

THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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Back In Business, For Now

THUMBS DOWN to the deal that ended the government shutdown and the avoidance of the federal debt default. We say even though it was a good thing this country didn't default and the shutdown was finally ended. It was all an exercise in futility, and the people who paid the price for it had no say in the matter. The problem is, the deal

only sets up the next showdowns: The government could shut down gain in January and we could be facing default again in February. It's an asinine situation — a series of self-inflicted wounds that play out with angry political undercurrents. Enough is enough.

Twilight Star



THUMBS UP to this week's visit by "Twilight" film star Chaske Spencer, who spoke to Wagner students in grades 5-12 as part of a Native American Day program. Spencer, whose heritage includes Sioux and Nez Perce, gave an entertaining yet realistic talk on his acting career and his battle with addiction. He connected with his young audience, even showing off his tattoos and sharing a "werewolf howl" with an elementary student. Spencer spoke of the need for accepting other people, staying away from drugs and persevering to achieve your dream — messages that resonated with all students, both Native and non-Native.

Parks And Rec



THUMBS UP to the public meeting held Wednesday night to map out Yankton's recreational facility needs for the future. It was clear after the presentation made by representatives of the Stockwell Engineers firm, which was contracted by the city to do analysis of Yankton's needs, that there are a lot of activities involving a lot of people — ranging from young kids to wide range of adults — who utilize Yankton's various facilities. An consensus seemed to merge that a central sports authority might be needed to coordinate these various organizations and facilities to better serve the public's overall need. Less clear, however, was how Yankton residents get to the point where a central authority is created. Thus, it is an idea in need of some traction and direction. Hopefully, Wednesday's meeting will be seen in hindsight as a good start toward that end.

Lighten Up!



Although it's well into the fall season, we feel this is worth noting: **THUMBS UP** to the new lights that have been installed at Mount Marty College's Laddie E. Cimpl Arena. The lighting in the area, which was built back in the late 1980s, was very poor — which may be something only photographers notice, but it is a fact. The new lights make a world of difference, brightening up the facility considerably. Now, if we can only get new lights installed at the Summit Activities Center main gymnasium, Yankton could boast two very illuminated facilities.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Oct. 18, the 291st day of 2013. There are 74 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Oct. 18, 1962, James D. Watson, Francis Crick and Maurice Wilkins were honored with the Nobel Prize for Medicine and Physiology for determining the double-helix molecular structure of DNA.

On this date: In 1685, King Louis XIV signed the Edict of Fontainebleau, revoking the Edict of Nantes that had established legal toleration of France's Protestant population, the Huguenots.

In 1812, during the War of 1812, the British ship *HMS Frolic* was captured off the Virginia coast by the crew of the *USS Wasp*, which was in turn captured by the *HMS Poictiers*.

In 1867, the United States took formal possession of Alaska from Russia.

In 1892, the first long-distance telephone line between New York and Chicago was officially opened (it could only handle one call at a time).

In 1912, black boxer Jack Johnson was arrested in Chicago, accused of violating the Mann Act because of his relationship with his white girlfriend, Lucille Cameron. (The case collapsed when Cameron refused to cooperate, but Johnson was later re-arrested and convicted on the testimony of a former mistress, Belle Schreiber.)

In 1922, the British Broadcasting Co., Ltd. (later the British Broadcasting Corp.) was founded.

In 1931, inventor Thomas Alva Edison died in West Orange, N.J., at age 84.

In 1944, Soviet troops invaded Czechoslovakia during World War II.

In 1961, the movie musical "West Side Story," starring Natalie Wood and Richard Beymer, premiered in New York, the film's setting.

In 1969, the federal government banned artificial sweeteners known as cyclamates because of evidence they caused cancer in laboratory rats.

In 1971, the Knapp Commission began public hearings into allegations of corruption in the New York City police department (the witnesses included Frank Serpico).

In 1972, Congress passed the Clean Water Act, overriding President Richard M. Nixon's veto.

In 1977, West German commandos stormed a hijacked Lufthansa jetliner on the ground in Mogadishu, Somalia, freeing all 86 hostages and killing three of the four hijackers.

In 1982, former first lady Bess Truman died at her home in Independence, Mo., at age 97.

In 2001, CBS News announced that an employee in anchorman Dan Rather's office had tested positive for skin anthrax. Four disciples of Osama bin Laden were sentenced in New York to life without parole for their roles in the deadly 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa.

