



# THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861  
Yankton Media, Inc., 319 Walnut St., Post Office Box 56, Yankton, SD 57078

## OPINION | WE SAY

### Let's Hear It



they take place, will allow the community to be heard on what has been a very contentious issue here in recent months.

### Music To Our Ears



THUMBS UP to news that a CD of the Mount Marty College 2010 Vespers performance will be available for purchase Saturday. Choir members will be selling the recording at the Sacred Heart Monastery Holiday Fair, which runs from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at 1005 West Eighth Street. The annual holiday event is a local treasure, and we are among those who are excited for the talented Mount Marty College students' accomplishments to be recognized with a release on an international label. We look forward to hearing what they have in store for us at the Nov. 27 Vespers.

### Roadblocks



THUMBS DOWN to the many roadblocks being encountered along the path to get the Meridian Trail Project completed on the south side of the Missouri River in Nebraska. The Lewis and Clark Natural Resource District (L&C NRD) headquartered in Hartington, Neb., has been spearheading the effort to get the trail built between Gavins Point Dam and the Meridian Bridge for five years now, and we understand their frustration with the process. The first phase was finally scheduled to get under way this week, but it was halted because the natural resource board refused to agree to a last-minute demand from the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) to express a willingness to condemn private property for the second phase, if necessary. We don't blame them. We just hope that the NDOR and the L&C NRD can find a mutually agreeable way to move forward, because we see the completion of that trail loop as a potentially great asset to the region. We'd hate to see such a fantastic idea crumble to pieces.

### Another Outlook



OK, here's another precinct heard from: THUMBS UP to a more promising winter forecast for the region that comes from the *Old Farmer's Almanac*. We reported recently that AccuWeather.com has put out a very bleak forecast for the coming season; the National Weather Service followed along those same lines last week. However, the new almanac is offering a different take, calling for mostly above-normal temperatures with below-normal precipitation/snowfall in the Yankton area. The annual publication also predicts a cool spring but with normal moisture, then a cool and dry summer of 2012. All these forecasts should be taken with a grain of salt — often, a whole shaker full — but at least the old almanac offers some small sense of hope as another winter looms.

## ONLINE OPINION

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

### LATEST RESULTS:

**Do you agree with the decision to remove all U.S. troops from Iraq by the end of the year?**  
 Yes .....66%  
 No .....26%  
 Not sure .....8%  
**TOTAL VOTES CAST .....555**  
*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:

**Who would you support in a hypothetical presidential matchup between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney?**  
 To vote in the *Press & Dakotan's* Internet poll, log on to our website at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).

## TODAY IN HISTORY

**By The Associated Press**  
 Today is Friday, Oct. 28, the 301st day of 2011. There are 64 days left in the year.  
**Today's Highlight in History:** On Oct. 28, 1886, the Statue of Liberty, a gift from the people of France, was dedicated in New York Harbor by President Grover Cleveland.

**On this date:** In 1636, the General Court of Massachusetts passed a legislative act establishing Harvard College.  
 In 1776, the Battle of White Plains was fought during the Revolutionary War, resulting in a limited British victory.  
 In 1858, Rowland Hussey Macy opened his first New York store at Sixth Avenue and 14th Street in Manhattan.

In 1919, Congress enacted the Volstead Act, which provided for enforcement of Prohibition, over President Woodrow Wilson's veto.  
 In 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt rededicated the Statue of Liberty on its 50th anniversary.  
 In 1940, Italy invaded Greece during World War II.

In 1958, the Roman Catholic patriarch of Venice, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, was elected pope; he took the name John XXIII.  
 In 1962, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev informed the United States that he had ordered the dismantling of missile bases in Cuba.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter and Republican presidential nominee Ronald Reagan faced off in a nationally broadcast, 90-minute debate in Cleveland.  
 In 1991, what became known as "The Perfect Storm" began forming hundreds of miles east of Nova Scotia; lost at sea during the storm were the six crew members of the Andrea Gail, a sword-fishing boat from Gloucester, Mass.

