

From: Symmes, Brian

To:

Date: 12/16/2013 11:32:00 AM

Subject: SC Front Pages - Monday, December 16, 2013

SC Front Pages – Monday, December 16, 2013

MISSED SUNDAY'S PAPER? YOU CAN STILL BUY IT AND GET \$135 IN COUPONS. SEE PAGE 6B



SPORTS GOALS REMAIN FOR USC



SPORTS Panthers bounce back

The Greenville News

A GANNETT COMPANY

MONDAY,
DECEMBER 16, 2013
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

SPORTS Injuries plague NFL season, 1B

FINAL EDITION

Action expected on road funding

Ethics reform also on
agenda in Columbia

By Rudolph Bell
Staff Writer
dbell@greenvillenews.com

Road funding and new ethics rules for public officials are among the big issues that Greenville County's representatives in the state Legislature expect to take up when they return to Columbia after the holidays.

They also predicted lots of Statehouse campaigning, with a race for chief justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court, one senator running for governor and another for U.S. Senate.

An ethics reform bill that Gov. Nikki Haley has been promoting around the state is scheduled for early Senate action when the General Assembly is gavelled to order on Jan. 14.

Among other things, it would require lawmakers to disclose private sources of income and create a new bipartisan commission to investigate ethics complaints.

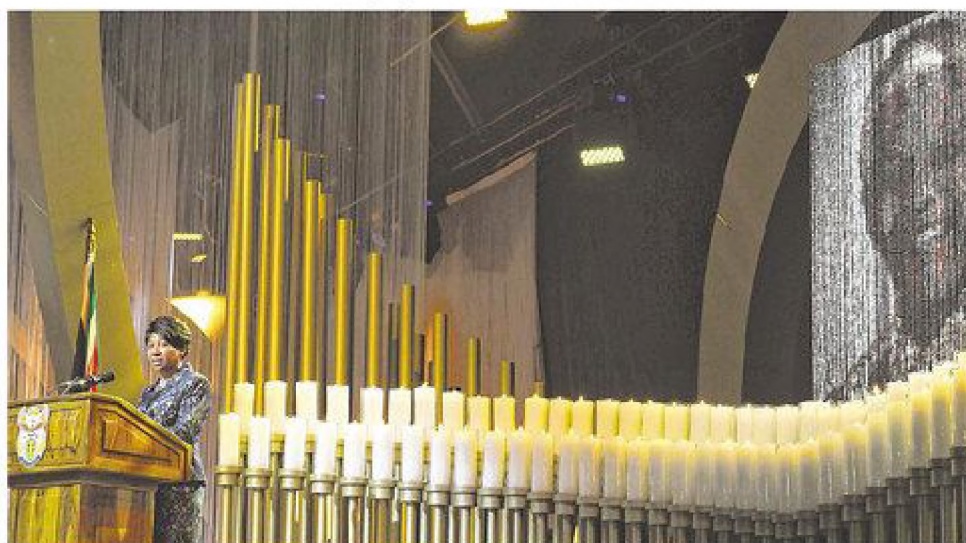
Haley says she wants the bill passed even if it's not perfect, but her Democratic opponent

See STATE, Page 5A



Representative Tommy Stringer from Greer speaks at the Greenville Chamber's annual legislative breakfast at the Westin Poinsett Hotel on Thursday. KTV OSBURN/STAFF

NELSON MANDELA



"Go well, Madiba," says Nelson Mandela's granddaughter, Nandi Mandela, during the funeral of the South African former president Sunday in Qunu, his home village. There are 95 candles, one for each year of his life. KOPANO TLAPGETTY IMAGES

South Africa buries its 'GREATEST SON'

By Beckharie Winship
USA Today

South Africa brought 10 days of mourning to a close Sunday as the body of Nelson Mandela was laid to rest at his ancestral home, where several thousand guests had gathered to bid a final farewell to the nation's "greatest son" and global icon.

The anti-apartheid leader was buried in the Eastern Cape village of Qunu, and his funeral service took place in a huge tent at the family compound on a hillside there not far from the house he built.

A smaller graveside service was attended by family members, heads of state and select officials.

As Mandela's coffin was lowered into the ground, military jets and helicopters displaying South African flags flew overhead.

"A great tree has fallen; he

is now going home to rest with his forefathers," Chief Ngamagohla Matanzima, a Mandela family spokesman, told mourners shortly after the larger ceremony — attended by about 4,500 people — got underway Sunday. "We thank them for lending us such an icon."

