

Title: **Raising their voices**
 Author: By Eileen Keithly ekeithly@southstrandnews.com
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Raising their voices

Jackson Village residents protest sewer tax, rally on Capitol steps

By EILEEN KEITHLY

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Citizens of Jackson Village in the Plantersville area of Georgetown County gathered on the steps of the state Capitol July 15 to protest a yearly sewer tax that some residents say is “illegal” and “racist,” and, in the end, they even got a meeting with Gov. Nikki Haley’s staff.

Holding signs that said “Black Communities Matter,” “Lethal Taxation” and “Racism,” all topped with the words “A Community in Crisis,” the protesters, many elderly, battled the blazing heat marching up and down the steps, chanting and singing “We need help! Plantersville residents need help! Please help us!”

“We came here to bring awareness to our state lawmakers about the sewer tax that was unfairly and unjustly imposed on the people of Jackson Village,” said the Rev. Benjamin Grate, the group’s organizer. “People are losing their homes and the land they inherited from their

grandparents who were enslaved people on that land, and someone needs to step in and help us because Georgetown County has turned their backs on all of us and we need help.”

The rally, demonstrators said, was needed to bring light to a \$250-per-year, 20-year sewer tax assessment that began in 2013 after the Georgetown County Water and Sewer District installed sewer service in the Jackson Village area of Plantersville.

Many of the protesters came from other areas, including surrounding states, to join friends and family at the protest.

“My family is from Plantersville, but I live in Columbia now,” Angie White said. “I am here because I believe the sewer tax is illegal and racist, and I am going to peacefully protest it be-

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Residents protest taxes

FROM PAGE 1A

cause I would like to maybe go back to Plantersville one day and I don’t agree with the tax.”

Lee McKinnon drove from Northcross, Georgia, to participate in the rally. He has family in Plantersville, and he, too, opposes the sewer tax.

“There is a wider set of problems that surround this sewer tax,” McKinnon said. “There is something to be said for the fact that only the black residents in Jackson Village were stuck with this tax and not the wealthy white plantation owners that live in the community.”

Jackson Village resident Gloria Milton walked the

steps of the capitol shouting and begging for state legislators to step in and help the residents. She said she wants state officials to find out what happened to the grant money that was supposed to keep the residents from having to pay the yearly tax that, in her case, almost caused her to lose her home.

“People don’t understand,” Milton said. “They wonder why we are opposing a tax when some of us wanted sewer to begin with. We may have wanted the sewer to begin with, but when we finally realized that it was going to cost us \$250 for 20 years, many of us, lots of us, put our foot down and said ‘no’ and they just kept on going knowing they lost the grant

money that was supposed to help us pay to connect into the sewer.

“The white folks that live down the street on the big plantations said ‘no’ and they didn’t have to get sewer, but the black folks have to pay and that is unfair and racist.”

According to documents obtained from the GCWSD through a Freedom of Information Act request by the Georgetown Times, the sewer project dates back to 2006, when GCWSD officials met for the first time with Jackson Village residents. At that time, Jackson Village was in line for \$8 million in federal loans and grants to underwrite the project, because it was on the state Department of Health and Environmen-

tal Control list of sewage-critical needs area.

Early on, residents were told the project would replace their old and leaking septic tanks. A monthly assessment, according to documents viewed by the Times, was not on the table.

“Somehow that grant money disappeared and then we got stuck with paying for the sewer and now we can’t afford it, and somebody needs to step in and figure out where the money went and how they are going to help us out of this mess before we lose all of our homes and our land,” Milton said. “I already had to buy my house back off the sheriff’s sale once and I don’t want to have to do that again.”

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Contacted after the protest, state Rep. Carl Anderson said the time limit on the grant that Milton spoke about expired and the money was not awarded to the project.

"I worked on that grant with Sen. Yancey McGill," Anderson said. "We worked really hard to get that grant, but there are time limits on grants like that, and the time just ran out and the project was already under way so the assessment was put into place."

Anderson said he had received correspondence from Grate in regards to the sewer tax situation in Jackson Village but had not responded to his latest letter.

"I need to get in contact with Ben Grate and those folks out there and meet with them," Anderson said. "The tax is a burden on some out there and hopefully there is

a solution for the situation. I wrote him back over a year ago and told him to meet with the Plantersville Tri-County Community Organization, but I'm not sure if he did that."

