

The Press & Dakotan

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Yankton Media, Inc., 319 Walnut St., Yankton, SD 57078

CONTACT US
PHONE:
(605) 665-7811
(800) 743-2968
NEWS FAX:
(605) 665-1721
ADVERTISING FAX:
(605) 665-0288
WEBSITE:
www.yankton.net

**SUBSCRIPTIONS/
CIRCULATION**
Extension 104
mike.hrycko@yankton.net

CLASSIFIED ADS
Extension 108
tera.schmidt@yankton.net

NEWS DEPT.
Extension 114
news@yankton.net

SPORTS DEPT.
Extension 106
sports@yankton.net

ADVERTISING DEPT.
Extension 122
sales@yankton.net

BUSINESS OFFICE
Extension 119
ar@yankton.net

NEW MEDIA:
Extension 136
beth.rye@yankton.net

COMPOSING DEPT.
Extension 129
kathy.larson@yankton.net

MANAGERS
Gary L. Wood
Publisher

Michele Schievelbein
Advertising Director

Tonya Schild
Business Manager

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OPINION

Retail Leakage And Future Plans

A report on Yankton's retail prospects, as presented to the City Commission Monday night, was a sobering reminder of where this community is at and where it needs to go in terms of bolstering its regional retail muscle.

One underlying purpose of the report, compiled by SB Friedman Development Advisors, was to examine something called retail leakage, which is the amount of regional retail business that the community may be missing out on because of the lack of local retail offerings to draw area consumers to town.

What the report showed is a community that's growing (it was noted that the community is growing faster than the regional market in general), but still hasn't reached a level that might draw the interest of more chain retailers and restaurants.

Also, the average income level in the region dampens opportunities. The current income level is in the neighborhood of \$45,000-\$50,000 per year, which is solid but not quite enticing enough to bring in bigger retailers looking for potentially lucrative markets. (This statistic must also be dissected in terms of income disparity. That figure includes both farmers, who have been doing quite well of later, and middle-income workers whose incomes have stagnated in recent years.)

Thus, Yankton seems to be a "tweener" market. It's unquestionably a regional hub and does draw in retail dollars from a wide area, and we are growing. But Yankton hasn't grown fast enough to attract more retailers who would, in turn, bring in more area consumers.

However, the key for changing this, according to Geoff Dickinson, a senior project manager with SB Friedman Development Advisors, is population growth, both in Yankton and in the immediate vicinity.

That means creating jobs and/or expanding operations. That also means creating good-paying jobs that would not only boost the population but also bring up the local income levels.

And that means having adequate housing for people in various income levels. If people can't live here, they won't.

These are issues that local officials are addressing. And Dickinson noted that having the city and Yankton Area Progressive Growth continuing to work on ways to make these things happen is essential.

Yankton is actually on a good trajectory — it's a growing community with a good industrial sector and a strong tourism base — but we're not where we want to be or could be. Creating a larger population base via job growth/expansion with competitive wages, promoted by aggressive regional marketing to ensure the jobs can be filled, would seem to be the more prudent approach to the retail leakage issue. If there are more people here, the stores and restaurants will come.

This should be the primary focus of the community's leadership. By facilitating this, step by step, the rest should follow.

kml

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**. Bylined 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/.

OUR LETTER POLICY

The **PRESS & DAKOTAN** invites its readers to write letters to the editor. We ask 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 us at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press
Today is Wednesday, Nov. 12, the 316th day of 1914. There are 49 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Nov. 12, 1984, space shuttle astronauts Dale Gardner and Joe Allen snared a wandering satellite in history's first space salvage; the Palapa B2 satellite was secured in Discovery's cargo bay for return to Earth.

On this date: In 1787, severe flooding struck Dublin, Ireland, as the River Liffey rose.

In 1815, American suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton was born in Johnstown, New York.

In 1927, Josef Stalin became the undisputed ruler of the Soviet Union as Leon Trotsky was expelled from the Communist Party.

In 1936, the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge opened as President Franklin D. Roosevelt pressed a telegraph key in Washington, D.C., giving the green light to traffic.

In 1942, the World War II naval Battle of Guadalcanal began. (The Allies ended up winning a major victory over Japanese forces.)

