

The Press & Dakotan

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

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OPINION

Substance Issues Never Go Away

The recent surge locally in the use of substances such as synthetic marijuana (K2), bath salts and other products tends to serve as a familiar cautionary reminder: There is no getting away from the perils of drug abuse.

But it also comes with an uncomfortable 21st century twist that's both unsettling and completely unsurprising.

Officials with the Yankton Police Department have expressed what could best be described as alarm at a surge in recent weeks in the use of illicit substances. It comes now after a period of relative calm on this front, thanks to laws passed by the South Dakota Legislature a couple years ago that targeted such products that were once being marketed legally as items such as bath salts, incense, potpourri and so on. These items were being used by some people to achieve potent and dangerous highs.

How dangerous? Law enforcement believe that a recent area death was caused by the illegal or improper use of these substances. And police said they became more aware of the surge in local usage when they started to see a rise in emergency-room medical cases.

There is no part of that previous paragraph that sounds particularly enticing, attractive or even sane.

And yet, here we are, dealing again with a headache that law enforcement and lawmakers had worked hard three years ago to address in strong terms.

Unfortunately, Yankton Police Chief Brian Paulsen believes one of the things fueling the new wave of use of the substances is the Internet.

Once more, the great online superhighway — which has literally changed our world in so many ways — has revealed its dark side. Or more specifically, it has shown what some nefarious souls can do with this tool, which has breathtaking reach.

It's a familiar story, only this time we are taking about illicit and dangerous substances. We can stack it alongside stories of scam artists and online predators, pornographic portals and alluring, deceptive propaganda. This universe ranges from people trying to score some personal tidbits about you to Islamic State recruiters.

The local police recently took to Facebook — another Internet-based tool — to spread the word about the dangers in this recent rise of chemical abuse and listed warning signs to be looking for in a loved one or friend. (There are good uses for the Internet, too.) But beyond the new methods of temptation, it all falls back to the fact that there are still bad things in this world and there are still people who fall into — or willfully pursue — these traps.

There are no answers here today. Anything that is said here as a means of warning won't really matter. The people who succumb to these dangers have heard the warnings and they know the risks, but they are too intoxicated by the "rewards" — even if it might cost them their life.

It's an ugly business, and there is no solution to it. There can only be constant vigilance. It seems to be the best available answer to this confounding issue.

kmh

ONLINE OPINION

The results of the most recent Internet poll on the Press & Dakotan's Web site are as follows:

LATEST RESULTS:

Would you support legalizing the use of marijuana for medical purposes?

Yes.....61%
No.....32%
Not sure.....7%

TOTAL VOTES CAST470

The Press & Dakotan Internet poll is not a scientific survey and reflects the opinions only of those who choose to participate. The results should not be construed as an accurate representation or scientific measurement of public opinion.

CURRENT QUESTION:

Which category should Onward Yankton's "Big Idea" address?

To cast your vote in the PRESS & DAKOTAN'S Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, May 20, the 140th day of 2015. There are 225 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On May 20, 1915, Israeli soldier-statesman Moshe Dayan was born at Deganya Alef kibbutz.

On this date: In 1712, the original version of Alexander Pope's satirical mock-heroic poem "The Rape of the Lock" was published anonymously in Lintot's Miscellany.

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act, which was intended to encourage settlements west of the Mississippi River by making federal land available for farming.

In 1902, the United States ended a three-year military presence in Cuba as the Republic of Cuba was established under its first elected president, Tomas Estrada Palma.

In 1925, the newly built headquarters of the United States Chamber of Commerce was formally dedicated in Washington D.C.

In 1927, Charles Lindbergh took off from Roosevelt Field in Long Island, New York, aboard the Spirit of St. Louis on his historic solo flight to France.

In 1932, Amelia Earhart took off from Newfoundland to become the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. (Because of weather and equipment problems, Earhart set down in Northern Ireland instead of her intended destination, France.)

In 1942, during World War II, the Office of Civilian Defense was established.

