

Title: **Inauguration 2017: Local group visits Washington**  
 Author: By LORI BEARD loribellbeard@gmail.com  
 Size: 108.34 column inches  
 Walterboro, SC Circulation: 5673



# Inauguration 2017: Local group visits Washington

By LORI BEARD

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Colleton County Republicans Janis and David Blocker, Mary Anne Cannady, her daughter Deborah Culpepper and granddaughter Neeley Culpepper, and Lori and Chad Beard headed to Washington, D.C., last Wednesday to attend the inauguration of President Donald Trump.

Early Thursday morning, the group headed out to the offices of the U.S. representatives and senators to pick up their reserved tickets

for the inauguration. The Colleton group had tickets courtesy of Senators Tim Scott and Lindsay Graham and Representatives Mark Sanford and Joe Wilson.

When they picked up the tickets, Mary Anne Cannady found her ticket had been upgraded: she was seated next to Sen. Graham as his guest. At the event, security made a

See TRIP, page 3A

## TRIP

Continued from 1A

path for her to get to her seat and "I felt like I was the most important person in the word," she said.

The group went to Arlington National Cemetery in the afternoon to watch the arrival of Trump and Pence for the "Laying of the Wreath" at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

That evening was the sold-out South Carolina Inaugural Ball, a black tie event, sponsored by the S.C. Society, held at the Smithsonian American Art and Portrait Gallery. S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley, Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, Attorney General Alan Wilson and all of South Carolina's congressmen and senators attended. Republicans from a couple of other states joined the South Carolina group, since only a few states held their own balls.

With some Metro stations closed and streets blocked for the inauguration events,

Uber proved to be the way to get around the city in the evenings for the balls and dinner. The several drivers used by the Colleton group were from all parts of the country, even one from Africa. They maneuvered through the maze with patience to get their passengers to their destination.

Friday was the big day. About 8:30 a.m. the Colleton group joined thousands of others to board the metro to the Capitol, making their way through security and the ticket gates to view the ceremony. The preliminary music and events started at 9:30 a.m. with the swearing in of the 45th president at high noon. The weather was mild with only a sprinkle of rain just as President Donald Trump was repeating the oath. The crowds dispersed in an orderly fashion to go to the parade or back to their hotels to watch it on TV.

The crowd was massive, Cannady said. "All the way back to the memorial, it was just people ... the largest crowd I've ever seen." She was seated just 10 feet from the band, just below the podium. "I'd never been that close before," she said.

"I was lucky enough to be beside my husband, Chad, and Janis Blocker during the inauguration," said Lori Beard. "When the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sang 'America the Beautiful,' both she and I had tears streaming down our faces. Being there in the flesh, we felt so proud to be Americans looking forward to the changes to come."

"I attended both of President George W. Bush's inaugurations, but this one was more exhilarating than either of those," said Janis Blocker. "The excitement was electric!"

Cannady agreed. She also attended both of Bush's inaugurations, but this one "was just different. The positive atmosphere definitely overwhelmed the negative."

After a relaxing dinner Friday night to share the highlights of the day, the exhausted Colleton group got some much-needed rest before returning home on Saturday.

"It was a great trip," Cannady said. "I'm so glad I had the opportunity to take my daughter and my granddaughter. Not everyone gets this kind of opportunity. It will be something she will remember for the rest of her life."

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Mary Anne Cannady and Sen. Tim Scott



Chad and Lori Beard with Janis Blocker join the crowd at the Capitol.

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Janis and David Blocker, right, with Joe Wilson and his grandson Addison Wilson III at the ball.



Chad and Lori Beard in front of Trump van

Title: **Nikki Haley waves goodbye to S.C.**  
 Author: BY JOEMARUSAK jmarusak@charlotteobserver.com  
 Size: 28.67 column inches  
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



# Nikki Haley waves goodbye to S.C.

BY JOE MARUSAK

jmarusak@charlotteobserver.com

South Carolina's former governor, Nikki Haley, tweeted a photo of herself looking at the Palmetto State from an airplane window as she embarked for her new role as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

"Thank you South Carolina," Haley tweeted. "I will miss you."

Haley was confirmed by the Senate on Tuesday to be the next U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Although she has no foreign policy experience, she impressed senators in her confirmation hearing last week by taking a tough stance against Russia and vowing to defend American values abroad, McClatchy's Washington news bureau reported.

Although Haley criticized Donald

Trump during his presidential campaign, Trump's transition team announced her nomination to the U.N. post in November.

"As she goes into this new job, she can learn the nuances of foreign policy, but diplomacy is either something you have or you don't," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said in support of Haley before the Senate vote, according to McClatchy. "She's tough, she's determined and I think very capable of being the United States' voice in the United Nations."

At about 1 p.m. Wednesday, Vice President Mike Pence tweeted a photo showing him walking with Haley, Trump and U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., after Pence administered the oath of office to Haley.

Joe Marusak: 704-358-5067,  
@jmarusak

“

**SHE'S TOUGH, SHE'S DETERMINED AND I THINK VERY CAPABLE OF BEING THE UNITED STATES' VOICE IN THE UNITED NATIONS.**

*Sen. Lindsey Graham on Nikki Haley's new role as U.S. ambassador*

Thank you South Carolina....I will miss



Nikki Haley



Screen capture from Twitter

Former S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley posted this photo on Twitter early Wednesday on her way to New York.

