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Date: 5/10/2016 9:20:22 AM  
Subject: SC Front Pages – Tuesday, May 10, 2016

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SC Front Pages – Tuesday, May 10, 2016

# The Post and Courier

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Tuesday, May 10, 2016

POSTANDCOURIER.COM

Charleston, S.C. \$1.00

## Man who shot, buried 2 to be freed

Plan to make self-defense argument in Goose Creek slayings helps sway judge

BY ANDREW KNAPP  
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**MONCK'S CORNER** — A Goose Creek resident panicked earlier this year after fatally shooting two intruders in his home, so he burned and buried their bodies in his backyard instead of calling police, his attorney

said. James Edward Loftis' eagerness to make the self-defense argument in court helped sway a judge Monday to grant bail to the 39-year-old as he prepares for trial on a pair of murder charges. He fatally shot taxi driver Guma Oz Dubar, 46, and James Cody Newland,



Loftis

32, on March 5 at his house on South Pandora Drive.

Loftis was expected to post \$250,000 bail and be freed sometime this week, said his attorney, Stephen Harris of Charleston.

The case poses new questions about the S.C. Protection of Persons and Property Act, a "stand your ground" law that gives homeowners the right in many cir-

cumstances to use deadly force against people breaking into their houses.

Authorities have said Loftis' account of the episode has varied, but his attorney insisted that one aspect has remained constant: the two people he shot had confronted him in his own home. He did, though, call his client's actions afterward "heinous."

"He's a human being," Harris said. "He freaked out and thought he was going to prison, so he tried to hide the bodies. Nobody knows how you're going to react when you kill two people."

Circuit Judge Markley Dennis weighed various factors, including facts of the case and whether Loftis is a flight risk or a danger to the community, in considering bail during a hearing Monday in the Berkeley County Courthouse.

Loftis' emerging self-defense plea indicates that it's likely he won't run away, the judge noted.

"The only way he will ever be able to resolve that is to ... have his day in court," Dennis said.

Please see **LOFTIS**, Page A6

## School board to close Lincoln despite outcry

OKs tax hike in packed, emotional meeting; Jane Edwards to stay open



WADE SPEARS/STAFF

Supporters of Jane Edwards Elementary School on Edisto Island made their case both at the podium during public comments and in the audience during Monday night's Charleston County School Board meeting. The board voted to keep the small school open, while Lincoln Middle-High School is closing at the end of this school year.

BY DEANNA PAN  
dpans@postandcourier.com

The Charleston County School Board voted to raise taxes to avoid another disastrous, multimillion-dollar budget shortfall, but not before closing a historically black neighborhood school.

During a crowded and raucous special meeting Monday evening, the board voted 6-3 to shutter 62-year-old Lincoln Middle-High School in rural McClellanville at the end of this school year. The board also voted 6-3 on a proposal to raise the commercial property tax rate equal to an additional \$600 tax on a \$1 million property.

The tax increase will sunset at the end of three years. Board members Michael Miller, Eric Mack and Chris Collins opposed the motion to close Lincoln; Collins, Todd Garrett and Tripp Wiles opposed the tax increase.

Please see **SCHOOL**, Page A6

## Rejection of Trump bad for Graham?

Observers: Reversal on GOP vow unlikely to hurt him politically

BY GAVIN JACKSON  
gjackson@postandcourier.com

**COLUMBIA** — Despite backtracking on his pledge to support the GOP presidential nominee, Sen. Lindsey Graham is not expected to suffer much fallout from party leaders or voters at the ballot box in 2020, some political observers say.

**Inside**  
Anxiety over Trump cuts into House GOP's support. **Page A7**

Citadel political scientist Scott Buchanan said he believes that even with Graham denouncing the presumptive GOP nominee, Donald Trump, voters who backed Trump are relatively new and shouldn't affect Graham's future reelection chances. What's not so clear is what swing voters will do, Buchanan added.

Please see **GRAHAM**, Page A7

## Fire throws wrench in wedding, party plans

Couples who reserved Citadel Beach Club now left scrambling

BY DIANE KNICH  
dknich@postandcourier.com

Ten days before the beachfront wedding of Elena Guidry's dreams, a devastating fire closed The Citadel Beach Club, leaving her scrambling for a new venue.

The blaze broke out in the early morning hours Sunday, caused extensive damage and indefinitely closed the popular event venue, which spans 3 acres of oceanfront property on Isle of Palms.

Guidry, who is 27 and a nurse from Rock Hill, learned about the fire in an email from The Citadel around 1 p.m. Sunday.

"In my wildest dreams, I couldn't have imagined something like this happening," she said. "I'm trying to hold it together, but I might have a complete meltdown."

