

From: Moore, Camlin <CamlinMoore@gov.sc.gov>  
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Subject: Morning Clips – Thursday, August 18, 2016

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## Morning Clips – Thursday, August 18, 2016

### Governor Nikki Haley News:

Post and Courier: No offense, but save 'ladies' first

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160818/160819465/no-offense-but-save-ladies-first>

Frank Wooten

We have a lady governor. No, that's not a patriarchal putdown of Nikki Haley or her gender. But even here in "America's Most Polite City," which remains a bastion of Southern gentility, times — and sensitivities — change. And excellent Miami Herald columnist Leonard Pitts Jr. wrote last week on our Commentary page that "years ago" an editor named Emily "hit the roof" when he "used the L-word." Pitts recalled: "For me, 'ladies' connoted nothing more sinister than genteel women, the feminine counterpoint to 'gentlemen.' Used in conjunction with that word, I suspect it wouldn't have bothered Emily. But used on its own it had, for her, a whiff of paternalistic condescension, i.e., 'You ladies ought not trouble your pretty little heads with politics.' I made the change [to 'women']." Pitts also wrote with regret about his "egregious" use of the word "shrill" in a late July tweet describing Hillary Clinton's "delivery." Though the tweet hailed her speech at the Democratic Convention, Pitts put his chagrin this way...

The New American: The GOP Factional Divide

<http://www.thenewamerican.com/reviews/item/23876-the-gop-factional-divide>

Patrick Krey

One common mistake people make when assessing the Republican Party is that it is a monolithic entity where all of its members walk in lockstep on key issues. This couldn't be further from the truth as this past election cycle just revealed. I covered the Republican National Convention for The New American and, between listening to the various speeches and talking to the delegates, it was obvious to me that the Republican Party is splintering into two sharp factions that are diametrically opposed to one another. Donald Trump was the focus of everyone's attention, but this ideological divide runs much deeper than Trump, and I believe it will impact the future direction of the party after Trump has moved on. The truth of the matter is that Trump merely tapped into this long simmering feud, some might even say accidentally, by choosing one side over the other, and completely upended the Grand Old Party in the process.

NOTE: There are plenty of candidates whom the globalists would love to use in the future to promote their "diversity" meme. South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley comes to mind as one whom globalists could use to recycle their neoconservative policies with a new multicultural face.

### SC Political News:

Associated Press: Airports, military museum among losers of \$10M budget cut

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=ymKW5Yi1](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=ymKW5Yi1)

Seanna Adcox

South Carolina's chief accountant says a revenue shortfall has cut \$10 million worth of spending from

the state's \$7.5 billion budget. State Comptroller Richard Eckstrom says the surplus for the fiscal year that ended June 30 came in \$10.3 million less than the Legislature expected. That means projects toward the bottom of a priority list for one-time spending can't be funded. The state's Aeronautics Commission takes the biggest loss of \$7.5 million. Most of that was intended for maintenance and upgrades at the state's 51 publicly owned airports. Agency director James Stephens said Wednesday the cut means airports may miss out on federal grants that provide 90 percent of a project's costs, benefiting competing airports in other states. Other cuts include \$380,000 to the South Carolina National Guard's museum.

The State: South Carolina has more freedom, study says

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article96211482.html>

Bristow Marchant

South Carolinians have more freedom than the residents of most other states, at least according to one study. The Cato Institute, a libertarian-leaning think tank, has published its rankings of all 50 states according to their freedom levels, whether it's economic restrictions or the freedom to marry, own firearms and consume marijuana. South Carolina ranks 15th on the list, five points higher than in 2012. Cato gives the state high marks for its tax and regulatory policy, and notes the legalization of same-sex marriage has improved the state's rankings on personal freedom. The most free state in the union is New Hampshire, according to the rankings, while its near-neighbor New York is the least free. New York has apparently been taking the least free state title for a while due to its economic policies, including a local tax burden twice the state average. Cato predicts it will remain there for "many years to come."

SC Agency News:

Post and Courier: S.C. transportation officials prepare for 2017 funding fight

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160817/160819450/sc-transportation-officials-prepare-for-2017-funding-fight>

Gavin Jackson

With five months until the start of the legislative session, S.C. Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall and the agency's commission are gearing up to pressure lawmakers to increase funding. The group is developing a plan to boost annual allocations for improvements to crumbling roads and bridges — especially the primary road system of main roads, state routes and U.S. highways that carry around half of the driving public across the state. "I would argue we're still in a state of crisis on the primary network," Hall said. To tackle road needs this year, the Legislature approved Act 275, which essentially is a \$4 billion borrowing plan. But the money is a one-time shot to address a nearly \$40 billion cost projected out for the next three decades. Hall said 10-year funding scenarios gained traction with lawmakers this year. Better communication next session should boost the chances of additional funding, she said.