Grate said he and other protesters were tired of waiting for the politicians in Georgetown County to help them, so they took their fight to Columbia.

"This is why we came to Columbia, because the powers that be in Georgetown and the legislators and senators and congressmen that represent Georgetown County folks are not doing anything to help us out of this situation," Grate said.

After cooling off under a shade tree after the rally, Grate proceeded inside the capitol, hoping to meet with Gov. Haley.

"The governor was not available to see me today," Grate said, "but she made sure that a member of her policy staff met with me."

Haley's Deputy Chief of Staff Rob Godfrey confirmed that Grate met with the governor's policy analyst, Hal Peters, on July 15, but he declined to comment on the conversation between the two men. Grate, however, said he was very pleased with the meeting.

"We were all pleased with the turnout for our protest, but being able to actually walk into the governor's office and have someone genuinely listen to your concern and actually promise you that they will look into where the grant money came from and where it went and try and help the people in Plantersville out," Grate said, "that is a job well done that

the people of Jackson Village can be proud of.

"All their hard work is finally starting to pay off."

Prior to the protest, Grate said he had been in contact with state Sen. Ronnie Saab, who represents Plantersville.

"I am very pleased with the progress that we have made to today at the rally and am also encouraged by a phone call I received from Ronnie Saab at the beginning of this week," Grate said. "Sen. Saab assured me that he was going to meet with other lawmakers and our community in working toward a resolution in regards to this sewer tax situation, and I am sure he will be in contact with the governor's office, as well."

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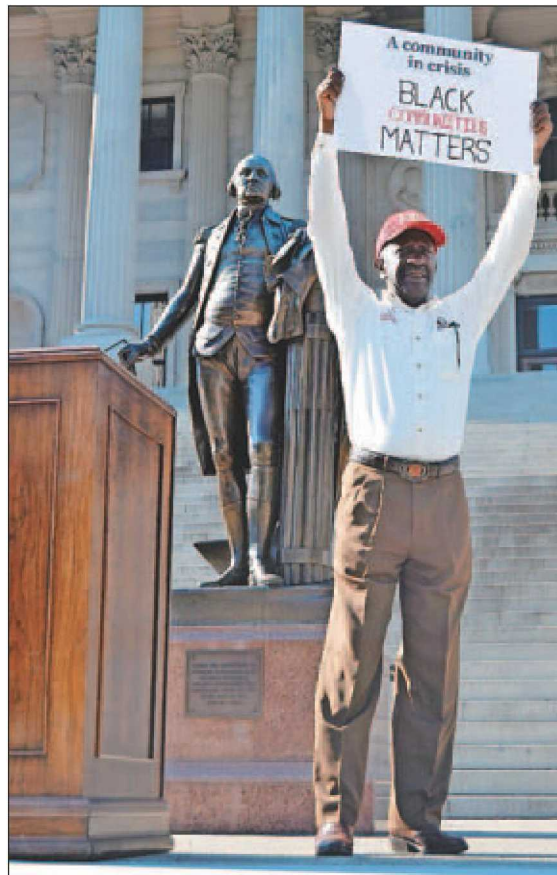
PHOTOS BY EILEEN KEITHLY/SOUTH STRAND NEWS

Jackson Village residents and family members protest on the steps of the state Capitol July 15.

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Exhausted from the heat, Plantersville resident Odessa Milton sits down on the steps of the state Capitol during the tax protest.



The Rev. Benjamin Grate protests on the steps of the state Capitol July 15.

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PHOTOS BY EILEEN KEITHLY/SOUTH STRAND NEWS

Jackson Village residents and supporters protest a \$250 20-year sewer tax on the grounds of the state Capitol July 15.



Jackson Village residents took turns speaking while others marched and carried signs during the July 15 protest at the state Capitol.

Title: **Petition sheriff candidates file in**
 Author: By ARIEL GILREATH agilreath@indexjournal.com
 Size: 38.90 column inches
 Greenwood, SC Circulation: 16494



Petition sheriff candidates file in

By ARIEL GILREATH

agilreath@indexjournal.com

Candidates have filed petitions to run for sheriff in three Lakelands counties — Abbeville, Laurens and McCormick — by the noon Friday deadline.

