

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

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OPINION | WE SAY

Scam Time



THUMBS DOWN to the sadly inevitable opportunity that arrived with the Oct. 1 start of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) exchange signup start. Both the Better Business Bureau and the South Dakota Division of Insurance issued alerts recently warning that scammers may try to prey on consumers by posing as insurance agents or

representative of the federal government. The press releases noted that fake Websites loom as a big problem and that some scammers my say that a new "Obamacare" card will be issued to you if you disclose additional personal — read, secure — information. No one can be surprised anymore when scammers seize on such opportunities, but it's still aggravating. However, that knowledge is also a weapon. Use caution and seek out trusted advice should this, or any, offer that comes your way tempts you.

Out Of Touch



THUMBS DOWN to AIG CEO Robert Benmosche, who last week showed that you can lead a large Wall Street firm and have jaw-droppingly out of touch with reality views. Speaking with the Wall Street Journal about outrage over the bonuses promised to AIG's members after the 2008 financial collapse, Benmosche said the uproar over

bonuses "was intended to stir public anger, to get everybody out there with their pitchforks and their hangman nooses, and all that - sort of like what we did in the Deep South [decades ago]. And I think it was just as bad and just as wrong." Oh yeah, except in this case, there were no lynchings. Instead of equating verbal criticism with the actual killing of human beings in public statements, we suggest that Benmosche sit down and contemplate a bit more about why there was so much criticism over the bonuses. We suspect he never bothered to do that.

Breaking Badfinger



THUMBS UP to the triumphant finale of the AMC television series "Breaking Bad" for unearthing a great song from an overlooked 1970s group. In the final, fatal scene, the soundtrack suddenly and unexpectedly cranked up "Baby Blue," a 1971 hit from the British pop band Badfinger. It was an unlikely choice for a tragic farewell because the tune

is really a bittersweet love song that has an uplifting feel to it. Series creator Vince Gilligan said he chose the song because it symbolized the antiheroic Walter White's love for his creation, blue meth. The exposure catapulted the song into download popularity, as it saw a nearly 3,000 percent increase in sales and a 9,000 percent increase in plays on Spotify. It also puts a curious spotlight on an overlooked band marred by tragedy and unrealized potential. "Baby Blue" was an interesting swan song for the show, as well as a cool introduction for modern-day music fans to a piece of classic '70s Brit rock.

ONLINE OPINION

The results of the most recent Internet poll on the Press & Dakotan's Web

LATEST RESULTS:

Did the Minnesota Twins do the right thing by extending manager Ron Gardenhire's contract? I don't care TOTAL VOTES CAST 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:

Which party do you think bears the most blame for the federal government shutdown?

To vote in the *Press & Dakotan's* Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yank-

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press
Today is Friday, Oct. 4, the 277th day of 2013. There are 88 days left in the

Today's Highlight in History: On Oct. 4, 1957, the Space Age began as the Soviet Union launched Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite, into orbit. James R. Hoffa was elected president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. The family comedy series "Leave It to Beaver" premiered on CBS.

On this date: In 1777, Gen. George Washington's troops launched an assault on the British at Germantown, Pa., resulting in heavy American casualties. In 1822, the 19th president of the

United States, Rutherford B. Hayes, was born in Delaware, Ohio.
In 1861, during the Civil War, the United States Navy authorized construc-tion of the first ironclad ship, the USS

In 1887, the International Herald Tribune had its beginnings as the Paris Herald, a European edition of the New

York Herald In 1931, the comic strip "Dick Tracy," created by Chester Gould, made its

debut. In 1940, Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini conferred at Brenner Pass in the

Alps.
In 1958, the first trans-Atlantic passenger jetliner service was begun by the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) with flights between London and New York.

In 1959, the Soviet Union launched Luna 3, a space probe which transmitted images of the far side of the moon. In 1960, an Eastern Air Lines Lock-

heed L-188A Electra crashed on takeoff from Boston's Logan International Airport, killing all but 10 of the 72 people on board.

In 1970, rock singer Janis Joplin, 27, was found dead in her Hollywood hotel

room.
In 1976, agriculture secretary Earl Butz resigned in the wake of a controversy over a joke he'd made about blacks

In 1980, fire broke out aboard the Dutch cruise vessel Prinsendam in the Gulf of Alaska, forcing the 520 people aboard to abandon ship; no deaths or serious injury resulted. (The ship capsized and sank a week later.)
In 1991, 26 nations, including the

United States, signed the Madrid Protocol, which imposed a 50-year ban on oil exploration and mining in Antarctica.

Ten years ago: A Palestinian woman blew herself up inside a restaurant in Haifa, Israel, killing 21 bystanders.

Five years ago: Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met with her Indian counterpart, External Affairs Minister

Pranab Mukheriee in New Delhi where they lauded but did not sign a new agreement opening up U.S. nuclear trade with India. The U.S. military said it had killed an al-Qaida in Iraq leader (Mahir Ahmad Mahmud al-Zubaydi) suspected of masterminding one of the deadliest attacks in Baghdad, several other recent bombings and the 2006 videotaped killing of a Russian official. A North Korean news agency reported on leader Kim Jong II's first public appear-

ance in nearly two months.

