

# Bob shares secrets for living a memorable life

Ole said:

With voice so brisk,  
I owe my age  
To lutefish."

One of the responsibilities of getting along in years is to be able to pass on your secret of longevity to upcoming generations — I call it "geriatrics!"

This is not a duty to be taken lightly. When the time comes, you can't just add a feeble platitude. All of which means that it's never too soon

to assemble the words which will best describe your remedy for survival.

Ben Franklin once said: "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." Folksy medical advice of the apple-a-day variety is old hat, unless you give it a new twist.

Your secret must be colorful and creative, maybe even titillating enough to get you on the Jay Leno Show.

You've got to be able to attribute your many years to something exotic like blackstrap molasses, collard

greens, goose grease rubs, a wee nip of white lightning before every meal or a daily dip in the river (even in the dead of winter.)

To help prepare your own provocative formula, I've collected a few of so-called secrets other centenarians have revealed:



**Bob Karolevitz**  
Writer At Large

"I owe my success to hard work; I've avoided it religiously all my life."

"One bath a week is enough for anyone. I've known some folks who dangled near scrubbed their skins off and I've outlived them all."

"Drink plenty of sassafras

tea, keep the epsom salts handy and never eat white bread."

"I've chased girls since I was 14. I never caught any, but the exercise kept me fit and healthy."

Now those are the kinds of pithy statements which will endure you to the press and the seekers of wise counsel. They ring true!

Things are so commercialized these days that it's now possible to capitalize financially on making it to 90 or 100. Not long ago an old timer was asked what his secret was, and he replied:

"I can't rightly say now because I'm still dicking around with two vitamin companies and one big distillery."

With the average life span increasing year by year, you never know who might be one of the lucky ones. That's why I'm preaching preparedness.

Right now I'm personally working on a very simple prescription of my own:

"If you eat an apple every day for a hundred years, you're sure to live a long, long time."

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**David Lias**  
Between The Lines

## Do we know how to act during peacetime?

A college classmate of mine, Tim Gebhart, made this observation in his blog recently as his thoughts turned toward the anniversary of the opening of the Berlin Wall. His reflections are certainly noteworthy. He writes:

"With the Cold War being waged for more than half my life, I was among the many millions fascinated with the fall of the Berlin Wall. Twenty years ago today, the East German government — intentionally or not — opened up its borders. For most, it is also perhaps the most substantive symbol of the beginning of the end of the Cold War.

I recall actually thinking at some point in the next year or two that the world really had changed. I thought that perhaps my kids actually would live in an entirely different world, one without the threat of nuclear holocaust and World War III. I was wrong — but I was far from alone.

One of the supposed benefits of the end of the Cold War was the "peace dividend." Money previously devoted to defense expenditures could instead be used to reduce the national deficit, improve education and health care, remedy infrastructure problems, etc., etc., etc. Government leaders in the West even made it a political slogan, seeking to add more bloom on the rose of ending the Cold War.

Here we are 20 years later and I think that even though a peace dividend was declared, it never really got paid out. True, defense spending did decline in the 1990s, we saw tax cuts and we enjoyed budget surpluses.

But since 2001, our military budgets have more than doubled. We've moved — both fiscally and politically — from fighting a Cold War to fighting the so-called War on Terror.

The national deficit soared during that same time. And here we sit 20 years later with education and infrastructure funding still problematic and still fighting about health care.

You can't lay the blame at the feet of one political party or one ideology, whether it's in the sense of having failed to take advantage of an opportunity or in not foreseeing that the dividend and what it represented could be short-lived.

What if that money had been spent on domestic problems or, God forbid, foreign measures that generated support for the United States?

We probably did have a peace dividend. Sadly, though, I think it got spent in ways again demonstrating we humans tend to wear blinders and can't — or refuse to — set aside political differences to accomplish meaningful change.