**Ten years ago:** The families of people killed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attack gathered in New York for a memorial service filled with prayer and song. Gunmen killed 16 people in a church in Behawalpur, Pakistan. United Airlines replaced embattled chairman and chief executive James Goodwin with board member John Creighton. The Arizona Diamondbacks gained a two-games-to-none lead in the World Series, defeating the New York Yankees 4-0.

**Five years ago:** President George W. Bush spoke by video conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki as he sought to reaffirm support for the Iraqi leader. Former heavyweight champion Trevor Berbick was found dead in a Jamaican church courtyard, the victim of a fatal beating. (A 21-year-old nephew and another man were later convicted of killing Berbick.) Basketball Hall-of-Fame coach Red Auerbach died in Washington, D.C., at age 89.  
**One year ago:** Investigators with the president's oil spill commission said tests performed before the deadly blowout of BP's oil well in the Gulf of Mexico should have raised doubts about the cement used to seal the well, but that the company and its cementing contractor used it anyway. (The cement mix's failure to prevent oil and gas from entering the well has been cited by BP and others as one of the causes of the accident.) Caroline Wozniacki wrapped up the year-end No. 1 ranking after rallying to beat Francesca Schiavone 3-6, 6-1, 6-1 at the WTA Championships in Doha, Qatar. Stage and screen actor James MacArthur, who played "Danno" in the original version of television's "Hawaii Five-0," died in Jacksonville, Fla., at age 72.  
**Today's Birthdays:** Jazz singer Cleo Laine is 84. Actress Joan Plowright is 82. Musician-songwriter Charlie Daniels is 75. Actress Jane Alexander is 72. Singer Curtis Lee is 70. Actor Dennis Franz is 67. Pop singer Wayne Fontana is 66. Actress Telma Hopkins is 63. Olympic track and field gold medalist Bruce Jenner is 62. Actress Annie Potts is 59. Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates is 56. The president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is 55. Rock musician Stephen Morris (New Order) is 54. Country/gospel singer-musician Ron Hemby (The Buffalo Club) is 53. Rock singer-musician William Reid (The Jesus & Mary Chain) is 53. Actor Mark Denwin is 51. Actress Daphne Zuniga is 49. Actress Lauren Holly is 48. Actress Jami Gertz is 46. Actor Chris Bauer is 45. Actor-comedian Andy Richter is 45. Actress Julia Roberts is 44. Country singer-musician Caitlin Cary is 43. Actor Jeremy Davies is 42. Singer Ben Harper is 42. Country singer Brad Paisley is 39. Actor Joaquin Phoenix is 37. Singer Justin Guarini ("American Idol") is 33. Pop singer Brett Dennen is 32. Rock musician Dave Tiro (Plain White T's) is 32. Actress Troian Bellisario is 26. Actor Nolan Gould (TV: "Modern Family") is 13.

**Thought for Today:** "If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear." — George Orwell (Eric Blair), English author (1903-1950)

## FROM THE BIBLE

Create in me a clean heart, O God. Psalm 51:10. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

### CONTACT US

PHONE: (605) 665-7811 (800) 743-2968  
 FAX: (605) 665-1721  
 WEBSITE: www.yankton.net  
 EMAIL ADDRESS: news@yankton.net

SUBSCRIPTIONS/ CIRCULATION: Extension 112  
 CLASSIFIED ADS: Extension 120  
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# Iraq: A Bittersweet End

BY LEONARD PITTS JR.  
 Tribune Media Services

Eight years ago on a night in March, they interrupted our regularly-scheduled programs for a breaking news bulletin.

We sat before our televisions and watched rockets arc into the skies over Baghdad. Many of us had doubts about the stated and implied causes of the war that began that night: the need to secure Saddam Hussein's stockpile of WMD and to retaliate for his part in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. But, as I noted in a column, "We need for George Bush to be right and those of us who are doubtful to be wrong. We need this for the sake of over 200,000 American servicemen and women who stand ready for war in deserts far from home." We all know how that turned out. There were no weapons of mass destruction.