The State: Roads agency to push for money for rural highways

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article96260317.html>

Cassie Cope

Transportation Secretary Christy Hall proposed Wednesday pushing for money during the 2017 legislative session to make rural S.C. roads safer. Hall proposed looking at the cost of a safety program that would include clearing areas alongside highways so drivers can recover if they run off

the road, draining ditches so they do not hold water and upgrading signage. South Carolina ranked second in the nation in highway fatalities on rural roads in 2015, according to a report by The Road Information Program. The only statewide safety programs currently in place include installing rumble strips and paving two-foot-wide shoulders on S.C. roads. Transportation Commission chairman Mike Wooten said the state Transportation Department needs a substantial increase in its budget to improve highway maintenance, including safety.

Aiken Standard: Transportation agency holds final statewide improvement program meeting

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160817/160819566/transportation-agency-holds-final-statewide-improvement-program-meeting->

Dan Brown

Viola Covington, program coordinator with SCDOT, along with a team of transportation and local government officials, were on hand in the LSCOG conference room on Wagener Road to answer public questions and provide feedback on top STIP projects in 2016. STIP is a policy and programming document required by federal law, and includes all federally funded programs and regionally significant projects. "The reason behind these public information meetings is to inform the public about the updating of the STIP document, extending it out from 2019 to 2022," said Kenny Larimore, regional planning engineer with SCDOT. The updated STIP document will be adopted Oct.

1

Island Packet: SCDOT to Walmart: Stop working on Bluffton roads

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/business/article96298762.html>

Madison Hogan

The state has ordered Walmart to stop all road construction in Greater Bluffton after its recent installment of a median at the Kittie's Corner shopping center drew fire from residents. The median is across the street from the site where the retailer is currently building two stores. Michael Black, a representative of the state Department of Transportation, said the retailer received an encroachment permit which gave it permission to work within the right of way. The median, SCDOT said, is not within that right of way. Until the SCDOT can verify Walmart has an agreement with property owners, the retailer cannot continue right of way work needed for the new stores — a supercenter and a Sam's Club — Black said Wednesday. That includes the right-hand turn from Fording Island Road onto Bluffton Road and the intersection between the construction site and Kittie's Crossing, where a traffic light is planned.

Associated Press: Authorities: Inmate strangled cellmate in fight over food

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=gSwaxZ9x](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=gSwaxZ9x)

SC State Wire

A man has been charged with strangling his cellmate at a South Carolina prison during a fight over food. The Department of Corrections said Wednesday that 34-year-old Michael Jerome Brice had been charged with murder in the July death of 24-year-old Ryan Mansfield. Authorities say the men had been fighting over the theft of food. A warrant says Brice made a statement implicating himself in Mansfield's death. Prisons records show Mansfield was serving a five-year sentence for burglary and grand larceny from Richland County. He was set to be released in March. Brice started a 13-year sentence for drug and weapons charges in January. It wasn't known if he had an attorney on the murder charge.

Post and Courier: Reason for Aetna marketplace exit may be related to blocked merger, report says

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160817/160819490/reason-for-aetna-marketplace-exit-may-be->

## related-to-blocked-merger-report-says

Lauren Sausser

When Aetna announced this week it would back out of the Obamacare exchange in South Carolina and several other states, CEO Mark Bertolini said patients covered by the Affordable Care Act aren't profitable. But an email obtained by The Huffington Post suggests the company's decision may be tied to a failed merger with Humana. "It is very likely that we would need to leave the public exchange business entirely and plan for additional business efficiencies should our deal ultimately be blocked," Bertolini wrote in a letter to Justice Department officials in June. "Our analysis to date makes clear that if the deal were challenged and/or blocked we would need to take immediate actions to mitigate public exchange and ACA small group losses," it continued. "Specifically, if the DOJ sues to enjoin the transaction, we will immediately take action to reduce our 2017 exchange footprint."

NOTE: S.C. Department of Insurance Director Ray Farmer, a member of Republican Gov. Nikki Haley's Cabinet, said there isn't anything the state can do to compel insurers to stay. "When a company leaves our market they are not required to give us a reason for it," Farmer said. "I think the bigger concern is why are companies losing money under the Affordable Care Act structure?"

