

VIEWPOINTS

I predict a loser

Last time I checked, we now have four candidates who have announced plans to seek the Republican U.S. Senate nomination in the June 2014 primary election.

Stace Nelson, a state legislator who farms near Fulton, is the latest member of the South Dakota GOP to throw his hate in the ring. Other candidates (as I write this, anyway) are Larry Rhoden, a state senator from Meade County, Dr. Annette Bosworth, a physician with no political experience from Sioux Falls, and former Gov. Mike Rounds of Pierre.

I likely could make a prediction this very moment of who will win the Republican Senate primary race, and have a very good chance of being right.

I'll resist that temptation, however, to instead talk about why one candidate most assuredly won't win.

Dr. Annette Bosworth will barely be a blip on the radar of South Dakota Republican voters when it comes time to cast ballots in June 2014. She's not known in political circles, and she has no experience as a political candidate (making one wonder why the first office she chooses to seek is something as major as U.S. senator).

And, so far, some of the things she's been saying on the campaign trail show that she sorely lacks the political savvy to do a good job for South Dakota in Washington, DC.

Last Monday in Pierre, according to a report in the Pierre Capitol Journal, she told citizens of that community that repealing, defunding or otherwise revoking the Affordable Care Act has become her defining issue, mainly because health care is her realm of expertise and the lens she views the world through.

Bosworth has come to detest the measure as an independent practice owner. She said from her experience it will destroy patients' freedom to choose their own health options and cause physicians to have to report confidential health information to an unseemly number of regulatory boards, including the Internal Revenue Service.

"How have I become an expert on Obamacare? I've tried to implement it for the last year and a half," she said.

Despite primary contenders having increased from one to four since she first considered running several months ago, not to mention the Democratic challenger, Rick Weiland, Bosworth said she's confident her message will resonate with her fellow South Dakotans.

"I wouldn't be running if I didn't think I could win," she said.

From a strictly partisan point of view, the most baffling aspect of her position on Obamacare is the total lack of an upside it would bring for Bosworth and her party.

If Obamacare is the disaster that she and others in the GOP claim it is, the logical course for Republicans is to let it fail.

One can sense that Sen. John Thune (R-SD) realizes the total folly of attempting Bosworth's idea of trying to totally revoke the Affordable Care Act.

According to a Wednesday morning news report, Thune said that even as conservatives "believe profoundly that Obamacare is the wrong prescription for the country and will be very harmful to people and the economy," Republicans need to be "realistic" about what they can accomplish.

One idea that Tea Party Republicans in DC are considering is to withhold support for any bill to fund the government if it contains money to implement the health care law.

If the Republican-controlled House refuses to pass a spending bill with funding, and the Democrat-controlled Senate refuses to pass a spending bill without funding, the result could be no government until the impasse is resolved.

This scenario, if it actually plays out, will be a public-relations disaster that the Obama administration undoubtedly will use to maximum effect in the 2014-midterm congressional elections.

Thune certainly appears to understand that. Bosworth, it appears, doesn't.

There is not a single Republican fingerprint on the Obamacare legislation. It was passed by Democrats, and only Democrats, in both houses of Congress.

If the GOP leadership truly believes Obamacare is the disaster they say it is, why not stand aside, let it be implemented and watch it flop?

They aren't truly worried that it will succeed ... are they??

BETWEEN THE LINES



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Some stories fall from the sky

"In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous." – Aristotle

People frequently ask me what I write about, to which I reply, "Just about everything." Next they want to know where I get story topics, and I tell them, "Just about everywhere."

However, it is seldom I can say story ideas fall from the sky, like this one ...

While minding my own business on my way to work the other day, I came upon a hitchhiker. He appeared to be a total freeloader with no belongings – not even a backpack!

I could hardly ignore the sight of him since he had landed smack dab on the hood of my car.

After I arrived at work, I got out of my car and took a closer look. His stocky hard-as-rock torso contrasted by a delicately laced wings and linen-white underbelly threw me at first. Studying him a bit longer, I was hoping he was some sort of rare traveler from an exotic faraway environment who had lost his way, ending up here.

Quite taken by his rough beauty and not sure if he was playing dead or not, I gingerly removed him from the hood and gently laid him on a napkin inside on the passenger seat. He didn't budge, and I then realized he had indeed expired.

Displaying no signs of decaying, his hard shell back had a Ninja Turtle

MY STORY YOUR STORY



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were set on opposite ends of his face.