Meanwhile inside the tent, Ahmed Kathrada, Mandela's close friend and a fellow prisoner at Robben Island for 26 years, eulogized the former

See MANDELA, Page 5A



A military honor guard escorts the body of former South African President Nelson Mandela on the way to the burial site in his home village of Qunu, South Africa, on Sunday. ELUMOND JIWANEAP

DIGNARITIES PAY LAST RESPECTS

The funeral service for Nelson Mandela in Qunu, South Africa, was attended by guests including senior South African officials, veterans of the fight against white rule, and foreign diplomats, including U.S. Ambassador Patrick Gaspard. Britain's Prince Charles, entrepreneur Richard Branson, former Zimbabwean Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and Oprah Winfrey were also among those who made the trip.

INSIDE

Poll: Health law blamed as coverage shifts



Panthers reclaim footing

SPORTS, C1



Reunited mother, son give back

LOCAL, A6

The Post and Courier

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MONDAY, December 16, 2013

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WAVE TAMER

Can carpenter's porous, removable seawall on IOP help solve Lowcountry's beach erosion problems?



Deron Nettles (right), owner and designer of the wave-dissipation system, and Tim Mays, associate professor of civil engineering at The Citadel, say this new system will slow erosion much better than a solid wall or sandbags.

BY BO PETERSEN
bpetersen@postandcourier.com

ISLE OF PALMS — The pipe wall standing between the Seascapes Villas condominiums and the crashing waves doesn't look like the future; it looks like Legos.

But it just might become part of the new face of Lowcountry beaches.

The 88-foot-long "wave dissipation system" is a study project created by carpenter Deron Nettles under the auspices of The Citadel. The idea is to break up the storm waves that cause the worst beach erosion, but allow water and fine sand to pass back and forth between the pipes, simulating the flow on an unobstructed beach.

Seascapes is the second in a line of condominium complexes on the volatile, eroding east tip of Isle of Palms, where Decees Inlet rakes and re-rakes the beachscape.

"The potential is amazing ... the huge amount of wave energy coming in, it kills on the spot."

Tim Mays, Professor at The Citadel



Poll

How do you think the new "wave dissipation system" being tested will work? Find this story at postandcourier.com to vote.

Before a 2008 renourishment, erosion undermined condominiums there, tore apart the signature 18th hole on the oceanfront golf course and led to a flasco of washed-away sandbags.

Today, the golf hole and the Ocean Club condos between the hole and Seascapes again are packed behind walls of sand bags, while erosion managers wait for an offshore sand bar to attach to the beach. The wall is what Seascapes has going for it.

The beauty of this assembly of reinforced plastic and composite parts is that, like Legos, it can be built to size, installed along the dunes as needed — when a hurricane, a Nor'easter, or even just an astronomical high tide is on the way.

Then it can be removed and the beach left as beach.

Please see **WAVE**, Page A4

Gauging Hillary support in S.C.

Backers anticipate White House bid

BY SCHUYLER KROPP
skropp@postandcourier.com

Earlier this month, the S.C. Democratic Women's Council held its fall forum in Columbia, where "Electing Democratic Women" was one of the discussion topics for the 100 or so in attendance.

A co-sponsor of the event was a low-key but nationally focused political action committee that has been actively pushing to see Hillary Clinton elected president in 2016.

"Ready for Hillary," which operates without her official approval, made a financial donation toward putting the gathering on, though council president Susan Smith of Pawleys Island declined to say how much it was.

Smith did say that she's ready and waiting for the announcement that Clinton will run for the White House.

"I think we're all excited about the possibility of Hillary Clinton running for president," she said.

Clinton is months away from declaring her intent. But just like in other states, a quiet effort is underway in South Carolina to build support for the former first lady, U.S. senator and secretary of state.

Part of the effort is being led by the Ready for Hillary super PAC, which is expected to do much of the early legwork for the next year or so while Clinton plots strategy. That includes appearing at rallies wherever Democrats get together.

"Our main goal is to build an army of supporters and create a database of volunteers and activists who can be



Clinton



Poll

Would you vote for Hillary Clinton to become the Democratic nominee for the 2016 presidential election? Find this story at postandcourier.com to vote.

Angel Oak area still faces threat

17 acres to be protected, but 2nd parcel may be too costly

BY DIANE KNICH
dknich@postandcourier.com

The Lowcountry Open Land Trust has raised enough money to purchase 17 acres to expand Angel Oak Park, but an apartment community may be built on an adjacent 17 acres.

Charleston Mayor Joe Riley said the land trust hopes also to buy and preserve the second portion of the 34-acre parcel, but the price the Raleigh-based Dominion Realty Partners is asking for it may be too high.

