

VIEWPOINTS

The consequences of our actions last November

The Washington Post points out that Rep. Kristi Noem (R-SD) is sort of in a tough spot right now.

Here's the thing, however — a great portion of our state's population is in the same predicament.

In other words, Noem should feel in good company as she finds herself in an uneasy political situation.

The Post notes that, right at the time the federal government shutdown began in early October, a devastating blizzard roared through western South Dakota.

Noem can't control the weather, but she is an active participant in the shutdown, which, as this is being written, has yet to be solved.

The story, written by Joann Weiner, notes that normally, cattle ranchers would go to the local office of the USDA Farm Service Agency to file claims for their losses. They generally have 30 days to apply.

Now, however, those farm offices are closed because of the government shutdown. When offices are closed, claims can't be filed. And if claims can't be filed,

BETWEEN THE LINES



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assistance can't be paid. But, Weiner notes, the happenings in South Dakota may not be Noem's biggest problem. Weiner contends that our representative's biggest challenge may be convincing her fellow Republicans that support for South Dakota ranchers is an exception to the rule that the federal government is spending too much of the American taxpayers' hard-earned money.

A week ago, Noem went to the floor of the House of Representatives and insisted that the federal government help ranchers due to the "unprecedented" nature of the blizzard that blew through our state.

Weiner notes the unfortunate timing of Noem's request. Her plea for additional

federal spending comes at a time when Congress hasn't approved any federal spending at all, thus the federal shutdown.

Weiner writes that, in many ways, Noem has brought this problem upon herself. She's part of the group of House Republicans who in September refused to fund the federal government unless the Democrats agreed either to defund or to delay implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

That contention can be extended to include we South Dakotans. A majority of us who participated in the last general election, after getting an idea of Noem's political philosophy and her abilities in Washington, DC as she finished her first term, decided to give her more time. Even though by now we all knew that Noem's allegiance at times seems to be with the Republicans powers-that-be in Washington rather than us folks here in South Dakota.

The Sioux Falls Argus Leader, in its editorial last November endorsing Noem's re-election, noted that our

representative was working in the polarized atmosphere in Congress, "but she still must learn that in South Dakota, representing the people doesn't always mean toeing the party line. Those politicians that have served before Noem created a tradition of independence for a reason, and she has yet to find that point."

The Argus noted that South Dakota needs Noem to lead in breaking down political barriers and building bridges as she works hard for her state and nation.

The Argus also suggested Noem should figure out her committee work and show up for her meetings because, despite what she and others may say, that work is important.

"In the end, she needs to dig deeper into issues that lie at the heart of our values and forget about being on message for national party leaders; we don't need her to tell us what they believe," stated the Argus endorsement.

Our ranching neighbors in West River are hurting big time right now. Why Noem believes that she can somehow serve as

effective voice in trying to secure federal aid for them while her entire Congressional career has been devoted to voting against nearly all federal spending is a bit of a mystery.

It's an attitude, however, that seems to be growing in our state. It is easy to forget just how dependent we are on the federal government, on how, disaster or not, our state receives more money back from Washington than we send to the federal treasury.

And yet, we continue to rail against federal spending. We send people to Washington who will do that regressive work for us. Like Noem, we tend to be against federal spending until we are for it. And, we stubbornly believe things should go our way. No need to bother with that "breaking down political barriers and bridge building" stuff.

We hope our ranchers get the federal assistance they need to get back on their feet. We fear, however, that such help may be fleeting at best, thanks, in part, to the decisions we all made in voting booths last November.

SD EDITORIAL ROUNDUP

Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, Oct. 15, 2013

Mount Rushmore vital to economy

Mount Rushmore National Memorial reopened Oct. 14, thanks to Gov. Dennis Daugaard and a group of private donors who are paying to keep the memorial open during the partial shutdown of the federal government.

When the National Park Service closed the memorial to visitors on Oct. 1, Daugaard offered to use state funding to keep it open. The park service refused the offer.

The White House eventually agreed to let states keep national parks open using state funds. Daugaard said the state would pay \$15,200 per day to keep Mount Rushmore open to visitors. The funds will come from various private donors who have pledged to "buy a day" of operating the memorial.

Paying \$15,200 a day to open Mount Rushmore is a bargain. A 2011 NPS report found that national parks in South Dakota receive more than 3.8 million visitors a year who spend \$165 million in nearby communities and support 2,651 jobs. That's more than \$450,000 a day to the state and Black Hills economy — \$15,200 is cheap by comparison.

We applaud the administration for its change in policy that saw a heavy-handed approach to the shutdown. National parks and memorials, even those that normally are not gated, were barricaded to the public.

Mount Rushmore had even put up orange traffic cones to prevent tour buses and other visitors from using pullouts on Highway 244 to see the presidential faces. Gov. Daugaard protested the move, and the cones were removed. A park service official said the cones were put up because the agency didn't have enough staff to monitor the pullouts, and that they were being removed because of safety concerns.