Now, what I'm about to tell you may sound more than a bit strange to some and could make others feel a tad squeamish. For five days, this big little bugger rode shotgun with me to and from work. And every so often I'd check on him, first to see if he's still there and then to admire the intricacy of his features and marvel at his contrasting features and colors.

The only thing I can attribute this bizarre behavior to is my interest in large winged insects, like butterflies, moths and the like. Besides, it's not very often I see an insect this size with its post-mortem anatomy largely in tact!

When I finally decided to share this find with my husband, I announced, "Look at this," as I

look as it was artfully decorated with a dark green and black fatigue pattern.

His inch-long oval-shaped wings were transparent and when illuminated casted a spectacular golden glow. His bulging red eyes

proudly displayed the bug on the wide open palm of my hand. "What do you think it is?"

It only took one glance and he said, "A cicada," sounding quite unimpressed.

After I looked up cicadas and verified he actually was what my husband said he was, I did a little "background" check and learned the one I found is a member of the periodic cicada family, native to North America. This type can hibernate deep underground for up to 17 years, and then makes sudden unannounced appearances. In other words, he was just a local who didn't get out much.

While cicadas do not sting or bite, they do have a definite dark side. Foe to farmers, cicadas are capable of doing the collateral damage of grasshoppers by destroying foliage on crops.

I have mixed emotions about my attachment to this little guy. On the one hand, I'm glad his days of destroying plants are over. On the other hand, I'm sad that his stunningly strong and strikingly intricate anatomy will be at rest forever, never again to lift a wing, make a shrill or buzz a call from his vibrating two drum-like timbales.

Sources:
<http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/periodical-cicada>

Turning the tide on childhood obesity

By Dr. Janey Thornton

USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services

As the Department of Agriculture's Deputy Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, I am on a mission to make sure all of our nation's children have the best possible chance at a healthy life and a bright future. So, I'm very encouraged by some recent news from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

The rate of obesity among low-income pre-school children appears to be declining for the first time in decades.

The declining rates show that our collective efforts – at the Federal, State and community level – are helping to gain ground on childhood obesity, particularly among some of the more vulnerable populations in our country.

Low-income children are often at a big disadvantage when it comes to getting the food they need to grow up healthy and strong, which is why the nutrition programs and resources available through USDA are so vital.

Programs like WIC – with its new, healthier food package offerings for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and young children, including more fruits and vegetables and more whole grains – and the Child and Adult Care Food

Program – with its increasing emphasis on nutrition and physical activity for young children – are making a difference in the lives of millions of children.

Our efforts don't stop there. School-aged children are now getting healthier and more nutritious school meals and snacks, thanks to the support of First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! initiative and historic changes implemented under the historic Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.

We're supporting healthy, local foods in schools through our Farm to School grant program, and we're improving access to fresh produce and healthy foods for children and families that receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

So what can you do to make a change in your home and community? Parents and caregivers can use educational materials like Healthy Eating for Preschoolers and Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children to help teach young children healthy habits from the start.

Teachers, principals and school food service professionals can use nutrition education materials like the Great Garden Detective curriculum provided through Team Nutrition to motivate older children to eat healthy and try new foods.

Kids can explore MyPlate Kids Place and take the MyPlate Pledge to commit to making healthy food

choices at school and at home. And parents, teachers, and kids alike can get active and learn about healthy foods with Let's Move! in school, at home and in their communities.

Don't get me wrong – we still have a long way to go before America's childhood obesity epidemic is a thing of the past. Far too many – one out of every eight – preschoolers are still obese. Unfortunately, obesity in these early childhood years sets the perfect stage for serious health problems throughout the entire lifespan.

We at USDA are proud of our ongoing efforts to ensure the health of America's next generation, and we know that, combined with your efforts at home, we are beginning to see real results in the fight against early childhood obesity.

Dr. Janey Thornton serves as USDA's Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Deputy Under Secretary.

Before coming to USDA, Dr. Thornton served as School Nutrition Director for Hardin County Schools in Elizabethtown, Kentucky and served as president of the 55,000-member School Nutrition Association during the 2006-2007 school year.

Learn more about USDA's efforts to improve child nutrition and visit ChooseMyPlate.gov for quick, easy nutrition and diet tips for families.

PLAIN TALK POLL RESULTS

Should the S.D. Legislature provide extra funding to the Board of Regents to allow a tuition freeze at state universities for the 2014-15 school year?

Yes	55
No	21
Undecided	5
Total Votes	81

To participate in the Plain Talk's weekly poll, log on to plaintalk.net.



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