Title: **S.C.'s Leatherman hangs onto powerful post; Bryant islt. governor**  
 Author: BY SEANNAADCOX The AssociatedPress COLUMBIA  
 Size: 45.10 column inches  
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



## GOVERNMENT

# S.C.'s Leatherman hangs on to powerful post; Bryant is Lt. governor

BY SEANNA ADCOX  
 The Associated Press

### COLUMBIA

Sen. Hugh Leatherman managed Wednesday to keep his position as South Carolina's most powerful lawmaker, despite opposition from fellow Republicans who accused him of sidestepping his constitutional duties.

Senators voted 28-16 to return the president pro tem title to Leatherman, a day after he resigned the leadership post to avoid becoming lieutenant governor.

All 16 who voted for Leatherman's challenger, Sen. Harvey Peeler of Gaffney, were Republicans.



Senate Majority Leader Shane Massey, who nominated Peeler, called Leatherman's moves to

retain power "a shameless and obvious game of musical chairs."

While most people probably have no idea who leads the state Senate, Massey said, "I am absolutely confident people understand politicians not playing by the rules. They understand

when other politicians cover for their friends who don't play by the rules."

The state constitution calls for the Senate's leader to fill a lieutenant governor vacancy. But Leatherman refused to leave the Senate for the largely ceremonial position. The 85-year-old Florence Republican resigned minutes before then-Gov. Nikki Haley was confirmed as President Donald Trump's U.N. ambassador, which promoted then-Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster.

Prior to re-electing Leatherman, the Senate technically voted to make Sen. Kevin Bryant the chamber's leader, knowing he'd keep the president pro tem title only momentarily. Bryant, first elected to the Senate in 2004, was sworn in minutes later as lieutenant governor.

Senate Judiciary Chairman Luke Rankin, who then nominated Leatherman to be leader again, said senators knew when they re-elected him as president pro tem in December - in their post-election organizational session - that he would not become lieutenant governor.

By that time, Trump had already nominated Haley for the job in his Cabinet.

"In courtesy and out of transparency, he made that announcement before we elected him. There were no surprises," said Rankin, R-Myrtle Beach. Noting voters just re-elected Leatherman, Rankin added, "His pledge was to those folks who elected him to remain as their senator."

Leatherman's predecessor, Sen. John Courson, resigned from the leadership post in 2014. Senators then chose Democratic Sen. Yancey McGill to momentarily become pro tem, then lieutenant governor. Leatherman was then elected pro tem, adding to the power he already had as chairman of the Senate's budget-writing committee and various financial oversight boards.

While the GOP-controlled Senate was willing to put a Democratic colleague in the No. 2 job for six months - knowing voters would soon elect McGill's replacement - that wasn't a possibility for the remaining two years of Haley's term.

Bryant, who helped found

the chamber's libertarian William Wallace Caucus, was the only Republican

who wanted the job. The 49-year-old Anderson pharmacist said he made the decision after much prayer and he's "honored to assume this new role."

Massey, who also argues no legislator should be able to amass as much power as Leatherman, reminded senators that former Senate President Pro Tem Glenn McConnell felt it his duty to leave the Senate after former Lt. Gov. Ken Ard pleaded guilty to campaign violations in 2012.

Soon after McConnell became lieutenant governor, legislators passed a law to put a question on the ballot they thought would prevent another senator from facing such a decision.

Voters passed a constitutional amendment that November to have the governor and lieutenant governor run on the same ticket and change the lines of succession. But the ballot question specified the changes wouldn't start until the 2018 election.

Title: **Vicepresidentswears inHaley asUS ambassador to the UN**  
 Author:  
 Size: 37.04 column inches  
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



## A NEW PRESIDENCY

# Vice president swears in Haley as US ambassador to the UN

*Wire Reports*

Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley has been sworn in to be President Donald Trump's ambassador to the United Nations.

Vice President Mike Pence swore in Haley on Wednesday.

During her confirmation hearing, the South Carolina-born daughter of Indian immigrants said she supports Trump's call to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

She also took a harder line against Russia than Trump, saying she doesn't think Moscow can be trusted right now.

### CHICAGO MAYOR WARNS AGAINST DEPLOYING TROOPS

A day after President

Trump declared that he was ready to "send in the Feds" if Chicago can't reduce its homicides, Mayor Rahm Emanuel warned against deploying the National Guard, saying that it would hurt efforts to restore trust in the police.

Trump offered no details on what kind of federal intervention he was suggesting or if it could involve troops, but the mayor cautioned that using the military could make matters worse.

He said he welcomed federal help battling "gangs, guns and drugs."

### TRUMP SAYS TORTURE WORKS AS HIS GOVERNMENT READIES A REVIEW

President Trump declared Wednesday he believes torture works as his administration readied

a sweeping review of how America conducts the war on terror. It includes possible resumption of banned interrogation methods and reopening CIA-run "black site" prisons outside the United States.

Asked about the simulated drowning technique known as waterboarding, Trump cited extremist groups' atrocities against Christians and others and said: "We have to fight fire with fire."

Trump said he would consult with Defense Secretary James Mattis and CIA Director Mike Pompeo before authorizing any new policy. But he said he had asked top intelligence officials in the past day: "Does torture work?"

"And the answer was

yes, absolutely," Trump said.

### TRUMP CALLS FOR PROBE INTO VOTER FRAUD CLAIM

President Trump declared Wednesday he is ordering a "major investigation" into widespread voter fraud, raising the prospect of a federal government probe into a widely debunked claim and sparking alarm among experts and Democrats.