Willie J. Callaham Jr. turned in 942 signatures out of the 747 which were required to run for sheriff in Abbeville County, Stephanie Williams turned in 2,673 signatures out of the 1,920 which were required to run for sheriff in Laurens County and LeRoy Martin turned in 450 signatures out of the required 340 signatures to run for sheriff in McCormick County.

Greenwood County only received a petition candidate for the Soil and Water Commission, for which all

candidates must be petition candidates. McCormick and Laurens county each received a petition candidate for county council.

K. Mann turned in 498 signatures out of the required 286 to run for seat 2 on Laurens County Council, and Timothy White turned in 103 signatures of the required 57 to run for seat 4 on McCormick County Council.

The candidates have been certified or approved, a process that should take several days.

Callaham, who is running against Democratic incumbent Ray Watson for Abbeville County sheriff, said he'd prefer not to comment until he has been verified as a candidate.

Laurens County

Williams is running against Republican Don Reynolds for Laurens County sheriff after Reynolds beat out incumbent Ricky Chastain in June.

Mann is up against Republican Joe Wood, who is the current Laurens County Council chairman, for the District 2 seat.

Williams, the captain over investigations at the Laurens County Sheriff's Office and former Gamecocks cornerback, declined to comment as his petition had not been certified as of Friday.

See **FILE**, page 4A

FILE

Continued from 1A

Mann could not be reached Friday for comment.

McCormick County

Martin, 60, is up against Republican Clarke Stearns and Democrat J.R. Jones for the McCormick County sheriff seat.

Martin has lived in McCormick his whole life. He spent three years in the National Guard before spending 32 years with the McCormick Police

Department, where he was police chief for some time.

"There's so much going on in the world, and I'm here at age 60," Martin said. "I want what's best for McCormick."

White, 49, is running against Democrat Charles Jennings, who is the current McCormick County Council chairman, for the District 4 seat.

White has lived in McCormick for 10 years and owns Michelle's Restaurant in down-

town McCormick.

He said he hears a lot of people complaining about the leadership in the county in the restaurant, and many people took it to heart when Gov. Nikki Haley said they need new county leadership in December.

White said some people didn't realize Sally Anne Gable was running as a Democrat against Jennings instead of a Republican, which might be a reason she lost.

"We need new leaders," White

said. "We need fresh ideas."

Those running for the Soil and Water Commission are:

— Jan Figueira in Greenwood County

— Julie Davis in McCormick County

— Kevin Yon in Saluda County

Staff writers Damian Dominguez, Katie Pearson and Adam Benson contributed to this story.

148 Messages show Haley was praised, vilified on flag stance

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Thousands of people reached out to South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley after the slayings of nine black people at a historic Charleston church, condemning the violence as senseless and saddening.

Many of these messages — included among more than 10,000 pages released Wednesday by Haley's office — praise the Republican governor as courageous for calling to remove the Confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds.

But many others, while criticizing the violence, urged her to leave the flag alone rather than make a "knee-jerk" reaction to the shootings.

The messages arrived from across the state and as far away as Texas, Washington and Hawaii. To many, Haley sent a standard response, thanking the writer for his or her message and praising South Carolina for unifying in the face of tragedy.

The documents, released in response to open records requests, reflect the divisiveness of the debate over the banner that had flown on the Statehouse grounds until Dylann Roof, the white man charged in the shootings, posed with the battle flag and talked of trying to start a race war.

Just five days after the shootings at Emanuel AME Church, amid heated conversations nationwide over race relations and the legacy of Confederate symbols, Haley held an emotional news conference to say the flag should be taken down.

"The fact that people are choosing to use it as a

sign of hate is something we cannot stand," Haley said then. "The fact that it causes pain to so many is enough to move it from the Capitol grounds. It is, after all, a Capitol that belongs to all of us."

Thousands gathered on July 10, 2015, to observe the honor guard lowering the flag from 30-foot pole near a Confederate soldier monument.

It has been kept since then in a climate-controlled storage unit at the Confederate Relic Room, since lawmakers have offered no money for a special display.

The document release comes just days before the one-year anniversary of its furling.

All the messages are passionate. Some are just a single sentence, praising Haley or condemning her for taking her stand. Others go on for pages, even including news articles or historical information.

There are racial epithets, too, aimed at the nine black shooting victims and at Haley, whose parents emigrated from India.

All of the senders' last names and contact information have been redacted.

"You boycott my flag, I boycott you," one wrote.

"What will you give up next when they ask. Our Bibles? Our guns? Our children?" another questioned.

