

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
Dakotian established April
26, 1875.
Postmaster: Send
address changes to Yankton
Daily Press & Dakotan,
319 Walnut, Yankton, SD
57078.

MEMBERSHIPS
The Yankton Daily
Press & Dakotan is a
member of the Associ-
ated Press, the Inland
Daily Press Association
and the South Dakota
Newspaper Association.
The Associated Press
is entitled exclusively
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news printed in this
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CARRIER DELIVERY
1-month..... \$12.09
3 months..... \$36.27
6 months..... \$72.53
1-year..... \$133.09

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OPINION

Basin Proposal Has Right Idea

A proposal that was approved Monday by a state legislative task force to organize South Dakota into nine drainage basins appears to be a wise idea that acknowledges the logic of geography and the irresistible facts of gravity.

According to the plan unanimously approved by the watershed task force, the nine basins — or “river basin natural resource districts” — would be governed by councils of local residents who would be elected to address water issues within their boundaries. Each council would have the authority to levy a property tax up to 30 cents per \$1,000 of property valuation.

The idea supplants the current manner of drainage regulation in the state. At present, county commissions oversee such issues within their own boundaries. According to a story from reporter Bob Mercer, many commissions often steer clear of addressing these matters, which sometimes end up in court as lawsuits.

But water drainage does not recognize county lines. For instance, if water is drained into a waterway that feeds the James River in Davison County, that water doesn't stop at the county line. It crosses over into Hutchinson County and then into Yankton County, neither of whom can do much of anything about it.

The new plan would set up governing districts based on the dictates of the land, not in imaginary boundaries. For instance, the areas that feed the James River would be under the James River basin district. This would allow for better and more practical coordination up and down the river system.

The watershed proposal would not mandate that the councils have permitting authority, although that would be something that could be granted by the residents of each basin district. Instead, the plan would call for mandatory public disclosure of the intentions for any drainage project.

The plan does have some concerns. Some members of the task force admitted worries that larger communities like Sioux Falls would eventually control the councils — in that case, the Big Sioux River basin — and perhaps address drainage matters for the benefit of the large municipality as opposed to the rural areas. It's a fair issue to consider, and there may be a risk.

Also, one has to wonder if some county boards will be reticent to surrender local control to a council that will have a broader geographic reach. To be sure, since these basin districts will be guided by the lay of the land, not the county boundaries, some counties would find themselves in more than one district.

But the simple logic of the matter really must prevail. The flow of the streams and the slope of the land must take precedence over county lines.

Water drainage issues are tricky affairs: They can get very emotional and, sometimes, even violent — and deadly. Heretofore, South Dakota has deployed what has really been an unsatisfactory patchwork system for dealing with these matters. This new proposal is actually like any sound drainage project: It works with the flow of the land and tries to address the needs of all those who would be impacted.

This proposal deserves serious consideration in Pierre this winter. *kmh*

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Wednesday, Nov. 26, the 330th day of 2014. There are 35 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Nov. 26, 1864, English mathematician and writer Charles Dodgson presented a handwritten and illustrated manuscript, "Alice's Adventures Under Ground," to his 12-year-old friend Alice Pleasance Liddell; the book was later revised and turned into "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland."

On this date: In 1789, this was a day of thanksgiving set aside by President George Washington to observe the adoption of the Constitution of the United States.

In 1825, the first college social fraternity, the Kappa Alpha Society, was formed at Union College in Schenectady, New York.

In 1842, the founders of the University of Notre Dame arrived at the school's present-day site near South Bend, Indiana.

In 1933, a judge in New York ruled the James Joyce book "Ulysses" was not obscene and could be published in the United States.

In 1941, a Japanese naval task force consisting of six aircraft carriers left the Kuril Islands, headed toward Hawaii.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered nationwide gasoline rationing, beginning Dec. 1. The motion picture "Casablanca," starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, had its world premiere at the Hollywood Theater in New York.

In 1950, China entered the Korean War, launching a counteroffensive against soldiers from the United Nations, the U.S. and South Korea.

In 1965, France launched its first satellite, sending a 92-pound capsule into orbit.