One year ago: A day after his first debate with Mitt Romney, which had been widely seen as a victory for Romney, President Barack Obama sug-gested that his Republican rival hadn't been candid about his policy positions during the faceoff. The Nielsen company said an estimated 67.2 million people had watched the debate; it was the biggest TV audience for a presidential debate since 1992.

Today's Birthdays: Country singer Leroy Van Dyke is 84. Actress Felicia Farr is 81. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Sam Huff is 79. Actor Eddie Applegate is 78. Author Jackie Collins is 76. Author Roy Blount Jr. is 72. Author Anne Rice is 72. Actress Lori Saunders ("Petticoat Junction") is 72. Baseball manager Tony La Russa is 69. Actor Clifton Davis is 68. The former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen, is 67. Actress Susan Sarandon is 67. Blues musician Duke Robillard is 65. Playwright Lee Blessing is 64. Actor Armand Assante is 64. Actor Alan Rosenberg is 63. Actor Christoph Waltz is 57. Actor Bill Fagerbakke is 56. Music producer Russell Simmons is 56. Actress-singer Wendy Makkena is 55. Musician Chris Lowe (The Pet Shop Boys) Hubbard (Sawyer Brown) is 53. Actor David W. Harper is 52. Singer Jon Secada is 52. TV personality John Melendez is 48. Actor Liev Schreiber is 46. Actor Abraham Benrubi is 44. Country singer-musician Heidi Newfield is 43. Singer-guitarist M. Ward (She & Him) is 40. Actress Alicia Silverstone is 37. Actor Phillip Glasser is 35. Rock singer-musician Marc Roberge (O.A.R.) is 35. Actor Brandon Barash is 34. Actress Rachael Leigh Cook is 34. Actor Jimmy Workman is 33. Bassist Cubbie Fink (Foster the People) is 31. Rhythm-and-blues singer Jessica Benson (3lw) is 26. Actor Michael Charles Roman is 26. Figure skater Kimmie Meisner is 24. Actress Dakota Johnson is 24. Actress Leigh-Anne Pinnock (Little Mix) is 23. Actor

Ryan Scott Lee is 17 Thought for Today: "Knowledge is like a garden: if it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested." — Guinean saying.

FROM THE BIBLE

Worthy are You, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power. Revelation 4:11. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis



They Aren't Like Us

Kelly

BY KELLY HERTZ

kelly.hertz@yankton.net

The government shutdown should tell us something: Our D.C. lawmakers really aren't like

That's a broad way of phrasing the matter, and even I might argue that it isn't completely accurate or fair. After all, these lawmakers were once just like us at some point, filled with the same idealistic motives we're all armed with when we think about public service. Also, our lawmakers are a product of who we are: Someone is voting these people into office, someone is donating money to their campaigns, someone is applauding some of the things they do.

And yet, they don't behave the way we do, in part because they don't face the same consequences that we do.

The shutdown is a prime example. This action could put nearly 800,000 people on furlough without incomes and with no idea when there might be an end in sight. It will inconvenience — and in some cases, truly hurt millions of Americans on myriad levels. But the lawmakers who are currently perpetrating this train wreck will still be getting paid just the same; they will still be fundraising and reaping donations for the next political scorched-earth battles on their calendars.

According to OpenSecrets.org, the average wealth of a member of Congress was almost \$12 million per senator and \$6.5 million per representative in 2011. Meanwhile, the average wealth for Americans is so starkly divergent that it's impossible to put even a reasonable ballpark number on it. Talk of the shrinking middle class and the rising number of those in poverty would scream, however, that there is a glaring economic disconnect between our lawmakers and vast majority of us.

You can't begrudge our lawmakers for doing well economically, but it is true nevertheless that they don't face the same concerns that most of us do, at least not in the way we face them. They don't have the same priorities because our priorities are based largely on basic needs and on survival. Lawmakers have some cushion.

If our lawmakers had to contend with the same kind of healthcare coverage issues that the rest of us do, healthcare would have been "reformed" long ago, and I suspect it would look much different than it has or than it will under the Affordable Care Act.

Lawmakers who wrangle over social programs like Food Stamps or WIC are never going to be in the position of needing those programs.

Lawmakers who fight against raising the minimum wage will never have to work for that kind of money. They will also never have to hold down two or three jobs, or work 80 hours or more a week, to make ends meet. Indeed, lawmakers seem to have a less stressful work schedule. This year, the U.S. House is slated to take 239 days — or nearly eight months — off. (For the rest of 2013, such a schedule looks like this: a workaholic 14 days on the job this month, eight days in November and eight days in December.) That's awfully sweet for a \$174,000-a-year salary.

Lawmakers won't lose their jobs because of layoffs, downsizing or even shutdowns, as mentioned earlier. They CAN be voted out of office, although more than 90 percent of them who run for re-election win. But if they don't win, they'll probably have great jobs waiting for them, for ex-lawmakers are valuable commodities to those in need of lobbyists. For the rest of us, losing a job might send us into a long, lean wilderness, as evidenced by the more than 4.5 million people who are estimated to be permanently unemployed at present.