Riley would not say how much the developer wants for the property, "but there's a wide chasm between the Lowcountry Open Land Trust and the developer on cost," he said.

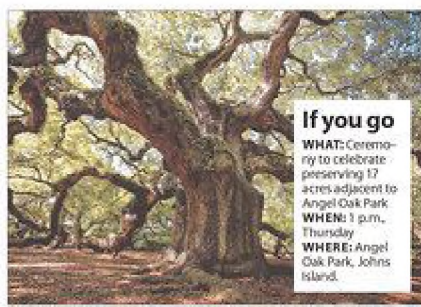
Conservationists have said they want the land around the historic tree on Johns Island protected from intense development to maintain the health of the massive live oak, which is believed to be at least several centuries old.

Elizabeth Hagood, the trust's executive director, has called the property "an ecological preserve." She also said

that keeping that land in its natural state is essential to the health of the Angel Oak. The ancient tree needs an expanded forest that's natural, she said.

The Raleigh-based Coastal Federal Credit Union has owned the property since it fell into foreclosure during the economic downturn; Dominion has a contract with the bank to purchase it. The land was set to be developed with multifamily homes and businesses before it fell into foreclosure.

Please see **THRILLAT**, Page A5



If you go

WHAT: Ceremony to celebrate preserving 17 acres adjacent to Angel Oak Park
WHEN: 1 p.m., Thursday
WHERE: Angel Oak Park, Johns Island

ILLUSTRATION BY SHARON STAFF



Sunny and clear
High 58 Low 38,
Complete 5-day
forecast, B8

Business...C1 Editorials...A14
Classifieds...C7 Horoscope...B7
Comics...B6, 7 Local News...A2
Crosswords...B6, D4 Movies...B5
Obituaries...B2 South...B1
Sports...C1 Television...B4

Charleston
Deals today

Rugged Maniac SK
Half-price entry. Pay only \$29.
See A2

SHRINE BOWL

Saturday's all-star game features S.C., N.C. players and future Gamecocks. **B1**



A LOT OF FIRSTS DOWN

Spurrier, USC milestones now become measured in repetition. **B1**

YOUR WEEK

Winterfest

The annual Winterfest at the State Museum begins Saturday with holiday crafts, a scavenger hunt and an appearance by Santa Claus. Winterfest runs until Jan. 4 at the State Museum, 301 Gervais St. All WinterFest activities are free with general admission or membership, except the Polar Express Party. (803) 898-4999; www.scmuseum.org



PHOTOGRAPH BY [unreadable]

Wynonna Judd

Five-time Grammy winner Wynonna Judd and her band, The Big Noise, present "A Simpler Christmas," 8 p.m. Thursday at Newberry Opera House, 1201 McKibben St., Newberry. Come hear the country music star perform her hit songs and some Christmas classics. Tickets are \$125. (803) 276-6264; www.newberryoperahouse.com

O'Toole 'didn't leave much of life unlived'

Actor who ruled desert epic 'Lawrence of Arabia' dies at 81

By GREGORY KATZ
The Associated Press

LONDON — Known on the one hand for his starring role in "Lawrence of Arabia," leading tribesmen in daring attacks across the desert wastes, and on the other for his headlong charges into drunken debauchery, Peter O'Toole was one of the most magnetic, charismatic and fun figures in British acting.

O'Toole, who died Saturday at age 81 at the private Wellington Hospital in London after a long bout of illness, was nominated a record eight times for an Academy Award without taking home a single statue.

He was fearfully handsome, with burning blue eyes and a pen-

The State

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2013 | THESTATE.COM

Towns seek road repairs and more from new tax

Proposals take shape as plans are made for a referendum on a penny tax hike

By TIM FLACH
tflach@thestate.com

Lexington County municipalities are seeking road improvements and much more from a proposed sales tax.

The proposals taking shape

in six of the 15 municipalities are the first glimpse at some being developed for a referendum on the tax hike of a penny-on-the-dollar in November.

Many road improvements wanted in Batesburg-Leesville and Lexington include widen-

ing busy intersections, adding turn lanes and installing sidewalks on local thoroughfares.

Cayce is focusing on ending drainage problems in neighborhoods while West Columbia wants to replace older lines supplying drinking water.

There's also interest in new buildings, with Irmo seeking a facility for its public-works staff; Pelion wants a Town Hall.

Some projects are modest, such as Pelion's goal of enhancing its playground and extending a walking trail.

Most of the proposals don't include price tags so far, with work under way to determine those.

County officials and regional agencies are developing

SEE TOWNS PAGE A4

SANTA AND HIS REINDOGS | ON, WEBSTER?