In 1973, President Richard Nixon's personal secretary, Rose Mary Woods, told a federal court that she'd accidentally caused part of the 18-1/2-minute gap in a key Watergate tape.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan appointed a commission headed by former Senator John Tower to investigate his National Security Council staff in the wake of the Iran-Contra affair.

In 1989, "America's Funniest Home Videos" debuted as a special on ABC-TV; it later became a successful regular series.

In 1992, the British government announced that Queen Elizabeth II had volunteered to start paying taxes on her personal income, and would take her chil-

dren off the public payroll.

Ten years ago: Leading Iraqi politicians called for a six-month delay in the Jan. 30, 2005, election because of spiraling violence; President George W. Bush said, "The Iraqi Election Commission has scheduled elections in January, and I would hope they'd go forward in January." (The vote took place as scheduled.) French movie director Philippe de Broca ("King of Hearts") died at age 71.

Five years ago: An investigation ordered by Ireland's government found that Roman Catholic Church leaders in Dublin had spent decades sheltering child-abusing priests from the law and that most fellow clerics had turned a blind eye. John Jones, a 26-year-old medical student stuck upside-down in a cave in Utah for more than a day, died despite the efforts of dozens of rescuers to extract him.

One year ago: The U.S. flew two B-52 bombers over the East China Sea, defying Beijing's move to assert greater military control over the area's disputed islands. Pope Francis denounced the global financial system that excluded the poor as he issued the mission statement for his papacy. Actress-singer Jane Kean, 90, best known for playing Trixie in a musicalized revival of "The Honeymooners" on "The Jackie Gleason Show," died in Burbank, California. Actor Tony Musante, 77, who'd starred in the ABC series "Toma" in the 1970s, died in New York.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Ellen Albertini Dow is 101. Impressionist Rich Little is 76. Singer Tina Turner is 75. Singer Jean Terrell is 70. Pop musician John McVie is 69. Actress Marianne Muellerleile is 68. Actor Scott Jacoby is 58. Actress Jamie Rose is 55. Country singer Linda Davis is 52. Actor Scott Adsit is 49. Blues singer-musician Bernard Allison is 49. Country singer-musician Steve Grissafe is 49. Actress Kristin Bauer is 41. Actor Peter Facinelli is 41. Actress Tammy Lynn Michaels Etheridge is 40. Actress Maia Campbell is 38. Country singer Joe Nichols is 38. Contemporary Christian musicians Anthony and Randy Armstrong (Red) are 36. Actress Jessica Bowman is 34. Pop singer Natasha Bedingfield is 33. Country singer-musician Mike Gossin (Gloriana Rock) is 30. Ben Wysocki (The Fray) is 30. Singer Lil Fizz is 29. Singer Aubrey Collins is 27.

Thought for Today: "Don't for heaven's sake, be afraid of talking nonsense! But you must pay attention to your nonsense." — Ludwig Wittgenstein, Austrian-born philosopher (1889-1951).

FROM THE BIBLE

Every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.
James 1:17. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