Please see **FIRE**, Page A6

### Inside



**SPORTS**  
Ladson youth get baseball field, tips from Cal Ripken. **C1**

### LOCAL

Slain senator's family receives posthumous degree. **A4**

### BUSINESS

Leader of huge loan fraud in South Carolina gets 3 years. **B1**

## Justice sues N.C. over restroom law

Calls transgender rule 'state-sponsored discrimination'

BY EMERY P. DALESIO  
AND GARY D. ROBERTSON  
Associated Press

**RALEIGH** — A potentially epic clash over transgender rights took shape Monday when the U.S. Justice Department sued North Carolina over the state's bathroom law after the governor refused to back down.

In unusually forceful language, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said North Carolina's law requiring transgender people to use

### Inside

Berkeley school board to get advice on transgender issue. **Page A3**

public restrooms and showers corresponding to the gender on their birth certificate amounts to "state-sponsored discrimination" and is aimed at "a problem that doesn't exist."

"What this law does is inflict further indignity on a population that has already suffered far more than its fair share," she said, speaking directly to residents of her native state. "This law provides no benefit to society, and all it does is harm innocent Americans." Billions of dollars in federal aid

for North Carolina — and a potentially landmark decision regarding the reach of the nation's civil rights laws — are at stake in the dispute, which in recent weeks has triggered boycotts and cancellations aimed at pressuring the state into repealing the measure.

Last week, the U.S. Justice Department said the law amounts to illegal sex discrimination and gave Gov. Pat McCrory until Monday to say he would refuse to enforce it. When the deadline arrived, a defiant McCrory instead sued the federal government, arguing that the state law is a "commonsense privacy policy" and that the Justice Department's position is "baseless and blatant overreach."

Please see **LGST**, Page A7



Partly cloudy.  
High 85, Low 65.  
Complete 5-day  
forecast, **B10**

Bridge — B9 Crossword — B6, C9 Sports — C1  
Business — B1 Editorials — A8 Sudoku — B7  
Classifieds — C5 Movies — B7 Television — B6  
Comics — B9, 9 Obscurities — B4 Health — D1

**Charleston Deals today**

**Garden & Gun**  
\$10 for year subscription (6 issues)  
See **A2**





**CLASS 4A GIRLS SOCCER**

Lexington girls defeat James Island, will be playing for state title, **1B**

**CLASS 3A GIRLS SOCCER**

Chapin girls triumph over A.C. Flora for a shot at the state title, **3B**

TUESDAY MAY 10 2016

\$1.00

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FORECAST, BC

# The State

**THE COLUMBIA FLOOD**

## Failed Fort Jackson dam target of \$20 million suit



The remains of Semmes Lake at Fort Jackson after the lake drained away in October's flooding.

Semmes Lake dam contributed to flood misery at King's Grant, property owners say

Army dam received poor marks in inspection

Fort Jackson, Army leaders have been largely quiet about dam failure

BY SAMMY FRETWELL  
[sfretwell@thestate.com](mailto:sfretwell@thestate.com)

Property owners near Fort Jackson are seeking up to \$20 million from the federal government for what they say is the U.S. Army's failure to maintain a dam that burst during last fall's historic flooding and rain-

fall in Columbia.

A federal lawsuit filed Monday says water rushed off the Army training base after the Semmes Lake dam failed, causing more than a dozen homes in the King's Grant neighborhood to flood the morning of Oct. 4.

The lawsuit, the first filed against Fort Jackson since the storm, says the fort knew for

two years that the Semmes Lake dam posed a "serious hazard," but did not make repairs to the 1940s-era structure or warn the public of the dangers. Federal inspectors cited problems with the dam in 2013, records show.

An inspector with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said deficiencies outlined in the 2013 inspection "may have led to the failure" of the Semmes Lake dam, according to an email obtained by The State newspaper in January.

Pete Strom, an attorney representing the King's Grant property owners, said there's little

SEE FLOOD, 7A



### SPORTS ENDORSEMENTS ON THE TRUMP TRAIN

No one has leveraged athletic relationships like Donald Trump, whose politics, strategy and personality match some of his backers, **1B**



### PRESIDENTIAL RACE PRIMARY DAY



Jennifer Pinckney and her daughters Eliana and Malana receive Rev. Clementa Pinckney's posthumous degree at the National Cathedral in Washington Monday.

### SEN. CLEMENTA PINCKNEY

## Doctorate helps slain pastor's legacy live on









## CLEMSON BASEBALL, 1C COACH: I LOVE 'EM ALL



## LIFESTYLE, 1D Cuba's impressive health care

# The Greenville News

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

TUESDAY,  
MAY 10, 2016  
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

USA TODAY RYAN SAYS HE WOULD STEP DOWN AS CONVENTION CHAIR IF TRUMP ASKS PAGE 1B

## Downtown trolley expansion eyed

Neighborhoods lining up  
to get added to service

ERIC CONNOR

ECONNOR@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

The sound of the trolley bell has been a staple of downtown Greenville for 10 years now, ever since the Greenville Drive invested in them as a novel way to transport fans within tight city confines.