© MICHAEL BERGEN/WEBSTER@THESTATE.COM



Lily Galvarino, 3, top, of Columbia, poses Sunday with her furry friend, Webster, at the Carolina Children's Garden at Clemson Sandhill Research and Education Center during the first Reindogs and Elves Costumed Canines Contest. The



The Beaufort Gazette

MONDAY, December 16, 2013

beaufortgazette.com

Established in 1897 50 cents



NELSON MANDELA 1918-2013



ELMOND JIJANE • The Associated Press

Military soldiers pay their final respects to South African President Nelson Mandela at his grave site in his home village of Qunu, South Africa, on Sunday.

Thousands mourn as anti-apartheid leader is

LAI D TO REST

after a final tour of South Africa

By **CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA** • The Associated Press



ANTOINE DE RAS • The Associated Press

A group of Zulu warriors, from KwaZulu Natal, gather near a public viewing tent during the funeral service.

His flag-draped casket resting on a carpet of animal skins, Nelson Mandela was laid to rest Sunday in the green, rolling hills of Qunu, South Africa, the eastern hamlet where he began his extraordinary journey — one that led him from prison to the presidency, a global symbol of endurance and reconciliation in the fight against South Africa's racist rule.

Artillery boomed and military aircraft roared through a cloud-studded sky, as the simple and the celebrated gathered to pay their final respects in Mandela's native village of Qunu at a state funeral that blended ancient tribal rituals with a display of the might of the new, integrated South Africa.

Please see **REST** on 7A

Deer culling a success

Seven communities in Beaufort County receive permits to kill about 200 deer, continuing efforts to control the population.

By **TOM BARTON**
tbarton@islandpacket.com
843-706-8169

Seven Beaufort County communities have received the state's permission to reduce their deer population.

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources will allow culling of about 200 deer in Belfair, Colleton River Plantation, Hilton Head Plantation, Indigo Run, Leamington, Palmetto Bluff and Sea Pines. The deer are killed at night by sharpshooters using spotlights and sound-suppressed firearms.

The plantations obtain permits from DNR to kill a certain number each year, based on surveys of their deer populations and car accidents involving deer.

Culling begins in the fall and must end March 1. The hunting season for sportsmen ends Jan. 1.

Please see **DEER** on 7A



'BORN ON PARRIS ISLAND'

Ex-Marine is building a brand

By **MATT McNAB**
mmcnab@beaufortgazette.com
843-706-8125

"Born on Parris Island" is a line most Marines who have gone through boot camp in the Lowcountry know.

The phrase, from an old Marine Corps cadence, invokes the training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island — or, as the cadence puts it, "the land that God forgot."

For former Marine Jay Joseph, "Born on Parris Island" became something else: a marketing opportunity.

Joseph, who served in the Marine Corps from 1994 to 1998, hopes to turn that short phrase into a brand geared toward his fellow Marines, with plans to sell clothing, alcohol and even



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STAFF PHOTO BY DERREK ASBERRY

Gordon Lewis has donated nearly 40 gallons of blood in his life. He will turn 81 on Jan. 1 and already has his next donation date scheduled.

Aiken man donates 40 gallons of blood

BY DERREK ASBERRY
dasberry@aikenstandard.com

Aiken resident Gordon Lewis has donated blood in six states since moving to the United States from Canada in 1995.

But the real story is how much blood he has given over the years. Overall, he has donated nearly 40 gallons of blood in his life, and with his 81st birthday approaching on Jan. 1, he plans to continue.

Overall, he has donated nearly 40 gallons of blood in his life, and with his 81st birthday approaching on Jan. 1, he plans to continue. ... Lewis said he started donating blood at age 17 while still living in Canada. However, when he moved to the states 18 years ago, Lewis started taking his donations more seriously.

In an interview with the *Aiken Standard*, Lewis sported two pieces of donor memorabilia: A hat from Shepard Community Blood Center in Aiken and a plaque awarded by Florida Blood Services commemorating his 25-gallon benchmark in the state.

Lewis said he started donating blood at age 17 while still living in Canada. However, when he moved to the states 18 years ago, Lewis started taking his donations more seriously.

"I retired from the phone business in 1995 and decided to start taking my blood donations more seriously," he explained.

"I would donate every now and then, but I started making it a priority to give blood at least once every two months."

Please see **BLOOD**, Page 5A

Repurposing ruins, rubble of Bath Mill



STAFF PHOTO BY DEDE BILES

John Jones Jr. stands on the Bath Mill property that he purchased in 2003. There is mostly rubble where buildings used to be.