SC After Recent Violence:

Independent Mail: Only a fraction of S.C. police shootings caught on police video

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/only-a-fraction-of-sc-police-shootings-caught-on-police-video-3a37f94f-3cd0-2901-e053-0100007ff88e-390512711.html>

Mike Ellis

Armed with what his mother later said was a BB gun, Jeffery Allen Morris put Anderson County sheriff's deputies in a tough situation last week. What was supposed to be the routine serving of a probation-violation warrant turned into havoc. The only people who know what happened next are the deputies who were involved. Deputies threw a stun grenade toward him and Morris allegedly raised his gun at a deputy who mortally wounded him, according to Anderson County Sheriff John Skipper. There is no video of the shooting. That's pretty common in South Carolina. More than a year ago, in June 2015, South Carolina became the first state to mandate that most law enforcement officers would have to wear the body cameras, although the cameras were not immediately required but tied to each individual agency's body camera plans being "fully funded." The law was passed in significant part because of a shooting in North Charleston a couple months earlier, in which an officer claimed to have shot and killed a man in self-defense until a citizen video surfaced, leading to a murder charge against the officer. Despite the law, this year in most cases involving an officer shooting there's no footage to be independently reviewed.

Sun News: Youthful offenders arrested for half of county's crimes, stats show

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/crime/article96293187.html>

Emily Weaver

One day after two shootings, including a drive-by in a Conway-area mobile home park, were reported in Horry County, members of the Horry County Subcommittee on Violence met to discuss crime statistics. The figures revealed an alarming trend: nearly half of the crimes committed in the county that led to arrests were perpetrated by youthful offenders. "I really wasn't expecting the numbers to be what they are," said Olaf Jonasson, a crime analyst with the Horry County Police Department. "I'm not a road officer so I don't know exactly what goes on out there all the time, but I was surprised at how high the numbers were of the youth (offenders)." Jonasson pulled the Horry County police numbers for violent crimes that led to arrests, breaking down the totals to show how many of the arrests were of perpetrators age 25 and younger. The statistics showed 14 cases of murder and non-

negligent manslaughter in 2011. Ten of the 14 cases (71 percent) involved youthful offenders.

Morning News: Church leaders, community members discuss race relations in Florence

[http://www.scnw.com/news/local/article\\_cda5ddb2-64dc-11e6-9f1e-83f228c68356.html](http://www.scnw.com/news/local/article_cda5ddb2-64dc-11e6-9f1e-83f228c68356.html)

Jessica Imbimbo

More than 40 church leaders and community members attended the Helping Florence Flourish Pastors' Breakfast on Wednesday to network with fellow church members and discuss race relations in Florence. The Pastors' Breakfast was held at St. John's Church on South Dargan Street in Florence starting at 7:30 a.m. The event is one of a series of breakfasts that the Racial Bridging Focus Group has held since January.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press : Tropical Storm Fiona getting stronger in the Atlantic

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=iKgTOv9I](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=iKgTOv9I)

SC State Wire

The U.S. National Hurricane Center says Tropical Storm Fiona is getting a little stronger as it moves across the Atlantic. The storm's maximum sustained winds early Thursday have increased to near 45 mph (75 kph). Additional strengthening is possible Thursday followed by slow weakening by the weekend. Fiona is centered about 1,080 miles (1,740 kilometers) west of the Cape Verde Islands and is moving west-northwest near 16 mph (26 kph).

Associated Press: On the Waterfront: Growth continues at South Carolina ports

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=FX87I7Wa](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=FX87I7Wa)

SC State Wire

Despite a sluggish world economy, growth continues at South Carolina's ports. The South Carolina Ports Authority announced Wednesday that container volume increased 1.2 percent last month over July of 2015. The equivalent of 1.9 million 20-foot-foot steel shipping containers crossed the docks in the Charleston area. Because steel shipping containers come in different sizes, volume is generally reported in how many 20-foot containers the cargo would fill. July was also a record for the month in terms of total number of containers moved. The authority moved 100,300 containers. That's almost 400 more than the number the terminals handled back in July of 2005.