The trolleys' use as a neighborhood service started out as an experiment a decade ago.

On days when there wasn't a game, the trolleys, driven by city public works employees, would travel the length of Main Street, a way to showcase downtown. But they needed a place to turn around, so they found their way through

the edge of the North Main community along historic Earle Street.

That experiment turned out to be an unforeseen success — and now more communities who see the trolleys as neighborhood perk want in.

The city poised to oblige them, but exactly where is up in the air.

In its budget for the coming year, the city is planning to set aside almost \$137,000 as part of its contribution to buy two new trolleys and fund operation to expand neighborhood service.

The routes haven't been determined and likely wouldn't go into effect until next year, said Mark Rickards, director of the city-contracted Greenlink transit organization, which took over operation of trolleys when the system evolved and uses a mix of city and federal money.

The first step, Rickards said, is buying the two new trolleys, which would resemble the current trolleys in service but be a little more accessible and hold a few less people than the 30 or so that can fit now in trolleys that run from Earle Street to Fluor Field.

One area has emerged at the center of the discussion for new neighborhood service — the Augusta Road area.

City Councilman David Sudduth, who represents the area, said his district has been asking for trolley service for years. One neighborhood, Alta Vista, has put it on the top of its wish list in community surveys, he said.

It's a peculiar demographic for public transportation. The Augusta Road area is one of the wealthiest in a city that for years has been struggling to have the public buy into using public transit.

However, the trolley's are desirable, perhaps because they have an association with being fun much like golf carts that are popular in the area, Sudduth said.

"There's a stigma attached to buses, which is really unfortunate because the trolleys serve as a transportation mode like buses do," he said.

The area the remaining trolley would serve is less certain.

When the city began discussion extension of service earlier this year, Sudduth said he advocated for Augusta Road to send a message that the city should buy trolleys and expand coverage areas.

The second route, he said, would be up for further consideration.

Councilwoman Lillian Brock Fleming said any second new trolley should

See TROLLEY, Page 5A

### HIGHWAY TRAGEDY



Tears flow and hugs console as family and friends attend a vigil Monday for Megan Mullinax, 25, Kandice Broome, 14, and Furman Broome, 9, who died in a head-on collision Sunday. The vigil was held at the Washington Avenue Baptist Church.

## Community grieves loss of three family members

ROMANDO DIXSON  
AND RON BARNETT  
STAFF WRITERS

Megan Mullinax, Kandice Broome and Furman Broome spent part of Mother's Day at Bald Rock, driving there on a whim.

They sent pictures to their families, sharing their experience as they enjoyed one of the Upstate's most scenic settings. On the way back to Greenville, tragedy struck near the entrance to Ta-



Family and friends attend a vigil for Megan

Sunshine Broome said. "She was a happy person. She would make you smile." Additional grief counselors were at the Broomes' schools Monday to help students cope with the deaths.

Paula Stewart, a friend of the family, said Mullinax was a wonderful person who was loved by lots of people.

"She had a big heart," Stewart said. The three occupants of the Honda Pilot were taken to Greenville Memorial Hospital in serious condition Sunday, the Highway Patrol said. They were not identified

## Humanists to appeal ruling on grad prayer

NATHANIEL CARY  
NCARY@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

A federal appeals court judge will hear oral arguments Tuesday in an appeal by the American Humanist Association to a U.S. District Court ruling last year that partially upheld the practice of prayer at graduation ceremonies and the ability by the Greenville County School District to hold school-wide events at religious institutions.

The case was brought against the Greenville County School District in 2013 by AHA on behalf of a fifth-grade student who attended Mountain View Elementary School in Taylors.

U.S. District Judge Bruce Howe Hendricks ruled last year that the school district could allow students who are selected to speak at graduation to use their own First Amendment right to pray.

Mountain View Elementary held its 2013 graduation in the chapel at North Greenville University, where religious items were on display inside the chapel.

The lawsuit claims the student's parents are non-theists and raised their daughter as a non-theist. The 2013 ceremony included two prayers, and "although against her sincerely held convictions, Jill (a placeholder name) bowed her head too. She was afraid she would be in trouble if she did not participate and did not want to stand out," the appeals brief says.

Her parents felt she was "coerced" into participating, according to the brief, and that the school's endorsement of Christianity during the ceremony "alienated and stigmatized" them, according to the lawsuit.

The school district selected students to pray at graduations from 1951-2013, and included the prayers as a scheduled part of its graduation programs at all schools, according to court filings. In 2013, it changed its prayer policy, allowing students to pray if they chose but not making the prayers a scheduled





# Aiken Standard

YOUR LOCAL NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1867

TUESDAY, May 10, 2016

AIKENSTANDARD.COM

Vol. 150, No. 131 Aiken, S.C. ★ ★ 75¢

## Mall property sold for \$3M

### Augusta developer buys Aiken Mall site, Outback parcel

BY MICHAEL SMITH  
msmith@aikenstandard.com

An Augusta developer that's revamping the struggling Aiken Mall into an outdoor, mixed-use shopping and dining hub bought the property Monday for a fraction of its appraised value, according to Aiken County property records.