Trump said in a pair of tweets the investigation will look at those registered to vote in more than one state, "those who are illegal and ... even, those registered to vote who are dead (and many for a long time)." Depending on results, the Republican tweeted on his sixth day in office, "we will strengthen up voting procedures!"



EVAN VUCCI Associated Press

Haley staffer Rebecca Schimsa holds the Bible as Vice President Mike Pence swears in ex-Gov. Nikki Haley.

Title: **STREET SCENE WEST COLUMBIA'S STATE AND MEETING STREETS**  
 Author:  
 Size: 158.72 column inches  
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564

## STREET SCENE WEST COLUMBIA'S STATE AND MEETING STREETS

**B**etter get a good look at State and Meeting streets.

With the groundbreaking earlier this week on a \$40 million project at this intersection overlooking the Congaree River – including apartments and condominiums, stores and restaurants – the area could be poised for big changes over the next many months.

City leaders hope the project will bring renewed interest to this West Columbia neighborhood. But even still, there's plenty to entice folks to State and Meeting streets for an afternoon or evening of entertainment. So go ahead: Cross the bridge.

### **CULTURE** ED'S EDITIONS

Selling books started out as a hobby for Ed Albritton. Having rented space in antique malls to sell his finds, he eventually came upon the location in 2001 for his Ed's Editions bookstore on Meeting Street. His selection has expanded from 20,000 books to 40,000 books, with its customers as varied as its findings.

"We have everybody from parents bringing their children in to get kids' books – for as little as \$1 – to higher-priced collectors who will drop \$1,000 on a book," said Eric Albritton, Ed's son. "But then we also have a lot of college students that come here because we're cheaper than buying a brand new book."

Adam Bryant is a former employee who has been a customer for the past 10 years.

"The thing I like most about Ed's is the sheer amount of high-end books, as well as the mass market paperbacks," he said. "There is something for everyone. I cannot think of an independent book store that even begins to compare when it comes to not only the inventory but also the level of expertise that the employees have to offer."

Ed's offers a quiet escape for an afternoon of browsing.

"The bridge is a pretty big psychological barrier to getting a lot of people from downtown, but

### **MUSIC** BILL'S MUSIC SHOP & PICKIN' PARLOR

Bill Wells moved from Chicago to Columbia in 1984. A die-hard, traditional bluegrass musician, he wanted a place to "pick" for himself and other like-minded musicians. Bill's Music Shop & Pickin' Parlor opened in 1987 on

Meeting Street and is now regarded as the bluegrass epicenter of South Carolina.

"My dad opened up the storefront selling acoustic instruments, and then on Friday nights, it was open for pickin'," said Willie Wells, who has run the family business since Bill passed away in 2011. "Everything was based around acoustic instruments and acoustic music."

Under Willie's ownership, the pickin' parlor has become home to more than just acoustic musicians.

Current offerings include classic country music and dance, a songwriter's night, big band performances, shag dancing, line dancing and "slow jams."

"It's evolved quite a ways from what my dad wanted to do," he said. "My customer is anybody who has a love for music, community, other people and who likes to enjoy a comfortable, family-friendly atmosphere. They can come socialize, get their guitar fixed or buy an

acoustic guitar.

"I reach out to everybody who wants to enjoy music. That's what this place is all about."

710 Meeting St., West Columbia.  
(803) 796-6477,  
[www.billsmusicshop.com](http://www.billsmusicshop.com)

### **FOOD** CAFE STRUDEL

Since opening its doors in 1997, Cafe Strudel has given foodies more than enough reason to cross over the bridge. Now in its third location on State Street, the restaurant famous for its "hangover hashbrowns" continues to grow.

"We serve college students, young business professionals, nurses, senior citizens, World War II vets ... everybody," said Kyle Turbyfill, son of owner Tripp Turbyfill. "Governor Haley has been here a few times; she gets the spinach salad. Jessica Biel has been here. Kenny Chesney's been here before – he wasn't wearing his hat, so nobody really recognized him."

Alex English, Senator Nikki Setzler; Dawn Staley comes in pretty often; Cal Ripken Jr. has been here a few times. We've had a lot of good people here."

And good food, from hot and cold sandwiches and wraps, to Southern specialties like shrimp and grits and more.

Ashley Bundrick, who grew up in Cayce, remembers eating at Cafe Strudel as a high school

student. Now, a recent graduate of the culinary school at the Art Institute of Charleston, she is the restaurant's kitchen manager.

"They do great food here; it's different than anything else around, and I wanted to be a part of that," she said.

"We have an eclectic style as far as atmosphere. The food on the menu is traditional, but you've also got more fun, adventurous things. That's a draw for people."

300 State St., West Columbia.  
(803) 794-6634,  
[www.cafestrudel.com](http://www.cafestrudel.com)

## More places to visit

**CULTURE:** Atlantic Institute, So You Want to Dance/Blue Moon Ballroom, New Brookland Railroad & Hobby

**ENTERTAINMENT:** On Stage Productions

**FOOD:** @116 State, Terra, What-A-Burger, Odaly's Bakery, Compton's Kitchen, Zesto's, Grecian Gardens, Mai Thai Cuisine

**SHOP:** 763 Meeting St. Antique Mall, Army-Navy Surplus Store, St. Paws Thrift Store, His House Ministry Thrift

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 Author:  
 Size: 158.72 column inches  
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564

we're a destination," Bryant said. "And you can't beat the building. This was made for a bookstore."  
*406 Meeting St., West Columbia.  
 (803) 791-8002,  
 www.edseditions.com*

#### **NIGHTLIFE NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN**

New Brookland Tavern is something of an institution, having been on State Street more than 50 years. It has been a pool hall, a biker bar and, for the past two decades, a music venue. Mike Lyons took over ownership in 2004 with his brother. The venue has played host to all music genres, including indie rock, metal, punk, ska, hip-hop, folk and pop.