Ten years ago: Pope John Paul II celebrated a Mass at the Vatican marking the 20th anniversary of his election to the papacy. The New York

Yankees defeated the San Diego Padres, 9-3, to take a 2-games-to-none lead in the World Series.

Five years ago: President George W. Bush, speaking at Camp David, said he would host an international summit in response to the global financial crisis, but did not set a date or place for the meeting. Anti-American Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr urged Iraq's parliament to reject a pact that would extend U.S. presence in Iraq for three years. Soul singer Dee Dee Warwick died in Essex County, N.J. at age 63.

One year ago: In a case that would go to the Supreme Court, the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals in New York ruled that a federal law defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman is unconstitutional and said the gay population has "suffered a history of discrimination." Just 48 hours after a confrontational debate, President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney appeared at the annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner in New York. Obama joked that he did better in the second presidential debate because he got a good long nap in the first one, while Romney quipped that the white-tie gala gave him and his wife Ann the chance to dress as they do around the house. The Detroit Tigers completed a four-game sweep of the New York Yankees, winning the finale of the American League Championship Series 8-1. The St. Louis Cardinals beat the San Francisco Giants 8-3 to take a 3-1 lead in the National League Championship Series.

Today's Birthdays: Rock-and-roll performer Chuck Berry is 87. Sportscaster Keith Jackson is 85. Actress Dawn Wells is 75. College and Pro Football Hall-of-Famer Mike Ditka is 74. Singer-musician Russ Giguere is 70. Actor Joe Morton is 66. Actress Pam Dawber is 63. Author Terry McMillan is 62. Writer-producer Chuck Lorre is 61. Gospel singer Vickie Winans is 60. Director-screenwriter David Twohy is 58. International Tennis Hall of Famer Martina Navratilova is 57. Boxer Thomas Hearns is 55. Actor Jean-Claude Van Damme is 53. Actress Erin Moran is 53. Jazz musician Wynton Marsalis is 52. Actor Vincent Spano is 51. Rock musician Tim Cross is 47. Tennis player Michael Stich (shteeck) is 45. Singer Nonchalant is 40. Actress Joy Bryant is 39. Rock musician Peter Svenson (The Cardigans) is 39. Actor Wesley Jonathan is 35. Rhythm-and-blues singer-actor Ne-Yo is 34. Country singer Josh Gracin is 33. Country musician Jesse Littleton (Marshall Dillon) is 32. Jazz singer-musician Esperanza Spalding is 29. Actress-modela Frida Pinto is 29. Actor Zac Efron is 26. Actress Joy Lauren is 24. Actor Tyler Posey is 22.

Thought for Today: "Slow down and enjoy life. It's not only the scenery you miss by going too fast — you also miss the sense of where you are going and why." — Eddie Cantor, American comedian-singer (1892-1964).

FROM THE BIBLE

For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. Matthew 22:30. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis



Pheasants And Canaries

BY KELLY HERTZ

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I honestly don't recall the last time I saw a pheasant.

And here in South Dakota, on the eve of the main pheasant-hunting season, that cannot be a good thing.

When the Game, Fish and Parks Department released its annual brood estimate survey last month, the findings were a shock. The survey indicated a 64 percent drop in the number of birds this year compared to last year, a staggering decline that has real monetary repercussions for the state in regards to the hunting-based economy.

Of course, what it doesn't mean is that there are no birds left. As outdoor columnist Gary Howey wrote in the P&D last month, "South Dakota is reporting a big decrease in their pheasant numbers, which means they will still have twice as many birds (than are) found in other states."

Nevertheless, the trend is worrisome — and not just because of the birds.

The trend is also very quiet. One thing I haven't heard too much the last several weeks is the distinct, staccato cackle of roosters exploding out of a slough or a shelterbelt. This is one of the essential sounds of growing up in South Dakota. But I rarely hear those sounds now, just as I do not see the birds gliding just above fields, wandering across roads or sunning themselves, seemingly oblivious to my distant presence, in a pasture.

I have no doubt that the birds are still around in this corner of the pheasant capital of the world and that hunters will be out this weekend flushing roosters out from wherever they may be — but there surely won't be as many to be flushed. And that saps some of the magic from one of this state's great autumnal traditions.

