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Subject: Clips - Monday, September 2, 2013

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

The State: Gay Couple Files Federal Lawsuit Attacking SC's Defense Of Marriage Law

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=lb2MvIhL

John Monk

Two Lexington County women who were legally married in Washington, D.C., have filed a federal lawsuit in Columbia challenging South Carolina's Defense of Marriage Law and a 2006 amendment to the state Constitution that expressly banned same-sex marriages. The lawsuit, brought by S.C. Highway Patrol Trooper Katherine Bradacs and Tracie Goodwin, was filed in U.S. District Court in Columbia last week. Judge Joe Anderson, a veteran judge who has presided in numerous high-profile civil and criminal cases, has been named to hear arguments in the case, which will be heard without a jury. Defendants in the case are Gov. Nikki Haley and State Attorney General Alan Wilson, both in their official capacities.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Post and Courier: Good plan for teacher merit pay

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130902/PC1002/130909925/1021/good-plan-for-teacher-merit-pay>

Editorial

Most Charleston County teachers still get raises based on how long they've been teaching and whether or not they have advanced degrees. However, some teachers' pay is tied, in part, to how well their students improve on test scores, and the district is committed to considering merit in evaluating all teachers. The Charleston County School District received a \$23.7 million federal grant to design a merit pay system that will include training for teachers who need it and bonuses for high-performing teachers. As part of that research, CCSD is inviting input from educators. What they're hearing is not surprising: some people like the idea of merit pay, but lots of teachers here, like teachers around the country, really hate it. Opponents insist that other attempts to pay teachers based on merit have proven unsuccessful. But those arguments don't hold up.

Aiken Standard: Agency mishaps won't fuel race for governor

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130902/AIK0201/130909993/1018/AIK02/editorial-agency-mishaps-won-x2019-t-fuel-race-for-governor>

Editorial

There are still 15 months to go until we know who will be the governor of our state for the next four years. But the Democratic game plan, at least at this stage in the campaign, seems to already be in place. Miscues by state agencies are apparently gaining traction in the minds of Democrats as the catalyst to bump Gov. Nikki Haley out of office. According to The State, Democrats on the state level have already issued more than a dozen press releases, a YouTube video and held at least two press conferences questioning her administration's management of the hacking incident at the state Revenue Department. Additionally, S.C. Sen. Vincent Sheheen, a Democratic candidate for governor, has taken jabs at the Haley administration for the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's handling of a tuberculosis outbreak in Greenwood County. These incidents may have hit the headlines over the summer, but likely won't fuel the election once it draws closer.

Times and Democrat: Big-time investors don't put money in dying business

http://thetandd.com/news/opinion/editorial/big-time-investors-don-t-put-money-in-dying-business/article_a4d0e72e-128c-11e3-a020-001a4bcf887a.html

Editorial

THE ISSUE: Future of newspapers and mass media. OUR OPINION: Transformation repositioning traditional media in marketplace. As the journalists who were able to take a day away from the job to

celebrate Labor Day return for what many in the work world consider the end of summer and the start of the countdown to the holidays and year's end, they will continue living a transformation in mass media. They will continue to be consumers of news too, with particular interest in reporting about the industry in which they work. While they read on one hand that integral players in mass media — newspapers, television and radio — must continue to change or die, they also read about how print media is expanding in emerging nations such as China, how a national institution such as The Washington Post has been sold but appears to be on track to remain the strong voice it has been in the nation's capital, and even how good old American capitalism is the most encouraging sign for the future.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Raising minimum wage would hurt employment and cause inflation

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20130901/OPINION/309011013/1128?Title=Raising-minimum-wage-would-hurt-employment-and-cause-inflation>

Editorial

In big cities across the country, fast food workers are striking, demanding that their employers almost double their pay, from the federal minimum of \$7.25 per hour to \$15 per hour. Their action fits with the agenda of President Barack Obama, who wants to increase the minimum wage to \$9 per hour. It sounds good, if you think money just appears from nowhere. It is much less appealing when you consider what it does to the economy and even how it affects unskilled workers. Where would the money come from to pay minimum wage workers a higher rate of pay? It would come from the customers of those businesses. When the cost of doing business rises, those businesses have to raise the prices of their products. This happens across industries and across the economy. The end result is inflation. Workers are making more money, but that money is only buying what their former wage purchased.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: SC closes year with higher-than-expected surplus

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/09/01/2954815/sc-closes-year-with-higher-than.html#storylink=cpy>

Seanna Adcox

South Carolina ended the fiscal year with a higher-than-expected surplus, handing legislators an additional \$68 million to distribute next year. The fiscal-year closing report issued Wednesday by the state's chief accountant shows South Carolina collected more than enough taxes to fund every item on the Legislature's priority list for surplus revenue, as well as the full \$50 million for bridge repair. "The results of what we closed out support that economic conditions look strong for the state," Comptroller Richard Eckstrom told The Associated Press on Friday. "Operating conditions look pretty sound."

