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Governor Nikki Haley News:

The State: Haley has not made up her mind on endorsing 2016 candidate

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60645446.html>

Andrew Shain

Four days before voters head to the polls for the S.C. Republican presidential primary, the state's most coveted GOP endorsement remains unclaimed. Gov. Nikki Haley said Tuesday that she has not made up her mind on endorsing a 2016 GOP presidential candidate. She did not provide a timetable for a decision and did not rule out foregoing an endorsement.

Note: "I'm doing what I think a lot of people in South Carolina are doing, which is I watched the debate (on Saturday in Greenville), I'm trying to go through all the situations, I'm looking at all the different candidates that are there, and I'm trying to figure out who that person would be," she told reporters at the S.C. State House. "The decision is whether an endorsement would matter, and whether I jump out there or stay out of it."

Wall Street Journal: South Carolina GOP Voters Feel the Benefits of Free Trade—but Also the Scars

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/south-carolina-gop-voters-feel-the-benefits-of-free-trade-but-also-the-scars-1455663542>

Bob Davis, Valerie Bauerlein

Global competition has turned South Carolina, the scene of a Republican primary on Saturday, into a trade powerhouse. Mrs. Howell, a supervisor at BMW AG's plant here, says working for the German company has given her job security, promotions and a fat enough salary to pay off two mortgages and put her daughter through college.

Note: The economy of the low country near the seacoast was similar in going international. Boeing opened a plant to build the 787 Dreamliner in 2011. Daimler AG's Mercedes-Benz and Chinese-owned Volvo Car Corp. announced plans last year for car factories nearby.

Note: Gov. Haley says such investment has helped remake South Carolina's economy and image. "Some of the presidential candidates are tone deaf to the fact that we've had this major renaissance of 'Made in America,'" she says.

Note: Gov. Haley won the 2010 Republican nomination on the strength of the Tea Party movement. She said recently she has tried to keep an outsider's mentality while working inside the political system.

WIS: Gov. Nikki Haley doesn't know who she'll endorse, but it won't be Donald Trump

<http://www.wistv.com/story/31235387/gov-nikki-haley-doesnt-know-who-shell-endorse-but-it-wont-be-donald-trump>

Jeremy Turnage

With only a few days to go before the South Carolina Republican Primary, the state's most notable Republican has yet to endorse any of the remaining candidates. Gov. Nikki Haley held an unrelated news conference on Tuesday to discuss a new program with the Department of Health and Human Services, but the fact that she has not formally endorsed any of the GOP candidates for president was discussed.

Note: "I don't know yet," Haley said. "I'm doing what a lot of people in South Carolina are doing, which is I watch the debate, been trying to go through all the different situations, I'm looking at all the different candidates and trying to figure out who that person would be, so I'm not at a point yet."

Note: In fact, Haley could consider not to endorse anyone, she said. "That's the decision is whether an endorsement would matter and whether I should jump out there or stay out of it," Haley said.

Associated Press: Expansion provides parenting help to more poor mothers-to-be

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=HsZlcl6J

Seanna Adcox

More of South Carolina's poor mothers-to-be will get parenting help at home through a \$30 million public-private partnership that aims to reduce pre-term births and child hospitalizations. Republican Gov. Nikki Haley announced Tuesday the state's collaboration with nonprofits, companies and private donors to increase those helped through the Nurse-Family Partnership, a Denver-based nonprofit that pairs registered nurses with first-time mothers on Medicaid.

Note: Haley said the voluntary program aims to put babies and their mothers on a successful path, while reducing state costs and the problems that come with generational poverty, including domestic abuse. "These new moms want to be the best moms they can be, but they need guidance," she said.

Note: Haley said the program is part of her administration's efforts in lifting up rural South Carolina. Democrats have been critical of the state's dismal poverty rankings and Haley's refusal to expand Medicaid to more poor adults as the federal health care law intended. "It's not about money, it's about outcomes," Haley said.