We are skeptical of the park service's motives. In 2011, during another budget crisis, the National Park Service wrote to Gov. Daugaard, requesting South Dakota Highway Patrol roadblocks at both ends of state Highway 244 to prevent anyone from driving past the memorial and seeing Mount Rushmore from the highway.

Daugaard responded by offering instead to use state resources to keep Mount Rushmore open.

Past experience tells us that the park service is more interested in public inconvenience during a shutdown than public safety.

Let's get something straight: Mount Rushmore is owned by the taxpayers and the public, not the National Park Service, which needs to be reminded who serves whom.

We applaud Gov. Daugaard, the private donors and, yes, the National Park Service for cooperating to reopen Mount Rushmore to the public.

The Daily Republic, Mitchell, Oct. 14, 2013

Ability is key in coaching

A woman will be a head coach of the sophomore boys' basketball team at Mitchell High School this season, leaving us to ask just one question:

What took so long?

The Daily Republic reported Oct. 12 that Erin Olson has asked for a transfer of her extracurricular duties, from assistant girls' varsity basketball coach to head sophomore boys' basketball coach. The school board finalized the move at its meeting Oct. 14, and Olson will now join the MHS boys' program.

Olson has all of the credentials needed for the job. She was a star player for MHS from 1991 to 1994, playing point guard for four years during Mitchell's most successful girls' basketball era.

She helped the Kernels to four state title games and two state championships before playing collegiately at the University of Wyoming and then the University of Minnesota.

She played professionally and coached in the collegiate ranks and also has worked at various high-level basketball camps. She is a teacher in Mitchell.

Her game-winning, last-second basket in the semifinals of the 1994 state championship is to this day one of Mitchell High's all-time sports highlights.

To us, she's a natural to coach any basketball team, and we commend the school board for approving an idea that just a generation ago would have been considered outlandish.

caglecartoons.com



The attitude of gratitude

I grew up in a household where ingratitude was intolerable. No whining was permitted. If we did not demonstrate our thankfulness, we were reprimanded, spanked or sent to our rooms.

In today's world, it's a rare delight to witness a child's gratitude over necessities, like food, clothing and shelter.

Part of the problem is we try too hard to make our kids and grandkids happy and in return, all we want is their gratitude. But gratitude is not something we can buy at the store or order online and have delivered to our doors.

Gratitude is a mindset a learned behavior that considers all things with appreciation and thankfulness.

In the book "How Gratitude Can Make You Happier," author Robert Emmons suggests that "gratitude is the foundation of fullness."

Scientists have found that regular grateful thinking increases our happiness. Doing something as simple as keeping a gratitude journal helps us sleep better sleep and energize us.

Although, passing on an attitude of gratitude to the younger generations is easier said than done.

In the Gospel of Luke, there's a story about how Jesus heals 10 people of leprosy.

There are different approaches to understanding the meaning of this passage, but for me the main message is twofold: believing good can come

MY STORY YOUR STORY



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What made them so bold? After all, they had spent most of their lives hidden from society, self-conscious and unloved. They probably were afraid but their faith overrides their fear.

Because without faith, they would have stayed at home. Without faith they would not have gone to meet Jesus; nor would have they cried out for help and healing.

Without faith, their doubt would have confounded them with unanswerable questions: What shall we say? What if he rejects us? Will he even notice us?

Instead, with their belief that Jesus would receive them, the lepers called out to Him across a boundary line required by law that quarantined lepers at a distance from others.

Jesus noticed the 10 lepers, heard their plea for healing and told them to go to the Temple to get their

out of the most hopeless situations and possessing an attitude of gratitude can be instantaneously life changing.

Even though the lepers were contagious and disfigured by awful skin rashes, they were bold in bringing their troubles to Jesus.

certificates for a "Clean Bill of Health," so they could begin living a normal life as members of society.

On their way to the temple, the 10 began to experience healing as their symptoms disappeared. One of the 10, so overcome with gratitude, turned around and went back to thank Jesus.

Actor, comedian and economist Ben Stein once said, "I cannot tell you how to be rich, but I can tell you how to feel rich and that is to be grateful. It's the only totally reliable get-rich-quick scheme ever."

Martin Luther said, "For whoever believes has everything from God and is happy and rich." With an attitude of gratitude in all things, "our fears disappear and abundance appears."

There's an old legend about a young man roaming the desert who came across a spring of delicious crystal-clear water. The water was so sweet he filled his leather canteen so he could bring some back to a tribal elder who was his teacher.

The old man who took a deep drink, smiled warmly and thanked his student lavishly for the sweet water.

Later, when the teacher let another student taste the water, the student spat it out saying, "Master, the water was foul. Why did you pretend to like it?"

The teacher replied, "You only tasted the water. I tasted the gift."

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