Hussein had no connection to the events of Sept. 11. Nor did the war pay for itself. Nor did Iraqis strew rose petals in the path of American tanks. The things we were told on the route to war turned out to be untrue.

What is true is that we fought a war we did not have to fight. It cost at least \$806 billion and more than 36,000 American casualties, including 4,400 fatalities.

So there are mixed emotions at last week's news that President Obama has decided to withdraw virtually all U.S. service personnel from Iraq. There is elation, of course, thankfulness that American servicemen and women will be home in time for the holidays.

But a patina of bitter shades the sweet and it is bound up in the fact that: They are coming home from a place they never should have been.

One feels like a broken record in saying this. That analogy, for those who have known only CDs and iPods, refers to the tendency of vinyl records to go bad and repeat a phrase ad infinitum. Ad infinitum. Ad infinitum.



Leonard PITTS

Similarly, your humble correspondent has repeatedly repeated himself over the last eight years in decrying the uselessness of this war. As facts go, it is a pebble in the shoe, a nagging truth that has made the good news less good and the bad news worse.

The surge worked? We should not have been there. Americans killed by roadside bombs? We should not have been there.

Iraq becoming more stable? We should not have been there.

Service personnel coming home? Great. But we should not have been there.

Moreover, once there, we should have been universally appalled at the breathtaking cynicism with which the war was prosecuted. To name the most obvious example, consider the stunning contempt for our collective intelligence that allowed the architects of war, once their original rationale was thoroughly discredited, to pivot to a new one with barely a pause to admit that they were wrong at best, lied to and misled us at worst.

The point is not, "I told you so." The point is that when a nation is angry and frightened as this one was after Sept. 11, its people are easy to manipulate, to herd down paths of heartache and easy answers.

So a fitting way to honor our servicemen and women as they return to families they have not seen in far too long might be to promise that next time we ask them to go into harm's way, we will recall how the bitter shaded the sweet this day.

Those men and women are the pride of this nation. They deserved better.

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](mailto:lpitts@miamiherald.com).

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# The Monster On The Roof

BY KELLY HERTZ

kelly.hertz@yankton.net

With Halloween looming, let me tell you the tale about the fate of the monster on the roof.

That's how I often thought of the satellite dish we had perched on a lower-level roof of the *Press & Dakotan* for as long as I can remember. Its job for years was to grab Associated Press satellite signals from the air and feed the embedded news copy into our network. It may have been only four feet in diameter, but that dish seemingly had vast invisible arms that stretched to the heavens. It was cutting-edge technology, better than the old Teletype system it had dislodged from our midst long ago.

And for that, it ruled over us, demanding a meticulous obedience. Through the years, it was drilled into my head to be oh so careful around the dish. It was set with what seemed like an incomprehensible precision, and the slightest nudge might knock it out of line, which would make life miserable for us all. But that fact, instead of making the monster seem fragile, made it demanding and all-powerful.

Proof of the tyrant's touchiness came several years ago when we were having some repair work done on our multi-level roof. One day, a ladder being used for the job slipped and hit the dish, knocking it out of alignment for half a day. We needed a technician from Sioux Falls to come down and realign it, a process that took less than five minutes. Nevertheless, we were dead in the water while we waited for the wayward signals to return.

As I've reported before, one of my jobs was to go up on the roof on snowy days to sweep out the snow from the dish, which would be unable to access the satellite signal if it was buried. When I noticed the signal strength readout on the newsroom modem dropping dangerously low, I put on a parka, grabbed a broom, headed up to a storeroom, crawled out a window, ducked under some electrical wires and then — very gingerly — swept the snow away from the beast.

This is how that satellite dish — that is, the technology that made it work — ruled us for many, many years.