The State: State assistance expanding for impoverished new S.C. mothers

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article60651951.html>

Tim Flach

More impoverished new mothers and babies will get state attention in coming months in an effort to assure family health, Gov. Nikki Haley said Tuesday. Plans call for nurses to work with an additional 3,200 mothers, mainly in rural areas, to provide "the tools they need to be successful," Haley said.

WYFF: Program provides parenting help to more poor mothers-to-be

<http://www.wyff4.com/news/Program-provides-parenting-help-to-more-poor-mothers-to-be/38034354>

Lauren Rountree

More of South Carolina's poor mothers-to-be will get parenting help at home through a \$30 million public-private partnership that aims to reduce preterm births and child hospitalizations. Gov. Nikki Haley joined other state and nonprofit officials Tuesday to announce the state's collaboration with nonprofits to expand the number of families helped through the Nurse-Family Partnership.

WLTX: SC Expanding Program to Help New Moms on Medicaid

<http://www.wltx.com/story/news/2016/02/16/sc-expanding-program-help-new-moms-medicaid/80476686/>

South Carolina is expanding a program to help mothers-to-be who are on Medicaid to be healthier and have healthier babies. Gov. Nikki Haley announced at the Statehouse Tuesday the state is expanding the Nurse-Family Partnership program, adding another 3,200 first-time mothers and their babies to the 1,200 families already in the program.

Note: "These new moms want to be the best moms they can be, but they need guidance and they need help, and that's where these nurses are going to come in," Gov. Haley said. "These aren't just case workers; these are actual nurses that are going to go into homes. These are actual nurses that are going to partner with the mom to say, 'You can do this' and give them all the practices on how they can do it."

Bloomberg: South Carolina's Economic Pragmatism Sets Traps for Ideologues

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-02-17/south-carolina-s-economic-pragmatism-sets-traps-for-ideologues>

Margaret Newkirk, John McCormick

Candidates campaigning in South Carolina's presidential primaries this month must navigate an economic landscape strewn with pitfalls. With extremes of wealth and poverty, South Carolina lifted its post-industrial fortunes by opposing organized labor favored by Democrats and practicing what Tea Party Republicans call crony capitalism, opening the public wallet to lure big business.

Note: The International Association of Machinists tried to organize it last year. Republican Governor Nikki Haley led the opposition, saying that she wore high heels not for fashion, but to kick out unions.

S.C. Presidential Primary News:

Associated Press: GOP candidates in high-stakes chess match in South Carolina

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

Julie Pace, Bill Barrow

Jeb Bush, John Kasich and Marco Rubio are locked in a high-stakes political chess match in South Carolina, strategically moving money and other campaign resources around in a bid to pull ahead in the Republican primary race - or at least keep their campaigns afloat if they don't.

CNN: GOP candidates at war in S.C.

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/16/politics/2016-south-carolina-republican-war/index.html>

MJ Lee

They're calling each other losers and liars, mocking one another's accomplishments and questioning each other's character. In South Carolina, the Republican presidential primary is turning into the nastiest kind of political war. Days out from the GOP primary contest here on Saturday, the party's top White House contenders have turned on each other in the most vicious way yet, leveling relentless attacks in stump speeches, media interviews, political ads and on social media.

CNN: In South Carolina, big leads on both sides

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/16/politics/south-carolina-poll-cnn-orc/>

Jennifer Agiesta

Donald Trump holds a broad 16-point lead among those likely to vote in South Carolina's Republican primary this Saturday, according to a new CNN/ORC Poll. Meanwhile, Hillary Clinton tops Bernie Sanders by 18 points in the state's Democratic primary, which will be held a week later.

Sun News: Marco Rubio touts conservatism, experience at North Myrtle Beach stump

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/politics-government/article60744656.html>

Claire byun

Less than a week before the S.C. Republican primary, Marco Rubio is looking to the South for more support. The Florida U.S. senator spent Tuesday night talking with more than 500 people at the Barefoot Resort Conference Center in North Myrtle Beach, addressing health care, conservatism and limited federal government.

Post and Courier: Marco Rubio touts his national security credentials

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160216/PC1603/160219489>

Robert Behre

Instead of blasting his GOP rivals, presidential hopeful Marco Rubio told a few hundred supporters here why he is most qualified to be the nation's next commander in chief. The Florida senator, who serves on the Committee on Foreign Relations, delivered a mostly upbeat 45-minute-long stump speech, but one that warned national security is as relevant today as it was during the Cold War.

