

VIEWPOINTS

RIP Neil Armstrong

After four decades, one's memory of a particular night can be a bit, well, suspect.

It's why I wish at least one of my brothers was here right now, so I could compare "notes," so to speak, and see if what I recall about one special night seems to jive with them.

I do know my grandparents, who lived in Rapid City, had arrived the day before to spend a few days with my family on the farm near Humboldt.

Normally, during those times when my grandparents were around, we'd all clean up after the evening's chores were done, eat dinner together in the kitchen, and my grandparents and Mom and Dad would stay at the table and talk about boring, grown-up stuff.

My brothers and I would excuse ourselves and go about our normal routine. Maybe we'd watch TV, or play catch outside, or take one last bike ride before the sun went down.

This night was different. This night, we ate quickly. I remember feeling a bit nervous, but I can't remember if others around the table seemed as anxious or excited as me.

This night, we all stayed at the kitchen table until each of us was done eating. We calmly collected ourselves, walked into the living room, found a place of comfort (pretty sure my brothers and I planted ourselves on the floor because there were a total of nine people in our house at the time) and we clicked on our small black and white television.

And waited. An American astronaut was about to step on the moon.

I fit the definition of "space nerd" growing up. My earliest memories as a kid include watching Walter Cronkite's televised reports as he, with great enthusiasm, described the scene each time we sent a man into space during the Mercury program.

And I watched as NASA evolved into something rather wonderful. Larger Gemini spacecraft that carried two men into orbit on top of larger rockets eventually replaced the tiny Mercury capsules. Naturally, the Apollo program followed that, as our manned space program continued to advance.

I thought I was fully aware of everything that was about to happen on July 20, 1969. I had pored over every news story about the pending moonwalk; I had tried to listen to every televised newscast describing what was planned for that night.

My jaw dropped a bit when Cronkite began describing the first ghostly images that appeared on our television screen. I had reasoned that we would simply have to listen to the exchanges between Mission Control and Neil Armstrong as he climbed down the ladder of the lunar module; TV images wouldn't appear until much later, when the two astronauts were established on the moon's surface and could set up a bulky camera. Or so I

thought.

The fact that engineers somehow designed a system so that an external television camera could be mounted to the spacecraft, survive a trip to the moon, be turned on

BETWEEN THE LINES



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from either the inside the lunar module or (who knows?) perhaps by an engineer in Houston, and be powerful enough to beam images to earth was, in itself, an amazing feat. At least to me.

It's a wonder we didn't all experience sensory overload. So much history occurred simultaneously.

July 20, 1969 is likely the only night that four adults and five kids crowded around a television set in our farmhouse and stared, in silent awe, at the grainy images before them.

We were just nine of billions of people around the world who had tuned in to watch the stuff of science fiction become real. It was, I remember, so real and so unbelievable, all at the same time.

Armstrong, whose footsteps still remain undisturbed on the moon's surface, died Saturday, Aug. 25. His funeral is today (Friday).

I was 13 when he stepped onto the moon's surface. I was old enough to understand just how difficult the Apollo 11 mission was – and how daring.

That night, I watched the anointing of the next great American hero. I feel fortunate that my life experience includes that moment. It's such a rare feat.

