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Subject: Morning Clips – Monday, December 8, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

WHNS: Grace period ends for SC's texting while driving ban

<http://www.foxcarolina.com/story/27571333/grace-period-ends-for-scs-texting-while-driving-ban#ixzz3LJEzlf3j>

Casey Vaughn

It has been 180 days since South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley signed a law into effect, banning texting while driving across the state. The law went into effect on June 9, replacing previously passed bans by towns and counties across the state, including in Greenville. Since June, drivers have benefited from a 180-day grace period where only warnings were issued.

Aiken Standard: Christmas tree grown in Edgefield County among decorations at Governor's Mansion

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20141208/AIK0101/141209540>

Dede Biles

A six-foot white pine grown at Turkey Creek Christmas Tree Farm in western Edgefield County is among the holiday decorations at the Governor's Mansion in Columbia this year. Turkey Creek earned the opportunity to supply the tree by winning the best in show competition for Christmas tree growers at the South Carolina State Fair in October.

Note: "It's an honor," said Turkey Creek owner Dale Cullum, who met Gov. Nikki Haley when he delivered the tree earlier this month.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

New York Post: Songs of the South

<http://nypost.com/2014/12/07/songs-of-the-south/>

Editorial

The GOP won its ninth US Senate seat of 2014 Saturday when Rep. Bill Cassidy ousted incumbent Democrat Mary Landrieu in the Louisiana runoff election. Landrieu's defeat was exceptionally sweet, given how she pulled out both the race and gender cards when it became clear she might be facing the end of her career.

Note: So because the South is conservative, it's hostile to women and black candidates? Try telling that to South Carolina Republicans Nikki Haley and Tim Scott. Haley, a woman of Southeast Asian descent, handily won re-election as governor. Meanwhile, Scott became the first African American to win a Senate seat in the South since Reconstruction.

Times and Democrat: S.C. law officers in error in letter about marijuana

http://thetandd.com/news/opinion/s-c-law-officers-in-error-in-letter-about-marijuana/article_2bd82efa-7de7-11e4-af4f-67abc02e4b92.html

Editorial

South Carolina Republican state Sen. Tom Davis of Beaufort County released the following statement regarding Thursday's letter written by the directors of South Carolina's four primary law enforcement agencies to the members of the state's Medical Marijuana Study Committee, which Davis co-chairs.

Note: Such possession and consumption of the cannabis oil became legal in South Carolina when Gov. Nikki Haley signed S 1035 into law on June 2, 2014. So there would be no ambiguity, the Act provides that:

Post and Courier: Count police cameras' costs

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141208/PC1002/141209606/1021>

Editorial

Outfitting police officers with body cameras could resolve many disputes about their actions. That sounds

particularly inviting considering the continuing, divisive debate about the details of Ferguson (Mo.) Police Officer Darren Wilson's fatal shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown in August. But adding cameras to every police uniform also sounds potentially costly - and not just in monetary measure.

Times and Democrat: Eutawville case: Legal system will produce justice

http://thetandd.com/news/opinion/eutawville-case-legal-system-will-produce-justice/article_e5fe68ae-7de6-11e4-a349-5bc3af6e126a.html

Editorial

THE ISSUE: Murder indictment of police officer; OUR OPINION: Beyond politics and protest, ensuring justice is the obligation. The case of a Eutawville police officer who shot and killed a man in a dispute at town hall has been hotly controversial since that fateful day in 2011.

Aiken Standard: Don't stall economy with new shutdown

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20141208/AIK02/141209528/1018/AIK02>

Editorial

A small victory lap seems to be warranted with the better-than-expected jobs report released last week. The economy thankfully isn't quite in the doldrums now as it once was, and areas where growth was needed – such as in the engineering, technology and manufacturing sectors, experienced higher numbers than in recent years.

S.C. General Assembly News:

Associated Press: Speaker Lucas: All of this is so improbable

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

Seanna Adcox

The newly elected leader of the South Carolina House calls himself an improbable speaker, but he believes he's the right person to lead the chamber past the cloud that's hung over it for two years. Rep. Jay Lucas says he's still amazed he even made it to the House 16 years ago, as a Republican from a then-Democratic-stronghold - an election he won by a few dozen votes following a recount.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: Statistics lacking in debate over police behavior

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=jJ8RM4Cr

Allen G. Breed

The deadly police encounters in Missouri, Ohio, South Carolina and New York may make it feel like there's a tidal wave of cases sweeping the country. But there are no firm statistics to say whether they're part of a growing trend or simply a series of coincidences generating a deafening buzz in news reports and social media.

Post and Courier: Charleston VA unveils brand-new mental health research facility

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141207/PC16/141209652/1177>

Lauren Sausser

A new \$10 million addition to the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center will enhance the ongoing clinical research that scientists here are able to conduct for veterans with mental health needs. The hospital in Charleston treats almost 60,000 patients every year. Nearly a third require mental health services.