Southeastern Development Associates, which does business as Ramp G Partners LLC, paid

\$3,025,000 for the Aiken Mall property, documents filed with the Aiken County Register of Mesne Conveyance show.

Victor "Vic" Mills, CEO of Southeastern Development, said in an interview Thursday with the *Aiken Standard* that his firm also is acquiring the Dillard's property, which is independently owned.

A deed for the Dillard's transaction had not been recorded as of Monday, a representative

with the Aiken County Register of Mesne Conveyance office said.

The Dillard's property consists of 9.57 acres and was last appraised at \$4.4 million. Its most current owner is identified in property records as Mercantile Kansas City Inc.

Mills said redevelopment of the Aiken Mall would resemble the transformation that took place at The Mall at Shelter Cove in Hilton Head Island.

The Mall at Shelter Cove was struggling, much like the Aiken Mall, with only a few tenants remaining open.

The Mall at Shelter Cove redeveloped into Shelter Cove Towne Centre, which today has a waiting list for tenants, Hilton Head Island officials said.

"At best, we were looking at a Costco type of

Please see MALL, Page 10A

## Council OKs first vote for road fee

BY DAN BROWN  
dbrown@aikenstandard.com

A proposed \$20 vehicle maintenance fee is just a drop in the bucket when it comes to dealing with the sour state of Aiken's city roads, according to City Council.

Aiken City Council approved the first of two votes to implement an annual vehicle maintenance fee during its

Monday meeting, earmarked to help fund a new roads program that City Manager John Klimm said the City desperately needs.

After years of inactivity, Council is faced with a crisis involving its city roads and infrastructure.

"We have done so well as a city in so many areas, but there are two areas where we have not done so well — our infrastructure and our City roads," said Klimm. "The fact is, we need a roads program."

If the ordinance passes a second vote and a public hearing, the \$20 fee will be levied against owners of the 23,600 vehicles titled inside the city limits.

"We are literally a city that has no debt," Klimm said. "While that is a great thing, if we can borrow money at 2 percent, we should borrow that money to repair our roads."

The City of Aiken has 367 miles of roads in the city limits, with the City owning 90 miles of these roads. The other 277 miles of Aiken City roads are owned by either the County or the state.

Please see FEE, Page 10A

### AREA DEATHS

Barbara Alexis Ostrowski, Aiken  
Victor W. "Vic" Johnson, Aiken  
Annie Frazier, Graniteville  
Yolanda L. Ebel, Aiken  
Martha Ann Altman Gooding, Crockerville  
Vernelle D. Best, Ward  
Virginia "Ginny" Foster Peterson, Aiken

Deaths and Funerals, 6A

### WEATHER

## Wagener reacts to farm aid



STAFF PHOTO BY CHRISTINA CLEVELAND

Local farmer Clint Brown said this 40-acre field he rents off Highway 389 in the Wagener-Salley area experienced an erosion problem, with water coming out of the field and heading to a nearby home.

## Residents hope Haley reconsiders possible veto

BY CHRISTINA CLEVELAND  
ccleveland@aikenstandard.com

WAGENER — Aiken County residents affected by last fall's flooding say they hope Gov. Nikki Haley reconsiders vetoing a bill that, if passed, would provide relief for South Carolina farmers who suffered losses from the historic rainfall.

During the state Republican Party convention held Saturday, Haley said she would veto the legislature's farm aid bill, multiple state news outlets have reported.

"I will not support any bailout of any industry over any other industry that has suffered from this thousand-year flood," Haley said Saturday. "I will not support any bailout of any industry."

badly for farmers, she feels badly for small businesses, too, and farmers shouldn't be treated differently."

South Carolina Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weatherly told *The Post & Courier* of Charleston he disagreed with Haley's position, saying many farmers do not qualify for the aid offered by the federal government.

The House and Senate has overwhelmingly approved the "S.C. Farm Aid Fund," a \$40 million fund for farmers affected by the October flooding, according to Rep. Bill Taylor, R-Aiken, a co-sponsor of the bill.

The fund "will make grants to farmers who have experienced a loss of agricultural commodities of at least 40 percent," states the bill's text.