But at long last, the monster on the roof met its fate. AP switched to an online delivery system a year ago, rendering its monster obsolete. And it sat alone, useless and unfeared, a toothless and discarded demon, for many months.

Its final rites took place one day a few weeks ago. I was



Kelly HERTZ

called to the front desk where an older, stocky gentleman was waiting. He was from AP, he told me, and was there to remove the satellite dish and its attending equipment. So I led him to the newsroom, where we grabbed the lifeless modem and its many electronic tentacles from a dusty shelf. We then went upstairs to crawl through a window and confront the dead monster one last time.

As we got out on the roof, I saw the dish in its usual position, with its parabolic antenna extending from its center and pointing at an angle to the southern sky. This time, I wasn't afraid to go near it, jostle it or breathe around it. Our plan was to detach the dish and its mount, then lower both down the front of the P&D plant, where the technician's wife would grab it and place it on the sidewalk.

The technician whipped out a wrench and loosened the bolts holding the mount down. As he did, the lifeless monster began to wilt from its upright position, bowing down meekly. I grabbed it; it was surprisingly light. If it weren't for the antenna, there wouldn't be much to it; I was then told the dish was made of fiberglass. We carried the heavy ground mount to the side, attached a cord to it, and then carefully lowered it down.

Then, it was time for the dish to go. I grabbed it by the antenna and discovered I could carry the whole thing with one hand.

As the technician and I walked to the front, I grew curious about something.

"What are you going to do with this now?" I asked as he prepared to attach the cord to the dish.

He answered my question with the unlikeliest of questions: "Do you have a dumpster?"

And that was it. The great tyrant, rendered powerless and pointless, was going to be thrown away. Once the technology had changed and its purpose for existing no longer remained, it had no place and no future to go to.

That was the fate of the monster on the roof. It was a demanding demigod that was finally snuffed out by what I've sometimes found to be the greatest monster of all: change. It's a fact of life in this ever-changing business. I've seen it with other deposed creatures that ruled over our work — our very first word processing computers and the once-miraculous film processor that allowed us to publish color photos every day, for example. There's no telling when or where a new monster will rear its head next and when the monsters we rely on now will simply become useless fodder for a trash heap.

It's always interesting to contemplate, however,

current Social Security and Medicare benefits. An 81-year-old in Hecla who still works a part time job to supplement the \$700 a month she receives from social security; a 78-year-old in Rapid City who struggles to make ends meet on just \$714 dollars. A resounding chorus shared over and over again was "how could I possibly live on less?"

This isn't a bunch of greedy senior citizens looking for entitlements. These are your friends, family and neighbors. These are real people right here in South Dakota who paid into Social Security and Medicare over a lifetime of hard work. These are people who were promised the benefits they earned would be available for them when they needed them. Now it's time for America to honor that promise.

We all know that Congress must make tough choices to address growing debt, but South Dakota seniors aren't line items in the federal budget, or numbers on a balance sheet. To reduce America's debt, Congress should cut wasteful government spending and close tax loopholes and protect the benefits seniors have earned.

## YOUR LETTERS

### Tough Choices

Sarah D. Jennings, Sioux Falls  
 AARP South Dakota State Director

Could you live on \$714 a month. Could you live on less? Even the average monthly benefit of \$1,100 is a stretch for many Social Security recipients in South Dakota. Yet, Social Security is the only form of retirement income for tens of thousands in the state. And, as the "supercommittee" — a small group of bipartisan lawmakers in Washington — works to trim the country's debt, that lifeline is being threatened.

Some proposals to reduce the deficit include harmful cuts to Medicare and Social Security benefits. The potential cuts could result in a dramatic increase in the cost of health care for seniors, threaten access to doctors, and reduce benefit checks older South Dakotans rely on to pay their bills and put food on the table.

Hundreds of AARP members in South Dakota have shared compelling, and in some cases heartbreaking and personal stories about the struggle to simply survive on