"The great thing about NBT is that we do many different acts and try to be as diverse as possible," he said. "At the Gin Wigmore show, there were some schoolteachers from Charlotte who had never even heard of us but came to the show and had a blast."

Deborah Adedokun, lead

singer of Debbie and the Skanks, has been hanging out at NBT since she was 15.

"It wasn't until I started going to New Brookland that I thought music was something that I could do," she said. "The first time I played there, it was so awesome. You get really bad nerves before you get on stage, unless you're surrounded by all these people that say, 'Even if you suck, we love you,' and New Brookland was definitely that for me."

*122 State St., West Columbia.  
 (803) 791-4413,  
 www.newbrooklandtavern.com*

#### **SHOP OLD MILL ANTIQUE MALL**

Margaret Causey has spent 25 years in the antique business. Her mother, Ellen Davis, opened the Old Mill Antique Mall in 1984. Causey, now owner, has been working there since 1992. The building is home to 75 dealers who sell everything from antique umbrellas to vintage clothes,

dishes and vinyl records – like Dave and Megan Dutka.

"The first time I stepped in, I fell in love with the place," Dave Dutka said. "We were at several different antique malls in the area, but the Old Mill was just the best fit for us. We've had the most success here with our style of vintage items. With us being in close proximity to USC, we get students buying vinyl records, even in this age of digital music."

Causey said younger generations are getting into antiques and shopping vintage for the deals they can score.

"Our average selling price is under \$10," she said. "We've sold \$2,000 pieces, but we sell a ton of \$1 to \$5 items. People are realizing that they can afford things in antique malls; it's not all out of their budget."

*310 State St., West Columbia.  
 (803) 796-4229,  
 www.oldmillantiquemall.com*

— DWAUN SELLERS,  
 DSELLERS@THESTATE.COM

## **Did you know?**

- West Columbia was incorporated in 1894.
- It was originally called "Brookland" – because of the number of clear-water brooks throughout the area – but since there was another town by that name, the U.S. Postal Service called the town "New Brookland." Many businesses adopted the name.
- The Guignard family built the first bridge across the Congaree River. The Gervais Street Bridge was built in 1927.
- The Gervais Street Bridge and New Brookland Historic District are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## **About this series**

This is the first in an occasional series highlighting entertainment and retail areas in Columbia neighborhoods.

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Author:

Size: 158.72 column inches

Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

Margaret Causey's mom opened Old Mill Antiques in 1984; Causey, now owner, has worked there since 1992.