"As certain as I-20 runs east and west, the legislature will override her veto and the farmers will get the aid they need," Taylor said Monday. "We have farmers out there that are now in bankruptcy or at the absolute end of their first line, so we believe that this is







# the Sumter ITEM

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2 SECTIONS, 18 PAGES | VOL. 121, NO. 172

## SPORTS

### Barons, LMA begin baseball semifinals today

B1

## NATION



### Considering the once unthinkable

More U.S. leaders on board with idea of supervised drug shoot-up sites A6

## DEATHS, B5

Dorothy Dawson Hall  
Susanne Gaymon Rodgers  
Lucy Enter  
Harry Burgess  
William Jenkins Sr.  
Thelma T. Dowell  
James Rambert  
Steven A. Davis  
Edith Christmas

## WEATHER, A10

### ANOTHER WARM DAY

Warm with clouds and sun; humid tonight  
HIGH 86, LOW 65

## INSIDE

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# Teen arrested in recent string of auto break-ins

Officials urge caution after 5 law enforcement vehicles targeted

## FROM STAFF REPORTS

Sumter County Sheriff's Office arrested a 19-year-old man on April 29 for allegedly breaking into five law enforcement vehicles in early April, a sheriff's office news release said.

Nathan W. Pratt, of 3915 Third Ave. in Mayesville, also faces charges for allegedly breaking into civilian vehicles throughout the



PRATT

city and county.

According to a news release from Sumter Police Department, detectives think Pratt and accomplices primarily targeted SUVs and pickup trucks at night and early in the morning but broke into any vehicle with valuables in clear view.

Overall, more than 30 firearms, a

number of electronic devices and other items were reportedly stolen during the string of break-ins.

Some of the items, including law enforcement gear, have already been recovered.

The police department has charged Pratt, also accused of breaking into two police vehicles, with 13 counts of breaking and

SEE BREAK-INS, PAGE A7

# Derby Days races home with \$65K



PHOTOS BY RICK CARPENTER / THE SUMTER ITEM

Derby Days fans react to Nyquist winning the Kentucky Derby on Saturday while watching the race on TV at the event. Derby Days serves as a fundraiser for United Way of Sumter, Clarendon and Lee Counties and included a silent auction.

Below, this "Sumter" painting by Heather Boseman drew attention. See more photos from the event at [www.theitem.com](http://www.theitem.com).

## Event serves as fundraiser for local United Way

BY RICK CARPENTER  
[rick@theitem.com](mailto:rick@theitem.com)

The Derby Days Sumter 2016 event that started out of the gate with a \$20,000 net gain the first year for United Way of Sumter, Clarendon and Lee Counties beat all odds Saturday by clearing at least \$65,000 for the nonprofit organization in its third year.

Danielle Thompson, the volunteer coordinator of the event, said Saturday before the event that she hoped to net \$40,000 this year, which would have been a substantial increase compared to the \$27,000 it raised in 2015.

Mindy Popovich, president of the local United Way, said she felt



"over the moon" about the 140 percent increase in net profit.

The final net profit will not be available until later in the week when all expenses are applied, but

Popovich listed the \$65,000 as a conservative estimate.

More than 300 tickets were sold at \$50 each — although some were part of event sponsorships — but the biggest boost came from live and silent auction items and the sponsorships.

One live auction item, a trip to New York City that included a private jet flight and hotel and restaurant accommodations for four people, sold for \$6,000 in the live auction, and a duplicate trip sold in the silent auction for \$4,500.

For the price of admission, participants received free food and drink with local restaurants donating gourmet food.

There was also a dance on Main Street with a live band. The food vendors included Naomi and Warner/Wen Lily's, Ward's Barbecue, Hamptons, Sidebar and Palmetto Pigeon Plant. People who just wanted to go to the party with a

SEE DERBY DAYS, PAGE A7

# Haze likely not from Canadian fire

BY JIM HILLEY  
[jim@theitem.com](mailto:jim@theitem.com)

Meteorologist Dan Miller of Na-

Instead, he said the haziness is either the result of a prescribed burn Sunday in southwest Sumter County or the result of atmospheric

tions have all of that smoke staying well to our north."

A massive forest fire near Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada, has







# Morning News

TUESDAY MAY 10, 2016

## TODAY'S WEATHER

Warm with times of clouds and sun.  
High 89, low 63.  
DETAILS 2A

www.scnw.com

The Voice of the Pee Dee

75 cents



Joe Perry/Morning News  
Dale Wolf (left), the plant manager of GE Healthcare, and Ted Brown, facility and maintenance leader, look over the southwest parking lot location of a solar farm that is currently under construction off West Radio Drive.

## GE Healthcare going solar

### Construction underway at Florence plant

BY JOE PERRY  
Morning News  
jperry@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — A new solar farm at GE Healthcare is under construction, representing not just an expansion and investment but also substantial cost savings with an eye on renewable energy.

Plant manager Dale Wolf said the project will cost between \$2 million and \$3 million and should be completed by the end

of the month. It will go online in early July.

"It will reduce our power consumption significantly and our burden on resources," Wolf said. "We're a pretty big power user in the area. This will significantly reduce our footprint."