Island Packet: In Beaufort, Rubio continues push before Saturday's GOP primary

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article60602531.html>

Matt McNab

Marco Rubio's second appearance in Beaufort County in under a week was smoother than his first. The Florida senator avoided any teeth-related mishaps Tuesday after a late arrival to Sun City Hilton Head last week caused by an impromptu dentist visit to repair a broken tooth.

Aiken Standard: White House hopefuls tackle MOX, eminent domain

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160217/AIK0101/160219533>

Derrek Asberry

Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush said the Savannah River Site's MOX facility should not be shut down unless there's a proven alternative, but said he'd defer to the "experts" on the subject – South Carolina Republicans U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham and U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson.

Aiken Standard: Carson campaigns at Aiken's Jimmy John's ahead of S.C. primary

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160217/AIK0101/160219538/carson-campaigns-at-aiken-x2019-s-jimmy-john-x2019-s-ahead-of-sc-primary>

Dede Biles

A cheering and clapping crowd filled Jimmy John's on Whiskey Road to see Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson, who held a meet-and-greet there Tuesday night, ahead of "The Last Word in the South" presidential forum at the USC Aiken Convocation Center.

Greenville News: Cruz denies Gowdy claim of Facebook deception

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/02/16/cruz-denies-gowdy-claim-facebook-deception/80458148/>

Rudolph Bell

Republican presidential candidate Ted Cruz said in Anderson Tuesday night that his campaign had nothing

to do with false reports on Facebook that U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy of Spartanburg had switched his support to Cruz from Marco Rubio, one of Cruz's rivals for the GOP nomination.

Anderson Independent: Congressman lashes out at Cruz campaign over fake Facebook posting
<http://www.independentmail.com/news/congressman-lashes-out-at-cruz-campaign-over-fake-facebook-posting-2bed72df-88c4-6cb3-e053-0100007fb-369051371.html>

Kirk Brown

An Upstate congressman called Tuesday for Republican presidential candidate Ted Cruz to repudiate a fake Facebook posting that said he was backing the Texas senator. U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy, a Republican from Spartanburg, has endorsed U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida in the GOP race for the White House.

Post and Courier: Sen. Ted Cruz speaks about bolstering military while aboard Yorktown
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160216/PC16/160219488>

Diane Knich

Hundreds of supporters, including many veterans, showed up aboard the aircraft carrier Yorktown at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum in Mount Pleasant to listen to Cruz, who won the Iowa caucuses earlier this month, buoyed by the votes of many evangelical Christians.

Aiken Standard: Trump blasts healthcare law, Cruz in North Augusta campaign stop
<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160217/AIK0101/160219541/trump-blasts-healthcare-law-cruz-in-north-augusta-campaign-stop>

Scott Rodgers

Ahead of the South Carolina Republican primary on Saturday, Donald Trump is looking to maintain his position at the top of the polls. Trump took to Riverview Park Activities Center for a campaign rally on Tuesday afternoon, speaking to roughly 1,200 supporters in Gyms 3 and 4 and an additional 500 in Gym 2.

Island Packet: Donald Trump talks tough in Beaufort on military matters
<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article60678751.html>

Stephen Fastenau

Boasting that record crowds had packed the Beaufort High School performing arts center and spilled into overflow areas, the New York billionaire and Republican presidential candidate promised to overhaul the Department of Veterans Affairs and defeat the Islamic State so fast "your head would spin."

Post and Courier: Donald Trump dials back attacks on Jeb Bush, pushes forward against Ted Cruz
<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160216/PC1603/160219473>

Maya T. Prabhu

Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump dialed back his attacks on rival Jeb Bush, focusing his ire on Texas Sen. Ted Cruz instead. "I've never seen a human being lie so much," Trump said of Cruz to a rally of 500 people Tuesday.