Local News:

The State: Regulators asked to probe company's phone rates for county jails in SC

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article96283252.html>

Cynthia Roldan

The state's Public Service Commission has been asked to investigate whether a company that provides phone services for inmates in South Carolina county jails is charging the inmates and their families higher rates than it is allowed. Securus Technologies, which provides service to the Lexington County Detention Center as well as more than two-dozen other county jails, was given until Friday to provide evidence that it wasn't overbilling families following a story published last week by The State newspaper. The S.C. Office of Regulatory Staff on Wednesday said it could not determine from the data the company provided what rates it was charging. The ORS said it is asking the Public Service Commission to compel Securus to provide more proof. Securus provides phone inmate services for more than 20 jails in South Carolina including the Lexington County Detention Center. The company is one of the nation's largest phone providers for inmates. The Public Service Commission signs off



on rates set by utilities in South Carolina.

Associated Press: Deputies: Man smothered infant while sleeping after drinking

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=e1Bm3ALd](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=e1Bm3ALd)

SC State Wire

Deputies say an Eastover man accidentally killed his infant son by rolling on top of him while sleeping after drinking alcohol and using drugs. The Richland County Sheriff's Department announced Wednesday the arrest of 25-year-old Billy Antwan Robinson. He's charged with unlawful neglect of a child. Deputies say the incident happened March 26 when Robinson fell asleep on the couch with his 2-month-old son and then rolled over on top of the baby, restricting his son's airflow. Lt. Jerry Maldonado says Robinson wasn't arrested until Aug. 4 because deputies had to wait for toxicology tests to come back. Officials say those tests showed Robinson had used marijuana, and he admitted to consuming alcohol before falling asleep with his son. It's unknown if he has an attorney.

The State: Man rolled over on baby after drinking and smoking pot, deputies say

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article96237442.html>

Glen Luke Flanagan

Deputies arrested a man after they say he was responsible for the death of his 2-month-old son. Billy Antwan Robinson, 25, of Eastover, was charged with unlawful neglect of a child. Robinson fell asleep with his son on the couch after drinking alcohol and using marijuana – then rolled over on top the child, restricting his son's airflow, officials said. The Richland County Sheriff's Department announced his arrest Wednesday. This happened March 26, officials said. Deputies did not arrest Robinson until Aug. 4 because they had to wait for toxicology tests to come back, according to Lt. Jerry Maldonado of the sheriff's department's special victims unit. The tests showed that Robinson had used marijuana, and he admitted to having consumed alcohol, officials said.

Associated Press: Police searching for missing pregnant North Charleston woman

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=sFgcpCJm](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=sFgcpCJm)

SC State Wire

Police in North Charleston are searching for a pregnant woman who was reported missing by her husband. North Charleston police spokesman Spencer Pryor tells media outlets that 40-year-old Shantel Lee was last seen Aug. 5 and is currently six months pregnant. Pryor says Lee's husband went to pick her up from work and she wasn't there. Lee's employer told her husband that she never showed up for work that day. Authorities say Lee's husband waited several days before reporting her missing because he says she has disappeared before in the past. Police say Lee is 5-foot-3, weighs 160 pounds and has black hair and brown eyes. Anyone with information about her whereabouts is asked to contact authorities.

Associated Press: Man accused of slashing sleeping woman's throat inside home

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=MOOWNU4y](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=MOOWNU4y)

SC State Wire

A man has been arrested after authorities say he slashed a sleeping woman's throat in Douglas County. News agencies report Douglas County sheriff's deputies say 20-year-old Kenny Wayne Oliver was arrested Wednesday in Spartanburg, South Carolina. His exact charges are unknown. Investigators say Oliver cut Sandy Archey's neck and hands while she was sleeping in her Douglasville home Aug. 5. She fought him off and he fled. Archey's throat was slit three times. She is expected to make a full recovery. Sheriff's office spokesman Lt. Glenn Daniel says Oliver was living with Archer and her family at the time of the attack. Archey's daughter, Ashley Archey, says her

mother took Oliver, who is a long-time friend, in when he needed a place to stay and helped him find a job.

Post and Courier: Former Berkeley County deputy who sold gun to felon sentenced to federal prison  
<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160817/160819491/former-berkeley-county-deputy-who-sold-gun-to-felon-sentenced-to-federal-prison>

Gregory Yee

A former Berkeley County sheriff's deputy was sentenced Tuesday to one year and one day in federal prison after he admitted to selling a handgun to a felon. Tony Riley pleaded guilty to the illegal gun sale after his trial ended with a hung jury and in exchange for dismissal of a second count that he sold a Mossberg shotgun to a felon. Riley was working as a courthouse deputy for the Berkeley County Sheriff's Office in late 2013 when he sold a Smith & Wesson .38-caliber revolver to a known felon, according to the indictment. The 62-year-old Goose Creek resident faced up to 10 years in federal prison. Instead, he will serve one year probation at the end of his prison sentence, according to court documents. His attorney, Grover Seaton IV, could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