Superconducting magnets used in magnetic resonance imaging machines, or MRIs, are manufactured at the 500,000-square-foot facility on West Radio Drive. Greg Cunningham, who leads human

resources, said GE Healthcare is looking to improve customer support by making more of the MRI machines on-site to bring about a speedier installation for the customer.

"It's one of the ways we're growing here," he said.

In the early 1980s, GE mobile radios were manufactured there, but when that spun off, the site transitioned to health care manufacturing about 30 years ago. Approximately 435 people work

See **SOLAR**, Page 3A

## Florence City Council

# Plans for 'The Grove' advance

BY JOSHUA LLOYD  
Morning News  
jlloyd@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — The Florence City Council moved forward Monday with a developer agreement for "The Grove at Ebenezer," a 240-acre development near Ebenezer and Pine Needle roads that ultimately will include a mix of residential and commercial properties.

The agreement ensures that the city is aware of the type of development and zoning planned for this area, and it allows the developer to know what the city's expectations are when establishing the development.

"Unlike your typical zoning, this is a very large development that's going to involve a mix use of commercial and different types of residential space," Florence Mayor Stephen J. Wukela said. "This planned development district addresses all of that."

See **GROVE**, Page 4A

## UP, UP AND AWAY



Joshua Lloyd/Morning News  
Residents and workers at Heritage Home of Florence release balloons Monday morning to celebrate the start of National Nursing Home Week.

### FLORENCE

It's National Nursing Home Week. To launch the celebration, residents and workers at Heritage Home released balloons Monday morning. Sen. Hugh K. Leatherman Sr. spoke before the launch, which preceded a lunch. Heritage Home is located at 515 Warley St. in Florence.

## Bring Back Big Give day arrives

BY SHAMIRA MCCRAY  
Morning News  
smccray@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Nonprofit organizations will get a second chance at online fundraising today through Bring Back Big Give.

Last week, a server glitch put a halt on many online Giving Day donations across the country, including the Big Give Pee Dee fundraiser presented by the Eastern Carolina Community Foundation.

Staff with Big Give Pee Dee decided to give the organizations a second chance.

"Eastern Carolina Community Foundation is proud to offer the non-profit participants of Big Give Pee Dee an opportunity to gain donation dollars in the wake of last week's Kimbia glitch," said Sarah Shelley, ECCF executive director. "If you tried to donate during our May 3rd event, please give our

### BRING BACK BIG GIVE

» **WHAT:** Online fundraising for participating nonprofits, presented by the Eastern Carolina Community Foundation.

» **WHEN:** 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. today.

» **HOW:** Donations can be made at [easterncarolinacommunityfoundation.org/give/donate](http://easterncarolinacommunityfoundation.org/give/donate), at both branches of First Reliance Bank, the Eastern Carolina Community Foundation office located at 154 W. Evans Street in Florence or by

## SC Senate, House leaders hint of override of farm bill veto

BY JOSHUA LLOYD  
Morning News  
jlloyd@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — With Gov. Nikki Haley planning to veto a bill this week that would provide \$40 million in state aid to farmers devastated by last year's historic floods, leaders of both the South Carolina House and Senate said Monday there's more than enough support in both chambers to override that

vetoes, when we can't bail out homeowners."

The \$40 million proposal, which passed the House 95-6 and the Senate 33-3, would allow farmers in disaster-declared counties to apply for grants of up to \$100,000 each, covering no more than 20 percent of their total loss.

Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh K. Leatherman Sr. said lawmakers in both chambers came together in a bipartisan

what they think is right for the people of this state," Leatherman said. "Our job is to send what we think is right to the governor, and she'll do what she has to."

When asked if there were enough votes in the Senate to override the veto, Leatherman said, "I suggest everyone go look at how many votes it passed with."

The bill passed by a vote of 33-3 on April 28 in the Senate and 85-2 on





# THE LINK

Connecting Chesterfield County, One Week At A Time

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Tuesday, May 10, 2016

75¢



Left, 2016 Chesterfield County Teachers of the Year display their plaques at the banquet May 3. Right, pictured from left, Plainview principal Beth Melton, Amanda Mishue and Petersburg principal Janice Kiser celebrate two generations of teachers.



Janice Kiser/Publisher

## Hatcher named District Teacher of the Year

JANE PIGG  
Publisher - The Link

Tracy Hatcher of Cheraw Intermediate School was named the Chesterfield County District Teacher for 2016-17 at the Teacher of the Year banquet May 3.

School Board Chairman James Sweeney began the program by saluting the 17 school winners. "You are the best of the best. I loved reading in the newspaper about why each of you decided to go into education. I'm amazed that so many of you decided at such a young age to teach, many in grade school, because you were in-

fluenced by a teacher. When you help improve the lives of others, you improve your own life," commented Sweeney.

Chesterfield County District Superintendent Dr. Harrison Goodwin complimented the teachers, as well.

