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SC Front Pages – Monday, December 22, 2014



SPORTS, 1C PANTHERS TOP DIVISION



LIFESTYLE, 1D Make new holiday traditions

The Greenville News

A GANNETT COMPANY

MONDAY, ^{K1}
DECEMBER 22, 2014
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

USA TODAY

FBI TRAINING 30K OFFICERS TO CONFRONT ACTIVE SHOOTERS PAGE 1B



Fuel pours from an overturned tanker on North Main Street near the Belton square on Sunday.

PHOTOS BY BART BOATWRIGHT/STAFF

LEAKING TANKER UNSETTLES BELTON

City's roads closed,
homes evacuated

By Anna Lee
Staff writer
alee@greenvillenews.com

BELTON — Some 8,200 gallons of fuel spilled out of a capsized tanker Sunday in an incident that evacuated homes and shut down swaths of the city for more than 12 hours, authorities said.

Belton Police Chief Tommy Clump said the semitruck was heading into Belton at 8:45 a.m. when it overturned at the intersection of Thompson and North Main streets near the town square.

The impact ripped a hole in the tanker, causing fuel to spew out onto the roadway, Clump said.

He said approximately 80 people from multiple EMS, police and fire departments responded, including crews from Williamston, Cheddar, Honea Path, Friendship and Anderson County Emergency Management.

A hazardous materials team and the state Department of Health and Environmental Control also were on the scene. The American Red Cross provided lunches.

Several nearby residences and an assisted living facility were evacuated while five city blocks from Smythe to River streets were shut down for most of the day.

Authorities said there was no immediate threat to the public.

By late afternoon, the spill, which Clump said contained a combination of gasoline and diesel fuel, had been contained to a hole dug in the ground. A second tanker and pump was used to empty the overturned truck before it was towed from the roadway.

"That's just one of those things that takes a



A fuel tanker blocks North Main St. in Belton after it overturned near the city square on Sunday. Belton Police Chief Tommy Clump said more than 80 personnel from several EMS units and police and fire departments responded to the scene.



PAUL BROWN



The tanker blocks North Main Street.

Belton firefighters sprayed foam on the tanker, which was carrying a combination of gasoline and diesel fuel.

Clemson initiates more diversity efforts

Action taken after criticized frat party

By Robbie Ward
Staff writer
rward2@greenvillenews.com

Clemson University President Jim Clements has announced plans to create a diversity council and other initiatives to soothe tension at the school after a white fraternity hosted a gang-themed party widely criticized as racially insensitive.

Clements condemned the off-campus party and other incidents this semester as "inappropriate and deeply disturbing behaviors" in remarks at a joint faculty and staff meeting as the semester wound down last week.

A president's lecture series on leadership in diversity will be among new efforts to address concerns of racial and other types of intolerance on campus, he said.

Monthly student luncheon dialogues will take place, involving students of different races, backgrounds and perspectives, and a diversity council will include a cross-section of membership from the campus and elsewhere to improve the university's climate of inclusiveness.

"Clearly, positive change is needed," Clements said, "and I want to express my appreciation to the many students, faculty, staff and alumni who have come forward to ask how they can help."

Clements said he wants the new diversity council to actively work to make people of all backgrounds feel that tolerance and cultural understanding are genuine Clemson values.

"We know that these actions will not prevent occasional thoughtless or hurtful remarks or acts," he told the group. "But I hope they will demonstrate a positive step toward our commitment."

Clements said the university will continue to take an honest look at efforts made in recent years to create an inclusive culture to see what went right and what still needs help.

The university's chief diversity officer hired in 2008, Leon Wiles, will work with Almada Jacks, interim vice president of student affairs, to create the new diversity efforts, Clements said.

Clements met with students

See TANKER, Page 4A

See DIVERSITY, Page 4A

LOCAL: Striped bass are back in the Ashley River, A2

The Post and Courier

THE SOUTH'S OLDEST DAILY NEWSPAPER • FOUNDED 1803

Monday, December 22, 2014

POSTANDCOURIER.COM

Charleston, S.C. \$1.00

8 N. Charleston-based C-17s to be grounded

Move that aims to save \$110M a year also impacts Washington state base

BY JOHN P. McDERMOTT
jmcdermott@postandcourier.com

One of the four C-17 flying units assigned to Joint Base Charleston is being grounded, along with another in Washington state, the Air Force

announced.

