



## Lessons From A Storm

BY BILL O'REILLY  
Creators Syndicate

Here's the big lesson from mega-storm Sandy: Mother Nature sneers at high tech, mocks modern convenience and couldn't care less about what kind of person you are. She will smack you if she wants to.

As we have become addicted to machines, many of us have forgotten about nature. We must have gizmos. Sandy laughed and took them away. Power, gone. Internet, dark. Cellphones, not happening. Even your landline phone, not available, because "all circuits are busy."

Suddenly, it's 1850 with one exception: battery-operated flashlights and radios. So what is the lesson here?

Actually, there are a few. First: No government agency can help you when disaster strikes. Any assistance will be after the fact and painstakingly slow.

Second: In order to ride out any storm effectively, you should be self-reliant and resilient. That means you have to anticipate problems and have some solutions at the ready.

For example, where I live on Long Island, the power infrastructure is a disaster and has been for years. The power company, LIPA, simply cannot keep the juice flowing under duress. I have accepted that, and so I bought a generator. However, during Sandy, the generator did not work. You can imagine how many four-letter words were uttered. But I had a Plan B. I know some guys who can repair generators, and they fixed mine very quickly. I have a long-term relationship with these guys and will reward them.

So, I rode out the storm pretty well, and that's



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good because there are children in my home.

Not once did I think the local, state or federal government was going to help me in any way. When President Obama speaks about government being there for you, I roll my eyes. In the history of mankind, no government has ever been there for the individual. Ever.

Sadly, we are becoming a nation dependent on other people and very reliant on machines. Sandy's destruction brought us back to the 19th century, as the collapse of the machines was something to see. Many people were lost without their appliances because they are not self-reliant. They do not think ahead. They do not figure out Plan B because they don't even have a Plan A.

Life is hard, and then you die. But while you're alive, you'll be far better off if you forget about the big-government nonsense, deemphasize the machines and begin incorporating the discipline of self-reliance into your life.

Sorry for the lecture, but my father always said that out of bad things can come some good. Americans need to wise up, and with the election just a few days away, we have an opportunity to do so.

We the people need leadership that will solve problems, be fiscally responsible and promote individual responsibility. The charlatans that promise big-government protection will always be around, but they are no match for Sandy and her furious friends.

That is the lesson of this terrible storm.

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show "The O'Reilly Factor" and author of the book "Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama."

## A Sad Longing For Yesteryear

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.  
Tribune Media Services

Well, I sure got that one wrong.

Four years ago, on the eve of the last presidential election, I wrote in this space of how the country has spent much of the last three decades "re-litigating" the 1960s, arguing over the changes wrought in that decade. As far as social justice is concerned, of course, the 1960s stand second only to the 1860s as the most profoundly transformative decade in American history. It was in those years that black folks came off the back of the bus, women came out of the kitchen, Hispanics came off the margins and gay people first peeked beyond the closet.

Conservatives have been trying to repeal the decade ever since, a crusade that seemed to reach its greatest clarity and lowest depth in the rush to define a certain jug-eared senator from Illinois who was, in 2008, running for president. He stood to become the first black man to hold that job. This was not an incidental thing.

For his supporters, it helped make him the embodiment of "hope" and "change," the renewal of inchoate liberal promises that died with Robert F. Kennedy. For his detractors, it was the realization of every paranoia-drenched, racially-tinged threat to the white picket fences and Mom's apple pie of status quo.

"You know what I hope Barack Obama is?" I wrote in 2008. "I hope he is reconciliation — the end of the 1960s at long last. And the beginning of something new."

He wasn't. That's what I got wrong.

There are, after all, many words you could use to describe the period from 2008 to now. "Reconciliation" is not one of them. To the contrary, the nation has endured a four-year temper tantrum of shrillness and ferocity nearly unparalleled in history. You have to go back to the 1960s, or maybe even the 1850s, to find a time when America was this angry with itself.

Far from putting the '60s to rest, we have seen a fresh assault on what had previously been considered the settled gains of that era. I mean, who could have



Leonard PITTS

predicted this election season would see debates on women's reproductive health? Or that we'd have to defend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965? Or that the state of Arizona would ban ethnic studies classes? Or that there would be a new attack on the right of public workers to unionize? And that's not to mention the new onslaught of coded racial slurs. They still say Obama wasn't born in the U.S.A. Just the other day, Mitt Romney surrogate John Sununu, honest to God, called him "lazy."

Lord, have mercy. It's like they can't help themselves.

"Restore Our Future" goes the name of a conservative super PAC. It seems increasingly obvious, though, that the idea here is to restore our past. Except, it's less a real past than a collective yearning for the perceived simplicity and normalcy of yesterday. And it is not "ours" in any sense, belonging instead to the collective memory of those who had the color, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation that signified rightness back in that mythic long ago.