Still others praised Haley's leadership in the tragedy's aftermath.

"You made me very proud. Thank you," one wrote.

And another congratulated Haley for her "gutsy" move, adding: "You make me so proud as an American, as a fellow Republi-

can, and as a United Methodist, too."

Some messages were handwritten, including poignant letters from children.

"I'm scared and I'm sad that it might happen to my church," one 7-year-old girl wrote to the governor, her message signed with a smiley face and hearts.

"This is not fair," another child wrote, drawing a large, crying frowny face. "Black people get killed for no reason."

Other documents involve internal communications with the governor's office related to the flag removal ceremony. All state lawmakers and Cabinet-level officials were invited, although some chose not to attend.

The governor's office also told state agencies that for nine days, their employees did not have to say, "It's a great day in South Carolina" upon answering the phone. Haley instituted that cheery greeting in 2011.

The release of the messages comes as both federal and state death penalty cases against Roof move toward trial. On Tuesday, his federal defense team filed court papers challenging the constitutionality of the federal hate crimes law, a legal longshot they say they'll drop if prosecutors agree not to pursue the death penalty.

Roof's trial on three-dozen federal charges, including hate crimes and obstruction of religion, is set to begin in November. He is scheduled to go on trial on state charges of murder, attempted murder and weapons violation in January.

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Florence, SC
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THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley speaks May 13 at the Tennessee Republican Party's Statesmen's Dinner in Nashville, Tenn.



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Gov. Nikki Haley issues proclamation recognizing CCU Chanticleer Baseball Team

***Proclamation designates July 1st as
"Chanticleer Baseball National Champions Day"***

Governor Nikki Haley has issued a proclamation recognizing the Coastal Carolina University Chanticleers for winning the College World Series NCAA national championship.

The proclamation designates today, Friday, July 1, 2016, as "Chanticleer Baseball National Champions Day" throughout the state of South Carolina and encourages all South Carolinians to join together in congratulating the Chanticleer baseball team and Head Coach Gary Gilmore for their outstanding performance in the 2016 College World Series.

On Thursday, the governor ordered a Coastal Carolina University flag be flown over the Statehouse to honor the Chanticleers and issued the following statement:

"Michael and I are proud to congratulate Coastal Carolina University on winning its first national championship in school history. This team embodied so many of the things we love about our state - and the fact that the Chanticleers are bringing the College World Series championship trophy back to South Carolina is something we can all celebrate. Cinderella is a Chanticleer!"



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148 Pure Power Technologies expanding operations in Richland County

COLUMBIA, SC – Pure Power Technologies, Inc., a leader in the engineering and manufacturing of new and remanufactured diesel fuel injectors for OEMs and the aftermarket, is expanding their existing operations in Richland County. The new development is expected to bring \$15 million in new investment and result in the hiring of 79 new employees.

Founded in 2009, Pure Power Technologies is the aftermarket's leading independent supplier of precision fuel, air-management and after-treatment systems for light, medium and heavy-duty vehicles. The company integrates research and development, engineering and manufacturing capabilities to produce world-class diesel power systems and advanced emissions control systems for commercial engine markets.

Located at 1410 Northpoint Boulevard in Blythewood, S.C., the company will be adding additional new injector technology to accommodate their continued growth for commercial vehicle OEMs and the aftermarket. For more information on the company, visit www.purepowertechologies.com.

The Coordinating Council for Economic Development has

approved job development credits related to this project.

"The skilled workforce in Richland County provides us with an ideal location for our dedicated employees to continue to deliver our world-class diesel technologies and precision manufacturing expertise. This new addition affords us the opportunity for aggressive growth and to pursue new market channels in the OEM and aftermarket space" said Pure Power Technologies President and CEO Jerry Sweetland.

"Pure Power Technologies'

decision to expand in our state is a true testament to South Carolina's business-friendly environment and our skilled workforce. We couldn't be more excited to celebrate their \$15 million dollar expansion and the 79 new jobs it means for Richland County" said Governor Nikki Haley.

"South Carolina's robust manufacturing industry continues to drive economic success in our state, and today's announcement from Pure Power Technologies is a testament to that. I'm excited to see both continued growth and what our loyal, world-class workforce will achieve with this expansion in the months and years to come" stated South Carolina Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt

"Pure Power's decision to expand here is a great vote of confidence in Richland County. Pure Power employs some of the most technology-driven processes in the Southeast, and this new investment is a reflection on our community's commitment to education and workforce development" said Richland County Councilman Torrey Rush of the announcement.

