

OPINION

FIRST AMENDMENT “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

OUR VIEW

Witness to the damage

Mother Nature’s extreme conditions often get attention. That’s certainly been the case in Minnesota this month as much of the state experienced higher than usual rainfall causing flooding from Borderland to the Iowa border. The attention has come in the form of media outlets that have showcased the cooperative and coordinated flood relief efforts of this community as well as the natural resources that have drawn and/or kept many of us living, working and playing in Borderland. But the most valuable attention may have come in the form of visits by state and federal officials. We’ve played host to stops by Gov. Mark Dayton, as well as all three of our area’s congressional delegation. They’ve met with local officials, talked with volunteers and viewed the damage the high water has caused. With the crest this week of Rainy Lake, we will move toward recovery efforts and it’s at this stage those visits may show their true value. The widespread damage in Minnesota ranges from flooded fields with ruined crops in the south, to resorts which have lost docks, decks and customers in the north. To qualify for federal disaster relief, the state will need to be able to prove \$7.3 million in damage, mostly to public infrastructure such as roads and bridges. State officials say the cost of clean up will be factored in, as well as overtime

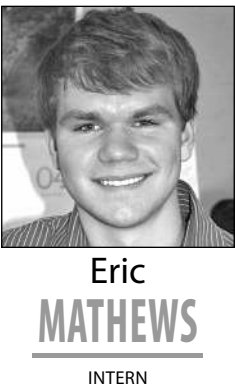
costs for emergency personnel, and the general impact on community budgets. The cost of accessing critical facilities such as utilities, hospitals, schools and fire and police departments will also be considered statewide. The state issued June 19 an emergency declaration for 35 counties, but Emergency Services Director Kris Eide has reported more counties likely will be added. Nearly 50 of the state’s 87 counties have reported flood damage. With the approximate \$108,000 Koochiching County has spent in the last couple weeks just in sand and sandbags, it’s very likely the statewide threshold for federal relief will be exceeded. It’s now obvious the \$3 million set aside by the Legislature this year to cover potential storm damage won’t be enough to handle the damage caused by this spring’s storms and flooding. Dayton said he could consider a special session of the Legislature to consider how to address flooding issues. Last year, a special session was called to consider a flood relief program that would offer forgivable, no-interest loans to flood victims willing to stay in their homes for 10 years. In what form or from what source flood relief will come is yet to be determined, but we’re glad our state and federal representatives have witnessed the damage statewide and appear ready to provide a hand to help in recovery.



The future is here and now

If you ever wanted a cool high-tech watch straight out James Bond, now is the time. Now you will be able to do everything you can on your smart phone on your smart watch. Google announced at a conference that Android Wear smart watches are now available to consumers. These smart watches are capable of running a special version of Android, and can connect to your phone to perform a number of tasks such as play music, answer calls, reply to texts, view weather information, run fitness apps, and yes, tell time. The new smart watches are available in a number of sizes, styles, and prices, so they are ideal for a range of people. The Moto360 is one that stands out as not looking like just a big computer on your wrist. It has a simple, circular design to look like current watches

today, and while it is in time-telling mode, most people would be hard-pressed to even notice that it is actually a wearable device instead of your average ordinary wrist watch. The smart watches also include voice control, so with the help of special apps, the wearer can tell the watch to do anything from order a pizza to call a cab. Voice control is actually centered around the watches so people don’t have to strain themselves looking and



Eric MATHIEWS
INTERN

tapping on small buttons to get where they want to go. The watches are also capable of talking back to the user to do things such as read you alerts from your phone, or remind you when you have a meeting. Navigation is made easier than ever with the smart watches. Getting directions is as easy as saying “OK Google, navigate to...” and saying your destination. The watch can give you turn-by-turn directions as well as tell you how long your travel will take. Android Wear devices are also designed with fitness nuts in mind. The watches include pedometers, heart rate monitors, and fitness apps. This goes above and beyond regular fitness watches because of their ability to do much more than track physical progress. All Android Wear is also water and dust resistant, so you