In a word, it is not real — and never was. Yet, the power it holds over conservative minds is proved in the decibel level of the temper tantrum, the desperate fury of the resistance. We have seen rocks flying through windows and weapons taken to presidential speeches. We have seen the president called the antichrist and accused of favoring white slavery. We have seen brazen schemes of voter suppression that must have Fannie Lou Hamer spinning in her grave.

Now, finally, we see Election Day. You will find no words about reconciliation here this time around, no suggestion the '60s might finally be at an end. Just a lament for the naive optimism that made such a suggestion possible — and for a nation where, these days, optimism is often devoured by rage.

It turns out the mythic past dies harder than any one ever knew.

Leonard Pitts is a columnist for the Miami Herald, 1 Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla., 33132. Readers may contact him via e-mail at lpitts@miamiherald.com.

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### YOUR LETTERS

#### Thanks To Volunteers

Paul Struck, Yankton  
Principal, Lincoln School

Lincoln School students are fortunate to have a new, large piece of equipment added to their playground. The students are excited about all the fun activities that are part of the new Playworld Systems structure.

On behalf of the Lincoln student body and staff, I would like to thank the following volunteers for their

work in the installation of this new multi-purpose structure: Kevin Bender, Rod and Shelley McNatt, Bob and Katie Steinbrecher, Ron Galvan, Nathan Loecker, Dave Abbott, Ryan Kaiser, Tom and Nancy Langdon, Lyle Hoelsing, Chuck, Shelley, and Ben Stoddard, Michael Donner, Randy Hlavac, Kyle Rohde, Tammi and Halie Adam, Cindy Lange, and Mike Van Winkle. I would also like to thank Clark's Rental for allowing volunteers to use their equipment over two weekends and Concrete Materials for donating the cement to ensure the structure is safe and stable.

**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:** "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." — The FIRST AMENDMENT to the U.S. Constitution

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

## In Tight Election, Every Vote Counts

MCCOOK DAILY GAZETTE (Oct. 26): Freeman Clark was on his deathbed.

We don't know for sure what his ailment was, but the year was 1844, and it could have been any number of things.

Perhaps even Freeman wasn't sure just how sick he was, but he knew one thing for sure, he had to get to the county seat of Switzerland County, Indiana, to vote for his friend, David Kelso, for state senator.

You see, Freeman Clark owed his life to Kelso, who had defended him in a murder trial years before, winning an acquittal.

So Freeman begged his sons to carry him to the county seat so he could cast his vote. His insistence finally cost him his life, as he died on his way back home, but Kelso won the election — by one vote.

When Kelso got to the Indiana statehouse, he found himself in the Democratic majority of one, controlling the Indiana senate.

He couldn't agree with his party, however, which was planning to nominate for U.S. Senate — it was state senators' job in those days — a man who promised to vote against the annexation of Texas if elected to the U.S. Senate.

Kelso refused to vote for the party's choice, however, and threatened to vote with the Whigs if the Democratic Party didn't vote for the alternative candidate he proposed, Edward A. Hannigan.

The Democrats caved in, electing Hannigan by one vote — Kelso's.

The next year, Texas was admitted to the union as a state by one vote — that of Edward A. Hannigan of Indiana.

Thus, Texas owed its statehood to one ailing Indiana man.

Of course, those are only a few examples of instances where one vote changed the course of history.

A few notable others:

— On Nov. 8, 1923, members of a newly formed political party elected, by one vote, an ex-soldier named Adolf Hitler to become the Nazi Party leader.

— In 1941, the Selective Service Act (draft) was saved by a one-vote margin, just weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

— In 1948, if Thomas E. Dewey had gotten one vote more in each Ohio and California precinct, the election would have been thrown into the U.S. House of Representatives, where Dewey had more support than his opponent, incumbent Harry Truman. As Dewey was expected to win by a landslide, many Republicans stayed home and Truman was sent back to the White House with 51.5 percent of the electorate vote.

— In 1960, if just one vote per precinct in Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey and Texas would have changed, Richard Nixon would have been elected president instead of John F. Kennedy.

In more recent terms, most of us remember that the Affordable Care Act — more commonly called Obamacare, even by the president himself — passed in the U.S. Senate by one vote, attributed to Sen. Ben Nelson of McCook.

With most national polls showing President Obama and Mitt Romney in a dead heat, now is not the time for voters to sit out the election. Let's hope the election turns out to be a decisive decision for whomever wins, giving him a mandate and setting the course of the nation for the coming years.

### OUR LETTER POLICY

The PRESS & DAKOTAN encourages its readers to write letters to the editor, and it asks that a few simple guidelines be followed.

■ Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.

■ In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the PRESS & DAKOTAN will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.

■ Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

■ Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email to views@yankton.net.

### TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Nov. 5, the 310th day of 2012. There are 56 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On Nov. 5, 1912, Democrat Woodrow Wilson was elected president, defeating Progressive Party candidate Theodore Roosevelt, incumbent Republican William Howard Taft and Socialist Eugene V. Debs.

**On this date:** In 1605, the "Gunpowder Plot" failed as Guy Fawkes was seized before he could blow up the English Parliament.

In 1781, the Continental Congress elected John Hanson of Maryland its chairman, giving him the title of "President of the United States in Congress Assembled."

In 1872, suffragist Susan B. Anthony defied the law by attempting to cast a vote for President Ulysses S. Grant. (Anthony was convicted by a judge and fined \$100, but she never paid the fine.)

In 1911, aviator Calbraith P. Rodgers arrived in Pasadena, Calif., completing the first transcontinental airplane trip in 49 days.

In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt won an unprecedented third term in office as he defeated Republican challenger Wendell L. Willkie.

In 1942, American showman George M. Cohan died in New York at age 64.

In 1968, Richard M. Nixon won the presidency, defeating Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey and American Independent candidate George C. Wallace.

In 1974, Ella T. Grasso was elected governor of Connecticut, becoming the first woman to win a gubernatorial office without succeeding her husband.

In 1987, Supreme Court nominee Douglas H. Ginsburg admitted using marijuana several times in the 1960s and 70s, calling it a mistake. (Ginsburg ended up withdrawing his nomination.)

In 1990, Rabbi Meir Kahane, the Brooklyn-born Israeli extremist, was shot to death at a New York hotel. (Egyptian native El Sayyid Nosair was convicted of the slaying in federal court.)

In 1992, Malice Green, a black motorist, died after he was struck in the head 14 times with a flashlight by a Detroit police officer, Larry Nevers, outside a suspected crack house. (Nevers and his partner, Walter Budzyn, were found guilty of second-degree murder, but the convictions were overturned; they were later convicted of involuntary manslaughter.)

In 2009, a shooting rampage at the Fort Hood Army post in Texas left 13 peo-

ple dead; Maj. Nidal Hasan, an Army psychiatrist, was charged with premeditated murder and attempted murder.

**Ten years ago:** In midterm elections, Republicans won control of the Senate and strengthened their hold on the House while claiming a majority of the governors' races. Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Harvey Pitt resigned under pressure after a series of political missteps that had embarrassed the White House. Randy Johnson won his record-tying fourth straight National League Cy Young Award.

**Five years ago:** Hollywood writers went on strike, forcing late-night talk shows to immediately start airing reruns. Police in major Pakistani cities fired tear gas and clubbed lawyers protesting President Gen. Pervez Musharraf's emergency rule. Talk show host Oprah Winfrey promised to "clean house" after a dorm matron was accused of abusing students at Winfrey's school for disadvantaged South African girls. Joe Torre was introduced as the new manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers, less than three weeks after walking away from the New York Yankees.

**One year ago:** Former Penn State defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky, accused of molesting eight boys, was arrested and released on \$100,000 bail after being arraigned on 40 criminal counts. (Sandusky was later convicted and sentenced to 30 to 60 years in prison for sexual abuse of 10 boys over a 15-year period.)

**Today's Birthdays:** Actor Chris Robinson is 74. Actress Elke Sommer is 72. Singer Art Garfunkel is 71. Actor-playwright Sam Shepard is 69. Singer Peter Dinklage is 65. Actor Nestor Serrano ("24") is 57. Actress-comedian Mo'Nique is 54. Actor Robert Patrick is 54. Singer Bryan Adams is 53. Actress Tilda Swinton is 52. Actor Michael Gaston is 50. Actress Tatum O'Neal is 49. Actress Andrea McArdle is 49. Rock singer Angelo Moore (Fishbone) is 47. Actress Judy Reyes is 45. Rock musician Mark Hunter (James) is 44. Actor Sam Rockwell is 44. Country singers Heather and Jennifer Kinley (The Kinleys) are 42. Actor Corin Nemec is 41. Rock musician Jonny Greenwood (Radiohead) is 41. Country singer-musician Ryan Adams is 38. Actor Sam Page is 36. Actor Jeremy Lelliott is 30. Rock musician Kevin Jonas (The Jonas Brothers) is 25.

**Thought for Today:** "Examine what is said, not him who speaks." — Arab proverb.

### FROM THE BIBLE

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You preserve my life. Psalm 138.7. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

### CONTACT US

PHONE:  
(605) 665-7811  
(800) 743-2968  
NEWS FAX:  
(605) 665-1721  
ADVERTISING FAX:  
(605) 665-0288  
WEBSITE:  
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