



# How Romney Can Win

BY ROBERT B. REICH  
Tribune Media Services

Can Mitt Romney possibly recover? Pundits and pollsters are beginning to doubt it. A survey conducted between Sept. 12 and Sept. 16 by the Pew Research Center — before the “47 percent of Americans are victims” video came to light — showed Obama ahead of Romney 51 percent to 43 percent among likely voters.

That’s the biggest margin in the September survey prior to a presidential election since Bill Clinton led Bob Dole, 50 percent to 38 percent, in 1996.

And, remember, this poll was done before America watched Romney belittle almost half the nation.

So I haven’t been surprised by all the calls I’ve been getting lately from my inside-the-Beltway friends telling me “Romney’s toast.” Hold it. Rumors of Romney’s demise are premature for at least four reasons.

First, between now and Election Day come two jobs reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics — Oct. 5 and Nov. 2. If they’re as bad as the last report, showing only 96,000 jobs added in August (125,000 are needed just to keep up with population growth) and the lowest percentage of employed adults since 1981, Romney’s claim that the economy is off track becomes more credible. And Obama’s claim that it’s on the mend will be harder to defend.

Economic predictions are always hazardous, but with gas prices rising, corporate profits shrinking, most of Europe in recession, Japan still a basket case and the Chinese economy slowing, the upcoming job reports are unlikely to be stellar.

Second, between now and Election Day come three presidential debates, the first on Oct. 3.

It’s commonly thought Obama will win the debates handily. He has a deserved reputation for eloquence. But that reputation didn’t come from his debate performance, and the expectation he’ll win may be very wrong — and could work against him.

Yes, Romney is an automaton. But when the dials are set properly, Romney can give a good imitation of a human engaged in sharp debate. He did remarkably well in the Republican primary debates.

Obama, by contrast, can come off slow and ponderous. Recall how he stuttered and stumbled during the 2008 Democratic primary debates. And he hasn’t been in a real-live debate for four years; Romney recently emerged from almost a year of them.



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Third, during the final weeks of the campaign, the anti-Obama forces will be spending a gigantic amount of money. The gusher will be coming not just from the Romney campaign and Romney’s super PACs, but also from other super PACs aligned with Romney, billionaires spending their own fortunes, and nonprofit “social welfare” organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, Karl Rove’s “Crossroads” and various Koch brothers political fronts.

Hundreds of millions of dollars will be dumped into TV and radio spots. Some of the money will be devoted to get-out-the-vote drives — to computerized targeting of voters likely to support Romney, phone banks and door-to-door canvassing to make sure they vote, and vans to bring them to the polling stations.

It’s an easy bet these Romney and anti-Obama forces will far outspend Obama and his allies. I’ve heard two-to-one. The race is still close enough that a comparative handful of voters in swing states can make the difference — which means gobs of money used to motivate voters to get to polling stations can be critical.

Fourth and finally, as it’s displayed before, the Republican Party will do whatever it can to win — even if it means disenfranchising certain voters. To date, 11 states have enacted voter identification laws, all designed by Republican legislatures and governors to dampen Democratic turnout.

The GOP is also encouraging what can only be termed “voter vigilante” groups to “monitor polling stations to prevent fraud” — which means intimidating minorities who have every right to vote. They’re poring through lists of registered Democratic voters, seeking to have “suspicious” names purged from the rolls or targeted for questioning when these people arrive to vote.

Republicans haven’t been able to document a rise in voter fraud in recent years. They’ve manufactured the problem in order to give a patina of legitimacy to these efforts. And what about those Diebold voting machines? For these reasons, don’t for a moment believe Romney is “toast.” There are still many weeks between now and Election Day, and he might just pop back up.

*Robert B. Reich, Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy at the University of California and former U.S. Secretary of Labor, is the author of “Beyond Outrage: What has gone wrong with our economy and our democracy, and how to fix it,” a Knopf release now out in paperback.*

# Once Upon A Disappearance

BY KATHLEEN PARKER  
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WASHINGTON — I’ve written variations of this column a couple of times during the past 20 years, but certain occasions bear revisiting — and surely the disappearance of a friend is one.

Dail Dinwiddie was my son’s baby sitter/nanny when she vanished on Sept. 24, 1992. He was 8 and she was 23. He’s now five years older than she was then — and Dail would be 43. Police in Columbia, S.C., where she disappeared, recently released an updated photograph showing how they imagine Dail would look today (<http://ow.ly/dYXev>), based in part on how her parents and brother have aged.

The doctored photo shows an attractive middle-aged woman. Back then, Dail was a doll — just 5 feet tall and not quite 100 pounds, a blithe spirit full of laughter. I could have tucked her under an arm without much strain. Apparently, someone else did.

She was like any other girl that night — a U2 concert-goer with a pack of friends who migrated afterward to a section of town, Five Points, where college students often congregate into the early morning hours. Just a few blocks from the University of South Carolina, Five Points is a friendly commercial intersection of restaurants, bars and boutiques. It is always daytime there, with nearly as much foot traffic at 2 a.m. as at 2 p.m.