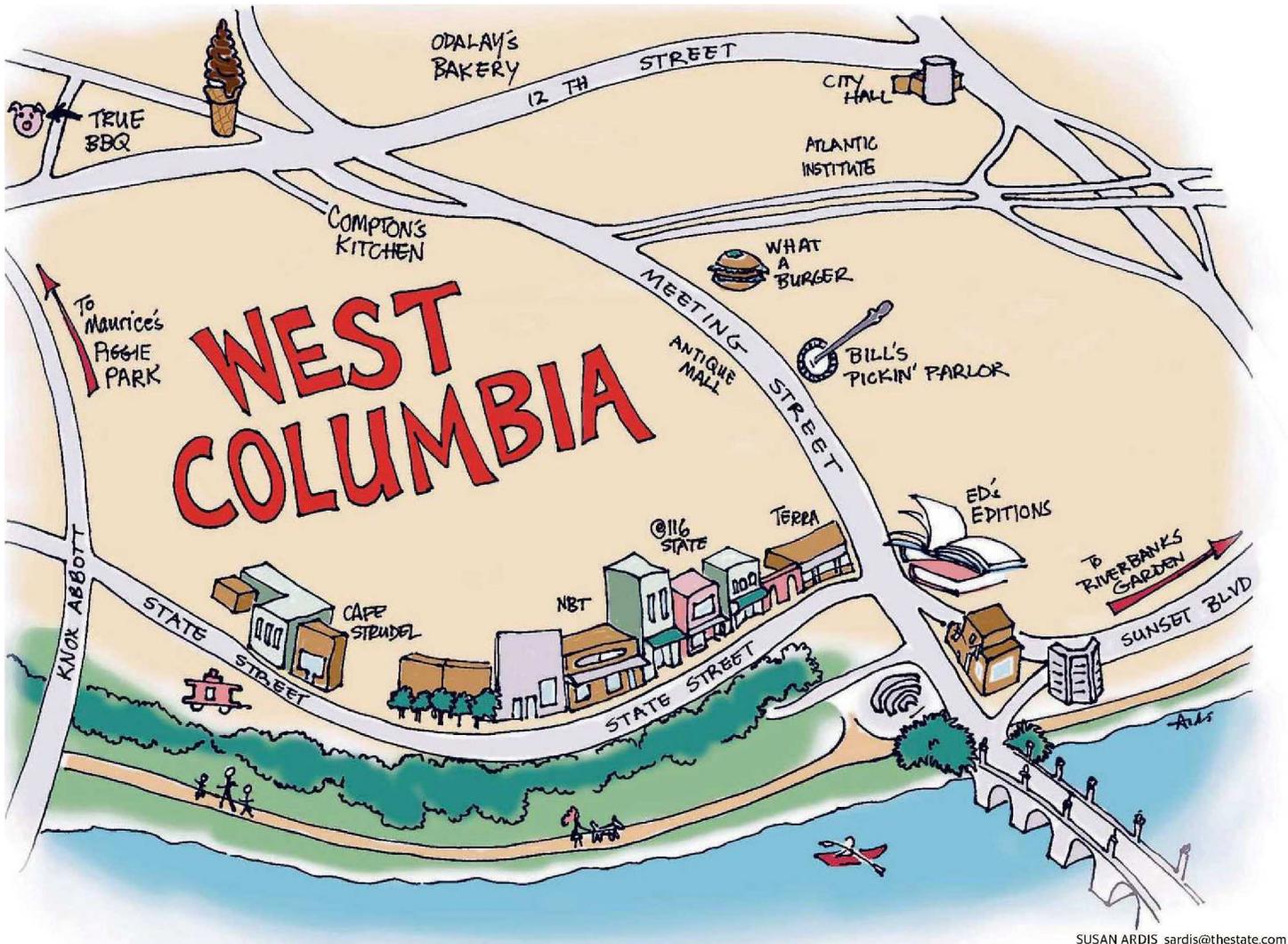
TIM DOMINICK tdominick@thestate.com

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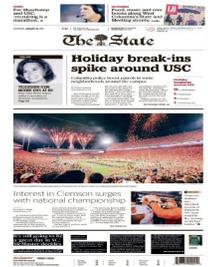
Size: 158.72 column inches

Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



SUSAN ARDIS sardis@thestate.com

Title: **It's still going to be a 'great day in SC,' McMaster decides**  
 Author: BY JAMIE SELF [jself@thestate.com](mailto:jself@thestate.com)  
 Size: 35.96 column inches  
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



# It's still going to be a 'great day in SC,' McMaster decides

■ **New Gov. Henry McMaster hires a longtime S.C. GOP political operative as chief of staff.**

BY JAMIE SELF  
[jself@thestate.com](mailto:jself@thestate.com)

It's still going to be "a great day in South Carolina" when state employees answer the phones.

New S.C. Gov. Henry McMaster will be happy to see state employees continue answering the phones with ex-Gov. Nikki Haley's signature catchphrase,

his office confirmed Wednesday in response to a question from The State newspaper.

McMaster's office added that continuing the practice, which Haley started, will help keep continuity in state government.

McMaster has other help settling into his new job.

On Wednesday, the governor's office confirmed Trey Walker, a longtime McMaster aide and veteran State House lobbyist, is the new governor's new chief of staff.

**SEE MCMASTER, 5A**

**FROM PAGE 1A**

## MCMASTER

McMaster took office Tuesday, automatically vacating his position as lieutenant governor when Haley resigned her post following her confirmation as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in President Donald Trump's Cabinet.

As the S.C. Senate moved Wednesday to fill the vacancy at lieutenant governor with Kevin Bryant, R-Anderson, the governor's website was being scrubbed of Haley and replaced with McMaster.

No other staff changes were announced Wednesday.

Walker previously has been a chief political strategist for McMaster, helping him win two terms as S.C. attorney general and

serving as his chief executive assistant.

How much Walker will be paid as McMaster's chief of staff was being worked out on Wednesday.

However, Haley's top aide was paid \$134,225 a year.

Walker, a 49-year-old Ballentine resident, also worked for Haley.

A 1989 graduate of the University of South Carolina, Walker was Haley's deputy chief of staff for communications and legislative affairs in 2011, her first year in office.

He stepped down later that year to become chief lobbyist at USC.

In 2014, Walker became a lobbyist for the Columbia-based BlueCross BlueShield of South Car-

olina insurance company.

Walker, a former S.C. GOP executive director, has more than two decades of experience in S.C. politics, including working on U.S. Sen. John McCain's presidential campaigns.

Walker ran McCain's 2008 S.C. GOP primary campaign and his Mid-Atlantic general election campaign, and was the senator's 2000 national field director for his primary campaign.

Walker also has been a political consultant to U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-Seneca, and on various congressional, state legislative and local campaigns.

## Dems question McMaster's

## country club membership

On Henry McMaster's first full day as governor, Democrats were up in arms not over his leadership style but his membership in the all-white Forest Lake Club.

As of Wednesday afternoon, a change.org petition calling for McMaster to resign from the Forest Acres club had more than 650 signatures. McMaster was challenged on the club membership by Democrat Bakari Sellers when the two ran for lieutenant governor in 2014. McMaster said then and last week, via a spokesman, that he would not quit.

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Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Walker

Title: **Who is Kevin Bryant, SC's new lieutenant governor?**  
 Author: BY AVERY G. WILKS awilks@thestate.com  
 Size: 77.65 column inches  
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



## GOVERNMENT

# Who is Kevin Bryant, SC's new lieutenant governor?

BY AVERY G. WILKS

awilks@thestate.com

COLUMBIA

Kevin Bryant — a founding member of the state Senate's libertarian "William Wallace Caucus," known for his unflinching support of pro-life legislation, school choice, traditional marriage and limited government — is now only a heartbeat away from becoming S.C. governor.

S.C. senators elevated the 49-year-old Anderson Republican on Wednesday to be South Carolina's lieutenant governor.

Senate Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence, paved the way for Bryant's election Tuesday, resigning his post to avoid becoming lieutenant governor. That post has little power, aside from being first in line to succeed the governor, if neces-

FROM PAGE 1C

## BRYANT

their choice. The proposal failed after Republican S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley objected, calling it unnecessary. State economic-development officials also opposed the proposal, noting the negative impact a similar N.C. bill had on jobs in that state.