The decision was based on the President Barack Obama's defense budget for fiscal year 2015, according to a statement from the Air Mobility Command.

The \$110 million a year cost-saving

plan calls for 16 C-17 Globemasters, including eight at the North Charleston base, to be redesignated to backup status, meaning they will not be assigned crews or flying hours.

"However, they will continue to receive funding needed to support weapon system sustainment," the Air Mobility Command said in a written statement.

The number of jobs affected was not immediately available. Eight C-17s at Joint Base Lewis-Mc

Chord in the Pacific Northwest also are being grounded, said Major Gen. Michael S. Stough, Air Mobility Command's director of strategic plans, requirements and programs.

"In this fiscally constrained environment, we have to balance readiness, capability and capacity," Stough said in the statement.

"To best preserve this capability, the intent is to fund these aircraft back into primary mission aircraft inventory in future years, and transfer them

to the Reserve component — and we're working with our Air National Guard partners to do that, perhaps even as early as FY16. We rely on our total force partners to meet our global mobility requirements. We couldn't do the mission without them. We'll continue to leverage the unique strengths of the active and Reserve components to meet current and future requirements with available resources."

Please see B4E, Page A6

The good times roll on by

James Island institution Hot Wheels must close, look for new home



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MADE SPEED/DAVE

Wando High School students Amy Grace Funic (from right), Chloe Horseman and Lily Johnston try their hand at skating during one of the last nights that Hot Wheels Skating Center, a James Island institution, will be open for business.

BY DIANE KNICH
dknich@postandcourier.com

Brian Packett hadn't been on roller skates for decades. But with Hot Wheels Skating Center closing, the 52-year-old rented a pair Thursday, stood up and shakily rolled across stained indoor-outdoor carpeting onto the old wooden rink for some final laps.

Packett used to spend Saturday nights at the rink when he was in high school.

So he and a group of old friends showed up to offer a fond farewell to the place where they hung out, showed off new skating moves under the disco ball and flashing lights, fell in love and got their first kisses in the back corner.

Poll



When was the last time you went roller skating? Go to postandcourier.com/polls to vote.

"I feel like an old man out here," Packett said as he was getting used to being back on wheels. "Wait, I am an old man out here."

The longtime James Island business, which owner Terri Halter said has been around since the mid-1970s, will close after an all-night skate on New Year's Eve. Halter said the building's owner has refused to renew her lease.

Please see SKATE, Page A6



Street shoes get a break while roller skates get a workout during one of the last nights for skating at Hot Wheels Skating Center.

Program may hurt patients on dialysis

Private ambulances need Medicare OK

BY LAUREN SAUSSER
lsausser@postandcourier.com

Hundreds of diabetic patients across the state who rely on dialysis treatment for survival may be left at home this week if Medicare doesn't make quick fixes to a new pilot program it recently rolled out in South Carolina.

Poll

Should private ambulance companies be required to seek prior permission before transporting Medicare patients for non-emergency, routine care such as dialysis? Go to postandcourier.com/polls to vote.

While a Medicare official said the program "will have minimal effect on beneficiaries," ambulance operators worry that without pre-approval, they won't be paid and patients won't be picked up.

Please see MEDICARE, Page A4

Cuba thaw is new hope for those who lost property

BY FRANCES ROBLES
New York Times News Service

MIAMI — It was a routine Saturday morning, almost two years after Fidel Castro took power in Cuba, when Lois and Roy Schechter went to check on their tobacco farm 100 miles west of their home in Havana.

The American couple encountered soldiers posted outside their property.

"My husband got out of the car, exchanged a few words with the soldiers, got back in the car, and we drove away," Lois Schechter, of Saratoga Springs, N.Y., recalled of that day in October 1960. "Things were getting scary, and there was nothing else we could do."

After nearly 60 years in the country, the Schechter family fled and never returned.