FIVE FAST FACTS

- Pure Power Technologies expanding operations in Richland County.
- \$15 million investment and hiring 79 new employees.
- Pure Power Technologies is a leader in the engineering and manufacturing of new and remanufactured diesel fuel injectors for OEMs and the aftermarket.
- Located at 1410 Northpoint Boulevard in Blythewood, S.C., the company will be adding new injector technology to accommodate their expansion.
- For more information on the company, visit www.purepowertechologies.com.



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148 Messages to Haley about flag released

**BY MEG KINNARD and
JEFFREY COLLINS**

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Thousands of people reached out to South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley after the slayings of nine black people at a historic Charleston church, condemning the violence as senseless and saddening.

Many of these messages — included among more than 10,000 pages released Wednesday by Haley's office — praise the Republican governor as courageous for calling to remove the Confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds. But many others, while criticizing the violence, urged her to leave the flag alone rather than make a “knee jerk” reaction to the shootings.

The messages arrived from across the state and as far away as Texas, Washington and Hawaii. To many, Haley sent a standard response, thanking the writer for his or her message and praising South Carolina for unifying in the face of tragedy.

The documents, released in response to open records requests, reflect the divisiveness of the debate about the banner that had flown on the Statehouse grounds until Dylann Roof, the white man charged in the shootings, posed with the battle flag and talked of trying to start a race war.

Just five days after the shootings at Emanuel AME Church, amid heated conversations nationwide about race relations and the legacy of Confederate symbols, Haley held an emotional news conference to say the flag should be taken down.

Guinyard-Butler Middle gaining free STEM lab¹⁴⁸

JONATHAN VICKERY
Managing Editor
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Guinyard-Butler Middle School is one of only two schools in the state selected to receive a free STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) lab.

Guinyard-Butler along with a middle school in Orangeburg District 5 will each receive a STEM lab after the Education Oversight Committee presented a bill to Gov. Nikki Haley, which she included in the budget. The schools were selected because they are part of the Abbeville equity lawsuit that accused the state of failing to provide a "minimally adequate" education for poor and rural students. However, Barnwell's inclusion in the federal Promise Zone helped District 45 stick out among the interested schools, said Crissie Stephens, the district's assistant superintendent.

"Those two things working together really helped us," said Superintendent Jay Grissom to the school board during the June 23 meeting. He thanked Danny Black with Southern Carolina Alliance for making the district aware of the opportunity.

The lab will be constructed by PITSCO Education, a company with 45 years of

experience creating STEM facilities across the country. PITSCO will fund all equipment, furniture and materials, said Stephens.

A video for PITSCO explained their STEM labs as "hands on, minds on". Stephens described the lab as a student-centered cooperative learning environment featuring personalized learning and peer-to-peer tutoring. The teacher will be a facilitator and have the freedom to focus on students who need assistance. It will be hands-on, multimodal (audio, visual, kinesthetic) and rigorous, she said.

One of the objectives students will delve into is alternative energy, such as hands-on activities to harness wind energy to produce electricity.

"Experiencing it is so much more powerful than reading about it or having someone tell you about it," said Stephens.

PITSCO will also provide a "customized 6th-8th grade STEM curriculum designed to address the needs of local industry," according to Stephens. She said students will be exposed to more than 400 career opportunities during their time in the lab.

While PITSCO is covering the cost of the lab, District 45 will be responsible for providing a teacher, although PITSCO will provide the

training. Grissom said they will not have to add to the budget because there is a slot open at the middle school and they can move people around.

An ad for the position on the district's website describes the teacher as someone who will "lead the students in opportunities to develop and practice critical college and career readiness skills, such as teamwork, communication, critical thinking and problem solving." Qualified applicants will possess a current South Carolina teaching license, have at least three years of teaching experience in math or science, have experience in researched-based instructional practices, be proficient with technology and preferably have a gifted and talented endorsement.

The district will also be responsible for providing a room for the lab, providing data drops and internet access, and accommodating visitors to the lab. Stephens said the lab will be a "high profile pilot" that the state and PITSCO wants to use as a model statewide.

Stephens said they hope to have the lab ready for the start of the new school year in August.