Dail was last seen around 1:30 a.m. by a bouncer at one of the popular watering holes, Jungle Jim’s. She had become separated from her friends and asked the bouncer if he’d seen them. He remembered watching Dail walk down the sidewalk toward another bar in the next block.

The next afternoon, Dail’s mother called me to say Dail hadn’t come home the night before and that I should meet my son at the bus stop. Hanging up, I wept. I knew Dail well enough to know that she would not just fail to come home without notifying her parents. She was too considerate for that. She certainly would never let her 8-year-old charge be left alone on a street corner. Something had happened to her.

One does what one can in such situations, but what? Police don’t usually begin looking for an adult for at least 24 hours because, statistically, most adults who disappear in this country leave of their own volition. But 24



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hours is a long time, after which most clues are cold and the chances of finding someone greatly reduced.

At the time, I had a work space in Bud Ferillo’s public relations office. Upon hearing what had happened, Bud offered his entire office — telephones and staff — to help organize a search effort. Ferillo is better known today as the documentary filmmaker who brought national attention to the dismal condition of South Carolina public schools with “Corridor of Shame.”

Within a matter of days, we had hundreds of volunteers, mostly students, and thousands of fliers with Dail’s picture posted around South Carolina and, thanks to volunteer truckers, distributed in every state in the country. Her parents, Jean and Dan, appeared on a couple of talk shows. Dail’s friends re-enacted the night of her disappearance, hoping some useful clue would surface. Psychics dreamed of wooded lots, vacant houses and riverbeds.

Amid the flurry of well-meaning folks, some members of the community complained that “they” only mobilize when white girls disappear. I’ve never been sure who the “they” are. I’ve only had one friend disappear and I did what little I personally could. Even so, I realized that the observation was not without merit. What does happen to other adults who vanish, I wondered?

This question led to the establishment of a nonprofit organization, the Dail Dinwiddie Safe Streets Foundation, dedicated to helping police and families find the missing, as well as educating young people about the buddy system. Our efforts never resulted in a happy ending — some of the missing were found dead, others in jail — but at least families had a means to channel their horror in constructive ways. Just getting a missing family member’s picture in the newspaper was better than nothing. Eventually, the organization named for Dail dissolved. Board members died; volunteers grew up, got jobs and married. People moved on and the safe streets foundation became a stack of boxes in a corner of my office.

Twenty years fly by when you’re not looking for a missing child. The Dinwiddies are still looking for theirs. Someone reading this knows someone who knows something that could bring peace to the Dinwiddies.

Perhaps, even you?

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Tuesday, Sept. 18, was a good example of great volunteers on Sunday for the prep work and working through the day Tuesday. There was a large selection of donated pies and willing workers with a smile. It is a great community that works together.

# THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

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## OPINION | OUR VIEW

# Consultant: City Makes Right Move

If Yankton is serious about formulating a cohesive long-range plan for its sports/recreational facility needs, then an outside consultant is the most practical — and arguably, only — course to take on the matter.

The Yankton City Commission got it right Monday night when it approved the hiring of a Sioux Falls firm that will gather input and help formulate a master plan proposal for the community’s various recreational venues. The firm was hired after submitting a bid of \$57,600.

Monday’s action represents no guarantee that there’s going to be an opt-out attempt on the horizon, as some people may suggest. It is not a commitment to a course of action in terms of expanding or construction. Instead, it’s a move to figure out the community’s needs and to figure out options.

As previously reported, this issue burst onto the radar last spring when the city sought the ability to purchase the former Human Services Center grounds at 31st and Broadway. This led to a discussion of a possible indoor sports facility, as well as the possible relocation of the current soccer facility located just to the west of 31st and Broadway. Eventually, other matters that had been percolating for years — such as the shortage of facilities for some sports and the growth of new activities that had nowhere to play — came up. Mount Marty College’s facility needs also entered into the discussion.

Thus, what started out as a single suggestion mushroomed into a more comprehensive issue. It focused a spotlight on the fact that the city’s recreational facilities had not kept up with demand. This didn’t represent a lack of direction so much as a lack of cohesion, as different groups oversaw their own needs without really reckoning on anyone else. That’s not a productive path for the future.

It was proposed that city staff do its own analysis of the community’s recreational needs and formulate proposals for future growth. Such an approach would have saved the price that will be paid to a consulting firm.

But this was not an ideal proposal, a fact that city staff itself readily admitted. It would be taxing on their time, plus the staff really wouldn’t have the expertise that a professional consultant possesses. Also, hiring a consultant removes any perception of favoritism that might emerge as this process attempts to examine the various demands and problems now facing the community.

Clearly, an outside consultant is the most effective way to go.

Yankton needs to have a professional and comprehensive proposal that could serve as a blueprint for recreational growth for years. As such, this justifies the investment now.

Monday’s vote sets the city moving forward on an important quality-of-life issue. The next move will be up to us in terms of providing input into the process. It’s important that as many voices as possible are heard. It’s all part of the process of doing this right.