The Schechter family farms in Pinar del Rio became one of almost 6,000 properties owned by American citizens and companies that were confiscated by the Cuban government.

Please see CUBA, Page A5

Inside

BUSINESS

Eremos makes inflatable privacy screen for beds, D3



GOOD CHEER

Donations can make holidays brighter for siblings, B1

SPORTS

Bowl practice allows USC to instill experience, C1

1989 white Christmas blanketed Hugo mess

Want snow this year? Only in your dreams

BY BRUCE SMITH
Associated Press

Since the National Weather Service began keeping records in 1880, there has been only one white Christmas on the South Carolina coast. But that storm, which blew in 25 years ago this week, set records from Florida to North Carolina.

The storm brought 15 inches of snow to Wilmington, N.C., 14 inches to Myrtle Beach and eight to Charleston.

And despite the problems it caused air travelers and holiday drivers, it also brought a bit of a respite from



Shoppers make their way down King Street during Charleston's only white Christmas.

Hurricane Hugo

For a few days, the widespread debris and damage from the Category 4 storm that hit South Carolina three months earlier was hidden under a blanket of white.

The snow covered broken wood

and other debris piled up in yards and, for a brief time, hid the blue tarps that covered many roofs that were torn up by Hugo and its 135-mph winds, which smashed into Charleston that September.

Hugo claimed 15 lives in South Carolina and caused \$7 billion in damage on the U.S. mainland, most of it in the state. Three months later, residents were still struggling to recover.

There's no chance of a white Christmas this year, with temperatures forecast to rise into the 60s.

It was 25 years ago Monday that the snow that brought the area's only recorded white Christmas began falling. It would fall into Christmas Eve day of that year.

Please see CHRISTMAS, Page A4



Rain, High 57, Low 48, Complete 5-day forecast, B8

Bridge — B7
Classifieds — C7
Comics — B6, C9
Crossword — B6, C9
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Sports — C1
Suboks — B7
Television — B4
Sister — B1
Business — B1



Wine and Design
2-hour BYOB painting class
See A2

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: USC ends year 12-0, looks to SEC play in 2015, **B1**

The State

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2014 | THESTATE.COM

'They'll be coming out of the woodwork': Many seek to replace Metts

By **TIM FLACH**
tflach@thestate.com

Lexington County voters will choose their first new sheriff in two generations next spring, in a race lacking the familiar name of James Metts.

As many as a dozen candidates — most of them better known in law enforcement circles than publicly — could emerge by the Jan. 12 deadline to enter the

**Metts**

contest.

The end of Metts' dominance during 42 years in office came with his retirement last week as he battles federal corruption charges.

His departure has several law enforcement officers — except interim Sheriff A. Lewis McCarty — considering the

race.

"They'll be coming out of the woodwork," County Council chairman Johnny Jeffcoat of Immo predicted.

Three candidates started campaigning even before Metts left, after it became clear the federal investigation that led to his indictment wounded him politically. That group includes West Columbia Police Chief Dennis Tyndall, former Columbia police officer

Jim Crawford and Richland County deputy Justin Britt.

They were joined after Metts stepped aside by assistant Lexington police chief Jay Koon, who served on McCarty's management team temporarily this fall.

And the race may attract current or former FBI and State Law Enforcement Division agents and other law enforcement officials

SEE **METTS** PAGE A6**THE UPCOMING RACE
FOR SHERIFF**

The next sheriff could be in office by late April under steps outlined by Lexington County election officials:
Jan. 2-12: Candidates file
March 3: Primary elections
March 17: Runoff elections if necessary
April 21: General election

Before shooting two officers, gunman bragged about his plans



A man leaves flowers Sunday at an impromptu memorial near the site where two police officers were killed the day before in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

'Shot dead just for being a police officer'

By **MARC SANTORA**
and **J. DAVID GOODMAN**
The New York Times

NEW YORK — The man who shot and killed two police officers in New York City on Saturday, targeting them solely because of the uniforms they wore, boasted to two people about what he was about to do just moments before he opened fire on the officers as they sat in their patrol car.