● Proposals last year to bar state agencies from accepting — or helping others to resettle — refugees in the state until new security measures are enacted, and require the tracking of refugees entering South Carolina. Both

sary. It pays \$46,545 a year.

### THE WILLIAM WALLACE CAUCUS

Since 2005, Bryant — a deeply religious Anderson pharmacist and small-business owner — has been one of the most conservative members in the GOP-majority Senate.

Bryant helped found the Senate's William Wallace Caucus, a group of back-bench Repub-

licans whose proposals and obstructionist tactics have sometimes frustrated both Democrats and mainstream Republicans.

Bryant fought the Affordable Care Act and Common Core, pushed back against proposed tax increases or borrowing plans, and blasted state agencies and public

colleges for what he deemed to be wasteful spending.

"He's not a pragmatic politician," said state Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, another member of the William Wallace Caucus, named for the 13th century Scot — of "Braveheart" fame — who fought for Scottish independence but was executed by the English. "He's not an art-of-the-possible type guy. He has an idea of right and wrong, and he's not going to waver."

The proposals that Bryant has authored or backed over the past few years include:

- A bathroom bill last year that would have prevented transgender men or women from using the bathrooms of

SEE BRYANT, 2C

failed.

● A failed push in 2014 to require the state to directly acknowledge a religious creator while making the Columbian mammoth the official state fossil

● An unsuccessful 2012 bill to allow anyone to carry a gun, concealed or not, anywhere but in private homes and businesses that specifically ban them

● An unsuccessful 2012 bill to require the jobless to pass a drug test before receiving unemployment

benefits.

Bryant says one of his proudest accomplishments was pushing through a 2006 bill that extended the death penalty to include child rapists.

Bryant said this week he believes God led him to the state Senate and, now, to become lieutenant governor.

"I will have a platform to preach conservatism across the state," Bryant said.

### 'A MAN OF HIS WORD'

Senators on both sides

of the aisle admit to differences — large and small — with Bryant's politics. But Bryant has earned universal praise for his principled, straightforward approach to policy making.

Lawmakers say Bryant is upfront and personable. He tells colleagues where he stands on their proposals and what he plans to do, an approach he says helps to iron out potential problems in legislation.

"There's no surprises with Kevin Bryant," said state Sen. John Courson, R-Richland.

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 Author: BY AVERYG.WILKS awilks@thestate.com  
 Size: 77.65 column inches  
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015

That approach, plus a reverence for Senate rules, qualify Bryant to be the chamber's presiding officer, a role of the lieutenant governor, legislators say. Last week, Bryant

practiced chairing the state Senate. In the vacant Senate chamber, he pretended to call on senators and move through business with the Senate clerk.

"I've always found him to be a man of his word, thoughtful, conscientious," said state Sen. Brad Hutto, D-Orangeburg. "We don't always agree on the policies that are proposed, but he's always

been a gentlemen."

Former state Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Richland, refers to Bryant as "my brother from a right-wing mother." Lourie said he admired Bryant's 2015 vote to remove the Confederate flag from the State House dome after the Emanuel 9 massacre.

"He got a lot of grief," Lourie said. "People were protesting in front of his drug store, and he didn't waver a bit."

But Bryant, a former Anderson County GOP chairman, seldom strays from the conservatism that makes him popular

among Upstate voters.

Davis says he will miss Bryant's help in fighting a proposal to increase the state's gas tax to pay to repair the South Carolina's crumbling roads. As Davis has filibustered similar proposals in years' past, Bryant would pepper him with sympathetic questions to pass the time.

"You can only speak for so long before you start to go crazy," Davis said. "He was always somebody who would stand up, and go back and forth with me."

*Avery G. Wilks:*  
803-771-8362,  
*@averygwilks*

## Kevin Bryant biography

- **Age:** 49
- **Occupation:** Pharmacist and president of Bryant Pharmacy and Supply
- **Education:** Bachelor of science degree, University of Georgia
- **Personal:** Married, Ann; three children
- **Political:** Served in state Senate since 2005; former chairman, Anderson County GOP, 1997-2001; delegate, Republican National Convention, 2000



TRACY GLANTZ [tglantz@thestate.com](mailto:tglantz@thestate.com)

Sen. Kevin Bryant, R-Anderson, talks in Senate chambers.



Title: Gov. McMaster names aide as his chief of staff
Author: Associated Press
Size: 11.78 column inches
Greenwood, SC Circulation: 16494



Gov. McMaster names aide as his chief of staff

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Gov. Henry McMaster has chosen a long-time aide as his chief of staff.



HENRY McMASTER

According to the governor's office, Trey Walker is rejoining his former boss following McMaster's ascension. McMaster was sworn in as governor Tuesday evening after the U.S. Senate confirmed Nikki Haley as United Nations ambassador.

Walker is well known in the Statehouse.

He was McMaster's chief assistant during his two terms as attorney general. Walker also was director of the state Republican Party through much of McMaster's tenure as GOP chairman.

Walker was deputy chief of staff for Haley during her first year in office, working as her legislative liaison. He has since lobbied for the University of South Carolina and BlueCross BlueShield.

The 49-year-old University of South Carolina graduate has also directed dozens of Republican campaigns.