"It gives me great pleasure to congratulate our 2016-17 Teachers of the Year. They have been selected by their peers to represent the best of the best in public education in Chesterfield County. All of our folks this year certainly do that very well," said Goodwin.

Hatcher, who has been teaching for 23 years, accepted her award with gratitude.



Janice Pigg/Publisher

Right, School Board Chairman James Sweeney and Dr. Harrison Goodwin present Tracy Hatcher with the 2016-17 District Teacher of the Year plaque.

"I am truly honored to represent Chesterfield County. It's very humbling to be among such an elite group of teachers in this group. We, as teachers, inspire, motivate and judge so many lives that we can't even begin to comprehend the impact that we have on these children's lives and our community," Hatcher remarked. "Growing up, I had a countless list of teachers, coaches and mentors that had a profound impact on my life. Through their inspiration, motivation and guidance, teaching became my calling. I didn't choose it; it chose me. Teaching is a pas-

sion that allows me to be a life-long learner. My students have always contributed a surprising mix of personalities that intrigue me every year."

Each school winner was recognized and received a Teacher of the Year plaque. Former teachers and now principals, Petersburg's Janice Kiser and Plainview's Beth Melton, saw their student, Amanda Mishue, honored as Plainview's winner.

"This is so exciting. I taught her in kindergarten. It's so special to see the accomplishments of my students," Kiser said.

## Pageland hires new police chief

REBECCA ROLLINS  
Staff Reporter

The Town of Pageland's search for a new police chief came to a close May 3 when Pageland Town Council voted unanimously to hire Craig Greenlee.

"Pageland Town Council had multiple qualified candidates, but we are particularly excited that Craig Greenlee will be Pageland's new chief," said Pageland Mayor Jason Evans.

Greenlee will be leaving a lieutenant position with the Lancaster Police Department to serve as chief. He has been at LPD since 2003 and previously served as a law enforcement officer in Florida, where he worked with the Cooper City Police for 16 years and served five years in a multi-agency gang task force. Prior to becoming a part of the Lancaster Lieutenant Patrol Division, he was a detective sergeant for three years.



Contributed

The Town of Pageland welcomes Craig Greenlee of Lancaster as its new police chief. Greenlee will begin work after all standard hiring procedures are complete.

mented history of exemplary service to the places where he was previously employed. Council is confident in our decision and trust that Chief Greenlee will guide Pageland Police Department forward in a new era of service to our town's citizens," said Evans.

The Pageland Police Department has been the subject of controversy and scrutiny since last October when for-

## Shelton arrested in father's death

JOAN YATES  
Editor - The Link

A Pageland man who once reported his father missing has now been charged with his father's death, according to a report from the Chesterfield County Sheriff's Office.



Shelton

Investigators from the sheriff's office arrested and served a murder warrant on 24-year-old Pageland resident Thomas Carroll Shelton Jr. on Thursday, April 28, in the death of his father, Thomas Carroll Shelton.

The senior Shelton was reported missing by his son Dec. 8, 2015. His body was later found by hunters on Tory Road in Pageland on Dec. 28, 2015.

See Shelton, 3A

## Officer shoots dog in self-defense

JOAN YATES  
Editor - The Link

A dog running loose on Beverly Drive in Cheraw was shot and killed April 28 after showing signs of aggression toward an officer responding to a call about the animal.

Officers received a call around 5 p.m. from an individual concerned about the safety of children in the neighborhood due to signs of aggression previously shown by the dog.

Three officers arrived at the scene and witnessed the dog returning to a fenced-in

## County Council faces deficit, considers 10 mill increase

ROBERT MONNIE  
Staff Reporter

Chesterfield County Council and the county staff are fully engaged in finding ways to close a projected \$1.5 million deficit in the preliminary proposed general fund budget for 2016-17.

Although council passed the second reading of the 2016-17 general fund budget last week by a vote of 8-1 with council member Doug Curtis dissenting, that document was a duplicate of the current \$16.6 million general fund budget.

In the preliminary proposal for next year, the net operating expenditures increase slightly by \$285,306, or 1.7 percent, to \$16.9 million.

Items not addressed in the proposed financial plan include a one percent cost-of-living increase for employees, which equates to \$90,000, and a \$109,000 boost in the sheriff's department's pay schedule.

Proposed revenues decrease by \$1.25 million to \$15.35 million with the county's

continuing shortfall in the local government fund that comes from the state budget. Under the current statutory formula, Chesterfield County should get \$2.6 million for next year but will likely get just \$1.76 million, a loss of \$846,000.

Over the past eight years, the total shortfall in the local government fund is \$4.4 million, according to County Administrator Denise Douglass.

"I wish our esteemed legislators in Columbia would realize the importance of the local government fund and fully support us," said council member Eddie Rivers of Pageland.