In a chilling and detailed account of the shooting, the police department's chief of detectives, Robert Boyce, said the gunman, Ismaaiyl Brinsley, 28, first walked past the patrol car, crossed the street and then approached the car from behind. He stood outside the passenger side win-



Slain officers Rafael Ramos, left, and Wenjian Liu

Brinsley fled the scene but was followed by two Consolidated Edison workers who the police called heroic. They alerted police that Brinsley had headed down onto a Brooklyn subway platform, where he was confronted by police officers and killed himself with a single bullet.

The killing of the two police offi-

heightened tension between Mayor Bill de Blasio and the Police Department.

In a show of disapproval and disrespect, police officers, led by union officials, turned their backs to him on Saturday night when the mayor went to the hospital to talk about the two officers who were killed.

Flashes across the city flew at half-staff Sunday as officials from President Barack Obama to Attorney General Eric Holder condemned the murder of the officers and offered their condolences.

In an emotional posting on Facebook, Ramos' 13-year-old son, Jaden, captured the mood of many in the department and around New York.

"This is the worst day of my life," he wrote. "Today I had to say bye to my father. He was there for me every day of my life, he was the best father I could ask for. It's horrible that some-



Clemson University President James P. Clements

Clemson president says university will work on diversity

Push comes after increased race tensions at school

By **ROBBIE WARD**
rward22@greenvillenews.com

GREENVILLE — Clemson University President James Clements says the administration intends to do more to create new initiatives after a semester marked by racial tension from social media blowups and a white student party viewed as racially insensitive.

The institution, he says, will take an honest look at recent years of trying to make the university's culture welcoming to everyone to see what went right and what still needs help.

Clements, president for a year at the nearly

SEE **CLEMSON** PAGE A5**YOUR WEEK**

Michael Hammond, 3, of Chapin, tells



Serving in Cambodia



Judy Sauls holds a child during a past trip to Cambodia. The Aiken resident and retired nurse has gone there four times on medical missions, and she is leaving on Saturday for another visit.

Aiken resident prepares for fifth medical mission

BY DEDE BILES
dbiles@aikenstandard.com

At a time when other people are busy shopping, wrapping Christmas presents and making New Year's Eve plans, Judy Sauls is packing her bags and getting ready to go on a medical mission to Cambodia.

The 73-year-old Aiken resident is scheduled to leave Saturday, and she's looking forward to the trip even though she'll be missing part of the holiday season.

"I like to serve and give to others, and I like to use my medical training," said Sauls, who worked as a registered nurse at Aiken Regional Medical Centers and the old Aiken County Hospital before her retirement.

Sauls will visit Cambodia for the fifth time with a team representing Southeastern Medical International. Her first trip to the Southeast Asian country was in 2010.

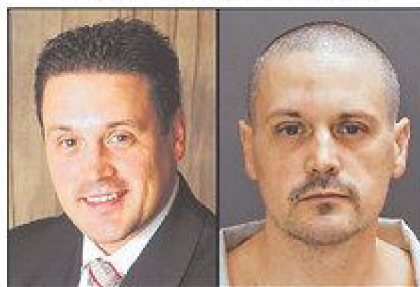
"It's always exciting; we feel like God is leading us and directing us in what we are doing," Sauls said.



Judy Sauls makes quilts, and she takes some of them with her when she goes on medical missions to Cambodia to give away to people who need them.

Please see **MISSION**, Page 16A

BROKEN COMPASS



AIKENSTANDARD FILE PHOTOS

In this photo combo, Jay Brooks is pictured before he pleaded guilty in September to swindling millions out of his investors with what many are calling a Ponzi scheme; at right is a recent mug shot of Brooks, who is currently housed in the Kershaw Correctional Institution.

Couple: Money not only thing lost in scheme

BY TEDDY KULMALA
tkulmala@aikenstandard.com

Editor's note: This is the first in an occasional series on the people victimized by Jay Brooks, and how his crimes have impacted their lives.

Nestled away on Aiken's west side is the two-story brick house in which Jane McGuire has spent most of her life. And, it's where she and her husband will now spend the rest of their lives, as their plans to move to an assisted living facility disappeared with the savings they invested with local financier Jay Brooks.

"We made a stupid mistake," she said. "That's about as clear as I can be."