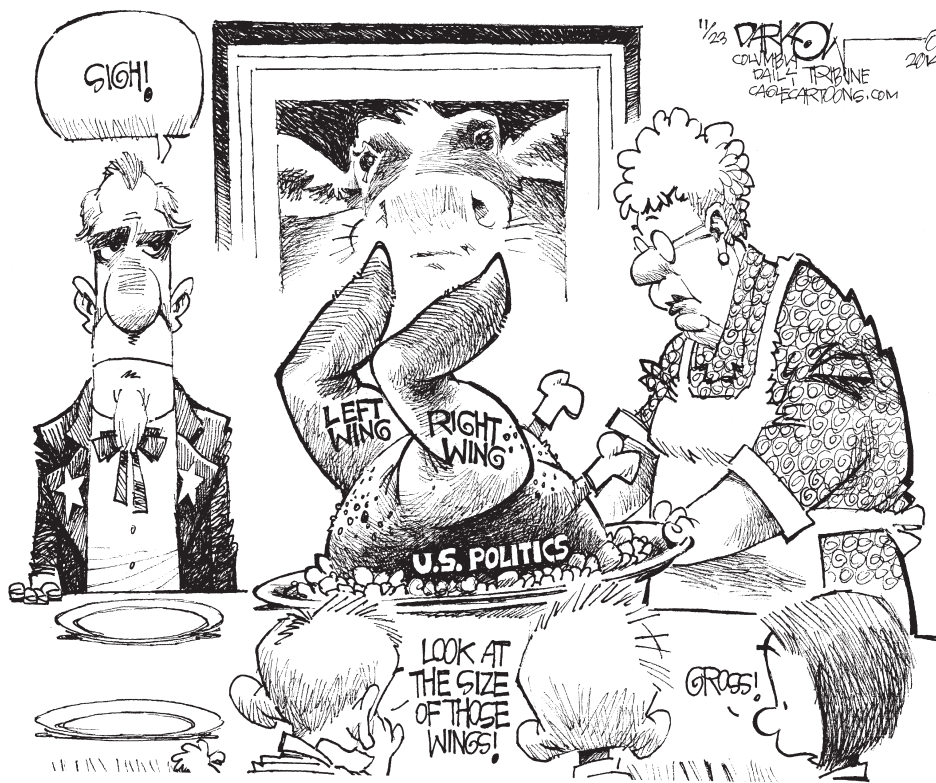
Enlightened Letters

Fernande Bitsos, Yankton
Kudos to Kathy K. Grow and Lois H. Varvel for their recent letters to the editor concerning the Meridian Bridge.

Ex-Editor Jim Van Osdel's "letters of errors" have caught my attention quite often. Some of my replies to his "errors" have been published, some other not. As a French-born American citizen, I pride myself to write in the English/American I learned from a U.S. GI (Vet) my sister and I greeted in our home after their landing in Morocco in November 1942. His name was Raymond Reed (or Read) who had a little

girl named Shirley (never forgot her name, being a fan of Shirley Temple). We had just started high school (Lyceum) and French, Latin, English and Arabic were mandatory, but my sister and I chose English — not German of course. This GI taught us to speak the "American" way. I never forgot him and what became of him as they moved on Algeria and so forth or what US State he came from. Bless him and thank you, WWII GI, for teaching me how to write here in the USA.

This brings me back to Jim Van Osdel and his "Letters of Errors," and those two ladies' replies. I envy your American writing, thank you for making my day.



Thanksgiving 2014

A Wartime Vision Of A Better World

Seventy years ago this Thanksgiving, America weighed its blessings yet again against the bleak backdrop of World War II. An old, weary darkness still hung over our heads after so many years of combat, death and tears.

But on Thanksgiving 1944, there was also a gleaming star of hope glowing on the smoldering horizon.

On the global fields of war, the Allies had Germany and Japan on the run. Italy had fallen. France had been invaded and freed. Rome and Paris had been liberated. The noose was tightening on the Axis.

There was finally a feeling that an end may be in sight.

It was in that spirit that President Franklin Roosevelt issued his 1944 Thanksgiving proclamation. For this holiday, he articulated the big-picture blessings of the "preservation of our way of life," the "unity of spirit" and "our abiding faith in freedom."

He called for more than that. He suggested that his countrymen read Scriptures between Thanksgiving and Christmas for a better appreciation of "those eternal truths and majestic principles" that fueled the national spirit.

To be sure, it was not over quite yet. Many more would die between Thanksgiving 1944 and the end of the war in 1945; indeed, Roosevelt himself would not live to see the final victory he had sought for years.

But on this holiday, he asked Americans to contemplate the better days to come and to remember the virtues that would lead us there.

In keeping with our Thanksgiving tradition, we have tapped the archives of PilgrimHall.org to present to you Roosevelt's 1944 proclamation of thanks, of humility and, at long last, hope.

**THANKSGIVING DAY, 1944
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA — A PROCLAMATION**

In this year of liberation, which has seen so many millions freed from tyrannical rule, it is fitting that we give thanks with special fervor to our Heavenly Father for the mercies we have received individually and as a nation and for the blessings He has restored, through the



Roosevelt

victories of our arms and those of our allies, to His children in other lands.

For the preservation of our way of life from the threat of destruction; for the unity of spirit which has kept our Nation strong; for our abiding faith in freedom; and for the promise of an enduring peace, we should lift up our hearts in

thanksgiving.