The State: Health-care Changes Chill Businesses' Expansion Plans

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=oAj4RzwR

Jeff Wilkinson

The executives of the 15-store chain have asked him to hire fewer full-time workers and more part-timers, a challenge that requires him to bring on more people to cover shifts while at the same time making sure those workers are dependable, motivated and happy. "Instead of two dishwashers at 40 hours a week, I have to hire four dishwashers at 20 hours a week," he said. "But it's hard to find dependable people who are willing to work 20 hours a week on nights and weekends." Such is the limbo that some businesses, particularly mid-sized hospitality businesses, are facing on this Labor Day: More people are taking advantage of their services in an improving economy, but the uncertain implications of health care reform are causing them to hedge their bets against possible higher operational costs.

Associated Press: More Than One Tax Benefit For S.C.'s School-choice Credit

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=AgfQqgac

Jamie Self

A new S.C. tax credit created exclusively to give private-school grants to children with disabilities has another benefit for taxpayers. In addition to reducing a taxpayer's total state tax bill by up to 60 percent, the donations qualify for state and federal tax deductions allowed for charitable contributions, Meredith Cleland with the state Department of Revenue told a state Senate panel two weeks ago. Realizing the dual tax benefit, state Sen. Joel Lourie, a Richland Democrat on the panel tasked with reviewing school-choice proposals, said his "initial reaction was 'Oh, really?' On the surface it looks like double-dipping, but I don't think that was the intention," he said.

Associated Press: Palmetto Trail backers try to finish SC route

http://www.theitem.com/news/ap_state_news/palmetto-trail-backers-try-to-finish-sc-route/article_ea0a6ff1-c97b-5518-a22f-299501dac1c6.html

Conservationists are still working to finish South Carolina's mountains-to-sea Palmetto Trail nearly 20 years after it was designed. The trail was planned to be about 425 miles when first drawn out in 1994. If it ever gets finished, it will likely be almost 500 miles, winding through cities, historic towns, through marshes and atop mountains and maybe even over the Jocassee Dam, said Natalie Britt, executive director of Palmetto Conservation Foundation, which is organizing the trail. "It connects some of the most important public lands that we have. No initiative in the state tells the story of South Carolina better than the Palmetto Trail," Britt told The Greenville News (<http://grnol.co/19XW9Yu>).

Local News:

Associated Press: Spartanburg fire protection company fined by SC

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=0wjwEpVL

An inspection company in Spartanburg that monitors fire protection systems and checks fire extinguishers has been fined \$9,200 and put on a year of probation by state officials. Documents from the State Fire Marshal obtained by the Herald-Journal of Spartanburg (<http://bit.ly/18ihk5A>) show National Fire Protection Co. did not properly service fire extinguishers at schools, a nursing home and a gold club in Spartanburg County. The fire marshal audited the company's work after receiving complaints. The order from the state says the company could immediately have its license suspended if it had violations during its probation. The company and its lawyer did not return messages from the newspaper.

Associated Press: Sen. Graham, Weinermobile at Labor Day parade

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=dOUSyQJx

This year's Chapin Labor Day Parade is hosting a few special guests. U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham is making an appearance at Monday's 34th annual event. Oscar Mayer says one of its Wiernermobile is also taking place in the parade, which makes a one-mile route around Chapin's historic district. The day's activities include a talent contest and a gospel concert, as well as arts and crafts vendors and a food court. Chapin's parade often attracts a number of politicians, especially in election years when it marks the unofficial home stretch of the campaign.

Post and Courier: Computer program will help Goose Creek track predators

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130901/PC16/130909902/1006/computer-program-will-help-goose-creek-track-predators>

Brenda Rindge

As technology advances, internet crimes are increasing. "It has evolved from chatting," said Micah Fogle, an investigator for the Goose Creek Police Department who is trained in computer forensics. Now the department is armed to fight those crimes, thanks to a donation from the Virginia-based Safe Surfin' Foundation and its supporting partner, Moose International. The department received a "Cop-in-a-Box" hardware and software computer package to help identify and apprehend Internet sexual predators. "Giving a unit to Goose Creek was a no-brainer," said Chip Payne, commander of the South Carolina Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. "It is a strong department and already had an investigator who has been trained in computer forensics."