In 1948, former Japanese premier Hideki Tojo and several other World War II Japanese leaders were sentenced to death by a war crimes tribunal.

In 1969, news of the My Lai Massacre in South Vietnam in March 1968 was broken by investigative reporter Seymour Hersh.

In 1977, the city of New Orleans elected its first black mayor, Ernest "Dutch" Morial, the winner of a runoff.

In 1982, Yuri V. Andropov was elected to succeed the late Leonid I. Brezhnev as general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee.

In 1987, the American Medical Association issued a policy statement saying it was unethical for a doctor to refuse to treat someone solely because that person had AIDS or was HIV-positive.

In 1994, Olympic track-and-field gold medalist Wilma Rudolph died in Brentwood, Tennessee, at age 54.

In 2001, American Airlines Flight 587, an Airbus A300 headed to the Dominican Republic, crashed after takeoff from New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, killing all 260 people on board and five people on the ground.

Ten years ago: A jury in Redwood City, California, convicted Scott Peterson of murdering his pregnant wife, Laci, and

dumping her body into San Francisco Bay. (Peterson, who maintains his innocence, remains on death row.) Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was buried at his headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah, a day after his death in a French military hospital.

Five years ago: Army psychiatrist Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan was charged with 13 counts of premeditated murder in the Fort Hood, Texas, shooting rampage. (Hasan was later convicted and sentenced to death.) James R. Lilley, a longtime CIA operative and later the U.S. ambassador to China, died in Washington, D.C., at age 81.

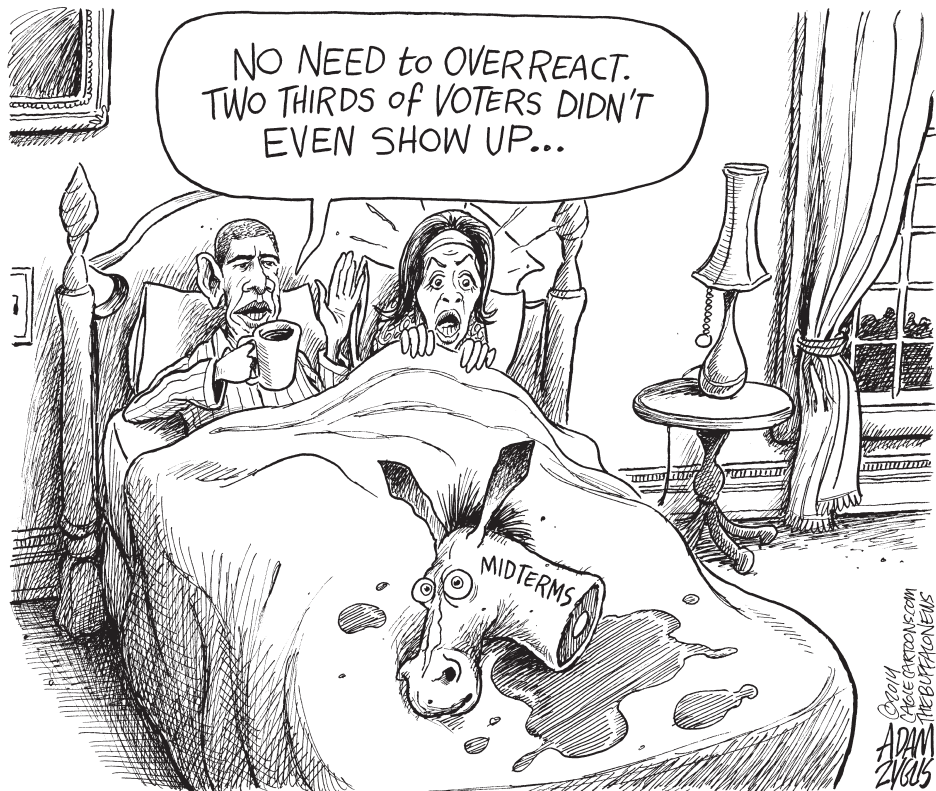
One year ago: An international panel of architects announced that the new World Trade Center tower in New York would replace Chicago's Willis Tower as the nation's tallest building upon its completion. Terry Francona of the Cleveland Indians won the AL Manager of the Year award in a close vote, and Clint Hurdle of the Pittsburgh Pirates was a runaway winner in the National League after both guided small-budget teams to the postseason. British composer John Tavener, 69, died in Child Okeford, England.

