

The Press & Dakotan

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We Say

Making A Stand



THUMBS UP to the forum and concert held at Mount Marty College Thursday addressing the issue of human trafficking. This is a social, criminal matter that is more prevalent than many people realize — especially in South Dakota on the Native American reservations, where poverty runs high and girls are susceptible to predatory enablers. Thursday night's concert featuring the Nebraska band Remedy Drive took aim at this issue, thanks to lead singer David Zach's aggressive involvement in fighting the issue. Also, an MMC noon forum — which included Zach; Kevin Koliner (a Yankton native) of the U.S. Attorney's Office of South Dakota; Kimberly LaPlante of Tapestry International Ministry; and Lisa Heth of the Pathfinder Center — drew a large crowd to hear about this issue. It's a matter that needs to be exposed to the light of day and of justice, and events like this one at MMC will help in that area.

Hooked Up



THUMBS UP to the completion of the new underpass at the railroad crossing along Auld-Brokaw trail north of W. 15th St. in Yankton. The underpass helps create a loop in the trail, directly connecting it to a piece of trail that passed along Locust St. However, the big thing here is that it culminates a process that took years to reach reality, as city and railroad officials negotiated over how to make this process happen. The perseverance paid off, and it will be a nice new link of convenience for Yankton's popular trail system.

Noooooo!!!!



THUMBS DOWN to the official — albeit fleeting — arrival of the season's first snow, which took place Wednesday during the rainy and very blustery storm system that caused a lot of misery throughout much of the central U.S. The snow was really ice mixing in with the wind-driven rain. But, it's a reminder that winter is looming. On the plus side, conditions are better than they were at this point last year, when Yankton saw 4.5 inches of snow on Nov. 15 and temperatures that didn't make it out of the teens for four days during a one-week stretch. So, it could have been worse — which may be a popular mantra this winter, if the El Nino-influenced forecasts are to be believed.

Spirit Of The '60s



THUMBS UP to the art of student demonstration. For a time it seemed the younger generation was content with sitting back and spreading a hashtagged message on Twitter or a post on Facebook when it came to bringing attention to pressing issues in society. Then the University of Missouri football team threatened a boycott of an upcoming game unless the university's president resigned over his inaction on a number of racial incidents that occurred at the campus. He eventually stepped aside in the face of mass protests. This has sparked protests at other schools dealing with racism issues, such as Ithaca College. Then Thursday, thousands of students from more than 100 schools across the U.S. participated in the Million Student March protesting high tuition, student debt and the low minimum wage. This isn't a glowing endorsement of every tactic that has been used — for example, the attempts by some protesters in Missouri to shut out the media deserve their own Thumbs Down. But it is an endorsement of the students that are breaking away from laptops and cell phones and taking to the common areas, the locker rooms and so on to make their voices heard in much the same way those marching for civil rights, for women's rights, against the Vietnam War and for the rights of students like themselves did in the 1960s.

ONLINE OPINION

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

LATEST RESULTS:

Do you support sending U.S. ground troops into Syria?

No.....67%
Yes.....29%
Not sure.....8%
TOTAL VOTES CAST.....211

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:

OK, we have to ask: If you had access to a time machine, would you kill Baby Hitler?
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 Friday, Nov. 13, the 317th day of 2015. There are 48 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Nov. 13, 1985, some 23,000 residents of Armero, Colombia, died when a volcanic mudslide buried the city.

On this date: In 1789, Benjamin Franklin wrote in a letter to a friend, Jean-Baptiste Leroy: "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."

In 1849, voters in California ratified the state's original constitution.
In 1909, 259 men and boys were killed when fire erupted inside a coal mine in Cherry, Illinois.

In 1927, the Holland Tunnel opened to the public, providing access between lower Manhattan and New Jersey beneath the Hudson River.

In 1937, the NBC Symphony Orchestra, formed exclusively for radio broadcasting, made its debut.

In 1940, the Walt Disney film "Fantasia," featuring animated segments set to classical music, had its world premiere in New York.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a measure lowering the minimum draft age from 21 to 18.

In 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down laws calling for racial segregation on public city and state buses.

In 1969, speaking in Des Moines, Iowa, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew accused network television news departments of bias and distortion, and urged viewers to lodge complaints.

In 1974, Karen Silkwood, a 28-year-old technician and union activist at the Kerr-McGee Cimarron plutonium plant near Crescent, Oklahoma, died in a car crash while on her way to meet a reporter.

In 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, designed by Maya Lin, was dedicated on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

In 1995, seven people, including five Americans, were killed when a bomb exploded at a military training facility in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ten years ago: Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, in Jerusalem, strongly rebuked Iran's leadership, saying "no civilized nation" can call for the annihilation of another — a reference to Iranian Presi-

dent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's remark that Israel should be "wiped off the map." An Iraqi woman arrested by Jordanian authorities confessed on television to trying to blow herself up with her husband in one of the three Nov. 9 suicide attacks in Amman, American Indian historian and activist Vine Deloria Jr. died at age 72.