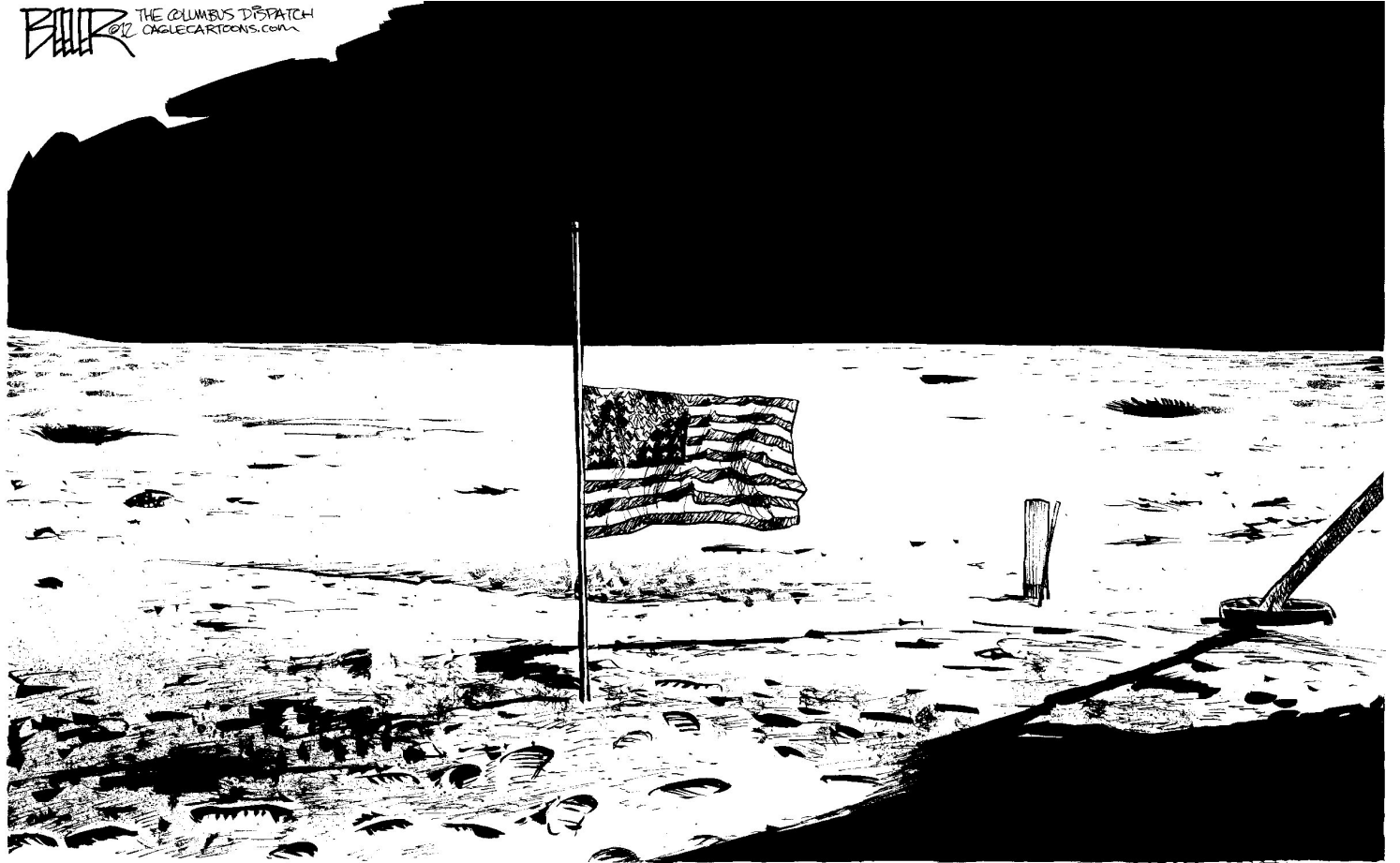
Years later, I read a story about Armstrong's life, and the path he chose to follow after making history. He gained fame as a pilot and astronaut, but he was an engineer, and wound up teaching for eight years in the Department of Aerospace Engineering at the University of Cincinnati.

Back in 1969, I reasoned that Armstrong could probably do anything he wanted after making history – and that he would be awarded greatly because of his fame and accomplishments.

His subsequent shunning of the limelight only deepens my regard for him today, as he is laid to rest at a private funeral service.

Four decades after leaving his footprints all over the moon's surface, the only thing that seems out of step about this man is that he had no capacity whatever for self-promotion. That means a lot in an era where too often, in most fields of endeavor we substitute personal puffery for achievement, or at any rate require it as a necessary component of success.

RIP Neil Armstrong.



NEIL ARMSTRONG 1930-2012

Poe Poe - Your paws down choice for president

Do you find it hard to watch the presidential election playing out in the seemingly endless drone of political TV ads airing for what seems like an eternity?