Today's Birthdays: Rhythm-and-blues singer Jimmy Hayes (Persuasions) is 71. Singer Brian Hyland is 71. Actor playwright Wallace Shawn is 71. Rock musician Booker T. Jones (Booker T. & the MGs) is 70. Sportscaster Al Michaels is 70. Singer-songwriter Neil Young is 69. Rock musician Donald "Buck Dharma" Roeser (Blue Oyster Cult) is 67. Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., is 65. Country/gospel singer Barbara Fairchild is 64. Actress Megan Mullally is 56. Actor Vincent Irizarry is 55. Olympic gold medal gymnast Nadia Comaneci is 53. Actor Sam Lloyd is 51. Rock musician David Ellefson is 50. Retired MLB All-Star Sammy Sosa is 46. Figure skater Tonya Harding is 44. Actress Radha Mitchell is 41. Actress Lourdes Benedicto is 40. Actress Tamala Jones is 40. Actress Angela Watson is 40. Singer Tevin Campbell is 38. Actress Ashley Williams is 36. Actress Cote de Pablo is 35. Actor Ryan Gosling is 34. Contemporary Christian musician Chris Huffman is 34. Actress Anne Hathaway is 32. Pop singer Omarion is 30. Folk-rock musician Griffin Goldsmith (Dawes) is 24. Actress Macey Cruthird is 22.

Thought for Today: "It's all right to have a train of thoughts, if you have a terminal." — Richard R. Bowker, American publisher (1848-1933).

FROM THE BIBLE

For who is the greater, one who reclines at tables or who serves?
Luke 22:27. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Robert Reich

Facing The Choice Of The Century

BY ROBERT B. REICH
Tribune Content Agency

The president blames himself for the Democrats' big losses on Election Day.

"We have not been successful in going out there and letting people know what it is that we're trying to do and why this is the right direction," he said Sunday.

In other words, he didn't sufficiently tout the administration's accomplishments.

I respectfully disagree.

If you want a single reason for why Democrats lost big on Election Day 2014, it's this: Median household income continues to drop. This is the first "recovery" in memory when this has happened.

Jobs are coming back, but wages aren't. Every month the job numbers grow, but the wage numbers go nowhere. Most new jobs are in part-time or low-paying positions. They pay less than the jobs lost in the Great Recession.

This wageless recovery has been made all the worse because pay is less predictable than ever. Most Americans don't know what they'll be earning next year or even next month. Two-thirds are now living paycheck to paycheck.

So why is this called a "recovery" at all?

Because, technically, the economy is growing. But almost all the gains from that growth are going to a small minority at the top. In fact, 100 percent of the gains have gone to the best-off 10 percent. Ninety-five percent have gone to the top 1 percent. The stock market has boomed. Corporate profits are through the roof. CEO pay is in the stratosphere.

Yet most Americans feel like they're still in a recession. And they're convinced the game is rigged against them.

Fifty years ago, just 29 percent of voters believed government is "run by a few big interests looking out for themselves." Now, 79 percent think so.

According to Pew, the percentage of Americans who believe most people who want to get ahead can do so through hard work has plummeted 14 points since 2000.

What the president and other Democrats failed to communicate wasn't their accomplishments. It was their understanding that the economy is failing most Americans and that big money is overrunning our democracy. And they failed to convey their commitment to an economy and a democracy that serve the vast majority rather than a minority at the top.

Some Democrats even ran on not being Barack Obama.

That's no way to win. Americans want

someone fighting for them, not running away from the president.

The midterm elections should have been about jobs and wages, and how to reform a system where nearly all the gains go to the top. It was an opportunity for Democrats to shine. Instead, they hid.

Consider that in four "red" states — South Dakota, Arkansas, Alaska and Nebraska — the same voters who sent Republicans to the Senate voted by wide margins to raise their state's minimum wage. Democratic candidates in these states barely mentioned the minimum wage.