BY DEDE BILES
dbiles@aikenstandard.com

BATH — Ruins are all that remain of Bath Mill, which used to be a major employer in the Horse Creek Valley. What once was a thriving textile business has been reduced mostly to piles of rubbish and crumbling bricks.

But John A. Jones Jr. said earlier this month that he is determined to "make something" out of the rubble. He purchased the mill and the 20-acre property surrounding it in 2003 for \$50,000. He also paid \$22,000 in back taxes and a \$12,000 bill that was owed at the time for fire protection.

"My mother started working here 10 hours a day, six days a week, when she was only 13 years old," Jones said. "My wife's daddy worked here until

they closed down the place in 1985." Since buying the mill, Jones has overseen the removal of about 300 dump truck loads of scrap.

"I've been steadily cleaning it up, and I just pray that I live long enough to finish," he said.

Jones, 72, has sold numerous handmade bricks that were scattered throughout the debris for use in construction and renovation projects.

"I've shipped nine tractor-trailer loads to Houston, Texas; two to Missouri, one to Virginia and one to Charleston," he said.

Jones, who makes custom trim and cabinets, also has started a business, Valley Building Supply, on the site.

Please see **BATH**, Page 5A



STAFF PHOTO BY DEDE BILES

John Jones Jr. sells handmade bricks that were used to build Bath Mill for construction and renovation projects.

INSIDE TODAY



Aiken County Museum Banksia to get new roof
Local News, 2A

AREA DEATHS

Frank Taylor Jr., Clearwater
Edward A. Newsome, North Augusta
William C. "Craig" Seamon Jr., Jackson
Deaths and Funerals, 6A

WEATHER

Couple teams up for guardian program

BY TEDDY KULMALA
tkulmala@aikenstandard.com

It was a news story that first got Rian True and his wife Rhonda involved in the guardian ad litem program in Aiken County. Two years later, the North Augusta couple hopes their story will get others involved.

Guardian ad litem is a program under the S.C. governor's office in which an adult volunteer is appointed by the courts to represent the interests of a child during a legal action.

'The one constant in the child's life'

"With a growing number of child abuse and neglect cases, volunteers are needed to advocate for them through the courts," said Christy Pritchard, circuit coordinator for the Aiken County program. "So when DSS (Department of Social Services) files any action through the courts, it's a law that a guardian is appointed."

Guardian ad litem gets involved only after DSS files a court action and "before the end" between children



STAFF PHOTO BY TEDDY KULMALA

North Augusta residents Rian and Rhonda True have teamed up on guardian ad litem cases in Aiken County for two years. They are two of about 80 volunteers with the program, which is seeking new volunteers.

background checks and "possess some common sense."

A guardian has the option of not accepting the case. Most can carry up to two cases at a time.

submit monthly monitoring reports on the child's condition. Some cases are open and shut, while others have dragged on for years.

Guardian programs work with DSS

plan for that child within six to nine months," Pritchard said. "Which permanent plan is it going to be? Placement with a fit and willing relative or

terminative parental rights and the

Panthers
send Jets
into a
nosedive,
1B



Actor
O'Toole
dies, **4A**



INDEX-JOURNAL

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2 SECTIONS, 20 PAGES

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2013

DAILY 75¢, SUNDAY \$1.50

City could pass budget tonight

As currently proposed, document calls for 5 mill property tax increase

By CHRIS TRAINOR
ctrainor@indexjournal.com

Property taxes could be on the rise in the City of Greenwood, assuming Greenwood City Council passes the final reading of the 2014 budget.

Council will have final reading on the budget at 5:30 p.m. today during its regular meeting at the Municipal

Want to go?

- **What:** Greenwood City Council meeting, with budget hearing.
- **When:** 5:30 p.m. today.
- **Where:** Municipal Building.

Building. There will be a public hearing in association with the final budget reading.

First reading of the budget passed at City Council's Nov. 18 meeting. The tally at first reading was 5-2, with Councilmen Ronnie Ables and Johnny Williams dissenting.

As proposed, the 2014 budget is balanced at \$14,228,711. That represents a \$572,115 increase from the 2013 budget, which was \$13,656,596. The city's budget runs on a calendar

year, rather than a fiscal year.

The budget calls for a 5 mill property tax increase and a 3 percent cost-of-living increase for city employees.

As for the 5 mill tax hike, city officials have said that would represent a \$10 increase on an owner-occupied home valued at \$50,000, or a \$15 increase on a residential rental home

valued at \$50,000.

There are several big ticket items in the budget, including a pumper for the fire department, a sanitation truck, five police patrol cars and a leaf and limb loader vehicle.