Greenville News: Kasich: I'll stay 'relentlessly positive'
<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/02/16/kasich-greenville-ll-stay-relentlessly-positive/80457906/>

Rudolph Bell

Republican presidential candidate John Kasich brought his message of collaborative problem-solving to a fire station in Eastside Greenville Tuesday, four days before South Carolina Republicans decide who they want in the White House.

New York Times: President Obama Criticizes G.O.P. Field, Particularly Donald Trump
http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/17/us/politics/president-obama-criticizes-gop-field-particularly-donald-trump.html?_r=0

Michael D. Shear

President Obama on Tuesday offered an extended critique of the Republicans running to replace him, describing them as "troubling" to people around the world and singling out Donald J. Trump as someone who would not be a serious president.

Associated Press: Clinton makes pitch to black ministers ahead of SC primary
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=EmvWC1kX

Jonathan Lemire, Ken Thomas

Making a direct appeal to black voters, Hillary Clinton said Tuesday she would give African-Americans their next ally in the White House and offered a detailed plan to overcome racial disparities ahead of crucial primaries in South Carolina and the Deep South.

Greenville News: Bill Clinton paints wife Hillary as 'changemaker' in Greenville

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/02/16/bill-clinton-paints-wife-hillary-changemaker-greenville/80455412/>

Amanda Coyne

A diverse crowd of hundreds packed the West End Community Development Center to see the President Bill Clinton stump for his wife, presidential candidate and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in his first visit to Greenville in 2016.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: Bill Clinton touts need for skilled manufacturing workers during Spartanburg visit

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20160216/articles/160219699>

Chris Lavender

Former President Bill Clinton said he believes demand for high-level manufacturing training will continue to grow in the United States as the country competes in a global economy. Clinton visited The Center for Advanced Manufacturing & Industrial Technologies (CAMIT) at Spartanburg Community College on Tuesday ahead of a campaign stop in Greenville for his wife, Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.

Charlotte Observer: Bill Clinton returns to site of a rare political defeat

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60708506.html>

Jim Morrill

The last time Bill Clinton spoke in Greenville, he found himself in the line of fire – from other Democrats. They accused him of making racially insensitive remarks about then-U.S. Sen. Barack Obama ahead of the 2008 S.C. primary. Others called his statements about Obama “character assassination.” A “truth squad” followed the former president, alert for any slams at Obama.

The State: S.C. Democrats not feeling the ‘Bern’

<http://www.thestate.com/news/nation-world/national/article60799566.html>

Jamie Self

Bernie Sanders predicted Tuesday he will “surprise people” in the South Carolina’s Democratic presidential primary in 10 days. The U.S. senator from Vermont reminded the mostly African-American audience at a prayer breakfast that he closed a wide deficit in Iowa, nearly tying Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton, and pulled off a historic rout in New Hampshire.

Post and Courier: Sanders in Charleston touts his ‘radical ideas’ for change

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160216/PC1603/160219493>

David Slade, Gavin Jackson

The 74-year-old U.S. senator from Vermont started and ended his rally with his populist brand of Democratic socialism and his call on voters to declare “enough is enough,” saying that throughout history America has been changed by the better for people who got fed up, risking life and property to secure civil rights, women’s rights, workers’ rights and more.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

The State: Don’t want to pick between Trump & Clinton? Take the primaries back from partisans

<http://www.thestate.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/cindi-ross-scope/article60694121.html#storylink=cpy>

Cindi Ross Scope

FOUR YEARS AGO, S.C. Republicans went ga-ga over Newt Gingrich, handing him an impressive 40 percent of the vote in what was still a very competitive four-man field. Or so the story went. It’s true that Republican primary voters fell hard for the bellicose former speaker of the House. But South Carolina Republicans? Not so much.

Post and Courier: Ups and downs for home prices

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC1002/160219462>

Editorial

It's a great time to sell a home in Charleston. Buying one? Not so much. Average home prices in the Charleston area rose 6.5 percent in 2015, an even faster pace than the 4.9 percent growth in 2014, according to the Charleston Trident Association of Realtors. That hasn't slowed down sales, however. The number of homes changing hands last year was up more than 13 percent.

