

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

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Published Daily

Monday-Saturday
Periodicals postage paid at Yankton, South Dakota, under the act of March 3, 1979.
Weekly Dakotan established June 6, 1861. Yankton Daily Press and Dakotan established April 26, 1875.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078.

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OPINION

School Security: Lessons And Words

Yankton has learned a lot about the dicey particulars of school security the last two weeks. It's unfortunate, of course, but it gave everyone involved — whether they think they are involved or not — a few things to think about. Two weeks ago, the Yankton School District coped with a bomb threat, courtesy of a message that had been found in the school. As memory serves, it was the first time the district has faced such a threat since the late 1990s.

A lot of has changed since then, especially in terms of communication. Mobile phones are now ubiquitous among students, and social media creates instant grapevines to transmit news. As a result, word of the situation spread quickly. Admittedly, this newspaper played a role in that, as we posted information online and through mobile updates once the situation was confirmed to us. But a lot of people in the schools, as well as a lot of parents, did not know the nature of the situation until they got the word from us, or from other non-school sources. This caused some tempers to flair, not only toward us but also toward school officials.

One big lesson here must be that trying to clamp down or control the spread of information — which was basically done during the incidents back in the late 1990s — is virtually impossible now when there are so many people inside the situation with means of communicating it elsewhere. Trying to control it is a lot like trying to rake water.

Thus, the experience should produce a new protocol for the district in terms of handling the information and informing the public. Given the rapid and seemingly limitless nature with which such information can get out anyway, it's best to stay ahead of the message as much as possible — and practical.

But communication is also part of an occasionally difficult balancing act.

The following week, another situation presented itself when a pair of alleged school threats were uncovered on Twitter. One was made April 17 and another April 28, but law enforcement apparently was not informed about it until last week. The police arrested the individual who posted the alleged terroristic threats.

The school dealt with this situation, which was handled fairly quickly, as well as could be expected. An email blast was sent out to parents after the matter was addressed, but that didn't stop some complaints from surfacing again. However, in reference to the aforementioned practicality, the priority for the school MUST be student and personnel safety, not informing the rest of us of everything that's going on. And really, that's the way we all should want it.

A more interesting issue is the reaction to the so-called threats, which were actually little more than juvenile posts that recklessly failed to reckon on any consequences.

But words do have consequences, sometimes even weeks after they are uttered or typed. At least one of these posts could be likened to screaming "Fire!" in a theater, even though the person was nowhere near that situation.

Did the police overreact? If we had to bet, we would say the individual involved meant no real harm with his puerile posts; he was just tossing out thoughtless comments for the "amusement" of others. The thing is, the police and the school district don't have the luxury of wagering on such matters because they're betting with lives — and they cannot afford even once to be wrong. They have to treat every piece of "chatter" as something potentially serious.

And that puts the onus on all of us in terms of what we say and post in social media. Like it or not, we own those words and the ramifications that ripple from them, whether they are intended or not. And that's the biggest lesson from last week, because really, what other choice can there be in the face of the alternative?

And those are words we must live with, whether we like it or not.

kmh

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, May 13, the 133rd day of 2014. There are 232 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On May 13, 1914, heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis was born in Lafayette, Alabama.

On this date: In 1607, English colonists arrived by ship at the site of what became the Jamestown settlement in Virginia (the colonists went ashore the next day).

In 1846, the United States declared that a state of war already existed with Mexico.

In 1917, three shepherd children near Fatima, Portugal, reported seeing a vision of the Virgin Mary.

In 1918, the first U.S. airmail stamps, featuring a picture of a Curtiss JN-4 biplane, were issued to the public. (On a few of the stamps, the biplane was inadvertently printed upside-down, making them collector's items.)

In 1940, Britain's new prime minister, Winston Churchill, told Parliament: "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."

In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Act. The musical play "The Pajama Game" opened on Broadway.

In 1958, Vice President Richard Nixon and his wife, Pat, were spat upon and their limousine battered by rocks thrown by anti-U.S. demonstrators in Caracas, Venezuela.

In 1968, a one-day general strike took place in France in support of student protesters.

In 1973, in tennis' first so-called "Battle of the Sexes," Bobby Riggs defeated Margaret Court 6-2, 6-1 in Ramona, California. (Riggs had his standing challenge to female players accepted by Billie Jean King, who soundly defeated Riggs at the Houston Astrodome in September.)

In 1981, Pope John Paul II was shot and seriously wounded in St. Peter's Square by Turkish assailant Mehmet Ali Agca.

In 1985, a confrontation between Philadelphia authorities and the radical group MOVE ended as police dropped a bomb onto the group's row house; 11 people died in the resulting fire that destroyed 61 homes.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton nominated federal appeals Judge Stephen G. Breyer to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace retiring Justice Harry A. Blackmun.