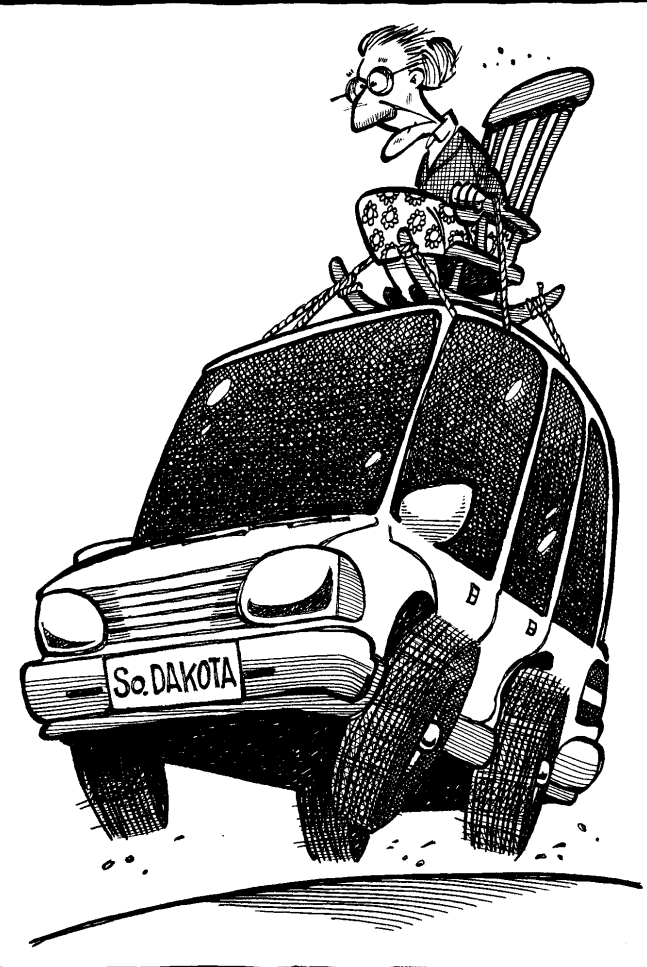
The peace dividend was a nice concept. Too bad we didn't spend it more wisely."

We know how to organize warfare, but do we know how to act when confronted with peace?

Jacques-Yves Cousteau, Calypso Log, 1993

Over the river  
and through the woods  
with credit cards in tow,  
Searching for ways  
to spend holidays  
and afford the gas to go.  
The prices rise  
before our eyes  
the closer the holidays get.  
To save cash, we fear,  
by moving grandma here  
would've been a safer bet.

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SPB



## Lost my drive, what's his name hasn't helped me

When my drive turned up missing, I panicked and immediately searched every corner, every stack and every drawer. I even shook out my boots, thinking I might find it there.

My flash drive is a life source holding my columns, my book, my plays and the many stories of my life. It is like a best friend, a trusted confidant on good days and bad. It is my tireless laborer, lifting the heavy burdens of my thoughts, carrying them and me from one week to the next.

For more than a week now, I have tried to retrace every step I took, remember each place I touched and recall every move I made.

Out of desperation, I have invoked the aid of Saint Anthony, patron saint of lost things. Mind you, even though I have not officially practiced Catholicism for 37 years, part of me always will be Catholic.

My formative years were ceremoniously shaped by and around the Church. The sanctuary was my second home, the confessional, my safe haven, and the saints, my constant companions.

In my childhood home, Saint Christopher protected my family on road trips. We turned to

### MyStory YourStory



**Paula Damon**  
Columnist

Saint Jude when in hopeless situations and petitioned Saint Blaise whenever we had sore throats.

Saint Anthony of Padua is the saint Catholics turn to for lost keys, lost books, lost memory, lost people, lost anything and everything. And with the commotion of six kids in my childhood home, we were always losing something.

We even had prayer cards with his image on one side and a petition for finding what was lost on the other. Saint Anthony might as well have had a place at our table; we turned to him that much.

The notion of being able to enlist God's army of saints was and still is nothing less than spectacular. Although I must admit, Saint Anthony has yet to come through this time.

It has been 10 days since I last remember removing the

drive from my computer. My faith is waning and I have concluded with crushing disappointment that my beloved memory stick is either hiding in some obscure place or it's in the landfill.

I am not ashamed to admit that I have been bouncing back and forth, ushering appeals not only to Saint Anthony, but to Mother Mary and Father God. Maybe with all three pulling for me my drive will miraculously appear.

After rechecking my desk drawers for the fifth time, my purses for the umpteenth time, my coat pockets a gazillion times, I am starting to question my faith, second-guess my absent-mindedness and worry about my dependence on that little stick of memory.

It is probably time to let go and begin to rebuild my repository of writing on a new flash

drive. (No offense, Saint Anthony.)

This whole incident smacks of our pet salamander that turned up missing many years ago. He was in the aquarium one day and gone the next. Vanished. I put Saint Anthony to work on that one, too.

Fifteen years later, when rearranging furniture, I reached behind a heavy dresser to get what I thought was a cobweb. Instead, I grabbed a salamander's skeletal remains while emoting a primal scream. Startled and then relieved, I uttered, "Thank you, Saint Anthony."

A resident of Southeast South Dakota, Paula Damon is a national award-winning columnist. Her columns have won first place in National Federation of Press Women, South Dakota Press Women and Iowa Press Women Communications Contests. In the 2009 South Dakota Press Women Communications Contest, Paula's columns took three first-place awards. To contact Paula, email pauladamon@iw.net, follow her blog at www.mystoryyourstory.blogspot.com and find her on Facebook.