It's downright painful to hear candidates blame each other for monumental debt in the trillions, a bankrupt social security system, artificially inflated gas prices, soaring unemployment and failing health care. Can you say I-800-China?

I thought I had seen it all until I read about the Alaskan town of Talkeenta, whose mayor is a cat named Stubbs. Good old Stubbs became the mayor through a write-in campaign 15 years ago and is still in office today. I hear he's running again.

Just imagine his political ads: "No matter what you've done wrong, always try to make it look like the dog did it. Paid for by the Stubbs for Mayor Reelection Committee."

I got to thinking, if Stubbs is good enough for Alaska, why not my Dachshund Poe running for President of the United States of America?

His name is trendy and his nickname, Poe Poe, is endearing. He'd make a great politician. He's narcissistic and neurotic, loves to be the center of attention, can be quite pompous, sometimes sneaky, cheating and tirelessly energetic.

A philanderer, Poe is a (gold) digger and loves the sound of his own voice. And, whether or not the cameras are rolling, he's constantly on. He's oppositional by nature and always raring for a good fight.

His vocabulary should give him an edge, too, since he knows more than 20 words and phrases, including sit, eat, ice cream, Mommy, hot dog, treat, time to eat, carrots, no, come

MY STORY YOUR STORY



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him from the race?

If given a chance, I'll bet Presidential hopeful Poe Poe could solve many of America's problems just as well as any two-legged candidate.

My father always told me, if you want it all, you have to give up something. Maybe that's the answer. Why not change the rules and elect a candidate of the four legged variety?

Anyway, there is so much that's dull about the 2012 presidential campaign, why not spice it up with a canine vs. feline contest. It would be a real back scratcher. If Stubbs decides to climb the political cat pole from his spot in Alaska and run against an opponent from the Heartland, at least the dueling ads would be entertaining.

"Dogs come when they're called; cats take a message and maybe they'll get back to you, paid for by Dogs Good, Cats Bad Consortium."

on, did I say Mommy, walkie, go to bed, here, let's get in the car, cow, horse, cat, bunny, Mommy, let's go outside, let's go inside and (my all-time favorite) do you love your mommy.

By the way, he is intelligent, alright. Although, I'm not sure if that's a requirement for the position. He has one serious drawback though, he isn't rich. Suppose that automatically eliminates

"Vote Stubbs for President, because when the cat's away, the mice will play. I'm Stubbs, and I approve this ad."

"Some days you're the dog, some days you're the hydrant. Vote for Poe Poe – he's been there, done that. Paid for by the Dogs R Us Political Action Committee."

"Politics is like herding cats. Elect Stubbs, an experienced cat herder. Paid for by the Political Action Committee To Replace All Politicians With Felines."

And finally... "Cats regard people as warm-blooded furniture. Dogs are man's best friend. I'm Poe Poe, and I approve this message."

The more I talk about this, the more I can see Poe Poe chomping at the bit, I mean biscuit. I wonder if he'd challenge Stubbs to a series of debates no holds barred, aired on CNN, NBC, ABC, CBS and Fox News with Barney or Snoopy as moderators. Better yet, the suddenly political Chick Fillet cow.

And, if Stubbs starts talking smack about seeing Russia from his house, Poe Poe's got him beat, because he can see both Nebraska and Iowa from his.

Poe Poe for President. The paws down choice.

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Guest Commentary:

Goal of initiative is to be smart on crime

By Gov. Dennis Daugaard

About a month ago, legislative leadership, the Chief Justice and I announced the formation of the Criminal Justice Initiative. This initiative has three goals: make the public safer, hold criminals accountable for their actions, and use public funds efficiently.

Since the initial announcement, a work group comprised of law enforcement, prosecutors, legislators, defense attorneys, judges, treatment providers, and members of my staff have met several times to look at ways to achieve those goals.

I have no policy change proposals which are driving this effort. Neither does the Chief Justice or the members of the work group. Policy proposals, if any, should come at the end – after the facts have been examined, and evidence-based practices have been studied.