The McGuires are Aiken residents, and just two of dozens of people who invested with Brooks, the disgraced Compass Academy co-founder who pleaded guilty in September to swindling millions out of his investors with what many are calling a Ponzi scheme.

The McGuires alone lost more than \$60,000 to his crimes.

The *Aiken Standard* is sitting down with some of Brooks' victims to talk about how his crimes have impacted their lives. The McGuires asked that their identities not be disclosed,

and to only be referred to as Mr. and Mrs. McGuire. For simplicity, this report will refer to them as "John" and "Jane."

'The man kept his word'

Several years ago, the McGuires received a brochure in the mail about a dinner seminar on finance that Brooks was holding at an Aiken restaurant.

"Just for kicks, we decided to go," Jane said. "One thing led to another."

The McGuires are retired, and had a small amount saved away to fund their retirement.

"We worked for what the market paid, we put three kids through college, and the good Lord blessed us with getting this house," John said. "We never had much money, but we had a little bit we were re-holing for hard times."

John said Brooks told them he could roll their money into an annuity and get them a 5 percent return on it, "basically tax-free," as long as they paid taxes on the growth.

"The man kept his word," John said. "He did."

The McGuires said that's how Brooks gained their trust.

Please see **FRAUD**, Page 5A

INSIDE TODAY

Happy Neuter Year helps with surgeries for animals
Local News, 3A

AREA DEATHS

No news deaths
Deaths and Funerals, 6A

In first year, Aiken Together nets nearly \$500K

BY MAAYAN SCHECHTER
mschechter@aikenstandard.com

The Aiken Together capital campaign, with a little more than one year checked off the calendar, has already raked in nearly \$500,000 to fund three institutions promoting the history of Aiken County.

The campaign is seeking \$2.9

American History, Art and Culture; the Savannah River Heritage Site; and the Aiken Visitors Center and Train Museum.

Tim Simmons, the Aiken Railroad Depot Committee president, said pledges have now risen to more than \$435,000 and are continuing to grow each month.

"About 50 percent of those funds

with those funds to get their projects going."

In August, \$102,000 of the collected pledges to Aiken Together were allocated — \$42,000 went toward the Center for African American History, Art and Culture; \$28,000 went toward the Friends of the Railroad Depot; and \$32,000 went toward the Savannah River

each entity complete a phase of the project.

"The SRS Heritage Center had its ribbon-cutting not long ago, and is in the process of upgrading its building to begin accepting exhibits," Simmons said. "The African American Cultural Center is finishing up its insulation, heating, air and electrical. They are starting to do the work



CMYK



Odd

The Times and Democrat MONDAY DECEMBER 22, 2014

**LADY BULLDOGS
FALL SHORT**
SPORTS, B1

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Wire Reports



AP/WIDEWORLD
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE, JIM COLLINS

The world's oldest Janus cat, named Frank and Louie and shown here, died at the age of 15 on Dec. 4. He passed away at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University.

Record-setting cat with two faces dies

NORTH GRAFTON, Mass. — This cat had two faces — but only nine lives.

A feline named Frank and Louie after he was born with two faces, two mouths, two noses and three blue eyes has died at the age of 15.

The Telegram of Worcester reported that Frank and Louie died at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University in North Grafton.

The cat's owner, Marty Stevens, said veterinarians believe the cause of death was cancer. Frank and Louie made it into the 2012 edition of Guinness World Records as the longest-surviving member of a group known as Janus cats, named for a Roman god with two faces.

Janus cats almost never survive, and most have congenital defects.

PGA: Golfer, 103, may be the oldest to record hole in one

SARASOTA, Fla. — A 103-year-old Florida golfer may have made history as the oldest person to record a hole in one.

The PGA of America announced on its website that Gus Andreone of Sarasota scored the ace Wednesday at Palm Aire Country Club. The group said it is likely that Andreone is the oldest golfer to score a hole in one, beating the previous record of a 102-year-old woman in 2007.

Andreone told Tampa Bay television station Fox 13 News that the ace marks his eighth since 1939. He used a driver on the 113-yard 14th hole of the Lakes Course, as he normally does, but then noticed something different. The ball went straight into the hole.