Associated Press: Charleston VA dedicates \$10M mental health center

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=iDyoZk82

The Ralph Johnson Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Charleston is opening its new \$10 million mental health research center. Dr. Carolyn Clancy, the interim undersecretary for health with the VA, is the guest speaker at the Monday ribbon-cutting. The new 16,000-square-foot addition to the medical center has laboratory space as well as 27 exam rooms and three group rooms.

Sumter Item: Deputies will soon wear body cams

<http://www.theitem.com/stories/deputies-will-soon-wear-body-cams,237439>

Matt Bruce

Sumter County Sheriff Anthony Dennis announced Friday that the sheriff's office will begin making efforts to equip every deputy with body cameras after recent tragedies raised the national debate of officers using

excessive force on citizens.

Sun News: Myrtle Beach's new police unit will focus on Memorial Day weekend, special event planning

http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2014/12/07/4652709_myrtle-beachs-new-police-unit.html?sp=/99/209/&rh=1#storylink=cpy

Maya T. Prabhu

The primary purpose of the unit, comprised of Capt. Amy Prock and Lt. Joey Crosby, is to coordinate Myrtle Beach's safety plan in response to a violent Memorial Day weekend this year that resulted in eight shootings that left three people dead and seven others injured.

Post and Courier: South Carolina power co-ops and their members sound off over emission regs

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141208/PC05/141209677/1177>

The federal government's proposed new limits on carbon dioxide emissions from existing power plants are catching flak. The state's largest electric cooperative, Berkeley Electric, submitted 51,136 comments opposing the new Environmental Protection Agency restrictions, saying they will crimp already tight spending plans and stifle economic growth.

Greenville News: Off-campus Clemson party increases racial tension

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2014/12/07/campus-clemson-party-sparks-backlash/20054675/>

Robbie Ward, Ron Barnett

The Clemson University chapter of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity has suspended "all activity" and most of the chapter's officers have resigned after what the university called "an inappropriate theme party organized by several of its members at a private, off-campus residence."

Local News:

Island Packet: Despite increase in body cameras, sheriff remains opposed

http://www.islandpacket.com/2014/12/07/3475443_despite-increase-in-body-cameras.html?sp=/99/100/&rh=1

Rebecca Lurye

The Beaufort County Sheriff's Office remains the lone local holdout against the use of body cameras, even as several state lawmakers hope to make the devices mandatory. Sheriff P.J. Tanner said he has no plans to add additional recording tools to an arsenal that already includes in-car cameras, audio recorders worn on deputies' uniforms, and video-recorded interrogation rooms.

Post and Courier: First Charleston County teachers poised to get performance bonuses

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141208/PC16/141209562/1177/first-charleston-county-teachers-poised-to-get-performance-bonuses>

Amanda Kerr

Some Charleston County teachers will get extra spending money later this month as the school district continues to roll out a pilot project for teacher performance that rewards the best educators with bonuses. Academic teachers in grades 4-8 at 14 Charleston County schools are eligible to receive a one-time bonus set to be issued on Dec. 15 as part of a grant-funded pilot evaluation and compensation project, dubbed BRIDGE.

Rock Hill Herald: Piedmont Medical Center emergency department fully open

http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/12/07/6599832_pmc-emergency-department-fully.html?rh=1

Don Worthington

From the exterior there are no changes, but as for the inside of Piedmont Medical Center, Monday marks a new day. PMC officially opens its fully renovated and expanded emergency department. The \$20 million project doubles the size of the emergency department from 21,113 square feet to 42,251 square feet.

Associated Press: Judge holds special Family Court day for adoptions

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=UrJDj0wa

Jade Reynolds

Many are thankful for family this time of year, but about 15 children are especially happy this holiday season. Their adoptions recently were finalized at Sumter County Judicial Center. "It's great, a big relief, awesome," said Felix Colon after officially adopting his second son. "We've been looking forward to this for a

long time."

Post and Courier: Award-winning journalist David Wren joins The Post and Courier of Charleston

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141208/PC05/141209684/1177>

Award-winning South Carolina journalist David Wren has joined The Post and Courier as assistant business editor and business writer covering Boeing Co. and other manufacturers, the maritime industry and economic development issues.

National News:

Bloomberg: By the Numbers: Half of the Senators Who Voted for Obamacare Will be Gone in 2015

<http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2014-12-07/by-the-numbers-half-of-the-senators-who-voted-for-obamacare-will-be-gone-in-2015>

Greg Giroux

Louisiana Republican Bill Cassidy's double-digit ousting of Democratic Senator Mary Landrieu on Saturday was, in the words of the senator-elect, an "exclamation mark" on a 2014 election that saw the Republicans win control of the Senate. With Landrieu's departure, only half of the Senators who voted to pass the Affordable Care Act will still be in office in 2015, when the new members are sworn in.

National Journal: Will Immigration Plan's Launch Repeat Obamacare's Mistakes?

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/white-house/will-immigration-plan-s-launch-repeat-obamacare-s-mistakes-20141207>

Rachel Rouben

The White House has been down this road before. It knows what happens when lots of people try to sign up for a controversial new government program but can't. So having been through last year's disastrous rollout of HealthCare.gov, the administration doesn't want history to repeat itself as President Obama's new immigration plan comes to life.

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