Title: **Local show of support**  
 Author: From staff and wire reports  
 Size: 67.27 column inches  
 Greenwood, SC Circulation: 16494



# Local show of support

## Leatherman hangs on to powerful post; Bryant becomes Lt. Governor

From staff and wire reports

COLUMBIA — Sen. Hugh Leatherman managed Wednesday to keep his position as South Carolina's most powerful lawmaker, despite opposition from fellow Republicans who accused him of sidestepping his constitutional duties.

But two Lakelands senators — Democrat Floyd Nicholson of Greenwood and Honea Path Republican Mike Gambrell — stood behind Leatherman as he weathered the fierce critique.

### SUPPORT

*Continued from 1A*

not playing by the rules. They understand when other politicians cover for their friends who don't play by the rules."

The state constitution calls for the Senate's leader to fill a lieutenant governor vacancy. But Leatherman refused to leave the Senate for the largely ceremonial position. The 85-year-old Florence Republican resigned minutes before then-Gov. Nikki Haley was confirmed as President Donald Trump's U.N. ambassador, which promoted then-Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster.

Prior to re-electing Leatherman, the Senate technically voted to make Sen. Kevin Bryant the chamber's leader, knowing he'd keep the president pro tem title only momentarily. Bryant, first elected to the Senate in 2004, was sworn in minutes

"I had promised to support Hugh Leatherman back in December for speaker pro tempore and once you give your word down here, that's about all you've got," Gambrell told the Index-Journal.

Senators voted 28-16 to return the president pro tem title to Leatherman, a day after he resigned the leadership post to avoid becoming lieutenant governor.

All 16 who voted for Leatherman's challenger, Sen. Harvey Peeler of

Gaffney, were Republicans.

Senate Majority Leader Shane Massey, who nominated Peeler, called Leatherman's moves to retain power "a shameless and obvious game of musical chairs."

While most people probably have no idea who leads the state Senate, Massey said, "I am absolutely confident people understand politicians

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later as lieutenant governor.

Senate Judiciary Chairman Luke Rankin, who then nominated Leatherman to be leader again, said senators knew when they re-elected him as president pro tem in December — in their post-election organizational session — that he would not become lieutenant governor. By that time, Trump had already nominated Haley for the job in his Cabinet.

"In courtesy and out of transparency, he made that announcement before we elected him. There were no surprises," said Rankin, R-Myrtle Beach. Noting voters just re-elected Leatherman, Rankin added, "His pledge was to those folks who elected him to remain as their senator."

In a unified stance against

what they called an "arranged procedure" that would enable Leatherman to "enjoy the rights and powers inherent in that office and yet avoid the discharge of the constitutional duty that goes along with enjoying those rights and powers," Sens. George E. "Chip" Campsen, R-Charleston, and Beaufort Republican Tom Davis abstained from voting on Bryant's ascension.

"We believe without reservation he is eminently qualified to discharge the duties of both offices," they said in a joint statement.

Leatherman said his actions didn't violate the constitution.

"We didn't do anything the Senate hasn't done before," he said.

Leatherman's predecessor,

Sen. John Courson, resigned from the leadership post in 2014. Senators then chose Democratic Sen. Yancey McGill to momentarily become pro tem, then lieutenant governor. Leatherman was then elected pro tem, adding to the power he already had as chairman of the Senate's budget-writing committee and various financial oversight boards.

While the GOP-controlled Senate was willing to put a Democratic colleague in the No. 2 job for six months — knowing voters would soon elect McGill's replacement — that wasn't a possibility for the remaining two years of Haley's term.

Bryant, who helped found the chamber's libertarian Wil-



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liam Wallace Caucus, was the only Republican who wanted the job. The 49-year-old Anderson pharmacist said he made the decision after much prayer and he's "honored to assume this new role."

Massey, who also argues no legislator should be able to amass as much power as Leatherman, reminded senators that former Senate President Pro Tem Glenn McConnell felt

it his duty to leave the Senate after former Lt. Gov. Ken Ard pleaded guilty to campaign violations in 2012.

Massey showed video of McConnell's reluctant resignation speech.

Soon after McConnell became lieutenant governor, legislators passed a law to put a question on the ballot they thought would prevent another senator from facing such a deci-

sion.

Voters passed a constitutional amendment that November to have the governor and lieutenant governor run on the same ticket and change the lines of succession. But the ballot question specified the changes wouldn't start until the 2018 election.

Nicholson said he's confident the General Assembly's upper chamber will move on from

Wednesday's vote quickly.

"I think the body as a whole, once its over they look at the total picture of the state and we're going to move some things forward," he said in an interview.

Staff writer Adam Benson and the Associated Press contributed to this story.



HUGH LEATHERMAN



MIKE GAMBRELL

Title: **Locals travel to Washington for inaugural festivities**  
 Author: BY AUGUST R. DITTBENNER, LINDSAY HICKMAN AND ROBERT ANDERSON INFO@MYHORRYNEWS.COM  
 Size: 86.18 column inches  
 Conway, SC Circulation: 6250



# Locals travel to Washington for inaugural festivities

BY AUGUST R. DITTBENNER,  
 LINDSAY HICKMAN AND  
 ROBERT ANDERSON  
 INFO@MYHORRYNEWS.COM

Horry County Republican Party Chairman Robert Rabon assured Donald Trump that he could be elected president even before Trump announced that he was officially seeking the position.

When Trump spoke at the Horry County GOP Convention in April of 2015, he asked Rabon what he thought about a possible bid for the presidency.

"I said 'if you run you'll be President,'" Rabon recalled.

Rabon never wavered in his belief although many political pundits just couldn't see it happening. Several of his skeptics have called since the election to tell Rabon he was right.