Andreone pocketed \$80 for the feat, and says he looks forward to doing it again.

N.C. man bounces checks for \$58K in postage stamps

NORFOLK, Va. — Perhaps Javorik Alexander Moore has a really long Christmas card list. Or a lot of pen pals.

Lawsuit: Inmate allowed to die despite troubling signs

By MARTHA ROSE BROWN
T&D Staff Writer

Attorneys allege the Orangeburg County Detention Center, the Regional Medical Center and a list of medical care providers were negligent when James Ray Parker died in the jail.

In a complaint filed in the Orangeburg County Courthouse last week, attorneys said that while

Parker was jailed from Jan. 26 until Feb. 6 he "was in such obvious mental and physical distress at the Orangeburg County Detention Center that correctional officers had to initially drag him on a sheet across the floor to an isolation cell."

"This transfer was witnessed by numerous detainees located within the unit."

Parker died on Feb. 6, 2013. An autopsy determined the 38-year-old Neeses resident died of nat-

ural cardiac problems.

Attorneys Carter Elliott Jr. and Clyde Dean Jr. are representing Parker's estate in the lawsuit. The attorneys say Parker weighed 470 pounds and a necropsy indicated he had an irregular heartbeat, fluid in his lungs and an enlarged heart, liver and spleen.

See INMATE, A2



A white Christmas in 1989 followed Hurricane Hugo by three months.

Three months after Hugo, a white Christmas

T&D Staff Report

It came almost exactly three months to the day after Hurricane Hugo dealt coastal South Carolina and a sizable portion of The T&D Region a devastating blow.

And just as Hugo on Sept. 21-22, 1989, was the state's "storm of the century," snowfall for Christmas in South Carolina is nearly as rare. Note so 25 years ago, when a white Christmas was reality.

It didn't happen all over the state. The storm that dumped record snowfall along the coast and 2 inches in Orangeburg left only a trace in Columbia.

The snow started in the Lowcountry on Dec. 22 and kept falling until Christmas Eve. By the end of the storm, parts of Myrtle Beach had recorded 14 inches. Charleston reported its deepest snowfall ever at 8 inches.

Seven inches of snow were reported in Beaufort and an inch was reported as far south as Jacksonville, Fla.



S.C. coast's only white Christmas 25 years ago

By BRUCE SMITH
Associated Press

CHARLESTON — Since the National Weather Service began keeping records in 1880, there has been only one white Christmas on the South Carolina coast. But that storm, which blew in 25 years ago this week, set records from Florida to North Carolina.

The storm brought 15 inches of snow to Wilmington, North Carolina, 14 inches to Myrtle Beach and eight to Charleston.

And despite the problems it caused air travelers and holiday drivers, it also brought a bit of a respite from Hurricane Hugo. For a few days, the widespread debris and damage from the Category 4 storm that hit South Carolina three months earlier was hidden under a blanket of white.

The snow covered broken wood and other debris piled up in yards and, for a brief time, hid the blue tarps that covered many roofs in that were torn up by Hugo and its 135 mph winds, which smashed into Charleston that September.

Hugo claimed 13 lives in South Carolina and caused \$7 billion damage on the U.S. mainland, most of it in the state. Three months later, residents were still struggling to recover.

Here's no chance of a white Christmas this year: temperatures forecast to rise into the 60s.

It was 25 years ago Monday that the snow that brought the area's only recorded white Christmas began falling. It would fall into Christmas Eve day of that year.

The National Weather Service reports that snowflakes fell as far south as Daytona Beach and Tampa, while there was measurable snowfall in Jacksonville, giving northern Florida, too, its first white Christmas on record. The storm and the ensuing cold also caused heavy damage to the Florida citrus crop.

ONE LAST OBSTACLE

Panthers to face Falcons in division showdown B1



Weather



Rain, cloudy
High 46
Low 41

Herald-Journal

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NY cop killer had long crime record

Officers urged to take extra precautions

By TOM HAYS
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The gunman who fatally ambushed two police officers in their squad car had a long criminal record, a hatred for police and the government,

and an apparent history of mental instability that included an attempt to hang himself a year ago, authorities said Sunday.

