

VIEWPOINTS

Seeing is believing

By Paula Damon

"The puppies you raise will never forget you," exclaimed Connie Carlson, who along with her husband, Greg, raise puppies for Leader Dogs for the Blind. Greg is Associate Professor and Director of Health Services Administration at the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, and Connie is a Volunteer Puppy Raiser.

Founded in 1939 by three members of Detroit-area Lions Clubs, Leader Dogs for the Blind empowers the vision impaired with skills for a lifetime of independent living, including travel.

Over the last 75 years, these amazing canines have been trained to address individual situations and adapt to the changing needs of over 14,000 clients from 39 countries. Annually, the program graduates approximately 200 guide dogs.

"We have had the privilege of being in contact with the puppies we've raised after they were placed and they all remembered us," Connie explains. "It's just an awesome feeling!"

The Carlsons, who have been puppy raising for eight years, were inspired to become volunteers for the program by Greg's father, Al, who was a lifelong Lions member in Marshall, Minn.

"Years ago, he showed us an article about Leader Dogs. When we became empty nesters, we decided to puppy raise!"

Today, Connie and Greg are raising their sixth puppy, Muncie, a yellow Labrador retriever.

"It always amazes me how different each puppy is; what works for one in training may not for another. They're just like people. You really have to get in tune with each puppy's personality. Some are very soft and delicate, others are more aloof. Some are hard headed; others are comical."

Muncie came to the Carlsons through the Leader Dogs Program in Rochester Hills, Michigan, one of 11 accredited guide dog schools in the U.S.

"We are raising Muncie in accordance with the Long Distance Puppy Raising Volunteer Program," explained Connie, a member of the Sioux City Lions Club.

"During the 12 to 14 months of preparation for his life as a guide dog, we are teaching him basic obedience and house-breaking skills. We also are socializing and exposing him to everyday experiences."

When Muncie returns to the Michigan-based Leader Dogs for the Blind Guide Dog University, he will have at least four months of formal harness training, and then hopefully he will become a guide dog for a visually impaired client.

"It takes a very special puppy to become a guide dog," Connie noted. "Only 40 percent actually make it. They must be extremely focused and enjoy working. They cannot have any medical issues, like hip dysplasia or allergies."

At the end of the program, puppies who don't qualify are retrained for new jobs as Veterans Assistance Dogs, K9 Police Dogs, Arson Dogs or Therapy Dogs.

Inmates raise puppies in the program, too.

Since the first puppy was delivered to an Iowa prison in 2002, the Leader Dogs for the Blind Puppy Raising Program has grown to seven facilities in Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. To date, prisoners have raised over 600 puppies.

Across the U.S., the recidivism rate for prisoners is 50 percent; however, for those raising puppies that number drops to less than 14 percent. Upon release to their communities, many former inmates contribute to the program as volunteers, sponsors and through their local Lions Clubs.

Recognized as a "Best in America" Charity by the Independent Charities of America, Leader Dogs for the Blind offers all services free of charge with Lions Clubs across the nation being the biggest financial supporters.

"Puppy raising takes lots of patience and it helps you focus on the positive," Connie added. "Knowing a pup you have raised is providing independence, mobility and love to a visually impaired client is so fulfilling! In the puppy raising world, that is called a vortex!"