HERTZ Lawmakers won't have to worry too much about getting their kids quality educations. They have the

means to send them to the best private schools, if they so choose, and then to handle a good share of whatever college tuition may loom. That's good news for them in a country where, according to CNBC, the national collegeassociated student debt last year grew at a pace of more than \$2,800 per second.

Lawmakers have great retirement plans, with numbers varying with the options chosen and the years of their service. Meanwhile, there are some of us who — deep, deep down — view buying a Powerball ticket as a "retirement investment."

Lawmakers can leave office with huge, unused war chests, often ranging in the millions of dollars, still at their disposal. A lot of us can't even carry over unused vacation time from year

No, lawmakers really aren't like us Like I said, that probably isn't fair. I have at times also witnessed great empathy and action from these individuals, as well as great service. And that surely counts for something.

But seeing is also believing. And lately, I can't

believe what I'm seeing.
I suppose it makes little sense for us to expect our lawmakers to act sensibly, like the rest of us likely would try to do in this current situation, and actually fix problems and avoid the disasters that disrupt the country and hurt so many people — to try to hammer out agreements and make the mechanism of this nation work. We, at least, would be committed to do the jobs we were entrusted to do, or so I want to think.

That's because we are not like lawmakers. And this week, at least, there's no higher praise I'd care to own.

You can follow Kelly Hertz on Twitter at twitter.com/kelly_hertz/. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net/.

YOUR LETTERS

Mental Illness Awareness

Steven Schweitzer, Yankton

Oct. 6-12 is Mental Illness Awareness Week. Unfortunately and too often, the only awareness we publicly have of mental illness are news items such as the recent event of the Navy Yards in Washington, where 12 people were killed. This shooting was apparently done by a person who suffered from some type of mental illness. We become aware of tragedies like this but the fact that one in four of us experience some type of mental illness in any given year goes unnoticed.

It is said that one in 17 people — about 13.6 million — live with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, major depression or bipolar disorder. Approximately only 60 percent of adults and even less for children receive treatment. The greatest barrier to treatment is

Don't be a part of the problem by letting others or news events bias your thinking. We can choose to view mental illness with compassion just as we would any other medical condition such as heart decease or diabetes. When we choose to speak and act with compassion, we may be opening a door to treatment for someone listening who experiences mental illness now or in the future. Choosing not to use terms such as "nut jobs," "crazies," "wacos," etc. is within the reach of all of us. Our compassion may save someone's life or put someone on the road to recovery. Mental illness is treatable and we can all play a part in making it easier to seek treatment.

All mental illness statistics are taken from nami.org. NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, also offers to speak to groups seeking to increase awareness, understanding and reduce stigma. You can contact me at sschweit@vvn.midco.net.

Democrats And The Shutdown

Kim Dale, Yankton

I think it is ironic that the Senate Democrats are blaming the Republicans for the government shutdown when all along it's been the Democrats who have rejected everything the Republicans sent over to help avert a shutdown.

Not only that, I also find it ironic that President Obama says the fault lies with the Republican right for not doing what the Democrat left wants them to do. My answer to that is: Why should they?

The American people have been shouting for years about this Obamacare debacle and the Democrats don't care. We are losing our religious freedoms, and the Democrats don't care. We may lose our gun rights and once again, the Democrats don't care. The Democrats are so busy trying to strip our country of the Bill of Rights, that

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 views@yankton.net.

one day we may find ourselves in a total civil war not unlike Syria, Egypt and others.

I'm personally glad the government shut down. Now Congress needs to lose their pay, too, since they are the ones that can't seem to work together anymore to fix the problems of this country.

It's time we have term limits in Congress. In my opinion, this is absolutely the worst government this country has ever had.

Obamacare Fears?

Charles Snyder, Apple Valley, Minn.

Michael Reagan, in his recent column (Press & Dakotan, Sept. 27) castigates our elected representatives for its long running dereliction of duty in not passing a budget. He also mentions Ted Cruz's recent theatrics, the Federal debt and concerning the Affordable Health Care Act he wrote, "I get it. I understand Obamacare is a total crock."

I agree with his concerns about the budget and our country's indebtedness, but as to the Affordable Health Care Act, my thoughts are mixed. Its implementation will be onerous, causing mountains of paper work and head scratching, but on the other hand, I think it needs to play out before one can pass judgment.

If the shoe were on the other foot, the Tea Partiers would have gone ballistic over the filibustering theatrics of Canadian-born Sen. Cruz — he with an eye on a presidential bid in 2016. If it were a Democrat involved in a situation of that nature, the far-right fanatics would surely accuse him of being un-American.

And, if the Affordable Care Act is the disaster that the Republicans make it out to be, why don't they sit down and shut up? That would ease the path for them to retake the majority in the Senate in 2014 and the presidency in 2016. Then, being the driver's seat, they could work their magic; pass budgets to their liking, repeal the Affordable Care Act and fix our county's finances

Might it be that what they fear most is that the voters will find Obamacare to their liking?