In 1959, nearly 5,000 Japanese-Americans had their U.S. citizenships restored after choosing to renounce them during World War II.

In 1961, a white mob attacked a busload of Freedom Riders in Montgomery, Alabama, prompting the federal government to send in U.S. marshals to restore order.

In 1970, some 100,000 people demonstrated in New York's Wall Street district in support of U.S. policy in Vietnam and Cambodia.

In 1985, Radio Marti, operated by the U.S. government, began broadcasting; Cuba responded by attempting to jam its signal.

In 1995, President Bill Clinton announced that the two-block stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House would be permanently closed to motor vehicles as a security measure.

Ten years ago: The U.S. military condemned the publication of photographs showing an imprisoned Saddam Hussein

clad only in his white underwear after the pictures were leaked to a British tabloid. President George W. Bush said he would veto legislation intended to loosen restrictions on embryonic stem cell studies, and he expressed deep concern about human cloning research in South Korea, research that was later discredited.

Five years ago: Under pressure following security lapses, retired Navy Adm. Dennis Blair resigned as national intelligence director. Mexican President Felipe Calderon took his opposition to a new Arizona immigration law to the U.S. Congress, telling lawmakers it ignored "a reality that cannot be erased by decree." A masked intruder stole a Picasso, a Matisse and three other masterpieces from a Paris museum. Floyd Landis admitted for the first time that he was guilty of doping for several years before being stripped of his 2006 Tour de France title.

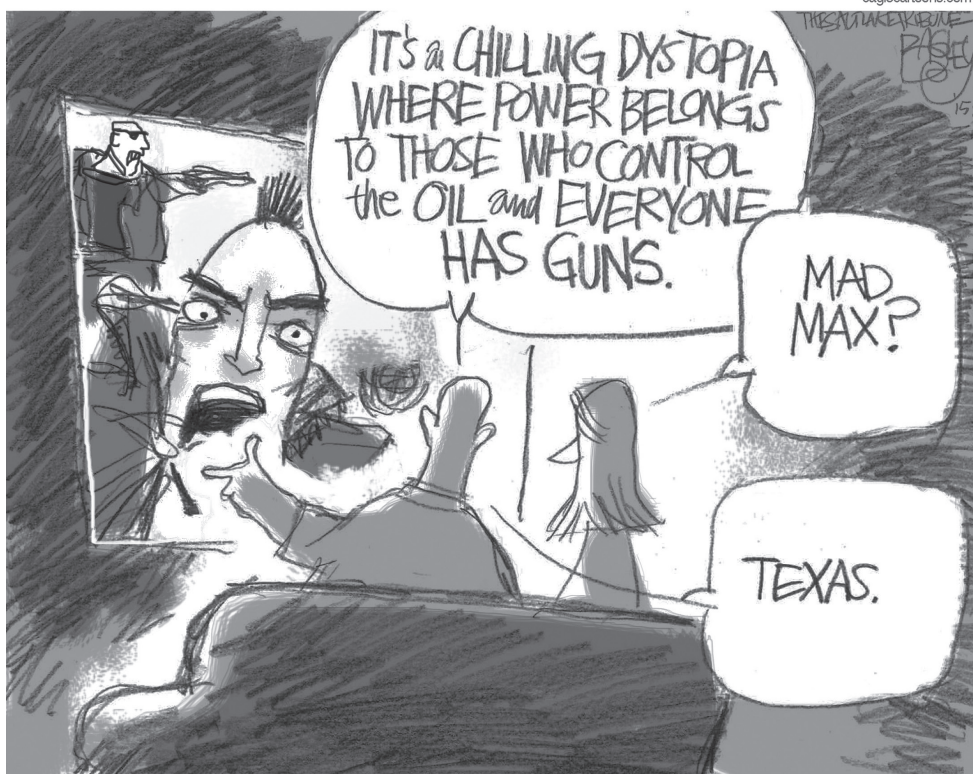
One year ago: In Kentucky's primary, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell dispatched his tea party challenger, Matt Bevin, with ease; Democrats chose Alison Lundergan Grimes to oppose McConnell in the fall (McConnell went on to win). Pennsylvania's ban on gay marriage was overturned by a federal judge. A group of retired professional football players filed suit against the NFL, accusing the league of cynically supplying them with powerful painkillers and other drugs that kept them in the game but led to serious complications later in life. Two car bombs hit a busy bus terminal and a market in the central Nigerian city of Jos, killing at least 118 people.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-author James McEachin is 85. Actor Anthony Zerbe is 79. Actor David Proval is 73. Singer-actress Cher is 69. Actor-comedian Dave Thomas is 67. Rock musician Warren Cann is 63. Former New York Gov. David Paterson is 61. Actor Dean Butler is 59. TV-radio personality Ron Reagan is 57. Rock musician Jane Wiedlin (The Go-Go's) is 57. Actor Bronson Pinchot is 56. Singer Susan Cowill is 56. Actor John Billingsley is 55. Actor Tony Goldwyn is 55. Singer Nick Heyward is 54. TV personality Ted Allen is 50. Actress Mindy Cohn is 49. Rock musician Tom Gorman (Belly) is 49. Actress Gina Ravera is 49. Actor Timothy Olyphant is 47. Rapper Busta Rhymes is 43. Actress Daya Vaidya is 42. Rock musician Ryan Martine is 40. Actor Matt Czuchy is 38. Actress Angela Goethals is 38. Actress-singer Naturi Naughton is 31.