For the harvest that has sustained us and, in its fullness, brought succor to other peoples; for the bounty of our soil, which has produced the sinews of war for the protection of our liberties; and for a multitude of private blessings, known only in our hearts, we should give united thanks to God.

To the end that we may bear more earnest witness to our gratitude to Almighty God, I suggest a nationwide reading of the Holy Scriptures during the period from Thanksgiving Day to Christmas. Let every man of every creed go to his own version of the Scriptures for a renewed and strengthening contact with those eternal truths and majestic principles which have inspired such measure of true greatness as this nation has achieved.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, President of the United States of America, in consonance with the joint resolution of the Congress approved December 26, 1941, do hereby proclaim Thursday the twenty-third day of November 1944 a day of national thanksgiving; and I call upon the people of the United States to observe it by bending every effort to hasten the day of final victory and by offering to God our devout gratitude for His goodness to us and to our fellow men.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States of America to be affixed. DONE at the City of Washington this first day of November in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and forty-four and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and sixty-ninth.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Blacks And Whites Must Wake Up To Racial Injustice

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.
Tribune Content Agency

In September, I received an email that should have left me feeling vindicated.

It was in response to the nonfatal shooting of Levar Jones, an unarmed African-American man, by Sean Groubert, a white South Carolina state trooper. Groubert would later claim he shot Jones because Jones came at him in a menacing way. But this lie was unmasked by Groubert's own dashcam video, which shows Jones complying with the trooper's orders until Groubert inexplicably panics and starts shooting.

That video moved a reader named David to write the following: "Think I FINALLY get what you've been saying all along. That cop just shot him down for doing nothing more than compiling (sic) with his commands. No offence to black people, but I SURE AM GLAD I'M NOT BLACK IN THIS COUNTRY! Re-evaluating my opinions of the last fifty years."

As I say, it should have felt like vindication. But it only made me sad. I kept thinking that, had there been no camera to prove Groubert lied, had there been only testimony from witnesses and whatever forensic evidence was gathered, Groubert would likely still be making traffic stops and David would support him, his opinions of the last 50 years unchanged.

My point is not that cameras are a panacea for justice—they weren't for Oscar Grant in 2009, they weren't for Rodney King in 1991, they weren't for Abram Smith and Thomas Shipp in 1930. No, my point is that the bar of proof is set higher when white people — police officers in particular — kill black ones. My point is that rules change and assumptions are different when black people seek justice.

Knowing that, who can be surprised at what happened in Ferguson, Missouri, Monday night? Who can be surprised that a prosecutor who didn't seem to want an indictment did not convince a grand jury to return one in the August shooting of Michael Brown? Who can be surprised that Officer Darren Wilson now goes on with his life after firing 12 shots, at least six of which struck home, at an unarmed teenager

while said teenager remains imprisoned by the grave? Who can be surprised people in Ferguson and around the country convulsed with shock, sorrow and disbelief? Who can be surprised some vulturous knuckleheads saw the calamity as an excuse to break windows and steal beer? Who can be surprised at pictures showing that the "injuries" Wilson sustained in his scuffle with Brown, injuries that supposedly made him so terrified for his life that he had to shoot, amount to a small abrasion on his lip and a reddened cheek?

I'm glad that video helped David to "FINALLY get" what I've been "saying all along," i.e., that a police officer's mouth, to use one of my mother's expressions, ain't no prayer book; no source of infallible truth the way too many of us think it is. And that benefit of the doubt is something black people are often denied. And that America devalues black life. But if we have to go David by David to those realizations, each requiring a dashcam video before he gets the point, we are doomed to a long and dreary future of Fergusons.

Last year, when the thug George Zimmerman was acquitted in the killing of Trayvon Martin, I wrote that black people need to "wake the h-l up" — organize, boycott, vote, demonstrate, demand.

But black people aren't the only ones sleeping. Too many — not all, but too many — white people still live in air castles of naivete and denial, still think abiding injustice and ongoing oppression are just some fairy tale, lie, or scheme African Americans concocted to defraud them. Or else that these things are far away and have no impact on their lives. The fires in Ferguson Monday night suggest that they continue that delusion at their own peril.

I still think black folks need to wake the h-l up. But white ones do, too.

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