Sun News: Decision makers to hear last word from residents in Horry County adult business debate

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2013/09/01/3682828/decision-makers-to-hear-last-word.html#storylink=cpy>

Jason M. Rodriguez

For those who know Horry County Councilman Carl Schwartzkopf, they know he is an intensive planner. He already has the Michigan State football schedule slated on his calendar through 2016. As for his vote on two ordinances relating to adult business regulations, however, it's a different story. Same goes for County Chairman Mark Lazarus, who said he will make up his mind after the public hearing portion of Tuesday's meeting. But there's one reality that people should understand. "The reality of it is, is they're not going away," Lazarus said. "We have to have zoning areas available for them to be able to go. Their license is a bar and restaurant and that's what they should be operating as. If they choose to open somewhere else where they comply with zoning, then that's fine, too. I think the negative effect that it's causing us is far outweighed by ... what we're trying to do."

Aiken Standard: New weight loss practice to open Tuesday

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130902/AIK0101/130909886/1007/AIK0101/new-weight-loss-practice-to-open-tuesday>

A new, physician-run weight loss practice will open on Tuesday.

Dr. Greg Eaves, of Carolina Heart and Vascular, has decided to open his new practice, Palmetto Wellness & Weight Loss MD, here in Aiken. "Weight loss translates into cost-savings as patients spend less on medications, doctor visits and food, and have fewer days missed on the job," Eaves said. He said Wellness & Weight Loss MD will set itself apart from other weight-loss programs because the practice works side-by-side with each patient's primary care physician to help patients reduce risk factors and manage their transition off medications as their health improves.

Aiken Standard: Second Circuit Solicitor's Office seeking volunteers for program

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130902/AIK0101/130839913/1007/AIK0101/second-circuit-solicitors-office-seeking-volunteers-for-program>

Teddy Kulmala

The Second Circuit Solicitor's Office is in need of volunteers to serve as arbitrators in a mediation program for first-time, non-violent juvenile offenders. The Juvenile Arbitration Program is designed for first-time juvenile offenders ages 11 to 17 in Aiken, Bamberg and Barnwell counties who are charged with non-violent crimes. The 90-day diversion program is run with help from community volunteers who are trained to serve as arbitrators in these cases, according to Rebecca Jowers, program coordinator. The program decreases the number of cases brought to family court, according to Jowers. Participation is voluntary for offenders, who would otherwise go through family court. Some of the charges handled by the program include disorderly conduct, shoplifting, simple possession of marijuana and assault and battery.

Aiken Standard: Executive director leaving Red Cross, moving to Texas

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130902/AIK0101/130909889/1007/AIK0101/executive-director-leaving-red-cross-moving-to-texas>

DeDe Biles

Lindsay Findley's last day at the Aiken Area Chapter of the American Red Cross will be Sept. 27. She is leaving her position as executive director after three years because her family will be moving to Texas. Findley's husband, Kyle, has accepted a new position with CB&I – Chicago Ridge & Iron – that will be based in Houston. "He currently works at Plant Vogtle (the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant near Waynesville, Ga.) on new power plant construction," Findley said. "He will be moving from the nuclear sector into the technologies division, and he will be working in business development, essentially with oil and gas." Findley sent out an email announcing her resignation on Aug. 29.

National News:

The Hill: Labor union frustration boils over with president on ObamaCare

<http://thehill.com/business-a-lobbying/319685-labor-frustration-boils-over-with-president-on-obamacare>

Kevin Bogardus

Unions are frustrated the Obama administration hasn't responded to their calls for changes to ObamaCare. Labor has watched with growing annoyance as the White House has backed ObamaCare changes in response to concerns from business groups, religious organizations and even lawmakers and their staffs. They say they don't understand why their concerns so far have fallen on deaf ears. It's an issue that Obama may have to face when he speaks to the AFL-CIO convention a week after Labor Day.

USA Today: Health care providers, insurers pitch state exchanges

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2013/09/02/states-promote-health-care-obama/2726655/>

Kelly Kennedy

A coalition of health care providers, insurers, bill collectors and community groups have stepped in to promote exchanges where people can buy health insurance even in the states that have declined to create or promote their exchanges. While the supporters may differ on other issues, they share a common understanding of the financial gains to be made from the latest step in implementing the 2010 health care law, supporters say. In Texas, which did not create its own exchange, the Dallas County judge is promoting the federal exchange that will operate in the Lone Star state. Health insurer Blue Cross Blue Shield, which will operate in exchanges in all 50 states, has created groups to promote them, particularly in states that deferred to the federal government.

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