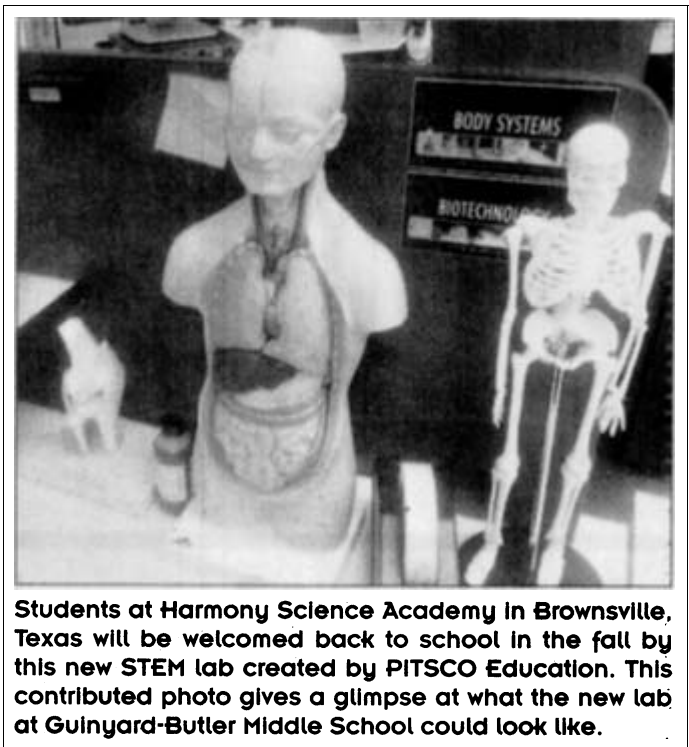
"We are very fortunate," said Stephens of the opportunity.



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South Carolina a fully certified work ready state

148 Region Report

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley announced the final two counties, Jasper and Richland, have received certification through the South Carolina Work Ready Communities initiative, making South Carolina the first state in the nation to become fully certified as work ready. All 46 counties have now met the specified workforce and education goals.

Being fully certified will assist all regions of South Carolina in their efforts to attract and retain international business development due to its commitment to economic growth and development of a robust workforce pipeline.

"We couldn't be more excited to announce that South

Carolina is the first state in the nation to have every county become certified work ready. Team South Carolina's is paying off – we have seen our state become one of the most competitive environments for business development in the world, and we're just getting started," Haley said.

"Today is a day to celebrate as South Carolina becomes the first state in the nation to have every county certified work ready," said Cheryl M. Stanton, executive director of the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce. "With our commitment to the Work Ready initiative and the continued development of a skilled workforce, it is not surprising that employment numbers have been at historic highs over the last year, and

companies continue to expand and choose South Carolina as the place to do business."

The South Carolina Work Ready Community initiative provides a framework to strengthen economic development using a community-based approach, grounded in certifying counties as work ready.

To become a South Carolina Work Ready Community, each county had to reach or exceed goals in earning National Career Readiness Certificates (achieved through WorkKeys® testing), had to meet or exceed the three-year graduation rate average or improvement percentage and had to engage business support.

For additional information, visit www.scworkready.org.

Hartsville
Messenger
Hartsville, SC
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63276

148 Senate changes highlight how much things change

For all the people who wax on and on about the need for legislative term limits, consider this:

Next year's state Senate will be a shadow of its former self. Not only will there be eight new state senators in the 46-member chamber, but if you look at who is not there compared to a few years back, you'll realize how much the body will change.

Since 2011 when Gov. Nikki Haley was inaugurated, just under half of the state Senate will have turned over by the time next year's session starts. Of the 46 senators in office in 2011, 22 will be gone next year, including three prominent chairs who lost in June elections — Judiciary Chair Larry Martin, R-Pickens; Banking and Finance Chair Wes Hayes, R-Rock Hill; and Corrections and Penology Chair Mike Fair, R-Greenville.

Go back a little more — to when President George Bush started his second term — and you'll discover that only a third of senators who were in office in 2005 will take seats in the Senate chamber next year. Yep, 31 different senators will be in seats in 2017 compared to just 12 years — three Senate election cycles — earlier.