Thought for Today: "If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies." — Moshe Dayan (1915-1981).

FROM THE BIBLE

For by grace you have been saved through faith. *Ephesians 2:8.*
Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



The Revolt Of The Small-Business GOP

BY ROBERT B. REICH

Tribune Content Agency

Can it be that America's small businesses are finally waking up to the fact that they're being victimized by big businesses?

For years, small-business groups such as the National Federation of Independent Businesses have lined up behind big-businesses lobbies.

They've contributed to the same Republican candidates and committees favored by big business.

And they've eagerly connected the Republican Party in Washington to its local business base. Retailers, building contractors, franchisees, wholesalers and restaurant owners are the bedrock of local Republican politics.

But now small businesses are breaking ranks. They're telling congressional Republicans not to make the deal at the very top of big businesses' wish list: a cut in corporate tax rates.

"Given the option, this or nothing, nothing is better for our members," Liam Donovan, the director of legislative and political affairs at Associated Builders and Contractors, told *Bloomberg Politics*. Donovan's group gave a reported \$1.6 million to Republicans in the 2014 midterm elections and nothing to Democrats.

Small businesses won't benefit from such a tax deal because most are "S" corporations and partnerships, known as "pass-throughs" since business income flows through to them and appears on their owners' individual tax returns. So a corporate tax cut without a corresponding cut in individual tax rates would put small businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

And since a cut in the individual rate isn't in the cards — even if it could overcome the resistance of Republican deficit hawks, President Obama would veto it — small businesses are saying no to a corporate tax cut.

The fight is significant, and not just because it represents a split in Republican business ranks. It marks a new willingness by small businesses to fight against growing competitive pressures from big corporations.

In case you hadn't noticed, big corporations have extended their dominance over large swaths of the economy.

They've expanded their intellectual property, merged with or acquired other companies in the same industry, and gained control over networks and platforms that have become industry standards.

They've deployed fleets of lawyers to litigate against potential rivals that challenge their dominance, many of them small businesses.

And they've been using their growing economic power to get legislative deals making them even more dominant, such as the corporate tax cut they're now seeking.

All this has squeezed small businesses — undermining their sales and profits, eroding market shares and making it harder for them to enter new markets.

Contrary to the conventional view of an American economy bubbling with innovative small companies, the rate at which new businesses have formed has slowed dramatically.