Five years ago: Pro-democracy hero Aung San Suu Kyi walked free in Myanmar after more than seven years under house arrest. Former White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel officially announced his ultimately successful candidacy for mayor of Chicago.

One year ago: The European Space Agency published the first images taken from the surface of a comet; the photos sent back to Earth showed a rocky surface, with one of the lander's feet free in the corner of the frame. Clayton Kershaw became the first pitcher to win the National League MVP award since Bob Gibson in 1968; Los Angeles Angels' outfielder Mike Trout was a unanimous pick for the AL MVP.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Madeleine Sherwood is 93. Journalist-author Peter Arnett is 81. Producer-director Garry Marshall is 81. Actor Jimmy Hawkins is 74. Country singer-songwriter Ray Wylie Hubbard is 69. Actor Joe Mantegna is 68. Actress Sheila Frazier is 67. Actress Frances Conroy is 62. Musician Andrew Ranken (The Pogues) is 62. Actress Tracy Scoggin is 62. Actor Chris Noth is 61. Actress-comedian Whoopi Goldberg is 60. Actor Rex Linn is 59. Actress Caroline Goodall is 56. Actor Neil Flynn is 55. Former NFL quarterback and College Football Hall of Famer Vinny Testaverde is 52. Rock musician Walter Kibby (Fishbone) is 51. Comedian Jimmy Kimmel is 48. Actor Steve Zahn is 48. Actor Gerard Butler is 46. Writer-activist Ayaan Hirsi Ali is 46. Actor Jordan Bridges is 42. Actress Aisha Hinds is 40. Rock musician Nikolai Fraiture is 37. NBA All-Star Metta World Peace (formerly Ron Artest) is 36. Actress Monique Coleman is 35. Actor Rahul Kohli (TV: "Zombie") is 30.

Thought for Today: "I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library." — Jorge Luis Borges, Argentine author (1899-1986).

FROM THE BIBLE

Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Luke 20:25. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Point of View

Now's The Time To Act

BY SEN. DEB SOHOLT AND REP. JACQUELINE SLY
South Dakota Blue Ribbon Task Force

According to the South Dakota State Constitution, the state has a responsibility to provide a uniform system of free public schools by adopting all suitable means to secure the people the advantages and opportunities of education. In fiscal year 2014 — 15, South Dakota public schools had 129,772 students, 9,362 teacher FTE's within 151 school districts. Each district has unique demographics, geographic challenges, cultural considerations and community circumstances.

Gov. Daugaard charged the 2015 Blue Ribbon Task Force to reevaluate the current funding formula, collect and analyze data, engage with stakeholders and seek public input. The final charge was to make recommendations to the 2016 State Legislature.

The 26 Blue Ribbon Task Force members represented the executive and legislative branches, along with those representing teachers, administrators, school boards, parents, business and taxpayers. As chairs of Senate and House Education Committees, we were co-chairs of the task force. Public input was sought April through June, and five task force meetings were conducted July through October.

Throughout the process, the task force believed it was essential to base any recommendations upon objective data. Additionally "the voice of the people" strongly informed the task force and is reflected in the recommendations.

The final report and recommendations have been delivered to the Governor. It could be perceived that the effort is now finished, but truly the work has just begun. The people of South Dakota challenged us to be bold. And we believe the 29 consensus recommendations — and three more that were not fully consensus — are just that, bold. Hallmark to this plan is a call for at least \$75 million in ongoing additional revenue for education, boosting the average teacher salary in the state from \$40,000 to \$48,000 and changing the funding formula to reflect a student-teacher ratio.

The recommendations from the task force are not just about money. Our state needs to increase the pool of teachers and retain the great teachers already in our classrooms. Students need equal access to learning opportunities. Tax-

payers need assurances that their tax dollars are being used effectively and as intended. School districts need to know there is equity in the funds they receive, along with being on-going, stable and sustainable. Communities want to retain responsible local decision-making.

The task force came to understand that: 1) schools matter to a community, 2) the most important factor to student success is the presence of a highly qualified teacher, 3) South Dakota faces a teacher shortage, and 4) no one plan will fit the needs of all districts. Additionally, any sustainable solution for the issues we face will require significant additional ongoing revenue.

Throughout all, we used consensus decision making as a creative and dynamic way of reaching agreement among all members of our group. Instead of simply voting for an item and having the majority get their way, using consensus committed us to finding solutions that everyone could actively support, or at least can live with. Consensus is used when the topic is complex and multi-faceted. And if ever there was a topic where strong buy-in was needed, education funding is it. With 151 unique schools districts and numerous, diverse constituencies — coming to consensus was heavy work. We are proud that this task force was up to the challenge, and rolled up their sleeves and tackled this difficult subject.