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## OUR LETTER POLICY

The **PRESS & DAKOTAN** encourages its readers to write letters to the editor, and it asks that a few simple guidelines be followed.

- Please limit letters to 300 words or less. (During political campaigns, letters related to the campaign may be limited to 150 words.) Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.
- In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the **PRESS & DAKOTAN** will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.
- Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.
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## TODAY IN HISTORY

**By The Associated Press**  
Today is Wednesday, Sept. 26, the 270th day of 2012. There are 96 days left in the year.

**Today’s Highlight in History:** On Sept. 26, 1789, Thomas Jefferson was confirmed by the Senate to be the first United States secretary of state; John Jay, the first chief justice; Edmund Randolph, the first attorney general.

**On this date:** In 1777, British troops occupied Philadelphia during the American Revolution.

In 1892, John Philip Sousa and his newly formed band performed publicly for the first time, at the Stillman Music Hall in Plainfield, N.J.

In 1914, the Federal Trade Commission was established.

In 1918, the Meuse-Argonne offensive, resulting in an Allied victory against the Germans, began during World War I.

In 1937, the radio drama “The Shadow,” starring Orson Welles, premiered on the Mutual Broadcasting System.

In 1952, philosopher George Santayana died in Rome at age 88.

In 1955, following word that President Dwight D. Eisenhower had suffered a heart attack, the New York Stock Exchange saw its worst price decline since 1929.

In 1960, the first-ever debate between presidential nominees took place in Chicago as Democrat John F. Kennedy and Republican Richard M. Nixon faced off before a national TV audience.

In 1962, Maury Wills of the Los Angeles Dodgers stole his 100th base during a 13-1 victory over the Houston Colt .45s. “The Beverly Hillbillies” premiered on CBS. The cult film “Carnival of Souls” premiered in Lawrence, Kan., where parts of it had been filmed.

In 1986, William H. Rehnquist was sworn in as the 16th chief justice of the United States, while Antonin Scalia joined the Supreme Court as its 103rd member.

In 1990, the Motion Picture Association of America announced it had created a new rating, NC-17, to replace the X rating.

In 1991, four men and four women began a two-year stay inside a sealed-off structure in Oracle, Ariz., called Biosphere 2. (They emerged from Biosphere on this date in 1993.)

**Ten years ago:** WorldCom former controller David Myers pleaded guilty to securities fraud, saying he was told by “senior management” to falsify records. (Myers was later sentenced to one year and one day in prison.) Four employees and a cus-

tommer were shot to death at a U.S. Bank branch in Norfolk, Neb., during a botched robbery. (Four suspects were later arrested; three were convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to death while a fourth man who served as a lookout was sentenced to five consecutive life sentences.) A state-run Senegalese ferry capsized in the Atlantic, killing more than 1,800 people.

**Five years ago:** A judge in Los Angeles declared a mistrial in Phil Spector’s murder trial because the jury was deadlocked 10-2 in favor of convicting the music producer of killing actress Lana Clarkson. (Spector was convicted in a 2009 retrial.) Myanmar began a violent crackdown on protests, beating and dragging away dozens of monks.

**One year ago:** Ending weeks of political brinkmanship, Congress advanced legislation to avoid a partial government shutdown. President Barack Obama appeared at a town hall meeting in Mountain View, Calif., hosted by the social networking company LinkedIn; the president plugged his jobs agenda in fielding questions on the employment picture, education, Medicare and Social Security.

**Today’s Birthdays:** Retired baseball All-Star Bobby Shantz is 87. Actor Philip Bosco is 82. Actress Donna Douglas is 80. Actor Richard Herd is 80. South African nationalist Winnie Madikizela-Mandela is 76. Country singer David Frizzell is 71. Actor Kent McCord is 70. Television host Anne Robinson is 68. Singer Bryan Ferry is 67. Actress Mary Beth Hurt is 66. Singer Lynn Anderson is 65. Singer Olivia Newton-John is 64. Actor James Keane is 60. Rock singer-musician Cesar Rosas (Los Lobos) is 58. Country singer Carlene Carter is 57. Actress Linda Hamilton is 56. Country singer Doug Supernaw is 52. Rhythm-and-blues singer Cindy Herron (En Vogue) is 51. Actress Melissa Sue Anderson is 50. Actor Patrick Bristow is 50. Rock musician Al Pitrelli is 50. Singer Tracey Thorn (Everything But The Girl) is 50. TV personality Jillian Barberie is 46. Actor Jim Caviezel is 44. Actor Ben Shenkman is 44. Singer Shawn Stockman (Boyz II Men) is 40. Jazz musician Nicholas Payton is 39. Actor Mark Fiammetti is 33. Singer-actress Christina Milian is 31. Tennis player Serena Williams is 31.

**Thought for Today:** “The world cares very little about what a man or woman knows; it is what the man or woman is able to do.” — Booker T. Washington, American educator and author (1856-1915).

## FROM THE BIBLE

*For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Exodus 20:11. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis*

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### Great Soup Kitchen

Judy Potts, Yankton  
VFW Soup Kitchen

It is great to have our community support our local organizations. The soup kitchen at the VFW on