The State: Money was motive for drug-dealing SC doctor now facing prison time

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article96276377.html>

John Monk

Dr. Mackie J. Walker of Aiken, once a respected podiatrist, pleaded guilty Wednesday in federal court to being the key figure in a major South Carolina oxycodone drug trafficking ring. Walker, 63, who sold oxycodone prescriptions to dozens of addicts and drug traffickers for up to \$1,000 per prescription, is now subject to being sent to prison for up to 20 years, prosecutors said. "Dr. Walker preyed upon the vulnerabilities and imperfections of various individuals for his own financial benefit," assistant U.S. Attorney Ben Garner told federal Judge Michelle Childs during Walker's guilty plea hearing at the federal courthouse in Columbia. In return for his guilty plea, prosecutors agreed not to charge Walker with the overdose death of a patient for whom he had prescribed oxycodone, Garner told Childs. Walker had "no legitimate medical purpose" in writing that prescription, Garner said.

Associated Press : Homeowner accused of running illegal homeless shelter

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=YVgAyZfD](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=YVgAyZfD)

SC State Wire

A North Charleston homeowner is facing charges after officials say he was operating an illegal homeless shelter at the property. The Post and Courier of Charleston reports (<http://bit.ly/2aXAuKb>) North Charleston officials say 51-year-old Cyrus Kamini was charged Monday with operating a business without a license, operating an unsafe dwelling and not having permits for work done on the site. Officials boarded up the 1,500-square-foot home owned by Kamini that was divided into as many as eight units. Kamini said Wednesday that he takes in homeless people and had about 20 people living at the location. He says those staying in the house have been relocated to another building on the property and to rooms given by local churches. Kamini said he admits he violated city building, zoning and business codes.

Post and Courier: North Charleston shuts illegal homeless shelter

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160817/160819448/north-charleston-shutters-illegal-homeless-shelter>

Brenda Rindge

North Charleston officials have shut down part of a compound that was operating as an unlicensed homeless shelter. Cyrus Kamini, 51, who owns a home at 2601 Carner Ave. in North Charleston, was

charged Monday with operating a business without a license, operating an unsafe dwelling and not having permits for work done on the site, according to North Charleston officials. He was fined \$5,000 and has a Sept. 21 date in North Charleston Municipal Court. Kamini said on Wednesday that he takes in homeless people — “no interview, no questioning” — and had about 20 people living at the location. “It’s not an official movement at all,” he said. “It’s just my home and me opening my home to other people.” Officials boarded up a 1,500-square-foot home that was divided into as many as eight units. Eleven people lodged in the house have been relocated to another building on the property and to rooms given by local churches, Kamini said.

Post and Courier: Funding for Wage Recovery Program set to expire

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160818/160819496/funding-for-wage-recovery-program-set-to-expire>

Hanna Raskin

A countywide program designed to recover wages illegally withheld from restaurant employees and other workers is in jeopardy after failing to win county staff’s support for its continued funding. After spending a year studying the scope and consequences of wage theft, the Charleston Area Justice Ministry in 2015 successfully lobbied Charleston County to foot the \$150,000 bill for South Carolina Legal Services’ hiring of a full-time attorney and part-time paralegal to work exclusively on wage theft cases. This year, though, the county asked the Wage Recovery Program to apply for a Community Investment grant, putting it in competition with more than 60 other community service projects for a pool of \$300,000. County staff graded applicants according to criteria such as length of existence and spending effectiveness: The Wage Recovery Program was the highest rated program not to make the list of 25 programs selected for allocation. County Council’s finance committee this evening will vote on whether to endorse the recommendation and forward it to the full council for a vote next week.

Associated Press: Problem of Popularity: Hilton Head seeks to ease congestion

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=VNk73G1I](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=VNk73G1I)

SC State Wire

Hilton Head Island leaders say shuttle buses, food trucks and charging for parking could ease traffic congestion on the popular south end of the island near Sea Pines Plantation. Local news outlets report town council will set up a committee to see if some of those suggestions, developed during more than 40 meetings, can be put in place by next tourist season. One suggestion is running shuttle buses from other areas of the island. And officials say allowing food trucks to serve less-visited beaches could draw visitors to such areas. Another idea is to remove parking fees at those other beaches but to put them into effect at beaches on the south end. Sea Pines is the location of the annual RBC Heritage PGA tournament.