Ten years ago: Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visited the Abu Ghraib prison camp in Iraq, where he insisted the Pentagon did not try to cover up abuses there. During a campaign swing in West Virginia, President George W. Bush said he felt "disgraced" by the images of U.S. sol-

diers abusing Iraqi prisoners but reminded his listeners that actions of a handful of Americans should not sully the nation's military. TV anchorman Floyd Kalber died in Burr Ridge, Illinois, at age 79. The multiple Emmy-winning NBC sitcom "Frasier" bowed out with an hour-long finale.

Five years ago: A judge in West Palm Beach sentenced two men to death for the drug-debt slaying of a family of four on the side of a Florida highway, including two young boys who died in their mother's arms. Atlantis' astronauts captured the orbiting Hubble Space Telescope for five days of repair work. Pittsburgh' Adam LaRoche and Florida's Ross Gload became the first baseball players to have home runs taken away following a video replay review.

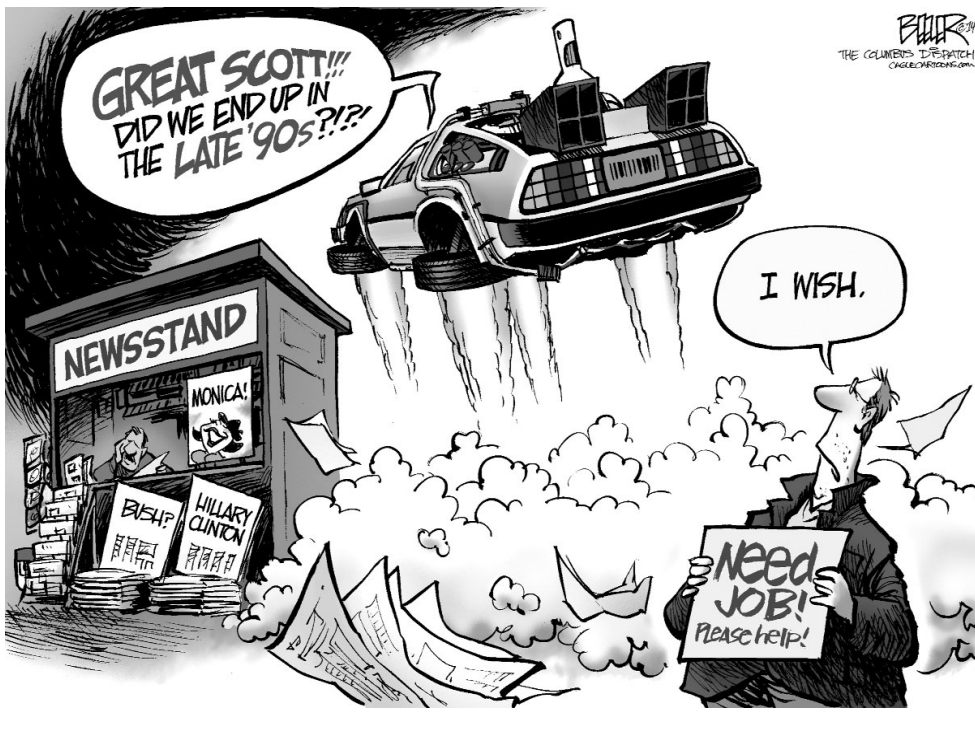
One year ago: President Barack Obama tried to address a pair of brewing controversies, denouncing as "outrageous" the targeting of conservative political groups by the IRS but angrily denying any administration cover-up after the deadly attacks in Benghazi, Libya, in September 2012. The Associated Press sent a letter of protest to Attorney General Eric Holder after the Justice Department told the news agency it had secretly obtained two months of telephone records of AP reporters and editors. Philadelphia abortion doctor Kermit Gosnell was convicted of first-degree murder in the deaths of three babies who were delivered alive and then killed with scissors at his clinic. (Gosnell is serving a life sentence.) Psychologist Joyce Brothers, 85, died in New York.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Buck Taylor is 76. Actor Harvey Keitel is 75. Author Charles Baxter is 67. Actor Franklyn Ajaye is 65. Actress Zoe Wanamaker is 65. Singer Stevie Wonder is 64. Producer-writer Alan Ball is 57. Basketball Hall of Famer Dennis Rodman is 53. Actor-comedian Stephen Colbert is 50. Rock musician John Richardson (The Gin Blossoms) is 50. Actor Tom Verica is 50. Country singer Lari White is 49. Singer Darius Rucker (Hootie and the Blowfish) is 48. Actress Susan Floyd is 46. Contemporary Christian musician Andy Williams (Casting Crowns) is 42. Actress Samantha Morton is 37. Rock musician Mickey Madden (Maroon 5) is 35. Actor Iwan Rheon (TV: "Game of Thrones") is 29. Actress-writer-director Lena Dunham is 28. Actor Robert Pattinson is 28. Actress Candice Accola is 27. Actor Hunter Parrish is 27. Folk-rock musician Wyllie Gelber (Dawes) is 26. Actress Debby Ryan (TV: "Jessie") is 21.