But that consideration may be a relatively small issue compared to the cause. And this is the more troubling aspect.

While last year's drought certainly played a devastating role in cutting down pheasant numbers, the sad fact is that the dwindling amount of



Kelly
HERTZ

CRP acres across the state — and in fact, across much of the farm belt — is also having a severe impact. And unlike the drought, which is a random natural variable, the loss of CRP acreage is a calculated, man-made situation. It is a conscious choice made in many heads based on financial considerations

to leave less cover for wildlife; with crop prices being what they are — or at least were — it's more prudent to convert the land that used to serve that purpose into cropland. The equation states that when you plant crops, that land is in production; when you don't plant crops, the land is not being used. And I guess I understand the logic.

But I also realize that land has many other uses and benefits, and sometimes, not planting crops in places can be more productive and beneficial in the long run.

In this sense, perhaps these pheasants, or the lack of them, are really canaries in a coal mine. The reduction of the bird population has been caused in part by the same kind of mentality that caused the Dust Bowl of the 1930s: dry times compounded by poor land practices. Undeniably, the Dust Bowl was a far worse situation by every possible measure, but what's worrisome to me is that the mindsets then and now both hail from roughly the same territory: The land must be worked to have value; it must be used to be productive; acres set aside for conservation are acres rendered useless.

Are we drifting back down that same path that turned most of these plains into a dusty furnace so long ago?

In such a consideration, the fate of pheasants and pheasant hunting is a minor issue, I suppose. Or it may be that such things are pointing to a danger lurking ahead.

It's a thought that crosses my mind on this quiet, empty day before the great pheasant hunt begins. It's a silence of our own making. The better news is, it's one we can reverse.

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

Michael Reagan

GOP: Weaker By The Week

BY MICHAEL REAGAN

CagleCartoons.com

A lot of people are asking what the heck is wrong with the Republican Party.

What isn't?

That's no joke. Not for the GOP, not for the country.

The party of Ronald Reagan is getting weaker by the week.

Republican failure, Republican infighting, Republicans caving on their principles — it's a grim soap opera, and it's playing out on the cable news channels every day.

How did the Republican Party ever fall to such depths?

The GOP was flying high when my father led it to victories in 1980 and 1984 on platforms built solidly — and proudly — on conservative principles.

So how was he so successful? It wasn't just his conservative gospel, his communication skills or his sunny personality. My father had a man named Michael K. Deaver by his side for a long time.

When Deaver died in 2007, The Washington Post called him the "media maestro" who "shaped President Ronald Reagan's public image for 20 years, transforming American politics with his powerful gift for image-making."

Yes, Mike Deaver was a master of media stagecraft. But he was much more. He was the public relations arm of Ronald Reagan. He understood politics, the media, and the heart and mind of my father.

Deaver was able to marry all those things for the betterment of Ronald Reagan — and therefore the betterment of the Republican Party, conservatism and America.

You don't see anyone like Deaver in today's fractious Republican Party.

You don't see anyone who understands how important it is to use the mainstream media to create the political perceptions that ultimately change the political reality.

Even though they talk about my father incessantly, Republican Party "leaders" don't understand that it was Deaver and others, such as Lyn Nofziger, who made him a success.

They weren't consultants to my father or the Republican Party. They were around Ronald Reagan because they were true believers in Ronald Reagan.

Right now, I don't know if the Republican Party

YOUR LETTERS

Buddy Poppies

Dot Blaha, Yankton

Buddy Poppy Chairman, Ernest Bowyer VFW Auxiliary 791

Hats off to Hy Vee, Kmart and Wal Mart for allowing the use of their entrances; to the volunteers, members and friends who helped solicit donations and to the public who so graciously donated to the VFW Buddy Poppy Program this past weekend. Your generous support will help local Veterans and their families through the Veterans Assistance program.

Buddy Poppies are never sold and it is only through donations of time and space and monies that local VFW Auxiliaries and Posts are able to finance their Veterans Assistance programs. You should be proud of the support you have given local veterans. Remember to wear your Buddy Poppy proudly.

Online Opinion

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

LATEST RESULTS:

Do you think the U.S. will default on its debts?
No 63%
Yes 37%
TOTAL VOTES CAST 227

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:

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is performing its job?

To vote in the Press & Dakotan's Internet poll, log on to our Web site at www.yankton.net.