"I deal with people everyday," Rabon said. "I knew people had had enough. I've had people who never voted before tell me they voted in this election. I never doubted it."

Rabon and one of his three daughters, Sherrie Brown, traveled to Washington, D.C., this past week to participate in the inaugural festivities and watch his prediction come to fruition.

"It was awesome and then some," Rabon said. "Trump's speech was awesome. It was centered around making America great again. It gives a sense of great hope to me and a lot of other people."

Rabon said the atmosphere was electric.

"The Republican Ball was great. The banquets we went to were great. I rode in a half dozen cabs and went to restaurants and different places and didn't meet one person who wasn't excited about Trump. When he was sworn in, someone in the crowd yelled 'amateur hour is

over.' Another person screamed 'God is back in the White House.'"

Rabon and Brown participated in many events including the South Carolina Inaugural Ball, where they hobnobbed with U.S. Congressman Tom Rice, Gov. Nikki Haley, former Gov. David Beasley and others.

Surprisingly enough, this was the longtime political activist's first inauguration.

"I could have gone a couple of times before, but I really wasn't that interested," he said. Rabon's biggest regret is all of his children and grandchildren weren't with him. He is grateful that Brown was able to share the experience.

"She had an awesome time," he said.

Brown, who serves as an occupational therapist for Horry County Schools, came home with a lot of wonderful memories.

"We had a great time," she said. "It was really nice. Our seats were very good. When Trump did take the platform, the sun came out and a light rain started falling. A lot of the things on the news are not really true. We didn't even see any protestors. We saw a couple of people holding signs saying 'Give Your Life to Jesus' but they weren't protesting. It was packed. There were people for miles."

Brown was also pleasantly surprised that four of the six people who prayed during the inauguration did so in Jesus' name.

"I had a great time and I definitely would love to go again," she said.

Although Trump's inauguration was broadcast for the whole world to see, a handful of students from Coastal Carolina University and Socastee High School choose to see it in person.

Cobi Williams, a political science and business management double major at Coastal, left early this past week to meet with coworkers in Washington, D.C., so he could attend the inauguration.

"I interned for Congressman Tom Rice in his district and in the D.C. offices in 2015, so I went up there to watch the inauguration with many people I worked with during that time," Williams said.

Williams' stay in the nation's capital was exciting and crowded, he said.

"The city was amazing," Williams said. "It was filled with people and with excitement for the inauguration, and I had a lot of great experiences with tons of people there."

Williams has been a supporter of Trump since the beginning, he said.

"[Trump] is a successful businessman that will ensure accountability and productivity in our government," Williams said.

Williams believes Trump is focused on helping the American people and creating jobs.

"Just look at the businesses that are already starting to come back and add jobs within the United States since the election," Williams said. "Even before being inaugurated, big businesses were responding to President Trump's emphasis on American jobs. No other incoming president has been able to

do that."

Williams, who did not help campaign for Trump because of his school commitments and focusing on his nonprofit, Cobi's Coats For Kids, said the difference between the atmosphere in the city is marked.

"I've spent semesters interning on Capitol Hill and it was just an entirely different experience," Williams said. "The entire city shuts down for the inauguration and it's something truly amazing to witness."

Socastee High School junior Megan Koppel attended the inauguration along with members of the school's Young Republicans Club.

"I had a lot of fun," Koppel said of the trip. "It was a really cool experience."

Koppel and the other Socastee attendees had been to Washington, D.C., during their freshman year to visit museums and monuments in the city, so during their trip to the inauguration they focused on the political aspects of the city.

"After the inauguration on Friday, we walked over to [South Carolina Senator] Tim Scott's office and got to sit and talk with him, talk with some of his interns and secretaries, and met his mom," Koppel said. "The inauguration and meeting with Tim Scott were the two educational things we did there."

Koppel said the inauguration was fascinating.

"We got there really early in the morning," she said. "They had screens and televisions going, talking about the history of our country and important events and people."

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Size: 86.18 column inches

Conway, SC Circulation: 6250

Because they got to the inauguration so early, they were able to get close to the ceremony.

"We were on the lawn of the Capitol," she said. "I'd say we were probably 300 meters away from the Capitol Building."

Koppel said she was not worried about protests in the city, but she and the rest of the group did have a chance to see the Women's March on Saturday after the inauguration.

"I was very amazed that, al-

though some of the things they were protesting I didn't agree with, they were protesting peacefully," she said.

Despite disagreeing with many of Trump's more offensive statements in the past and having some concerns about his potential actions in office, Koppel is willing to give him a chance.

"In certain aspects of his job as President, I would approach it cautiously," she said. "He has a temper, he tweets things he probably shouldn't tweet and

says things he probably shouldn't say."

Koppel does have some concerns about how Trump will handle diplomacy because of his volatility, but she sees many positives about him as well.

"I think he's going to do a great job with helping people get jobs and get out of debt, and get people off welfare and into jobs, so our economy can grow and not just be in a standstill," she said.

Both Williams and Koppel say

they will remember their experiences for the rest of their lives.

"It is something I'll never forget, something I'll be telling my children and grandchildren about one day," Williams said.

"I think when I grow up and have kids, I'm going to try to take them to go experience that," Koppel said. "It was very cool to watch, and I'll be able to tell them I got to see the 45th President of the United States get inaugurated."



COURTESY

**Robert Rabon and his daughter, Sherrie Brown pose for a picture at the South Carolina Inaugural Ball during inaugural festivities this past week in Washington, D.C.**