Mayor Wellborn Adams noted City Council has been toiling with

See **BUDGET**, page 4A

■ SUICIDE PREVENTION

Learning the signs

Advocate pushes to educate people on what to look for

By MATT BRUCE
mbruce@indexjournal.com

Front pages across the nation this weekend heralded the story of a teenage heavily armed student who walked in his suburban Denver high school Friday afternoon and opened fire, critically wounding one student before he turned the gun on himself.

While the brazen school shooting might have rocked the country, Lakelands residents might have become more accustomed than they'd like to such headlines centering on tragic rampages that end with perpetrators killing themselves.

The region was the scene of three murder-suicides that left 10 people dead during a 16-day span in October and November. The rash of deadly shootings here hit closer to home as all three were domestic-related incidents carried out inside residences and involved people who were well acquainted with one another.

According to national crime data, there are an estimated 624 murder-suicides in the U.S. each year, resulting in between 1,000 and 1,500 deaths. Studies suggest depression plays a pivotal role in many of the incidents, which are overwhelmingly carried out by men.

Cathy Smith, a suicide prevention advocate who conducts training seminars in Greenwood County, talked about some of the triggers behind suicidal individuals. The Centers

See **SIGNS**, page 4A

■ ROAD WORK

Everybody knows ELMO

Carey Wells retires after working in local law enforcement for 35 years

By CHRIS TRAINOR
ctrainor@indexjournal.com

Some people just seem born for a certain career path.

That is certainly the case for Carey "Elmo" Wells, the well-known officer who just wrapped up a 35-year career in law enforcement

See **ELMO**, page 4A



CAREY "ELMO" WELLS
Retired GCSO deputy





Morning News

MONDAY DECEMBER 16, 2013

TODAY'S WEATHER

Plenty of sun,
high 55, low 34
DETAILS 2A

www.scnw.com

The Voice of the Pee Dee

75 cents

Pee Dee sees large number displaced by fires

BY TRACI BRIDGES
Morning News
tbridges@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — While many are worried about last minute shopping in the Pee Dee, more than 100 local residents are worried about where they're going to

sleep.

There have been 43 residential fires in the Pee Dee since the beginning of November — leaving 130 people homeless, at least temporarily.

Linda Boone-Smith, executive director of the Pee Dee chapter of the American Red Cross,

knows firsthand the devastation fires cause. She is typically the first person firefighters call.

"Fire departments usually notify us while they are still trying to extinguish the fire," Boone-Smith said.

"We try to get to the scene as quickly as possible," she said. "We

want to be there with the family and get them out of the weather to a hotel. That's our first priority — getting them somewhere to sleep. Then we determine their other immediate needs — food, clothing, medication. In a lot of

See **FIRES**, Page 3A

FIRE IN THE PEE DEE

NOVEMBER

- » 28 fires
- » 90 people displaced

DECEMBER (so far)

- » 15 fires
- » 40 people displaced

Rice files resolution against Obama

BY GAVIN JACKSON
Morning News
gjackson@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Representative Tom Rice's first sponsored piece of legislation to gain co-sponsors is a resolution he filed late last week in the House of Representatives to pursue legal action against President Barack Obama and his administration.



Rice

Rice's resolution titled Stop This Overreaching Presidency (STOP) has garnered 29 cosponsors including fellow Republican S.C. congressmen Mark Sanford, Joe Wilson and Jeff Duncan, R-Spartanburg.

The resolution calls out Obama and members of his administration that "have frequently overstepped the limits placed on executive branch power by the Constitution" and that the House shall bring civil action in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia for declaratory or injunctive relief.

The resolution states that the administration failed to involve Congress on four matters including the administration's fix over cancelled health care plans in November under the Affordable Care Act, delaying the employer mandate a year this summer, the administration's move last summer to grant temporary status to illegal immigrants who came to America as children and the waiver initiative by the administration for the welfare work requirement under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

"Whereas, because of President Obama's continuing failure to faithfully execute the laws, his administration's actions cannot be addressed by the enactment of new laws,

Mixed blessings for cotton

Heavy rainfall delayed planting, lessened production

BY JOHN D. RUSSELL
Morning News
jrussell@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — The cotton growing business has been full of ups and downs this season, and as the Pee Dee nears the end of its harvest time, farmers have said it's been a good and bad year.

Wednesday, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), released their latest Southern Region Crop Production report that stated production was up 9 percent from the November forecast but was down 36 percent from 2012.

This past summer saw heavy rainfall shortly after farmers planted their cotton fields. Thirty-year cotton farmer Edwin Dargan said the rain definitely put a dent in the crop.