Thought for Today: "So you think that money is the root of all evil. Have you ever asked what is the root of money?" — Ayn Rand, Russian-born author (1905-1982).

FROM THE BIBLE

The LORD of hosts has sworn: "As I have planned, so shall it be, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isaiah 14:24. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis



The Rez Of The Story

Beware Of Bronchitis

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), The British poet Matthew Prior (1664 to 1721) once wrote: "Cured yesterday of my disease, I died last night of my physician." A particularly curious statement, you might observe, but one that will become more understandable as you read on.

Of late it has come to my attention by way of casual conversation that folks are being told by health care workers that bronchitis is not contagious. This seems to contradict what my doctor informed me when I came down with the disease a few years ago.

On my front door hangs a sign that simply says that if you're coughing or sneezing, please do not come in for the simple fact that I do not want my mother (who lives with me) or myself to get sick from something contagious like the flu, bronchitis or any other such disease. I've been exposed to bronchitis, as I said earlier, and believe me, it is not picnic to have to go through fighting off this potentially deadly disease, especially for elders or anyone else struggling with respiratory problems. Chronic bronchitis is the third largest cause of death in the U.S., according to experts.

So, does it matter whether or not bronchitis is catchy? Absolutely! According to ask.com, the disease is — I repeat — IS contagious. "Bronchitis is an infection that you can catch from other people who have it. A good way to make sure you don't is to wash your hands thoroughly after coming in contact with someone with the infection. Sometimes bronchitis can appear in someone without showing symptoms, if that is the case, always wash your hands after contact with people or objects that may contain the infection."

What are the symptoms? Alothealthy.com tells us that, "Acute bronchitis caused by an infection generally develops after a person has contracted a cold or flu, which is characterized by sore throat, fever, fatigue, body aches,



Vince
TWO EAGLES

runny or stuffy nose and diarrhea or vomiting. Bronchitis causes may include smoking, viruses (of flu, parainfluenza, rhinovirus, adenoviruses, etc.) and bacteria (pneumococcus, haemophilus, influenza, streptococcus). The most frequent cases of bronchitis infection are airborne [coughing and sneezing]."

According to ask.com, bronchitis was first observed and named in 1808 by Charles Badham. The disease has been around since the beginning of time, though. This illness has been treated with everything from garlic to turpentine.

The first virus was discovered in 1892. Bronchitis can be caused by a virus.

According to Wikipedia, bacteria were first observed by a Dutch merchant by the name of Anton Von Liewenhock in the 1660s. "He was excellent at grinding lenses so he could see cloth better and achieved magnification up to 500 times life size. He used his best lens to observe a sample of pond water and saw that it was teeming with tiny living things." Bronchitis is also caused by bacteria.

If you want to know more about this serious ailment, you can go online and simply Google bronchitis. The point of all this is about taking personal responsibility and staying away from your relatives when you are sick. Keep your kids at home also. It would be far too tragic if you infected an elder or small baby and they either suffered severe complications or died. It can be prevented. Find out how and act accordingly; the life you save may be your own.

I am no doctor or any other health professional, but my common sense tells me to take precautions to not infect others if I'm sick and to take steps to keep infection out of your home as much as possible. Remember, a virus or a bacteria knows no race, gender or economic status.

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

YOUR LETTERS

Cold Case Outrage

Michael Snow, Gayville

Now that the attorney general has confirmed that the two girls who disappeared in 1971 have been found, we know that there was never any evidence of a crime nor a crime scene, only wild conjecture and wackos with fantastic stories.

"On Aug. 24, 2004, more than 20 vehicles with officers, guns drawn, surrounded the [Lykken] farm to secure the 'crime scene.' Ester [an 84-year-old widow], accused of being the mother of murderers, an accomplice, a liar, destroying evidence, was kicked out of her house [that did not even exist in 1971] ..." so writes a daughter, Dianne Lykken Bruns (*Argus Leader*, April 19).

An elected official thinks that an apology is "inappropriate." Was it appropriate for overzealous agents to try to coerce a "confession" from a widow?

This began when South Dakota received federal money to create a cold case unit. Looking for a case, they found that two girls vanished in 1971 and that a penitentiary inmate, convicted of a sex crime, lived "less than two miles from the gravel pit where the girls were headed."

Except it is six miles. And in 1971, this kid was 16, had no car and was a student working on the family farm.

Also, he was NOT "a classmate of Miller and Johnson," as the *Press & Dakotan* reported. The press owes the Lykken family an apology for parroting whatever the state agents said to make themselves look good.

The media reported "bones, a red purse, clothing, a Bible ..." But the press didn't tell us

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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