

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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OPINION

Employment, Wages And Options

There was good news in Friday's jobs report, which showed that non-farm payroll employment in the U.S. increased by 288,000 jobs in April — beating expectations — and unemployment dropped to 6.3 percent. That's the lowest it's been since September 2008, just as the Great Recession really began to kick in.

But dark news lurked beneath that sunny snapshot. The number of people in the workforce dropped by 806,000, obliterating the March uptick of 503,000. That means more than 92 million American adults are not in the workforce. The participation rate fell to 62.8 percent, which matched a 36-year-low, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Also, the growth in jobs did not produce a growth in wages, according to *Time* magazine's website.

Thus, two things were confirmed with Friday's jobs report: The economy is recovering, but the recovery is tepid at best (although, it's relatively vibrant compared to much of the world, as the fallout from 2008 is still having a major, dragging impact).

As for the reasons for all this, there are, naturally, political charges and countercharges that fall along partisan lines. There are also some intriguing unknowns. For instance, a *Los Angeles Times* analysis over the weekend pointed out that there are people who are discouraged because they cannot find a good job — and thus have dropped out — and people who are, say, staying home with young kids or returning to school to get retrained for a new profession, which are adults who have not dropped back in to the workforce. How those factors break out is unknown at this point.

What's just as frustrating is the lack of wage growth, even at a time (or, really, an age) when corporations are reaping big rewards.

Interestingly, as our economy struggles to gain traction, corporate profits in this country are the highest they've been in 85 years, the Commerce Department reported in late March. Last year, the corporate after-tax profit of \$1.7 trillion amounted to a record 10 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP).

What's more, after-tax corporate profits under President Obama's overall term in office are running higher now (9.3 percent of the GDP) than at any time since the statistic began to be followed in 1929, the *New York Times* reported. This is due to the U.S. currently having the lowest "effective corporate tax rate" (which is a corporation's total tax bill divided by its profits), now at 20.5 percent, since Herbert Hoover.

Meanwhile, employee compensation is at its lowest level in 65 years. Employee compensation as a percentage of GDP is at 53.2 percent, the lowest it's been since Franklin Roosevelt's presidency during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Thus, someone is making money in these economic doldrums — lots of it. And workers (as well as a lot of small businesses who rely heavily on consumer spending to survive) are being left behind.

What is the answer to get our economy really rolling? Cutting the corporate tax rate from 35 percent down something more competitive with other industrial nations may be a start, but it's a double-edged sword: It would also feed the well-fed at a time when the working class is starving. (Also, such tax breaks are no guarantee that corporations will invest in more jobs.) But if we raise corporate taxes, those companies will grow even more risk-averse and continue to invest elsewhere, generating even more stagnation here while their bottom lines flourish. And since Washington currently seems reluctant to either do more direct stimulus spending (or concentrate on jobs at all at this point) to prime consumer demand or take on any tax reform, the remaining options seem frustratingly suspect at best.

And that may be the most disappointing economic news of all right now.

kmh

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, May 6, the 126th day of 2014. There are 239 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On May 6, 1954, medical student Roger Bannister broke the four-minute mile during a track meet in Oxford, England, in 3:59.4.

On this date: In 1840, Britain's first adhesive postage stamp, the Penny Black, officially went into circulation five days after its introduction.

In 1863, the Civil War Battle of Chancellorsville in Virginia ended with a Confederate victory over Union forces.

In 1882, President Chester Alan Arthur signed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which barred Chinese immigrants from the U.S. for 10 years (Arthur had opposed an earlier version with a 20-year ban).

In 1889, the Paris Exposition formally opened, featuring the just-completed Eiffel Tower.

In 1910, Britain's Edwardian era ended with the death of King Edward VII; he was succeeded by George V.

In 1935, the Works Progress Administration began operating under an executive order signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1937, the hydrogen-filled German airship Hindenburg burned and crashed in Lakehurst, N.J., killing 35 of the 97 people on board and a Navy crewman on the ground.

In 1942, during World War II some 15,000 Americans and Filipinos on Corregidor surrendered to Japanese forces.