"We had so much (rain) it hurt the yield a little bit. I didn't lose any but it got waterlogged and didn't grow good," Dargan said. "It wasn't a real good crop but it was a fair one. This year I'm averaging about 600-700 pounds per acre. Usually I get a 1,000 pounds or better."

As of this week, the harvest is about 73 percent complete. Over the past five years the harvest has averaged 85 percent by now.

Last year, Tré Coleman, vice president of the S.C. Department of Agriculture's Tobacco and Cotton Board, said the state average was 900 pounds an acre and, "It was one of the best years ever."

This year, Coleman said there's no doubt there will be less cotton to harvest but in his opinion



PHOTO BY JOHN D. RUSSELL FOR MORNING NEWS

Only a small amount of cotton is left in a recently picked cotton field on Ebenezer Road in Darlington County. The USDA announced in its report on Wednesday that cotton production is down 36 percent as compared to last year.



Cotton farmers reported mixed results from the 2013 harvest.

it's not as bad as thought.

"There just wasn't enough sunlight and heat so it took forever for it to mature, delaying the harvest. Some farmers planted later because of the rain," Coleman said. "Normally October and November are the prime

months for harvesting. Some cotton crops have been good, some bad. The average swings from 200 to 1,100 pounds per acre depending on where in the state it was planted."

Frankie Woodard farmed about 1,500 acres of cotton this year

with fields sprinkled geographically around Florence and Darlington counties.

"Sometimes you might have an excellent part of the field and bad in another. It's scattered good and bad all around," Woodard said. "We were pretty discouraged in the beginning of the year, but it ended better than anticipated. Still it's not as good as we originally hoped for. We are farmers, so we don't expect the best of it all at the same time. I'll be close to breaking even or maybe barely ahead. Hopefully, it will come back strong next year."

Coleman said the price of cotton started out high, but has dropped in the past month, which is normal. The Chicago Board of Trade, the trading exchange for cotton, closed at 82.5 cents per pound through March 2014.

Coming Events

Santa Calls: Today and Tuesday, 5-7:30 p.m. Kids can receive a telephone call from Saint Nick and talk about their school, their activities and their Christmas wish list. Phone calls last 3 to 5 minutes and all proceeds benefit The Elizabeth Pettigrew Durant Children's Center. A call for one child is \$6, \$10 for two children, \$14 for three children and \$18 for four

reservations, call 843-332-6234.
"Scrooge": Today and Thursday through Saturday, 7 p.m. and Sunday, 2:30 p.m. at CD Joyner Auditorium in Marion. No charge to attend; however, a \$5 minimum donation is asked of those who are able to help offset

information, call 843-332-5115.
Chrismon Tree Open House: Tuesday and Thursday, 4-8 p.m., and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Saint Luke Lutheran Church, 1201 Cherokee Road in Florence. Saint Luke Lutheran Church celebrates the 50th anniversary of its Chrismon Tree. For more information, call 843-662-4622.
Chamber Choir of Kershaw County

Ensemble; and the Chancel Bells of Lytleton Street United Methodist Church. Tickets are \$5, available at the door. For more information or tickets, call 803-425-7676, ext. 300.
The Sights and Sounds of the Season: Tuesday, 7 p.m. at FMU Performing Arts Center in downtown Florence. Enjoy an evening of entertainment from the Southside Orchestra. Band





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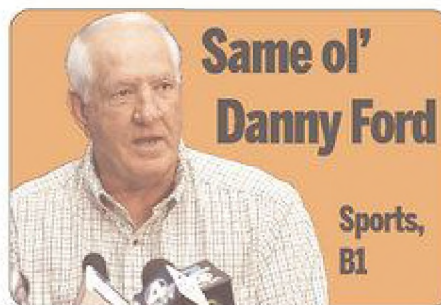


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KEN STERN/PHOTO THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER/AP
Joseph Ali, 27, of Huntington Beach shows off an 18-pound California spiny lobster he caught with his hands while free diving, without tanks, near the pier on Dec. 9.

YOU'VE GOT TO READ THESE

Wine reports

Swimmer nabs monster lobster off California coast

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. — Joseph Ali says onlookers thought he was drunk when he dove into the nighttime waters around a Southern California pier. But he came away with a monster of a lobster and the catch of a lifetime.

Ali told the Orange County Register he was closing his father's business, Zack's Pier Plaza in Huntington Beach, when he saw the ocean was calm and decided to dive for dinner.

He was down about 15 feet going after a smaller lobster when he saw the giant. He says it was too big to grab properly, but it latched onto him, and he wrestled it to shore.