Thus far, work group meetings have been a good examination of South Dakota's criminal justice system, from probation to prison to parole. The group is considering what other states do, and how they spend their corrections' dollars. We should not be afraid to look critically at ourselves. If we find something we cannot defend, then perhaps it is indefensible and needs to be changed.

In short, we don't know what policies will come from this initiative, as it is still in the fact-gathering and policy-considering stages.

There are a few issues and ideas that this work group is not considering. The work group is not discussing letting current offenders out of prison. The work group is not considering changes to the death penalty, the juvenile justice system, or the sex-

offender registry. The work group is not considering deeper societal questions that could be a root cause of crime, such as poverty or education. These are important issues, but they are so complex in their own right that they could overwhelm the discussion. The group is instead focusing on increased public safety, more offender accountability, and efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

South Dakota incarcerates more people per capita than our neighboring states – nearly twice the rate of North Dakota and Minnesota. South Dakota's prisons are filling, and locking more people up has a significant cost. Projections show that – if we change nothing – our prison population will increase 25 percent over the next 10 years, at an additional \$224 million cost. At our current rate, we will need to build a new women's prison in just a few years and another men's prison not long afterward. The dollars we would use are funds that we could not spend on other priorities, such as education, economic development, or infrastructure.

This does not mean that our prisons are full and we should stop locking people up. We should and will continue to lock up dangerous, violent career criminals.

We should never be afraid of self-examination. I look forward to the recommendations of the work group, because I believe we will find ways to improve. I believe we can do a better job of keeping the public safe, while spending tax dollars more effectively. That will allow us to spend more on schools, roads and job creation, or provide tax relief.

We are committed to making South Dakota safer, holding criminals more accountable, and providing taxpayers with a better public safety return for their corrections' dollars.

Conservation communication

By Tony Stokely

Conservation Officer Clay and Union Counties

The fall seasons are fast approaching. A couple paper application deadlines are due on Aug. 31, and they are for east river deer and muzzleloader deer. Online applications will be accepted until Sept. 5 at 8 a.m. Archery deer season application has no deadline. There will be the mourning dove season opening on Sept. 1 statewide. The daily limit is 15 dove and 30 doves for a possession limit.

Now is the time, if you haven't already, to start getting ready for your hunting season.

You can never get enough practice with your equipment, no matter if it is your archery equipment or your shotgun and rifle. The more practice shooting you do before the season the more comfortable and confident you will be during the season to make that first shot count. Practice, practice, practice!

For the upland game hunter it is not only the equipment you have to get ready, but let's not forget about another part that makes for a successful hunt – your dog!

If you travel to go out pheasant hunting or waterfowl hunting make sure you have your dog in tip-top shape. Condition your dog physically and mentally. Go out and bring

your dogs on short runs to begin with and gradually bring them up to longer runs. Having the dog go for a swim also helps with the conditioning.

It doesn't hurt to have your dog's nose in shape also. Practice with your dog by placing some pheasant scent on some throwing bumpers. Start by throwing or dragging the throwing bumper into some short grass. Have your dog try to hunt up the bumper. You can graduate the dog into some taller grass and tougher finds of the throwing bumper.

A physically fit dog – and hunter – will make for a more enjoyable "opening day" hunting for both you and the dog.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

THANK YOU, VERMILLION

To the editor:

On behalf of the kids and families across South Dakota that we serve, thank you to everyone who was involved in and attended this year's Make-A-Wish event in Vermillion July 25 at Pro's Bar and Grill. Thanks to the generous support of the Vermillion community, more than \$20,000 will go toward helping to make wishes come true for kids in the area.

Since last September we have granted nearly 70 wishes across the state at a cost of almost \$7,000 a wish. This includes five kids in the Vermillion/Yankton area. Two other kids are in the process of receiving a wish.

Thank you to organizers Gary Madsen, Bruce Fischbach, Jim Brady, Rick Steenholdt and everyone else who helped make the event possible. Thank you also to the generous businesses in Vermillion who donated auction items and to Pro's Bar and Grill for hosting the event.

Sincerely,

Paul R. Krueger
President and CEO, Make-A-Wish South Dakota

Vermillion

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