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OPINION | OUR VIEW

'Citizen Of The Year' Nominations Sought

There is a familiar sentiment that starts with the broad words, "It takes a village..." And a village or community is only as strong and as noble as the people who comprise it and who take an active role in its affairs.

That is what Yankton's Citizen of the Year award annually seeks to spotlight.

It's time again for us to seek nominations from the public for this award, which for more than four decades has honored individuals who have played a defining role in making Yankton a better place to live.

A look at the list of past winners tells you a few things about the people who are chosen for this award.

One thing that stands out is how dissimilar the past winners have in some ways been. Some of the winners have been well known, having served in public office and in the spotlight. Other winners have been the kind of people who work tirelessly in the background; their names may not be known to everyone, but their fingerprints were usually everywhere.

They do all share the same trait, however, of being devoted to making this community the best place possible. And it has been done — and is still being done — in myriad ways, affecting many lives. These better angels deserve our appreciation and our thanks, although they are usually the last to think so.

Nevertheless, the Citizen of the Year award is a chance to do just that.

And now is your chance. Send your nominee for the award to: Citizen of the Year, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078; email us at views@yankton.net; or visit us online at www.yankton.net/. Also, look for the ballots that will be published in the Press & Dakotian throughout the month. The deadline for submitting a nomination is Friday, Nov. 29.

Past Winners

Table listing past winners from 1970 to 2012, including names like Carl Youngworth, Joe Vinatieri, Jeff Scott, Freeman Otto, George Bauer, Harold Levinger, C.B. McVay, Chan Gurney, Dorothy Jencks, Lucy and J. Laiten Weed, Irene Scott, Sister Jerome Schmitt, Laddie Cimprl, T.H. Sattler, Elizabeth Riempp, Mary Alice Halverson, Don Dendinger, Bessi Burgi, Don Peterson, Frank Yaggie, Willis Stanage, Wynn Speece, Don Bierle, Hod Nielsen, Millie Wootton, Tom Merrill, Ted Blakey, Bob Karolevitz, Gladys Woolm, Dr. Ken Halverson, Sister Jacquelyn Ernster, Don and Doris Allan, Beulah Larson, Ken Jones, Arletta Tisher, Larry and Kathy Hintgen, Don and Peg Schiedel, Jim Black, Pauline Rhoades, Jack and Margaret Lyons, Myrtle Andersen, Thomas and Jo Stanage, Brooks and Vi Ranney.

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OUR LETTER POLICY

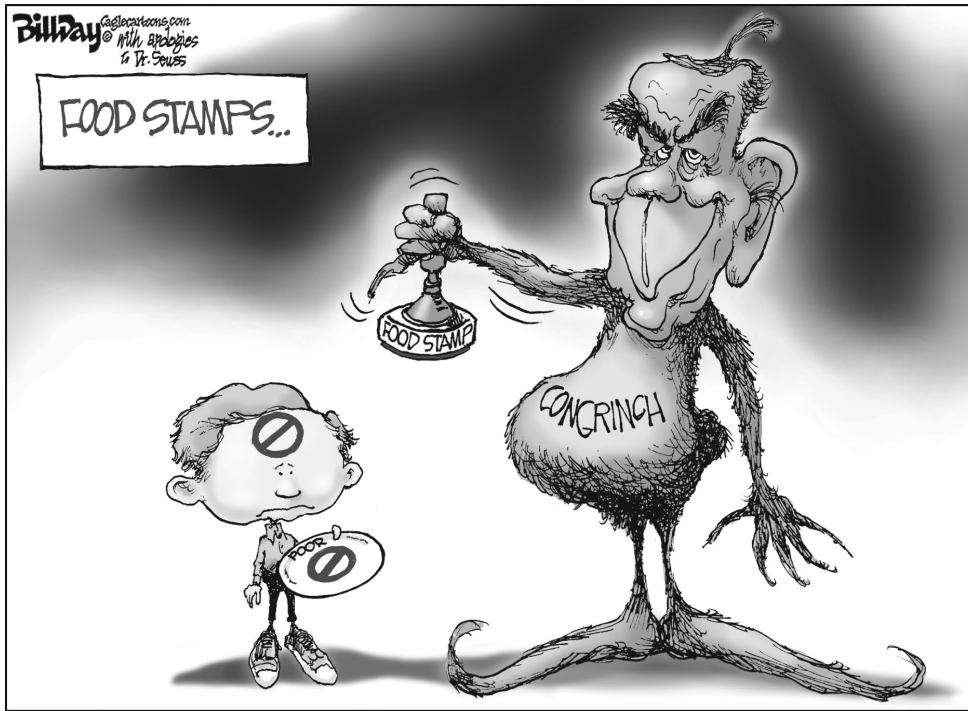
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ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press: Today is Wednesday, Nov. 6, the 310th day of 2013. There are 55 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On Nov. 6, 1888, Republican Benjamin Harrison won the presidential election, defeating Democratic incumbent Grover Cleveland with an electoral vote count of 233-168, even though Cleveland led in the popular vote. On this date: In 1632, King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden was killed in battle. In 1860, former Illinois congressman Abraham Lincoln defeated three other candidates for the presidency: John Breckinridge, John Bell and Stephen Douglas. In 1861, Confederate President Jefferson Davis was elected to a six-year term of office. In 1893, composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky died in St. Petersburg, Russia, at age 53. In 1928, in a first, the results of Republican Herbert Hoover's election victory over Democrat Alfred E. Smith were flashed onto an electric wrap-around sign on the New York Times building. In 1934, Nebraska voters approved dissolving their two-chamber legislature in favor of a nonpartisan, single (or "unicameral") legislative body, which was implemented in 1937. In 1944, British official Lord Moyne was assassinated in Cairo, Egypt, by members of the Zionist Stern gang. In 1947, "Meet the Press" made its debut on NBC; the first guest was James A. Farley, former postmaster general and former Democratic National Committee Chair; the host was the show's co-creator, Martha Rountree. In 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower won re-election, defeating Democrat Adlai E. Stevenson. In 1962, Democrat Edward M. Kennedy was elected Senator from Massachusetts. In 1977, 39 people were killed when the Kelly Barnes Dam burst, sending a wall of water through Toccoa Falls College in Georgia. In 1990, about one-fifth of the Universal Studios backlot in southern California was destroyed in an arson fire.