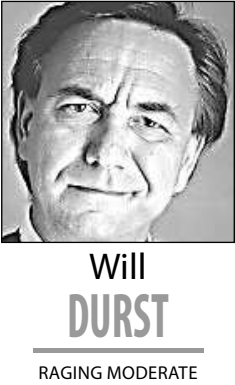
don’t have to worry about destroying your device when it rains or it gets dirty. It is also possible for you to control other screens in your home using the wearable devices. With the right combination of devices, someone could do anything from change the channel on the TV to control home security systems with a push of a button, wherever you may be. All of this is made possible if you have a compatible Android smart phone, and the money for a new watch. The possibilities are endless with new apps for these devices, someday it may even be possible to look up where the fish are biting using your watch. The Android Wear smart watches, made by LG and Samsung, are available now. Motorola’s Moto360 will be available later this summer.

GUEST COLUMN

The Washington Treaty Breakers

You don’t hear much about the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office. And that, my friends, is a good thing. Usually this federal office is as controversial as parsley wrapped celery. On a 1-10 scale of boring, patent law has to rate about a 3,000. That’s normally. But today this obscure agency has thrown football fans into raging fits. Real football. Where guys in helmets use their hands to throw or carry some spheroid object. Not faux football, where athletes direct a round ball with their feet. In a 2-1 ruling, the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board stripped the Washington Redskins of six trademark registrations after concluding the football team’s name was disparaging to Native Americans, and thus in violation of laws banning offensive language. Although to many Americans it’s the locational part of the name that is most repugnant. Especially those Americans known to party with cups of tea. The USPTO made a similar ruling back in 1999, but it was overturned, and may

very well be again. Because as we all know, the government is fond of doing the same thing over and over and over again. Expecting different results. Conservatives fear this kind of political correctness will snowball, causing many nicknames to be spurned. For instance: should the Pittsburgh Pirates be compelled to switch their name because it’s offensive to families who have been pillaged? The Green Bay Packers due to folks harboring nightmares concerning broken lamps? The commissioners could forestall this movement by declaring all sports teams be named after marsupials. What about the Fighting Irish? Does



Will DURST
RAGING MODERATE

anybody really think that drunken Leprechauns with fists cocked are responsible role models for today’s university students? The Utah Jazz is an odious appellation to anybody possessing a modicum of musical taste. And the name of the state of Oklahoma is Choctaw for red people. Should they be forced to repeal their name or can we just get rid of the state altogether? How about individuals? Doesn’t the same logic mandate that anybody named Manson or Hitler alter their name so as not to remind victims’ relatives of their grisly crimes? Adolf? Charlie? What about Bush? Clinton? Kardashians? And if Daniel Snyder, the owner of the 3rd most valuable NFL franchise, according to Forbes Magazine, does cave to the rising cries of boycott, which direction will he head? Reportedly, the team has already filed for the trademark of Washington Warriors, but that doesn’t really distill the essence of the town. The Senators won’t work. Baseball tried and it depressed the players so much the team was forced to move. Twice.

He could capture the true spirit of the town with... the Washington Slippery Slopes. The Ethical Sliders. Corrupters. Prevaricators. The Hogs works and even has sentimental ties. If you want intimidating, how about the Washington Lobbyists? The Patent Lawyers. Under Secretaries. The Filibusterers. The Kickbacks has a vague football feel. The Mindless Horde. The Red Inks wouldn’t necessitate the need to buy new letters for the stadium exterior. But, if honoring the proud indigenous nations of America is, as the team claims, the actual goal, how about the Washington Treaty Breakers. Or the Plague Blankets- which is pretty damn scary. And finally, to keep the natural rivalry with the Dallas Cowboys intact- the Washington Barbed Wires. Durst is an award-winning, nationally acclaimed political comic. His columns are distributed by the Cagle Cartoons Inc. syndicate.

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