One option being considered to close the county's general fund deficit for next year is a 10 mill increase to the reserve account by council that would raise an estimated \$1.12 million. According to County Finance Director Michelle Stanley, this millage increase would raise the annual property taxes by \$40 on a \$100,000 owner-occupied house, \$60 on a





LOCAL

Old Town group's proposal targets Bluffton's parking problems. 3A



LOCAL

Broad River drowning victim said experienced diver 3A



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# THE ISLAND PACKET

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT  
DEPOT PARRIS ISLAND

## Recruit involved in 2nd incident

The offender who allegedly injured recruit Morgan Brown on Easter Sunday was involved in subsequent incident

Just 50 recruits have been separated from the Marine Corps in the past two-plus years because of disciplinary infractions

Brown alleges his attacker hurt another recruit by slamming the recruit's head into a column

BY WADE LIVINGSTON  
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The Parris Island recruit who attacked a fellow trainee in sick bay on Easter Sunday was involved in a second incident that factored into his separation from the Marine Corps.

Marine Corps spokesperson Capt. Greg Carroll confirmed the "offender" in the March 27 incident — during which recruit Morgan Brown was knocked unconscious and left with three facial fractures, according to his father, Bryan Brown — is being separated because of "multiple disciplinary infractions," one of which occurred after the sick bay scuffle.

Because of an ongoing investigation, Carroll could neither name the offender nor confirm Morgan Brown's involvement in the first incident.

The offender, Carroll said Monday afternoon, is currently in Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island support battalion's "recruit separation platoon" and is scheduled to leave the island this week.

He will join the ranks of just 50 former trainees who have been separated from the Corps because of disciplinary infractions on Parris Island during the past two-plus years. More than 44,000 recruits have come through the depot between Oct. 1, 2013, and April 30, 2016 — the Department of the Navy's current record-management period — according to Carroll.

During that time the Corps severed ties with only a tenth of one percent of recruits because of discipline issues.



DELAYNA EASLEY deasley@islandpacket.com

Faith Sulak, 14, center, holds a photograph of her twin sister Grace while standing for a portrait with her mothers Kristen Sulak, left, and Heidi Hanson in front of the trampoline in the backyard of their Bluffton home Monday. Grace Sulak died in a hit-and-run car crash on Saturday.

### REMEMBERING GRACE SULAK

## Family focuses on teen's loving side

Family remembers 14-year-old girl lost in a car crash Saturday

River Ridge 8th-grader was shy, but had a playful side many never saw

Teen was a gifted athlete, known for kindness

BY ERIN HEFFERNAN  
cheffernan@islandpacket.com

Grace Sulak remains present in every corner of her family's Bluffton home. Every wall of the house where she lived her entire life holds a reminder of her short life.

There are years of honor roll certificates, pencil marks tracking the teen's height from her toddler years to her 8th-grade growth spurt, and a high school track varsity letter, earned when Sulak was in just 7th grade.

In the kitchen, there is still a box of cake mix meant for Mother's Day. Grace and her twin sister, Faith, were plan-

Instead Grace's parents, Heidi Hanson and her partner Kristen Sulak, spent Sunday facing the unimaginable.

Their smart, goofy, athletic, girl — always the one in the family full of energy and life — was gone.

The River Ridge academy student died in a car crash returning from a Bluffton High track meet in Columbia on Saturday night. Her teammate and friend, Emma Dewey and Emma's mother Andrea Dewey, were seriously injured in the crash. Grace was just 14 years old.

When Grace's mothers got home after the devastating news, the house was one big reminder of something they'd

death. "And as painful as it is, it's what we want. We're always going to be a family of four. We want to hold those memories close."

Hanson remembers that even as a teenager, Grace never pushed her family away.

"It's comforting to go in her room because she still every night wanted to be tucked in by one of us," Hanson said. "You just have to remember all of that. You have to try not think about the rest right now ... because if you do, you'd just drown."

### THE GRACE HER FAMILY KNEW

Grace's twin, Faith, was also one of her best friends and

SEE GRACE, 10A

### MORE INSIDE

Details on Grace Sulak's memorial and updates on others involved in the accident. 10A

## Suspect vehicle description released

S.C. Highway Patrol is looking for a white Dodge Ram with right front end damage

The truck is believed to have fled the scene of a crash that killed Bluffton teen Grace Sulak

BY CAITLIN TURNER  
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Though the driver of a hit-and-run crash that claimed the life of a Bluffton teenager on Saturday in Calhoun County remains at large, the S.C. Highway Patrol is closer to finding the offender after a vehicle description was released Monday afternoon.

The patrol is asking anyone with information about a white Dodge Ram 2500 Crew Cab pickup truck believed to have damage on the right front bumper and fender area to call 843-953-6010 or Crime Stoppers at 1-888-CrimeSC.

The truck is believed to have struck a Nissan Rogue driven by Andrea Dewey as she drove her daughter Emma and her friend Grace Sulak home from a track



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