Moments before opening fire, Ismaaiyl Brinsley approached people on the street and asked

them to follow him on Instagram, then told them, "Watch what I'm going to do," Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce said.

A portrait of the Brooklyn-born gunman emerged as big-city police departments and union leaders around the country warned officers to change

their routines and insist on extra backup a day after Brinsley carried out what he portrayed online as retaliation for the slayings of black men at the hands of white police.

Brinsley was black; the slain officers were Asian and Hispanic.

Investigators were trying to determine whether Brinsley had taken part in any protests over the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, whose names he invoked in his online threat, or simply latched on to the cause

♦ SEE POLICE PAGE A13

HJ
IN A HURRY

4 Things to read today

Going back on list?

President Barack Obama says the United States is reviewing whether to put North Korea back on its list of state sponsors of terrorism as Washington decides how to respond to the cyberattack on Sony. **PAGE A3**



Kim

Better mine safety

Less than five years after an explosion fueled by excess coal dust killed 29 men deep inside a West Virginia underground mine, the nation's coal mines are on pace for an all-time low in work-related deaths. **PAGE A7**

Divided Catholics

The key role Pope Francis played encouraging talks between Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro left fractures among his flock in South Florida, where many older Roman Catholics equate the Castro brothers with the devil. **PAGE A11**

Mother charged

An Australian woman was charged with murder on Sunday in the deaths of seven of her children and her niece, whose bodies were found inside her home, police said. **PAGE A15**

On the Web

Visit GoUpstate.com for breaking news and state stories, and to

Cause of deadly fire investigated



PHOTOS BY TIM KIMZEY/TIM.KIMZEY@SJ.COM

Investigators look for clues Sunday about what caused a fire that destroyed an apartment building on Bryant Road and claimed the lives of five people, including three children, early Saturday morning. See more photos from the fire at GoUpstate.com.

Community rallies to aid of seven families left homeless by blaze



By JENNY ARNOLD
jennifer.arnold@sjc.com

WHITNEY — Investigators continued to sift through the charred remains of an apartment building Sunday where five people died the previous day.

The U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the State Law Enforcement

tal records to identify them, and it was difficult getting that information on a weekend.

"Worse-case scenario" is how Whitney Fire Chief Shawn Petras described his thoughts upon receiving the call about an apartment fire at night, with people trapped inside their homes.

"Everyone's sleeping," Petras



Morning News

MONDAY DECEMBER 22, 2014

The Voice of the Pee Dee

TODAY'S WEATHER
Cloudy with a touch of rain. High 51, low 44.
DETAILS 2A

www.scnw.com

75 cents

Santa Claus waves to parade-goers from atop a float. The annual Florence Christmas parade was held on Sunday along Evans Street. This year's theme was "The Joy of Christmas."



FLORENCE CHRISTMAS PARADE

Here comes Santa Claus



PHOTOS BY VEASEY CONWAY/MORNING NEWS

The Omar Daredevils ride go-karts in the annual Florence Christmas parade, which was held Sunday along Evans Street. This year's theme was "The Joy of Christmas."

Event fills downtown Florence with holiday spirit, wears Santa out

BY VEASEY CONWAY
Morning News
vconway@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — By the end of the annual Florence Christmas Parade on Sunday along Evans

Street, Santa Claus was exhausted.

"My hands are tired" from all the waving and candy throwing, he said. "This was a long one." Santa makes it a point to be in the Florence parade, though.

He came "to see all the kids, find out what they want for Christmas," he said. "Who's been naughty, who's been nice. Feel everything out, check the list twice."

He traveled atop a float in the

parade. It was one of more than 48 entries in the holiday procession.

"We had about 48 on the book, and there were some others

See **PARADE**, Page 3A

MORE COVERAGE

» Photo gallery on scnw.com

COMING WEDNESDAY

» 32-page Letters to Santa special section.

Larry Frazier gets one more round in boxing industry

Larry Frazier (center), a retired professional boxer, coaches the One More Round boxing team of Darlington. From left, Clayton Stokes, Austin Castrillon, Gabe Castrillon and



BY SHAMIRA MCCRAY
Morning News
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FLORENCE — For Larry Frazier of Hartsville, boxing wasn't initially something he wanted to do for fun. It was something he thought he needed to do.