Post and Courier: Just the gun facts, please

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC1002/160219463>

Editorial

Gun rights advocates often accuse gun control advocates of acting on emotion rather than data. They claim there is insufficient information to warrant firearms restrictions. But last week a majority of the House of Representatives voted against a proposal aimed at collecting and analyzing data about gun violence.

S.C. General Assembly News:

The State: Senate to start debating road repair plan Wednesday

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article60722421.html>

Cassie Cope

After five weeks of letting a road-repair bill sit atop its calendar, S.C. senators are set to begin debating Wednesday how to repair the state's crumbling roads. Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence, said he is happy the Senate is getting to the road-funding debate.

Note: Cleary and Lourie's amendment addresses four parts of the House bill, which passed that chamber last year by a 87-20 vote. That proposal had enough support to override a threatened veto by Republican Gov. Nikki Haley.

Post and Courier: Palmetto Sunrise: Roads bill set for floor debate

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160217/PC1603/160219440>

Cynthia Roldan

The South Carolina Senate is clearing its calendars so that it can debate the roads bill on the floor of the chamber today. Many lawmakers have said the debate is long overdue, since it was supposed to be the first issue they discussed on the floor at the start of the 2016 Legislative session more than a month ago.

Greenville News: Bill to restrict disposal of coal ash headed to Senate floor

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2016/02/16/bill-restrict-disposal-coal-ash-headed-senate-floor/80444068/>

Tim Smith

A bill that would restrict the disposal of coal ash in South Carolina from utilities to Class 3 landfills is headed to the Senate floor. The amended House bill received an 18-0 vote by the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday. If lawmakers don't act, it could have environmental impacts across the state, where currently 67 Class 2 landfills exist that could take coal ash if a liner is placed underneath, said Senate Judiciary Chairman Larry Martin of Pickens.

WCIV: Cancer survivor puts support behind federal breast density notification bill

<http://abcnews4.com/news/local/cancer-survivor-puts-support-behind-federal-breast-density-notification-bill>

Ashley Blackstone

That's why Spears supports proposed federal legislation on breast density notification. If approved, it would make it mandatory for doctors to alert women if they have dense breasts and discuss additional screening options. The same issue is being discussed by South Carolina lawmakers in this year's legislative session. Spears is still studying that bill.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: SC state, business leaders discuss workforce modernization

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=ezaBJb7g

The South Carolina Chamber is putting on a symposium to discuss how to close the state's skills gap and build a modern workforce. The two-day Workforce Development Symposium starts Wednesday at the Columbia Marriott downtown.

The State: Richland County detainees could get bus ticket after release from jail

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article60751731.html>

Glen Luke Flanagan

Folks released from jail in Richland County won't be getting taxis, which County Council previously was considering, but they might be getting a ticket to ride the COMET. The bus system currently makes four stops every weekday at the Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center, the last at 3:18 p.m., according to COMET executive director Robert Schneider.

Local News:

Greenville News: Clemson president, mayor tout year of record growth

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2016/02/16/clemson-president-mayor-tout-year-record-growth/80460018/>

Ron Barnett

Clemson is booming – both the university and the city – leaders of the two institutions told the Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce at the annual State of Clemson luncheon Tuesday. The city saw \$80 million in construction during 2015 and expects another \$120 million worth this year, according to Mayor J.C. Cook.

The State: Advisory group says Richland should use federal flood grants to buy out damaged homes

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article60739791.html#storylink=cpy>

Sarah Ellis

Government buyouts of homes badly damaged by October's floods are the top priority on a list set by a local stakeholders group created to advise county leaders on how to use some expected disaster relief funds. Richland County Council on Tuesday got a first look at the priorities list set by the county's newly formed "Blue Ribbon Committee."

National News:

McClatchy DC: Could Supreme Court fight put Richard Burr's Senate seat in play?

<http://www.thestate.com/news/nation-world/national/article60724826.html#storylink=cpy>

Greg Gordon, Tim Funk

Sen. Richard Burr of North Carolina was quick to support Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's declaration that the next president – not President Barack Obama – should fill the Supreme Court vacancy created by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia.

Brian Symmes

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