In 1960, Britain's Princess Margaret married Antony Armstrong-Jones, a commoner, at Westminster Abbey. (They divorced in 1978.)

In 1962, in the first test of its kind, the submerged submarine USS Ethan Allen fired a Polaris missile armed with a nuclear warhead that detonated above the Pacific Ocean.

In 1981, Yale architecture student Maya Ying Lin was named winner of a competition to design the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

In 1994, former Arkansas state worker Paula Jones filed suit against President Bill Clinton, alleging he'd sexually harassed her in 1991. (Jones reached a settlement with Clinton in November 1998.) Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and French President Francois Mitterrand formally opened the Channel Tunnel between their countries.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush apologized for the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by American soldiers, calling it "a stain on our country's honor"; he rejected calls for Defense

Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's resignation. The FBI arrested Oregon lawyer Brandon Mayfield as part of the investigation into the Madrid train bombings; however, the bureau later said Mayfield's arrest had been a mistake, and apologized. The final first-run episode of "Friends" aired on NBC, drawing an average 52.5 million viewers, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Five years ago: After a day of meetings at the White House, President Barack Obama declared he'd gotten the commitments he wanted from the leaders of Pakistan and Afghanistan to more aggressively fight Taliban and al-Qaida militants. Gov. John Baldacci signed a bill making Maine the fifth state to legalize same-sex marriage (however, the law was later overturned by a public vote).

One year ago: Kidnap-rape victims Amanda Berry, Gina DeJesus and Michelle Knight, three women who'd gone missing separately about a decade earlier while in their teens or early 20s, were rescued from a house just south of downtown Cleveland. Their captor, Ariel Castro, hanged himself in prison in September 2013 at the beginning of a life sentence plus 1,000 years. Grammy-winning singer Lauryn Hill was sentenced by a federal judge in Newark, N.J., to three months in prison for failing to pay about \$1 million in taxes over the previous decade. Italian statesman Giulio Andreotti, 94, died in Rome.

Today's Birthdays: Baseball Hall-of-Famer Willie Mays is 83. Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., is 80. Rock singer Bob Seger is 69. Singer Jimmie Dale Gilmore is 69. Gospel singer-co-median Lulu Roman is 68. Actor Alan Dale is 67. Actor Ben Masters is 67. Actor Gregg Henry is 62. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair is 61. TV personality Tom Bergeron is 59. Actress Roma Downey is 54. Rock singer John Flansburgh (They Might Be Giants) is 54. Actor George Clooney is 53. Actor Clay O'Brien is 53. Rock singer-musician Tony Scalzo (Fastball) is 50. Actress Leslie Hope is 49. Rock musician Mark Bryan (Hootie and the Blowfish) is 47. Rock musician Chris Shiflett (Foo Fighters) is 43. Actress Stacey Oristano is 35. Actress Adrienne Palicki is 31. Actress Gabourey Sidibe is 31. Actress-comedian Sasheer Zamata (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 28. Actress-singer Naomi Scott is 21.

Thought for Today: "The people no longer believe in principles, but will probably periodically believe in saviors." — Jacob Christoph Burckhardt, Swiss historian (1818-1897)



The Rez Of The Story

Designs Of 'Savages'

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), This week reminds me of many spring days of the past. The brisk, cool evenings and the warm, bright days here on the reservation — it don't get any better than this, I say. Life is for the most part what we make of it, I think. Yes, we all face adversity, some more than others perhaps. We certainly can't argue with that. But all I'm saying is to consider the possibility that today, at least for today, let's exercise our individual power to make the best of it and seek to be happy just to spite those that wish us not to.