Presidential Election 2016:

Associated Press: Weary GOP hopeful Trump staff shake-up triggers new momentum

<http://bigstory.ap.org/b2aced51a739492588e683885186c4e9>

Steve Peoples and Julie Pace

Weary Republican leaders are accepting Donald Trump’s latest staff shake-up, hopeful that a new leadership team can reverse the New York businessman’s struggles even as some worry it’s too little too late. The Republican National Committee has already conceded it may divert resources away from the presidential contest favor of vulnerable Senate and House candidates if Trump’s standing does not improve in the coming weeks. RNC chief strategist Sean Spicer called Trump’s staffing changes the “healthy growth of the campaign at a senior level at a key point.” Spicer also urged caution as



Trump's new team contemplates whether the fiery populism and freewheeling style that won him the Republican nomination will give him a better shot at the White House than uniting his party and rallying moderate voters."I think people want him to be authentic," Spicer said. "They appreciate he's not a scripted politician, but there's a recognition that words do matter."

National News:

Associated Press: WHY IT MATTERS: Income inequality

<http://bigstory.ap.org/8f18f6261a854e62ab481a4a94a4f81f>

Josh Boak

THE ISSUE: The rich keep getting richer while more Americans are getting left behind financially. Income inequality has surged near levels last seen before the Great Depression. The average income for the top 1 percent of households climbed 7.7 percent last year to \$1.36 million, according to tax data tracked by Emmanuel Saez, an economics professor at the University of California, Berkeley. That privileged sliver of the population saw pay climb at almost twice the rate of income growth for the other 99 percent, whose pay averaged a humble \$48,768. But why care how much the wealthy are making? What counts the most to any family is how much that family is bringing in. And that goes to the heart of the income-inequality debate: Most Americans still have yet to recover from the Great Recession, even though that downturn ended seven years ago. The average income for the 99 percent is still lower than it was back in 1998 after adjusting for inflation.

Associated Press: Louisiana flooding victims now struggling with where to live

<http://bigstory.ap.org/13ebdf7e6e854b56a7c87dcd6b264c17>

Michael Kunzelman, Melinda Deslatte and Kevin McGill

Keisha Taylor, a 37-year-old mother of four, has spent three nights in two different shelters since her family fled the flooding at their Baton Rouge apartment complex. And she doesn't know how many more nights they will be sleeping on cots inside the downtown arena where hundreds sought shelter. Taylor probably could stay with relatives in White Castle, a town about 30 miles west of Louisiana's capital city, but three of her kids are enrolled in Baton Rouge schools that could reopen next week. "This is where I live. I need to be home," she said. Taylor is one of thousands of people across southern Louisiana displaced by catastrophic flooding and now struggling with where to live.

Associated Press : California wildfire brings destruction and uncertainty

<http://bigstory.ap.org/be49cd7bb4f046f8b11e75b4a3e2717b>

Christopher Weber and Christine Armario

A ferocious wildfire had swallowed up many homes as it spread across 40 square miles of mountain and desert east of Los Angeles. Exactly how many, however, and to whom they belonged, remained uncertain. Firefighters were faced with the difficult task of tallying that damage while still battling the huge, unruly blaze. That left evacuees in a cruel limbo, forced to spend another night wondering whether anything they owned was still intact. They included Shawn Brady, who had been told by a neighbor that flames had raged down their street. But he was waiting for official word.

World News:

Associated Press : Lochte's swim teammates to meet with authorities on robbery

<http://bigstory.ap.org/c29081e6ac6c4ed9b3eaaf400415b081>

Mauricio Saverese and Beth Harris

Three American Olympic swimmers planned to meet with Brazilian law enforcement Thursday to

discuss a reported robbery targeting 12-time medalist Ryan Lochte and his teammates, a U.S. Olympic Committee official said. USOC spokesperson Patrick Sandusky said Jack Conger and Gunnar Bentz were released by local authorities after being pulled from a flight at the Rio de Janeiro airport, with the understanding that discussions would continue amid uncertainty over what truly took place during a late evening night Olympic swimming wrapped up at the Rio Games. Fellow teammate Jimmy Feigen also plans to talk to officials, Sandusky said, as he navigates a judge's order that keeps him in Brazil. The order similarly called for Lochte's passport to be seized, but the star swimmer had already returned to the United States before authorities could enforce the decision.

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Camlin Moore

Cell: 803-206-8236

Office: 803-734-8044