After thorough analysis of data and extensive dialogue, the Blue Ribbon Task Force has made policy recommendations to address the major findings of the K-12 funding system in South Dakota. These recommendations are a package, not individual menu options. Each recommendation works to strengthen other parts of the total plan.

We believe that it is now time to act. Solutions for funding education in South Dakota will be a step of courage amongst the public, the executive branch and the legislature. As co-chairs of the task force, we are confident that we will find a way.

Rep. Jacqueline Sly (R-District 33) of Rapid City is a retired teacher who serves as the chair of the House Education Committee. Sen. Deb Soholt (R-District 14) of Sioux Falls is a registered nurse/health care director who serves as the chair of the Senate Education Committee.

Kelly Hertz

When Voters Get Angry

BY KELLY HERTZ

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Here's a revelation: Voters are angry, according to a new poll.

But voters are always angry, or so it has seemed during election cycles going back to nearly the beginning of this century.

The latest source for measuring this anger is an NBC/Wall Street Journal poll released last week. Only 27 percent of respondents believe the country is headed on the right track, with 54 percent believing the economic and political systems are stacked against them. Also, 57 percent said they would rather fire their congressional representative than re-elect him or her.

That's all nice and angry, but the real proof comes at the polls, where — despite all this alleged antipathy — incumbents win about 90 percent of the time.

Still, something different may be in the air this time around. We're seeing genuine outsiders — as opposed to the self-proclaimed sort — soaring above the establishment candidates in the Republican presidential field, with Ben Carson and Donald Trump combined polling above the 50-percent mark in that large field. In the Democratic race, maverick Sen. Bernie Sanders created some buzz earlier this autumn against establishment candidate Hillary Clinton, although that now seems to be fading as Clinton — who pushed her own tradition-breaking novelty — gets her act together.

However, maybe the names don't matter. Maybe the candidates don't even matter. Maybe what truly matters are the voters.

They seem to be angry and they go to the polls. They see the results and they're still angry. So, what are voters doing wrong?

After all, the electorate is really the only common denominator here. We're the ones who are always angry, and we're the ones making the choices. We're the ones who keep electing candidates who vow to change things. And we're the ones who, like clockwork, get angry when things don't.

So let's ask it this way: What's OUR problem? Part of the answer is the bitter partisanship that has been bred into our modern politics. According to an online article in Sabato's Crystal Ball written by Alan I. Abramowitz and Steven Webster of Emory University, this is called "negative partisanship," described as a genuine, robust dislike held by Democrats and Republicans toward the opposing party and its leadership. This anger "has been on the rise since the 1980s,

and today it is arguably the most salient feature of the political scene in the United States," the authors note.

This has resulted in crippling gridlock in Washington, almost as if the two political parties are waging their own version of the static trench warfare of World War I. And it's led to such telling images as newly elected Speaker of the House Rep. Paul Ryan, a Republican, recently (and awkwardly) avoiding a congratulatory hug from Rep. Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, out of fear of being seen in a friendly embrace with the enemy.

Such unbending behavior and stubbornness are among the reasons why Sen. Ben Sasse, the freshman senator from Nebraska, last week told his august colleagues on the Senate floor: "The people despise us all." And it may be why congressional approval rated at just 11 percent in a Gallup poll released this week.

And yet, it's the people who put those lawmakers there — and keep putting them there.

It's the people who keep endorsing, sometimes even demanding, such divisiveness. If a presidential candidate ran on the promise of working with members of both parties to find common ground and a constructive, bipartisan path forward, that hopeful would have no hope of winning his or her party's nomination.

It's the people who've endorsed this atmosphere that equates compromise with capitulation.

And yet, voters are angry at their politicians for essentially giving them what they demand. (To be fair, politicians do capitalize on this rancor for their own and their party's ends; they are not at all blameless.)

Perhaps it's the people themselves who are taking this country in the wrong direction by sending such rigid messages to their representatives.

We cannot expect to become happier with our leaders and the course of our nation until we become at least more tolerant of other views and opposing ideas. In other words, we need to become more realistic about what's possible in this diverse republic of ours. The more we embrace the unyielding hard lines and extreme wings of our ideologies, the angrier we're bound to become. Clearly, what we've been doing so far isn't working — and yet, we keep doing it again and again.

And if that doesn't get you angry, I'm not sure what will.

Follow @kelly_hertz on Twitter.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shredding Event

The Contact Center (Jennifer Adamson, Kelli Stanage, Liz Lynch, Dionne Hento and Donna Madson) The Contact Center would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to each and every one of you that participated in the Community Shredding Day sponsored by The Services Federal Credit Union.

The donations are greatly appreciated and much needed. The Yankton community and the surrounding area have always and continues to be a great help in donations for the Contact Center to serve the needs of our community.

We would also like to thank the Services Federal Credit Union for Sponsoring the Com-