As a 12-year-old boy, he watched the fight between Joe Frazier and George Foreman in 1973. When Foreman knocked Joe Frazier down five times and won the fight, young Larry Fra-



Each Monday, the Morning News features a good-news story on a person, place or organization in the Pee Dee. If you have a suggestion for someone or something to profile, send it to

Frazier continued until he turned 18.

At 16, he won the Carolina Golden Gloves at 147 pounds. At the age of 17, he made it to the finals of the Carolina Golden Gloves in the same weight class.

In 1976, Frazier joined the Marine Corps.

"(Boxing) is one reason I joined the Marine Corps," Frazier said. "I liked their boxing team. They had a real good boxing team."

Frazier competed in more than 80 fights while in the Marine

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Portrait of NYC gunman emerges

Shooter of 2 officers had long criminal record, apparent history of mental instability

By TOM HAYS
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The gunman who fatally ambushed two police officers in their squad car had a long criminal record, a hatred for police and the government and an apparent history of mental instability that included an

attempt to hang himself a year ago, authorities said Sunday.

Moments before opening fire, Ismaiyil Brinsley approached people on the street and asked them to follow him on Instagram, then told them, "Watch what I'm going to do," Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce said.

A portrait of the Brooklyn-born gunman emerged as big-city police departments and union leaders around the country warned officers to change up their routines and insist on extra backup a day after Brinsley carried out what he portrayed online as retaliation for the slayings of black men at

the hands of white police.

Brinsley was black; the slain officers were Asian and Hispanic.

Investigators were trying to determine if Brinsley had taken part in any protests over the deaths of Michael

Please see GUNMAN on 9A

OFFICERS KILLED



WENJIAN LIU, 32, had been a member of the police force for seven years. Liu had gotten married just two months ago.



RAFAEL RAMOS, who had his 40th birthday this month, joined the NYPD in 2012. He was married with two sons.



LITERARY LEGACY

Former teacher's memory lives on in donated children's books



DELAUNA EARLEY • Staff photo

Rick Callahan, a mover with GCA, packs some of the 1,500 children's books owned by Colleen Skibo, shown at top, a Beaufort County School District teacher who died a year ago, on Friday morning at the home of Tyra Wahl in Bluffton.

By SARAH BOWMAN • sbowman@beaufortgazette.com • 843-706-8138

Among the library shelves at Hilton Head Island School for the Creative Arts are some special books — about 80 in all. While they may have fantastic illustrations or powerful words, that is not what makes them extraordinary.

What does is a white nameplate, about 3 inches wide and 2 inches tall, in the upper right corner on the first page in each book.

"This book was donated in loving memory of Colleen and James Skibo."

While the dedication is simple and unassuming, the woman it names was anything but.

Please see LEGACY on 9A

EXONERATION OF GEORGE STINNEY

Judge, others respond to ruling

Fourteenth Circuit Judge Carmen Mullen's decision to toss out the 1944 conviction of an executed teen gains national attention.

By REBECCA LURYE
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Fourteenth Circuit Judge Carmen Mullen could have waved off George Stinney's case when it landed on her docket in January, citing the passage of 70 years since the 14-year-old's conviction and execution in Clarendon County.

Many judges would have chosen not to hear the sensitive and difficult case of a black boy put to death in the killings of two young girls in a small, segregated mill town, friends and colleagues said this week.

But that is not Mullen's way, they say. Her decision Wednesday to exonerate Stinney was courageous, if not surprising, said 5th Circuit Judge L. Casey Manning, who has known Mullen since she served as his law clerk after graduating from law school.

"Her intellectual ability and intelligence are surpassed only by her honesty and integrity," Manning said. "I know she did the right thing."

Kenneth Gaines, a professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law, agreed the ruling would have taken nerve, though the constitutional violations in Stinney's case were obvious.

Please see RULING on 9A

US Navy SEAL veteran featured in new car show

By MATT McNAB
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championships, four Ironman challenges, and rode from California to

TEAMWORK

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