From 1978 to 2011, as big businesses



Robert B.
REICH

expanded and solidified control over many industries, the pace of new business formation was halved, according to a Brookings Institution study released last year. The decline occurred regardless of the business cycle or which party occupied the White House or controlled Congress.

Contributing to the drop was the deregulation of finance — which turned the biggest Wall Street banks into powerhouses that swamped financial markets previously served by regional and community banks. Not even Dodd-Frank

has slowed the pace of financial In consequence, many small businesses can't get the financing they once got from state and local bankers. Over the past two decades, loans to small businesses have dropped from about half to less than 30 percent of total bank loans.

That means the Fed's rock-bottom interest rates haven't percolated down to many small businesses.

Tensions have also grown between giant franchisors — restaurant chains, fast-food corporations, auto manufacturers, giant retailers — and their franchisees.

Franchisees have found themselves trapped in contracts that siphon off profits to parent companies, give franchisors the right to unilaterally terminate the agreements, and force franchisees into mandatory arbitration of disputes.

Complaints are mounting about parent corporations closing successful franchisees for minor contract violations in order to resell them at high prices to new owners.

Meanwhile, small businesses are feeling the same financial pinch the rest of us endure from big corporations whose growing market power is letting them jack up prices for everything from pharmaceuticals to Internet connections.

So the willingness of small-business groups to take on big business on its top legislative priority could mark the start of a political realignment.

If small businesses were willing to ally themselves with consumer, labor and community groups, they could press for stronger antitrust enforcement against giant corporations, as well as for breaking up Wall Street's biggest banks and strengthening community banks. They could also get legislation banning take-it-or-leave-it contracts requiring mandatory arbitration.

Such an alliance might even become a powerful voice for campaign-finance reform, containing the political clout of giant corporations.

Don't hold your breath. Small-business groups have done the bidding of big business for so long that the current conflict may be temporary.

But the increasing power of big corporations cries out for new centers of countervailing power.

Even if the political realignment doesn't happen soon, small businesses will eventually wake up — and could play a central role.

Robert Reich is Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley and Senior Fellow at the Blum Center for Developing Economies. His new film, "Inequality for All," is now out on Netflix, iTunes and Amazon.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Honoring Sacrifices

Donna Henriksen, Chairperson; Louise Gregoire, Secretary; and Pat Girard, Treasurer
American Legion Auxiliary District 8, Gingrich-Dixon Unit 13, Wakonda

Memorial Day is the day Americans set aside to honor the brave men and women who met tragic ends during times of war. Use this day to honor their sacrifices, to pray for their families, and to bow our heads in recognition of their service.

You have seen their faces, know their names, and maybe even heard their voices — those who gave the ultimate sacrifice during all wars. This Memorial Day, local American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Unit members would like to invite area residents to join us in remembrance of our nation's fallen heroes and those who have fought for our freedoms.

The ALA is the world's largest women's patriotic service organization, with nearly 800,000 members and 9,000 units in communities across the nation, serving nearly one million veterans every year. South Dakota auxiliaries continue to help mitigate the challenges our veterans face and deliver upon our mission by organizing multiple events throughout the year to support veterans and their families in civilian life.

About This Page

The View page provides a forum for open discussion of issues and interests affecting our readers. Initialed editorials represent the opinion of the writer, but not necessarily that of the **PRESS & DAKOTAN**. Bynlined columns represent the view of the author. We welcome letters on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at kelly.hertz@yankton.net.

For nearly a century, ALA members have dedicated themselves to meeting the needs of veterans, active military and their families, both here and abroad. They volunteer millions of hours yearly, with a value of nearly \$2 billion. As part of the world's largest women's patriotic service organization, Auxiliary volunteers across the country also step up to honor veterans and — through K-12 school programs, annual scholarships and with ALA Girls State programs, teaching high school juniors to be leaders grounded in patriotism and Americanism. To learn more about the Auxiliary's mission or to volunteer, donate or join, visit www.ALAForVeterans.org.