The lobster weighed nearly 18 pounds — even a 5-pounder is considered trophy-sized — and was likely at least 30 years old.

3 young pandas at Atlanta zoo are girls, not boys

ATLANTA — Genetic testing has revealed that three young giant pandas born at Atlanta's zoo that were thought to be males are actually females.

Zoo Atlanta spokeswoman Keisha Hines says an examination that was part of the preparation to send Po to China revealed the 3-year-old panda is female.

Hines says the zoo then decided to do DNA testing on Po and on twin cubs Mei Lun and Mei Huan. That revealed those cubs were also females, rather than males.

Zebra escapes from Tenn. farm, roams for weeks

CLEVELAND, Tenn. — The black-and-white-striped animal that's been spotted at different places around a Tennessee

By GENE ZALESKI
T&D Staff Writer

Wagner resident Doug Busbee was raised on the South Fork of the Edisto River.

"My uncle took me on my first fishing trip when I was 6 or 7 years old," Busbee said. "It was a very magical and mystical place untouched by man."

For the past 48 years, Busbee says he has had a love affair with the river and it is a relationship he will continue to fight for.

So when he found out that Michigan-based Walther Farms was planning to withdraw millions of gallons out of the blackwater river at its potato farm in Aiken County, Busbee jumped to action.

"It is unbelievable," Busbee said. "In my lifetime ... I have never seen another farm of this magnitude."

Walther Farms received state approval in March to withdraw about 805 million gallons per month out of the South Edisto River, or 6,440 million gallons annually. The anticipated maximum number of months the company will withdraw will be eight months.

Busbee and other landowners, farmers and Friends of the Edisto officials say the proposed project was unannounced and are concerned about the project's impact on the river's ecological system and wildlife.

Walther Farms President and Chief Executive Officer Jason Walther said the farm will practice sustainable agriculture and respect the land.

"In all of our processes, we focus on safety for our people and our environment," Walther said. "We go above and beyond to ensure all nutrients are used timely by the crop and teaspoon just the right amounts required by the plants throughout the season to ensure runoff does not occur."

Walther Farms, which has operations in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Georgia and Florida, purchased about 3,700 acres of a former horse farm in Windsor and has converted about 2,000 acres for potato farming. The farm is expected to employ between 30 and 70.

The company grows potatoes for Frito-Lay's potato chip company. The farm plans to plant the crops in February and March and harvest in June and July.

The farm grew about 400 acres of potatoes last year and



SPECIAL TO THE T&D
Michigan-based Walther Farms plans to grow 800 acres of potatoes for potato chips by withdrawing water from the Edisto River. Farmers, landowners and environmentalist groups are concerned about the farm's impact on the river's ecology and wildlife.

will plant to grow about 800 acres in the spring, Walther said.

As part of its plans, Walther applied for and received an agricultural registration from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control on March 21 to withdraw the water.

DHEC confirmed Walther has applied for another agricultural registration for another withdrawal effort. This was for about 400 million gallons of water monthly.

"We are currently conducting the safe yield analysis," DHEC spokesman Jim Beasley said, noting there is no public appeal process for an agricultural registration request.

For the initial 805 million gallon withdrawal request, DHEC said after review of the request "the proposed withdrawal is within the safe yield of the source of water body at the withdrawal point and within the safe yield of the Edisto River Basin."

It is not known if Walther Farms will use both groundwater and river water to irrigate, though officials say they plan to use less than the registered allowance.

Springfield 150-acre tree farmer Vince Furtick lives about 1-1/2 miles from the



UNREY HARDY/T&D
Landowners, members of the conservation group Friends of the Edisto and other stakeholders are opposed to plans that would allow a Wagner area commercial potato farm to withdraw millions of gallons of water from the Edisto River.

river and has lived on the river's edge since he was five.

"The South Fork of the Edisto River is a part of me," he said. "This river means so much."

Furtick says he uses drip irrigation on his property, with the water coming out of six underground wells. He tabulates his water usage and submits reports to DHEC. He uses about 65 million gallons

a year. He was shocked to hear Walther Farms would be using 805 million gallons a month from the river.

"I did not think they could do that because the law would not allow it," he said.

According to South Carolina law enacted in 2010, an agricultural use of surface water must be registered if in excess of three million gallons

of water is withdrawn in any one month at a single intake or multiple intakes within a mile radius of each other.

Three million gallons is roughly equal to applying one inch of water to 30 acres of crops, four times in a month.

For nonagricultural uses exceeding 3 million gallons a

See RIVER, A2

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