So what now? Republicans, soon to be in charge of Congress, will push their same old supply-side, trickle-down, austerity economics.

They'll want policies that further enrich those who are already rich. That lower taxes on big corporations and deliver trade agreements written in secret by big corporations. That further water down Wall Street regulations so the big banks can become even bigger — too big to fail, or jail, or curtail.

They'll exploit the public's prevailing cynicism by delivering just what the cynics expect.

And the Democrats? They have a choice. They can refill their campaign coffers for 2016 by trying to raise even more money from big corporations, Wall Street and wealthy individuals. And hold their tongues about the economic slide of the majority, and the drowning of our democracy.

Or they can come out swinging. Not just for a higher minimum wage but also for better schools, paid family and medical leave and child care for working families.

For resurrecting the Glass-Steagall Act and limiting the size of Wall Street banks.

For saving Social Security by lifting the cap on income subject to payroll taxes.

For rebuilding the nation's roads, bridges and ports. For increasing taxes on corporations with high ratios of CEO pay to the pay of average workers.

And for getting big money out of politics, and thereby saving our democracy.

It's the choice of the century. Democrats have less than two years to make it.

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 iTunes, DVD and On Demand.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Meridian Musings

Jim Van Osdel, Yankton

"People are more fun than anything" was a favorite saying of Marvin Scott, longtime Yankton P&D city editor, who preceded me in that job. His quote rings especially true today.

A coffee shop patron has apparently been espousing the theory that the twin towers on Yankton's venerable Meridian Bridge "could be rolled farther south along the bridge to lift a portion of the bridge as the river's channel changed according to the whims of 'Old Muddy.'"

That point was posed to Don List, longtime employee of the South Dakota Department of Highways, whose job it was to raise the Meridian's lift span. Don generously told us at the coffee table that he learned the trade from Joe Novak, another "highway" employee and longtime Yankton volunteer fireman who lived

in the Yankton City Hall and, when the fire siren sounded, actually slid down the fire pole to start the fire trucks and have them running when the younger volunteer firemen arrived at the fire hall.

Joe Novak showed Don List how to persuade the 25-horsepower Allis-Chalmers motor to set in motion the 250-ton weights in each of the twin towers which were lowered on heavy cables and caused the lift span to rise as much as 32 feet.

When the question of the "moveable twin towers" bit was recently posed to List at coffee, his eyes widened and he just shook his head at the improbable thought that the Meridian Bridge was built sufficiently strong to have twin towers each carrying 50,000 pounds suspended by cables rolling along on the bridge, as if there were any other lift spans on the bridge.

Yes, coffee conversations can get exciting.

YOUR D.C. LAWMAKERS

SOUTH DAKOTA

SEN. TIM JOHNSON: 136 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; Washington Phone: (202) 224-5842; Sioux Falls Phone: (605) 332-8896; email: tim.johnson.senate.gov/emaillform.html

SEN. JOHN THUNE: United States Senate SR-493, Washington, D.C. 20510; Washington Phone: (866) 850-3855; Sioux Falls Phone: (605) 334-9596; Fax: (202) 228-3855; Web: thune.senate.gov

REP. KRISTI NOEM: 226 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515; Washington Phone: (202) 225-2801; Sioux Falls Phone: (605) 367-8371; Fax: (202) 225-5823; email: visit https://noem.house.gov

NEBRASKA

SEN. DEB FISCHER: 825 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; Washington Phone: (202) 224-6551; email: NJA

SEN. MIKE JOHANN: 1 Russell Courtyard, Washington, D.C. 20510; Washington Phone: (202) 224-4224; email: log on at http://johanns.senate.gov/public/?p=EmailSenatorJohanns

REP. JEFF FORTENBERRY: 1517 Longworth House, Office Building, Washington, .20515; Washington Phone: (202) 225-4806; District Phone: (402) 438-1598; email: log on at www.house.gov/writerep/

REP. ADRIAN SMITH: 503 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515-2703; Washington Phone: (202) 225-6435; Fax: (202) 225-0207; District Phone: (308) 633-6333; email: log on at www.house.gov/writerep/