Gone are powerhouses like former Senate President pro tems Glenn McConnell, now College of Charleston president, and the late John Drummond of Ninety Six. Gone are workhorses like Phil Leventis of Sumter, Tom Moore of Aiken and David Thomas of Greenville. Gone are controversial figures like Robert Ford of Charleston and Jake Knotts of Lexington. In addition to the loss of Hayes, Martin and Fair,



Andy Brack
Statehouse Report

next year also will see replacements for firebrand Lee Bright of Roebuck and hard-working members Joel Lourie of Columbia and Paul Thurmond of Charleston.

It will be, noted former Democratic Senate leader John Land of Manning, a much different place. Not only will there be a lot of new faces, but there will be a big shift in Senate leadership.

"You've had a bigger turnover in leadership than I can ever recall," he said recently. "At the top before, change was always very gradual and gentle as far as replacements were concerned."

Next year, some names will be familiar as veterans who will return including Democrats Brad Hutto and John Matthews, both of Orangeburg, Vincent Sheheen of Camden and Nikki Setzler of Lexington, as well as Republicans John Courson of Columbia, Larry Grooms of Daniel Island, Harvey Peeler of Gaffney and Danny Verdin of Laurens.

State Sen. Hugh Leatherman, the Florence Republican who fought off an inter-party challenge fueled by money from a Haley political action committee, will continue to be the chamber's most powerful figure as head of the Finance Committee and president pro tem.

But another Haley target, Luke Rankin of Conway, will take over the Senate Judiciary

Committee, which will leave an opportunity for someone to take over the Ethics Committee he currently chairs. And then there will be new chairs for committees dealing with banking and corrections.

Over the last two decades of interacting with leaders across the state, we've been fortunate to meet people like Larry Martin, Wes Hayes and Mike Fair. It's kind of hard to imagine them not being in the middle of the legislative process. We'll miss Martin, with his gentle manner, patience, candor and willingness to answer any question, and Hayes for his quiet, hard-working demeanor and common decency. And while we didn't always agree with some of Fair's conservative positions, we appreciated how he listened and didn't shy away from describing what he believed.

Yes, the Senate has changed in the last 12 years. Once the domain of where some ideas just went to die or to be talked to death, it also once served as a check to the hot-headedness of the S.C. House of Representatives and often made other ideas better and more stable. These days, it has become more like the House of old, moving forward with less reflection, more reaction.

Let's hope new faces will take their jobs seriously to do what is best for the state by incorporating the best of the past — genuine consideration of the merits and demerits of proposals — and forgoing some of the career-building soap-boxing that's become all too common.

Andy Brack is editor and publisher of Statehouse Report. Have a comment? Send to: feedback@statehousereport.com





Coastal
Observer
Pawleys
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64210



148 Goldfinch raises \$221K in pursuit of Senate seat

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

Stephen Goldfinch raised \$221,405 in his campaign for the state Senate, with over a third of that coming in during the final weeks, according to a campaign finance report filed last week.

It cost Goldfinch just over \$20 a vote to win the District 34 seat over three other candidates in the GOP primary and a runoff last month; a total of \$123,179.

Goldfinch said he was prepared to spend more. The total doesn't include a \$100,000 loan the campaign took out at Conway

SEE "CAMPAIGN," PAGE 2

Campaign | Lawyers lead donors

FROM FRONT PAGE

National Bank. That was repaid with \$62.33 interest a week before voters went to the polls.

"It was an expensive race," Goldfinch said. He spent \$31,504 on his 2012 campaign for a second term in House District 108, which he won over a challenge from Vida Miller, a former House member.

The biggest single donor to his Senate campaign was the S.C. Association for Justice, a trial lawyer's group, that made \$10,000 in contributions through 10 separate political action

committees. Those donations came in after the June 14 primary as Goldfinch prepared for a runoff with Reese Boyd, an attorney who was once his law partner.

"We had to raise three or four times what he raised because his race was paid for by outside special interest groups," Goldfinch said.

Boyd's campaign report for the period that ended July 10 was not available this week at the S.C. Ethics Commission website.

Boyd had the support of Gov. Nikki Haley, who

said she was disappointed by Goldfinch's support for raising the gas tax to pay for road repairs. It was one of several races where Haley backed challengers to Republican incumbents.

"People across the state were angry with the governor and her intrusion into our local races," Goldfinch said. The S.C. Justice PAC donations were a result of the backlash. "I don't think I called any of them," he said.

Aside from the loan payment, his biggest expense in the period was \$35,923 for a consultant.