FROM THE BIBLE

[Jesus] said to him the third time, "Simon, you of John do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" and he said to Him, "Lord, You know everything; You know that I love you." John 21:17. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis



D.C. Turns Its Back On Recession Victims

BY ROBERT B. REICH
Tribune Content Agency

How to explain this paradox? Starting Nov. 1, more than 47 million Americans lost some or all of their food stamp benefits. House Republicans are pushing for further cuts. If the sequester isn't stopped, everything else poor and working-class Americans depend on will be further squeezed.

We're not talking about a small sliver of America here. Half of all children get food stamps at some point during their childhood. Half of all adults get them sometime between ages 18 and 65. Many employers — including the nation's largest, Walmart — now pay so little that food stamps are necessary in order to keep food on the family table, and other forms of assistance are required to keep a roof overhead.

The larger reality is that most Americans are still living in the Great Recession. Median household income continues to drop. In the most recent Washington Post-ABC News poll, 75 percent rated the state of the economy as "negative" or "poor."

So why is Washington whacking safety nets and services that a large portion of Americans need, when we still very much need them?

It's easy to blame Republicans and the right-wing billionaires who bankroll them, and their unceasing demonization of "big government" as well as deficits. But Democrats in Washington bear some of the responsibility. In last year's fiscal cliff debate, neither party pushed to extend the payroll tax holiday or find other ways to help the working middle class and poor.

Here's a clue: A recent survey of families in the top 10 percent of net worth (done by the American Affluence Research Center) shows they're feeling better than they've felt since 2007, before the Great Recession.

It's not just that the top 10 percent have jobs and their wages are rising. The top 10 percent also own more than 80 percent of the stock market. And the stock market was recently up 24 percent for the year.

The stock market is up even though most Americans are down, for two big reasons. First, businesses are busily handing their cash back to their shareholders — buying back their stock and thereby boosting share prices — rather than using the cash to expand and hire. It makes no sense to expand and hire when most Americans don't have the money to buy.

The S&P 500 "Buyback Index," which measures the 100 stocks with the highest buyback ratios, has surged 40 percent this year, compared with a 24 percent rally for the S&P 500.



Robert REICH

IBM has just approved another \$15 billion for share buybacks on top of about \$5.6 billion it set aside previously, thereby boosting its share prices even though business is sluggish. In April, Apple announced a \$50 billion increase in buybacks plus a 15 percent rise in dividends, but even this wasn't enough for multimillionaire Carl Icahn, who's now demanding that Apple use more of its \$170 billion cash stash to buy back its stock and make Icahn even richer.

Big corporations can also borrow at rock-bottom rates these days in order to buy back even more of their stock — courtesy of the Fed's \$85-billion-a-month bond-buying program. (Icahn also wants Apple to borrow \$150 billion at 3 percent interest in order to buy back more stock and further enrich himself.)

The second big reason shares are up while most Americans are down is that corporations continue to find new ways to boost profits and share prices by cutting their labor costs — substituting software for people, cutting wages and benefits, and piling more responsibilities on each of the employees who remain.

Neither of these two strategies — buying back stock and paring payrolls — can be sustained over the long run (so you have every right to worry about another Wall Street bubble). They don't improve a company's products or customer service.

But in an era of sluggish sales — when the vast American middle class lacks the purchasing power to keep the economy going — these two strategies at least keep shareholders happy. And that means they keep the top 10 percent happy.

Congress, meanwhile, doesn't know much about the bottom 90 percent. The top 10 percent provide almost all campaign contributions and funding of "independent" ads.

Moreover, just about all members of Congress are drawn from the same top 10 percent — as are almost all their friends and associates, and even the media who report on them.

Get it? The bottom 90 percent of Americans — most of whom are still suffering from the Great Recession, most of whom have been on a downward escalator for decades — have disappeared from official Washington. The only people Congress regularly encounters are in the happy top 10.

Robert Reich, former U.S. Secretary of Labor, is professor of public policy at the University of California at Berkeley and the author of "Beyond Outrage," now available in paperback. His new film, "Inequality for All," was released last month. He blogs at www.robertreich.org.

YOUR LETTERS

A Woman's Work

John Magnuson, Yankton
The World Economic Forum recently published its Global Gender Gap Report for 2012. The Forum studies the magnitude and scope of gender based disparities around the globe to create awareness of the challenges and opportunities for countries whose progress may improve if they better utilize their female populations. Economic participation, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment are key factors considered. Iceland continues to be ranked No. 1 as having the fewest gender disparities, with other Nordic countries close behind. The U.S. is ranked at a distant No. 23. So why is there such a major disparity between Iceland and the U.S.? Some differences are that Iceland has a universal health care system, 100 percent literacy and even has a political party founded by women, for women, with women candidates. Notably, Iceland does not have the dead weight of huge armies, prison systems, police forces, spying agencies, a dysfunctional Congress, a radical Tea party and other peculiarities that produce nothing and slow down progress. The U.S. earns a very poor grade by the Forum in the political empowerment of women. Given the dismal state of our Congress and its gross gender gap, maybe it's time that we the voters elect more females to office. The men in power have done a fine job of lousing things up. We all deserve better.

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