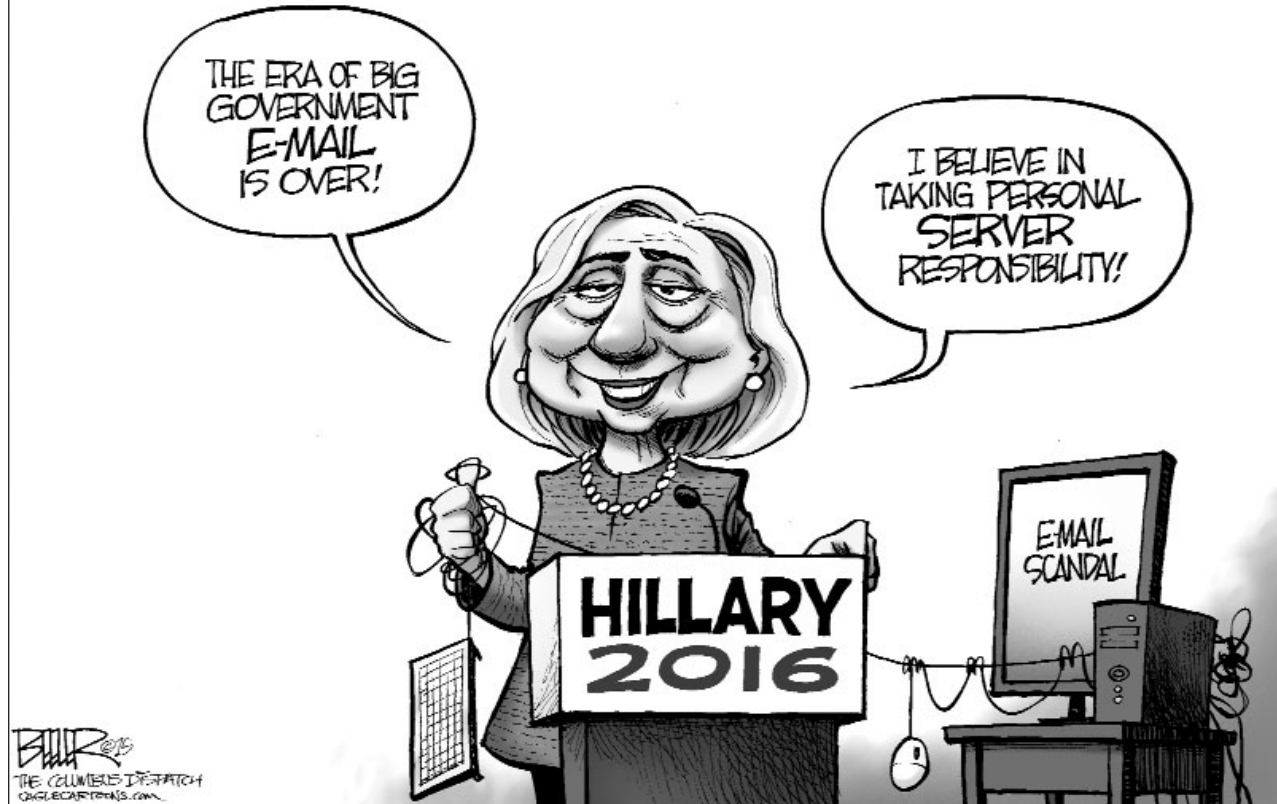
SOURCES: www.leaderdog.org, www.leaderdog.org/the-leader-dog-difference

MY STORY YOUR STORY



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HILLARY TRIANGULATES..



Only thing we have to fear is fear itself

By Richard P. Holm MD

Was FDR right when he spoke to the danger of "fear itself?"

Experts explain that when we are threatened by real danger, an area in our brains called the amygdala goes into action to help us survive. The amygdala stimulates the adrenal gland to release adrenaline, which in turn prepares us to defend ourselves or to run — the so called "fight or flight" system. Adrenaline causes heart racing, sweating and blood flow to muscles, preparing us from an attacking enemy. Fear was designed to help us survive.

But fear does not always help us avoid danger. During my medical school rotation on the psych ward, I observed people with paranoid schizophrenia, an emotional brain illness often manifested by an inappropriate and overwhelming fear that others were plotting against them. These patients had lost touch with reality and had bizarre thoughts, all

resulting from a neurochemical imbalance that is still not perfectly understood. But what stuck in my med-student brain was how their deep seated and overwhelming fear was somehow connected to such severe mental illness. Fear appeared to destroy them.

Most of us have minor inappropriate fears resulting from past minor emotional traumas, such as going near water, seeing the doctor, flying in airplanes, walking near swooping birds, speaking in public, and the list goes on. Trouble comes when a fear keeps us from functioning normally, thus making it a phobia.

Something similar to life-interfering phobias is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This results as a consequence of a specific severe emotional trauma and results in recurrent and overwhelming panic-like adrenaline surges when the person is reminded of that bad experience. Presently we live in a "not so

dangerous world," quite different than for our great ancestors. Now, though there are times we need that adrenaline surge, we are generally more in danger of harm from fear itself, like in those with paranoid schizophrenia, phobias or PTSD. Even without these conditions, most of the time we can better side-step what can hurt us in a rational and cool way: identifying, avoiding and/or dealing with danger without paralyzing panic.

Anti-psychoactive medicine is unquestionably the best and mainstay treatment for schizophrenia. PTSD certainly needs meds and counseling. But for simple phobias, I prefer antidepressants over anti-anxiety valium-like medicines and, when appropriate, recommend psychologists armed with programs to help us gradually face and overcome inappropriate fears.

Just the right amount of fear can save us from an enemy, but, "fear itself," can be very bad.

SD LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Senator Arthur Rusch

The eighth week of the 90th legislative session is now over and we have just one week left and the "veto day" on March 31st when the legislature meets to consider any bills that the Governor may have vetoed. As of this date he has signed 84 bills and 35 are still on his desk awaiting a decision. As of now he has not vetoed any bills.

Most of the committees have completed action on the bills which were assigned to them. There are still some bills pending which have passed one house but not been passed by the other house and a number of bills which were passed by one house but amended by the other house. Most of those amendments are of a minor nature and the other house tends to go along with the amendments.

The major issues next week will be the budget and the Highway and Bridges bill. The Appropriation Committee will receive information from the economists on Monday, March 9th as to the amount of revenue which can be expected next year. They will have to use those estimated revenue figures in determining how much can be appropriated for the various. Although the state economists have been criticized for being too conservative in their estimates and underestimating the amount of

money which the state can spend, in fact, last year they overestimated the revenue by about four million dollars and that had to be made up elsewhere.

The bill to provide additional funding for highways and bridges passed out of the Senate some time ago but has been languishing in the House. As passed out of the Senate, the highway bill closely resembled what the Governor had recommended but at this point it is uncertain what the House will do with the bill.

The most controversial bill to pass the Senate this week was the House bill to allow counties to adopt zoning ordinances which would include a certification process for conditional uses, in other words a certain location could obtain a permit for a conditional use in advance and would also allow the zoning ordinance to provide for a simple majority approval rather than a supermajority. I voted for this change once I was certain that this was entirely discretionary on the part of the local county. Neither of those provisions would take effect unless the local county voted to adopt them. In checking over the entire bill I found one location where the original "shall" had not been changed and was able to get that amended to "may" to make sure this would be local choice. Among other issues that I have

received e-mails and letters about; SB135 which would have allowed cities to adopt an additional penny sales tax, passed the Senate but was defeated in the House; HJR 1005 which changed the name of Shannon County to Oglala Lakota County passed both houses; SB101 which required insurance companies to treat cancer patients the same whether they are receiving oral treatments or IV treatment, passed both houses.

Of great disappointment to me this week was the defeat in the Senate of HB1103 because I had done a great deal of work in both the House and Senate to try and get it passed. This bill would have provided a fairer result in personal injury and property damage lawsuits. By changing from a contributory negligence test to a comparative negligence test, the jury would have looked at the comparative negligence of each party in a lawsuit rather than the present method where a party who is more than slightly negligent is barred from any recovery. I don't think that the evidence supports the claim that this would result in higher insurance rates in South Dakota. Myself and two other retired judges testified to the confusion this causes jurors and the unfairness in results which we had observed.

By this time next week, it 90th Legislative Session should be "all over but the crying."

CHAMBER CHAT

CHAMBER BUSINESS

TUESDAY, MARCH 17

Please join us for a Special Ribbon Cutting at Polaris with Governor Dennis Daugaard, Tues., March 17, 4:30 pm in their main lobby. Everyone is invited to help celebrate the completion of the upgraded conveyor belt system in Polaris

Governor Daugaard to speak at Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company (VCDC) Annual Banquet is Tuesday, March 17 at the Vermillion Technology Center (VTC), 1012 Princeton. The guest speaker is Governor Dennis Daugaard. Honored guests are Senator Tim Johnson and Barb Johnson. The social hour will begin at 5:30 pm, followed by dinner and the program. It is a time to thank all of the members, individuals, and volunteers who support and contribute to the success of the Chamber and business community through their membership

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Promote Your Business at the VCDC Annual Banquet
• Promote and advertise your business or organization at the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company's Annual Banquet by providing a table centerpiece. The banquet is Tuesday, March 17 at the Vermillion Technology Center (VTC), 1012 Princeton. Reference your business or organization within the centerpiece and be cre-

and investments. The banquet also gives us an opportunity to recognize the outstanding achievements of the community's leaders and organizations by presenting the Family Business of the Year Award, the Mayor's Community Service Award, the United Way Volunteer of the Year Award, the VCDC Community Leader Award, along with other awards. The banquet is open to the public. Chamber Members \$40 per person, non-Chamber Members \$50 per person. For more information and to register by March 11, please contact the VCDC at 116 Market Street, 605-624-5571.

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ative. This year's banquet theme is "Celebrating the 'You' in Community" which can be incorporated in your table centerpiece if you wish.

All centerpiece will be given away to our lucky guests at the banquet. In order to have your business or organization's name included in the banquet program, please register by Thursday, March 12.

For more information and to register your table centerpiece please call the VCDC at 605-624-5571 or email annb@vermillionchamber.com by March 12. Thank you!

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

• 1 Million Cups-Yankton/Vermillion Town Hall #2: Join us Wed., March 18 @ 9:00 am at the Vermillion Technology Center (VTC) when the VCDC hosts our friends from the west for a great discussion! It is also a chance to show off the beautiful, state of the art VTC located at the corner of Princeton & Bower St. near Hy-Vee, Walmart & Polaris.

THIS WEEK'S HAPPENINGS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• USD & National Music Museum (NMM) selected as one of fifty-two sites in the U.S. to host the 2016 traveling exhibit marking the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. The First Folio is the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays published in 1623. Plays such as Macbeth, The Tempest, Julius Caesar and others would have been lost without this publication. The rare book will be on exhibit at NMM. Final touring dates to be announced in April 2015.

• Great Strides: March 30 - May 10: Individual/Team and Family Packets are available on line at www.sanfordvermillion.org. Sanford Vermillion's Great Strides program is in its 21st year. We are excited to once again partner with the USD Wellness Center this year. The goal of Great Strides community exercise program is to encourage an increased activity level above and beyond your normal daily activity.

Miles can be accumulated through any form of exercise (walking, jogging,

biking, etc.). Families earn points through various means of activity and healthy lifestyle choices. Individual, team and family statistics are updated weekly and reported on the Great Strides page at sanfordvermillion.org.

• Youth/volunteers sought: The Clay-Union Foundation seeks youth age 5-17 throughout the two counties. The program invites a youth age 10-14 from the Irene area to join the program as there is an adult male seeking a match in that area. Two males in Vermillion are seeking a match with boys age 7-12. Also, there's a need for adult female volunteers for 3 girls in Vermillion. Go to www.clay-unionfoundation.org for an application under the sign up tab. To date, 140 matches have been made and more are possible.

• Vermillion Area Community Foundation (VACF) updated grant application information: Beginning this year, there are only two grant periods: The second Thursday in April and the second Thursday in October. Grant guidelines can be found at: <http://vermillion.sdccommunity->

foundation.org or applications can be picked up at the VCDC, 116 Market Street.

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

• Yankton Children's Theatre Co. presents "The Emperor's New Clothes", Fri., March 13-14 @ 7:00 pm and Sun., March 15 @ 2:00 pm at the Dakota Theatre, Yankton. Tickets available at the door.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

• Overeaters Anonymous: Sat., March 14 @ 9:00 am. Location: Newman Center-USD Campus, 320 E. Cherry, across from the MUC at the corner of Rose & Cherry St. (West Door-straight through double glass doors on left & first door on left, North Door-door hall to left & first door on left). Description: Overeaters Anonymous is a 12 step program for people with eating disorders & struggles.

TO SEE MORE CHAMBER CHAT ITEMS PLEASE VISIT WWW.PLAINTALK.NET.

Vermillion

PLAIN TALK

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