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# Health care reform that's right for South Dakota

By Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin

This weekend, the House took one of the most important votes of the year, on an issue that has been a priority for me since I first was given the honor of representing South Dakotans in Congress. I have long believed that the strength of our communities in South Dakota depends on the health of our people and that, unfortunately, quality, affordable care remains out of reach for far too many South Dakotans.

I am convinced this Congress and the president will achieve fundamental reform because our country must fix what's broken in our health care system. The status quo is unsustainable. It's critical that we control rising health care costs, increase quality and value within our health care system, and that we improve access to health care and affordable health care insurance coverage. There is simply too much at stake for South Dakota's families and businesses, who have either seen their premiums rise sharply year after year, or who still have no access to an affordable plan.

Done right, health care reform will both ensure that more people have access to quality health care and just as critically, make the common sense reforms that are necessary to

## GUEST COMMENTARY

fix an unsustainable system that threatens our fiscal future. These twin goals of addressing access, quality and costs on the one hand, and solidifying our fiscal future on the other are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they are complementary.

Unfortunately, the House bill missed this critical opportunity. While it did include many good provisions, it was not the right answer for South Dakota. It could unintentionally threaten existing access to health care in our state, and it did not include nearly enough cost-containment and deficit reduction measures.

Specifically, I am concerned about the House bill's potential to limit South Dakotans' access to care when it comes to the impact of Medicaid provisions on South Dakota's state budget, and the reductions in payments for long-term care under Medicare.

These are but two examples of how the House bill falls short on the first goal I laid out — access to care. But underlying these and other issues is a fundamental concern about the effect of the House bill on the nation's long term deficit, and more specifically, my view that it doesn't do enough to start

bringing down the deficit and health care costs in the long term. As President Obama noted earlier this year, quote: "If we do nothing to slow these skyrocketing costs, we will eventually be spending more on Medicare and Medicaid than every other government program combined. Put simply, our health care problem is our deficit problem. Nothing else even comes close." He's right. Skyrocketing long-term costs will bankrupt the Medicare trust fund by 2017 — and that's just part of the problem we need to fix.

But when it comes to the net change in the federal budgetary commitment to health care, the House bill is seven times greater in budgetary commitment of dollars than the Senate Finance Committee bill, while falling far short of the long-term cost containment in the Senate bill. In my view, any bill with such a significant increase should have a similar commitment to cost containment. Otherwise, we'll find ourselves in the same situation we find ourselves in with Medicare — an essential program for South Dakotans that is going broke because we can't make the

tough choices now and are putting those choices off until we face an immediate crisis. That's not reform, that's a recipe for fiscal disaster.

Now, the House bill does include a number of good provisions on which the vast majority of South Dakotans I have talked to agree. For instance, I strongly support provisions in this bill to require insurance companies to cover people with preexisting conditions, and to end the insurance companies' ability to cancel coverage when someone becomes sick. These practices must end. I was surprised and dismayed to see that the House Republican proposal that we also voted on refuses to end the unconscionable practice of denying coverage for pre-existing conditions. The Congress will ultimately agree on a bill that ends this practice. In addition, I support establishing health insurance exchanges to provide a transparent and competitive marketplace for individuals and businesses to buy more affordable health care plans.

Unfortunately, in my view the House bill did not come far enough from where it started, and the bill does not represent the right formula for South Dakota. Nonetheless, I am very optimistic that, with the House and Senate working together

with the president, we will achieve a good bill for South Dakota during this Congress. The time has come for fundamental reform.

Again — I believe the Congress has a responsibility to pass health care reform legislation that is deficit neutral, that ensures access, fairness and affordability of coverage for South Dakotans, and that takes a responsible approach to long-term costs with a focus on

achieving higher quality health care outcomes. The House bill met some of these goals but not all, and I couldn't support it. I remain steadfastly committed to improving this legislation and I am optimistic that through the legislative process we will achieve what South Dakotans deserve, which is a fiscally responsible and sustainable reform of the health care system that will dramatically improve coverage and quality for all.

## PLAIN TALK

Since 1884  
Official County, City and School District Newspaper  
201 W. Cherry, Vermillion, SD 57069  
Publication No. USPS 657-720

Editor: David Lias

Published weekly by YANKTON MEDIA, Inc.  
Periodicals postage paid at Vermillion, SD 57069.

Subscription rates for the Plain Talk by mail are \$27.56 a year in the city of Vermillion. Subscriptions in Clay, Turner, Union and Yankton counties are \$41.34 per year. Elsewhere in South Dakota, subscriptions are \$44.52, and out-of-state subscriptions are \$42.  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Plain Talk, 201 West Cherry Street, Vermillion, SD 57069.

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