Vince
TWO EAGLES

The philosopher in me had to get that out of the way. So, this week's "Rez of the Story" is one of another FYI I've been known to offer for your consideration now and then. Trying to continue to dispel stereotyping Native people as among other things being characterized as "noble savages" — the pejorative "savages" being the operant word here, here taken from "American Indian Contributions to the World," co-authored by Emory Dean Keoke and Kay Marie Porterfield:

"The mathematics of the properties of measurement and relationships of points, lines and angles, known as solid geometry, was developed by the Indians of North, Meso- and South America independently of the systems devised by the ancient Greek, Chinese or the people of the Middle East. Based on the circle, indigenous geometry has been practiced throughout the Americas for well over 2,000 years and probably longer. Archaeological evidence shows that ancient Americans applied their knowledge of the principles of geometry to architecture, city planning and the ornamental designs they used in sculpture, painting and textile patterns, such as those woven by the Maya of Mesoamerica for hundreds of years.

"Precise theoretical and working knowledge of geometry was needed to build the Mesoamerican Pyramids that were constructed by pre-Peruvian people in El Aspero in about 3000 B.C. or by the Olmec in about in about 1200 B.C. in the Yucatan Peninsula of what is now Mexico. This knowledge was also needed to build the monumental stone works of the Moche, whose culture began to flourish in what is now Peru in about 200 B.C. Another grand example of geometrical

theory and practice on a grand scale are the Nazca lines, huge geometrical designs scribed into the desert in what is now Peru. (The Nazca culture flourished from about 900 B.C. to A.D. 600.) These mysterious geometric figures and animal shapes, whose lines radiate from diverse centers, are organized by a set of principles. So vast on scope that they can only be viewed from the air, the designs would have been impossible to execute without careful prior planning and understanding of geometry [don't see any 'savages' here, do you?].

"Western scientists were slow to recognize the American Indian command of geometrical principles. One reason for this is that the buildings they studied were often eroded, causing the angles, alignments and circles to change somewhat over the hundreds of years since their construction. Second, all the world's geometries are essentially a grammar of space, based on certain principles. Although the 'grammatical' rules of American Indian

geometry are the same as those Greek, Islamic or Chinese geometrical systems, the message they were intended to convey differed. Often the angles and alignments of these buildings are not what one would expect operating from the perspective of Western geometry. In the past, they were written off as sloppy planning. Modern archeologists, however, have identified several Mesoamerican sites that may have been used as astronomical observatories. They also believe that the rising and setting of the planet Venus or stellar constellations often determined the positioning of buildings in sacred complexes.

"According to Francine Vinette, a professor of applied mathematics writing in *Native American Mathematics*, Mesoamerican designers used patterns and templates, not only for the layout of their buildings but for sculpture and painting. In addition to the ability to create nearly perfect right angles and circles when desired, symmetry — the repetition of design elements on both sides of a central axis — is another feature of these works that proves an understanding of geometrical principles. Geometrical designs can be seen today in the pottery of the Zuni and Acoma Pueblo people ..." [Look at Dakotah designs in beadwork and quill work to see further evidence of Native understanding of geometry principles.]

And now you know the rez of the story. Doksha (later) ...

YOUR LETTERS

Expansion Solution?

Jackie Hauger, Yankton

To those who have written about the Affordable Care Act and the need to expand Medicaid, the easiest answer to what you call a problem is for the Legislature to set up an account to take in funds, money, donations, for Medicaid from the citizens that are willing to give voluntarily and not demand (tax) all South Dakotans.

Those who feel strongly about this subject will pour out their money to help others, and bills can be paid for medical services for the small amount uninsured. With this procedure, you will quickly find out how many are anxious to contribute and not burden the others. (If money is not sent in, then you know exactly how the voters feel about this expansion.)

Make a call to your physician or doctor or a clinic or hospital business office to be informed on the costs of this program, that in turn is passed on to the paying patients by increasing the price charged for their medical services.

ELECTION LETTERS

■ With the primary election season here, the **PRESS & DAKOTAN** is limiting any letter related to the political campaigns to 150 words. (A letter that exceeds that total by a small margin may be edited down to fit within that parameter.) Letters that surpass that limit will be referred to the advertising department, and author will be given the option of paying to have the letter printed in its entirety elsewhere in the newspaper. Send your letters or questions to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email us at views@yankton.net.

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FROM THE BIBLE

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."
John 14:6. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis