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It is Constitution Week

Gov. Nikki Haley signed a proclamation last week proclaiming Sept. 17-23 Constitution Week and Sept. 17 Constitution Day throughout the state of South Carolina. Sept. 17 marks the 228th anniversary of the signing of the final draft of the Constitution by the Constitutional Convention.

Constitution Week is a time to encourage all South Carolinians to renew and strengthen their appreciation for the unique and cherished heritage passed on to us by our Founding Fathers through the U.S. Constitution. The Samuel Bacot Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution encourages everyone to celebrate these special days in the life of our country.

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SME celebrates 25th anniversary

By Greg Oliver
Courtesy The Journal
goliver@upstatetoday.com

SIX MILE — Six Mile Elementary welcomed back former students, faculty and staff, as well as local elected officials, on Monday to mark the 25th anniversary of the school's opening at its current North Main Street site.

"Time flies when you're having fun," said principal Clif Alexander, who is in his 31st year at the school after starting as a teacher and eventually moving up to assistant principal prior to becoming principal. "I can't believe it's been 25 years. I've been blessed to be a part of these 25 years, and even five more."

Alexander said the Six Mile community has always had a school since Six Mile Academy opened in 1910. He said that "opened the doors of public education" for students.

The current school moved to its fourth and current site in 1990, and Alexander said it enjoys a special relationship with the community.

"We take pride in this community, we take pride in this school and we continue to teach the values of pride and responsibility," he said. "It's the people

that make up this special place — Six Mile Elementary School is a community, and it takes a team."

Looking at the students seated with their teachers on the lawn for the ceremony held outside the school's office, Alexander called them "superheroes who are going to be future leaders."

"We know you're going to make the world a much, much better place in the years to come," Alexander said.

School District of Pickens County superintendent Danny Merck called Six Mile Elementary "a model school for public education." Merck said students have achieved at a high level, evidenced on their school report cards each year, and thanked the

school and its teachers for their role in student achievement — including teamwork and character development of students.

"Six Mile Elementary School is one of the leading schools in Pickens County and the state for learning," Merck said, adding, "Good job."

State Rep. Gary Clary, who represents the Clemson, Central, Norris and Six Mile areas, read a letter from Gov. Nikki Haley — who was unable to attend — praising the school for its mile-

stone. Clary added he believes education "is the key to everything we do."

"I'm pleased to be part of a community that not only expects a quality education, but demands it," Clary said.

State Sen. Larry Martin of Pickens was a member of the

State House of Representatives when Six Mile Elementary

opened its current school 25 years ago. On Monday, Martin

congratulated the educators who are part of the school's past, present and even the future.

"Education doesn't just happen — it's a building block," Martin said. "Some of you will be here 25 years from now — either as adults or as teachers leading the next generation."

Martin also read a list of items stored in a time capsule that was buried at the school's 1990 dedication and unearthed for the 25th anniversary ceremony. They included a tennis ball from the PE department, spiral notebook and pencil, Six Mile Elementary annual, school map and invitation to the first open house, as well as items of the day, including a New Kids on the Block button and book, a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles figurine, a "Just Say No" button, friendship bracelet and a children's book titled "Frederick" by Leo Lionni.

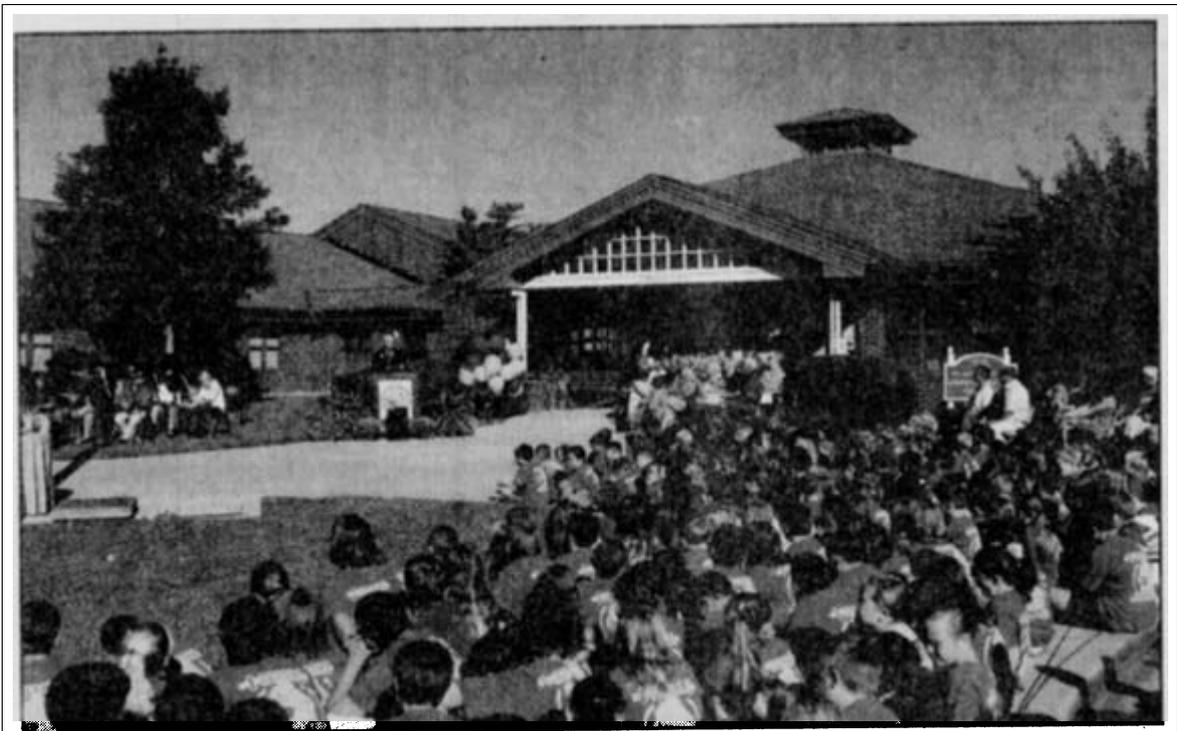
After the crowd in attendance sang "Happy Birthday," 25 balloons were released into the air to conclude the celebration.

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Rex Brown/Courtesy The Journal

A large crowd of community members was on hand in addition to school faculty, staff, students and other dignitaries at Six Mile Elementary School's 25th anniversary celebration Monday morning.



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Haley leading group to Germany for auto show

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Gov. Nikki Haley will lead a nine-day economic development trip to Sweden and Germany to recruit jobs in the automotive industry, Commerce Secretary Bobby Hitt said Thursday.

Meetings start next Thursday at Volvo's headquarters in Gothenburg, Sweden, with company suppliers.

The delegation will then proceed to Munich, Germany — home to BMW — before heading to the 66th International Motor Show in Frankfurt, Germany, on Sept. 14, according to the

Commerce Department.

The group returns to Columbia on Sept. 17.

The state will run a booth at the show. Hitt expects Haley and other officials to participate in more than 50 meetings there, both with companies already located in the state and prospects.

“We’re building a strong automotive cluster in the state with three premium” car manufacturers, Hitt said.

Volvo and Mercedes-Benz Vans are in the process of building plants in the

Charleston region. Both announced plans earlier this year.

Hitt's former employer, BMW, started production in South Carolina in 1994. Two decades later, 9,000 people work on its campus, while its suppliers employ almost 30,000 people across 28 of the state's 46 counties, Hitt said.

Hitt expects the trip to cost taxpayers roughly \$50,000. The delegation will consist of about 20 people. The nine state employees include Haley, two others in her office and six Commerce officials.

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Gospel concert to shed light for sickle cell awareness

BY ADRIENNE SARVIS
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Dennis Littles, who describes himself as a sickle cell warrior, invites the Sumter and surrounding communities out to Crestwood High School, 2000 Oswego Highway, on Saturday for the 2015 Sickle Cell Anemia Gospel Benefit Concert.



LITTLES

Sumter County Council approved a proclamation, proposed by Littles, declaring Sept. 5 Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Day during its meeting on Aug. 25.

Sickle cell anemia is a hereditary blood disorder in which there is an abnormality in the hemoglobin molecule in red blood cells that causes the cells to form into a "c" shape. The disease can be associated with severe pain, infection and stroke.

Littles, who was diagnosed with sickle cell disease when he was 5, was inspired to propose a day in recognition of sickle cell anemia and those who have been diagnosed after he became very ill in February and received three blood transfusions within that a month.

The Sumter native also hopes to give back to the community by advocating for

the construction of a sickle cell treatment and support center in the city.

Littles said the center would provide treatment for adult and child patients and feature a community support center, weight room, cafeteria and pharmacy.

He said he is in the process of seeking grants to help with the construction of the treatment center, and all proceeds from ticket sales for this weekend's concert will go toward the center.

Littles said he was inspired to advocate for the facility because although he has access to transportation to travel treatment centers in other areas, some people may not.

He travels to Columbia twice a week and Charleston once a month to receive treatment and support, and he knows that some people do not have the resources to make those trips.

The 33-year-old has been living with the disease for the majority of his life and said he is motivated to keep positive through prayer and his faith in God. He said he is also motivated by his family, especially his sister, Shanekia Littles, who goes above and beyond to assist him.

During the concert, Sumter School District Superintendent Frank Baker





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will present a proclamation on behalf of Mayor Joe McElveen declaring the month of September Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month in the City of Sumter.

Littles said the proposal to declare the awareness month has also reached the office of Gov. Nikki Haley, though no action has been taken yet.

Vocal artists scheduled to perform during the gospel concert include the Singing Angels, Justified and The New Boyz, all of Sumter, with performances from the praise dancers of First Nazareth Baptist Church in Columbia.

Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Advance tickets can be purchased at Undisputed Barbershop, 270 Broad St., and New Era Beauty Salon, 624 Manning Ave.

Doors to Crestwood's gym will open at 5 p.m., and the event will start at 6 p.m.

The theme for the concert is "I could only imagine."

Anyone interested in making a donation toward the construction of the proposed sickle cell disease treatment and support center in Sumter can do so at any local Wells Fargo location. Donations should be made out to Bread of Life Community Outreach for Sickle Cell Disease.

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State recognizes veterans, loved ones with new award

Governor, adjunct general present S.C. Prisoner of War Medals

COLUMBIA (AP) — South Carolina veterans who were prisoners of war during World War II received state medals Thursday for their time in captivity.

In a ceremony at the Statehouse, Gov. Nikki Haley and Adjutant General Robert Livingston presented medals to 12 veterans ranging in age from 88 to 97, the son of a WWII veteran, and the widows of seven former POWs. They were the first recipients of the South Carolina Prisoner of War Medal created by the Legislature.

"They are heroes, not for the time that they served, but for life," Haley said.

*'They are heroes,
not for the time
that they served,
but for life.'*

GOV. NIKKI HALEY

"South Carolina will forever be grateful for your service."

The ceremony paused for an impromptu singing of "Happy Birthday" for Col. Chester Hackett of Columbia, who turned 96 on Thursday.

The pilot spent a year as a

German prisoner of war after his plane was shot down during a bombing mission to Poland. Having no parachute, he and two others crashed in a wheat field. One didn't survive, he said.

"After dropping my bombs, I got hit right away. It knocked all four engines out," he said, noting it was his 24th mission. "The Germans met us with shotguns and rifles. They watched us come down."

The award was created last year by unanimous votes in both the House and

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HEROES

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Senate. The law, signed by Haley in June 2014, allows the governor to present the award to South Carolina residents who are on federal POW lists.

Sponsoring Sen. Wes Hayes, R-Rock Hill, said the state needed to recognize their service too.

Driving the effort was T.J. Martin of York, an Army veteran who spent 2 ½ years as a POW during the Korean War — 13 months of that in confinement. Martin, who's worked with federal and state prisoner of war groups, said he felt it imperative that the WWII veterans should be honored by their state as soon as possible. He said his list of WWII prisoners of war living in South Carolina used to be in the hundreds.

"They will not be here 10

years from now," he said.

Other WWII veterans honored in the ceremony:

- Robert Dunbar, 94, of Charleston, a prisoner for nine months;
 - Jack Moak, 93, of Columbia, 21 months;
 - Ernest Jenkins, 97, of Charleston, 16 months;
 - Lou Fowler, 91, of Columbia, 16 months;
 - James Gatch, 92, one year.
- The award was accepted by his son Charles Gatch;
- Emerson Roberts, 92, of Columbia, 11 months;
 - Paul Hollen, 92, of Mount Pleasant, six months
 - Claud Young, 92, five months;
 - Bill Pebley, 88, of Little Mountain, four months;
 - Pete Wylie, 91, of Columbia, four months;
 - Paul Luckadoo, 93, of Fort Mill, 10 months; and
 - Reginal Salisbury, 90, nine months.



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148 Sumter already practices some suggestions, resources still needed

BY JIM HILLEY
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Most local officials have had little time to study Gov. Nikki Haley's Domestic Violence Task Force Phase II Report, but Third Judicial Circuit Prosecutor Ernest "Chip" Finney III hailed it as a significant effort to deal with one of the Palmetto State's most significant problems.

"I appreciate the leadership of the governor and taking on this task because we certainly are aware that the problem has increased in severity over the last several years," he said.

Third Judicial Circuit Assistant Prosecutor Margaret Held is a member of the task force's Criminal Justice Division Prosecutors Working Group and has helped shape some of the task force's recommendations. She said the task

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE

In an emergency, call 911

Sumter Police Department Victim Assistance Unit: (803) 436-2703, (803) 436-2780 or (803) 436-2781

Sumter County Sheriff's Office Victim Assistance Unit: (803) 436-2129 or (803) 436-2044

Third Circuit Solicitor Victim Services: (803) 436-2191

YWCA Domestic Violence Hotline: (803) 775-2763

force is trying to refine some of the changes made when the Legislature passed a domestic violence reform law this past session that is now in effect

One of task force's recommendations is that domestic violence

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SUMTER

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cases always be prosecuted by deputy solicitors or prosecutors, something that is already being done in Sumter, Held said.

South Carolina is one of only four states that allows law enforcement to prosecute domestic violence cases, according to Haley.

Finney said in jurisdictions where law enforcement prosecutes its own cases, it can be a problem to get a conviction.

"Nine times out of 10, the police officer is prosecuting a case against a well-experienced defense lawyer," Finney said. "But, the domestic violence problem in South Carolina has been so bad, we thought we could have our conviction rate go up if we did not have police prosecuting their own cases."

He said the state has given solicitors additional money in the last several years to hire more prosecutors.

Held said there is now a special domestic violence court within Summary Court in Sumter.

"I like to keep the domestic violence cases all together," she said. "We have our own court, and no other cases

come unless they are domestic violence related. In other cases, everyone is together in Magistrate Court whether it is disturbing the peace or driving under suspension, and we don't do that."

Held said Sumter Police Chief Russell Roark also has a designated detective to handle domestic violence cases, and the sheriff's office has a similar arrangement.

"We can have somebody in court helping the victims and helping the police officers get prepared and get the cases prosecuted," she said. "We have a collaborative approach."

That helps put Sumter ahead of the curve, Roark said.

"Many of the things in the task force report are already in play," he said.

The task force report also recommended more victims' advocates, shelters and safe housing, a point Roark echoed.

He said additional housing support would be a great help to victims of domestic violence as well as law enforcement.

"Many victims have no resources to lift themselves outside of their situation," he said. "It is something we spend an inordinate amount of time with."

Finney said additional tools to deal with mental health issues would help in the fight against domestic violence.

"South Carolina has been one of the poorest states in terms of dealing with this issue, and I think it falls in line with the reduction in our communities in mental health type resources," he said. "I think a lot of these cases have a mental health component. People are frustrated; people are depressed; people are stressed out by things that happen on the job or in the community, and they take that home and take it out on family members."

He said it is important to make sure people in the system get treatment

"If a person acts out violently toward a family member or a child, it is something that can be repeated over and over unless we educate that person and give them treatment," he said.

He said there are some cases that can qualify for a dismissal, but only if the offender completes a treatment program and if the treatment program is available.

"This task force is the first step in seeing how we can go back to solving the problem before it becomes a problem," he said.



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Taking another look at criminal domestic violence

Governor's task force issues 50 solutions

BY SEANNA ADCOX
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — A task force's recommendations for combating domestic violence in South Carolina include training more 911 operators, improving documentation of the crime scene and increasing the number of shelters statewide.

Many of the 50 recommendations issued Monday involve uniformly training law enforcement officers statewide on how to investigate domestic violence cases.

Gov. Nikki Haley, who created the group by executive order in January, said there's a lot of work to do on recommendations that would seem to be common

sense. She said she was shocked, for example, that officers often don't interview children at the scene or even document they were witnesses. Many officers don't interview the victim separately, allowing nonverbal intimidation from the abuser.

Roughly one in five law enforcement agencies don't even require officers to file a report on a domestic violence call, according to the group's findings.

Prosecutors reported that while photographs are important in getting a conviction, officers had failed to take a photo of the victim in 40 percent of their domestic violence cases. Sixty percent had no photo of the crime scene.

Haley called it a "kick in the gut" to learn that not all 911 operators are trained on handling domestic violence calls.

The Criminal Justice Academy offers a two-week course for 911 operators. But it costs \$700 per person, and many smaller agencies simply can't afford the school, said Department of Public Safety Director Leroy Smith.

"If they don't know the right questions to ask, the officer doesn't know what he's walking into," Haley said.

Nationwide, South Carolina consistently ranks among the worst per capita in women killed by men.

But the extent of the

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TASK FORCE

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state's domestic violence problem is unknown.

The task force discovered there's no uniform reporting system. Some of the recommendations are aimed at

supplying reliable numbers.

The Legislature passed a law in June that increased penalties for domestic violence convictions and gave prosecutors more options for punishment. Haley asked her group to come up with systemic, cultural changes to combat the problem.

"We want to make sure anyone from

a hairdresser to a dentist to a doctor can recognize the signs" and knows what to do with that information, she said.

At least 135 people from dozens of agencies, nonprofits and associations participated in the task force. Once new guidelines are created, Haley said, she'll create a checklist for sher-

iffs and police chiefs across the state and ask them to sign a letter committing to implement them.

"I think law enforcement is doing all they know to do. We have no uniform processes on what they should be doing," she said. "They do what we tell them to do. What we need to do now is educate them."



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Sheriff Underwood subject of Sheriff's Association video

BY BRIAN GARNER
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Chester County Sheriff Underwood, the 2014 S.C. Sheriff of the Year, is the subject of a new video, posted online by the S.C. Sheriff's Association this week.

The video lauds his accomplishments and includes an interview with Underwood himself as he talks about the

CCSO's
S.T.O.R.M.
(Showing
Teens Our
Real
Mission)
program.
Under-
wood
talks



Underwood

about some of the benefits of having the S.T.O.R.M. program and how he and

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his deputies continue to keep in touch with the kids who have gone through the program. That contact has even led

to some valuable information, Underwood says.

The video also features interviews with Patsy McCullough, President of the Chester County Sheriff's Foundation and Kim Williford, Sheriff's

Foundation board member, who speak of Underwood's care and concern for his community.

Underwood expresses his appreciation to the other South Carolina

sheriffs for his being named 2014 Sheriff of the Year.

"We go through a lot of things here in Chester, and for the other sheriffs to think that much of me and what we're trying to

do here...that was unbelievable," Underwood says.

Finally, the video concludes with a message of greeting and appreciation from Gov. Nikki Haley who says "I'm glad to see

that he's being honored in a way that really lets him know how much we appreciate him...Congratulations, Sheriff, you continue to make us proud," the governor says.

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Grand Funk Railroad performs on Sunday at Darlington Raceway for the Bojangles' Southern 500.

REVVED UP

The sun sets on Darlington Raceway as the 66th annual Bojangles' Southern 500 runs on Sunday.



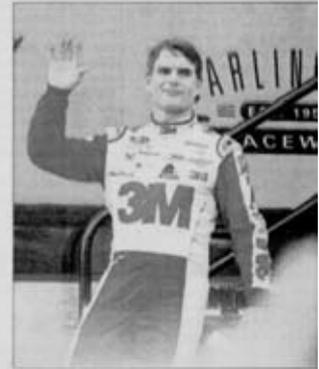
Tampa Tucker sings the National Anthem on Sunday at Darlington Raceway for the Bojangles' Southern 500.



Kurt Busch's pit crew works on the rear left tire of his Haas Automation Chevrolet during the Bojangles' Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway.



Gos. Nikki Haley with First Gentleman Michael Haley tour the Sprint Cup garages before the Bojangles' Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway.



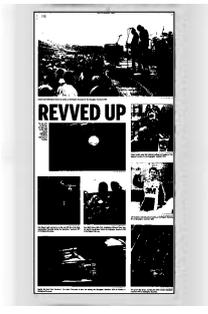
Jeff Gordon is introduced on Sunday at Darlington Raceway for the Bojangles' Southern 500.



Sparks fly from Ryan Newman's Caterpillar Chevrolet in turn one during the Bojangles' Southern 500 on Sunday at Darlington Raceway.



The green flag drops, starting the 66th annual Bojangles' Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway.





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Haley: 'New South' can lead nation in race relations

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley said Wednesday that South Carolina has shown that racial progress comes from listening to, not shouting at, one another.

Noting the deaths of unarmed black men in cities across the country, Haley told the National Press Club in the nation's capital that black lives do matter.

But they've been "disgracefully jeopardized" by the Black Lives Matter movement "that has laid waste" to Ferguson, Missouri, and Baltimore, she said to applause.

South Carolina's first minority governor called the riots in those communities senseless, saying they primarily harmed black residents and the businesses that serve them. And, she added, "most of the people who

now live in terror because local police are too intimidated to do their jobs are black."

"In South Carolina, we did things differently," she said in her speech, titled "Lessons from the New South."

She noted there was no violence after black motorist Walter Scott was gunned down in April while running from a white North Charleston officer, nor after a mass shooting in June of nine people at a historic black church in Charleston.

The victims' families taught everyone that love and a willingness to listen are the paths to racial reconciliation, Haley said.

"As a state, we came together — black and white, Republicans and Democrats," she said. "We didn't have riots, we had vigils. We didn't have violence, we had hugs."

That approach produced results, she said:

» After Scott's death, the officer was quickly charged with murder after a bystander came forward with cellphone video of the shooting. Two months later, she signed a police body-camera law, with Scott's family attending.

» Less than a month after the

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Haley

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slayings at "Mother Emanuel" AME Church, the Confederate battle flag that had flown on Statehouse grounds for 54 years came down.

"If we scream less, and listen more, we can make a lot of progress. We can do it together," Haley said. "And I couldn't be more proud that it is the New South — my South — that's pointing us in the right direction."

Her speech in Washington comes amid speculation she will be in contention next year as a running mate for the Republican presidential nominee.

The national profile of the 43-year-old governor has risen since she successfully called on legislators to send the Confederate flag to a state museum. But Haley has previously dismissed questions on how the attention affects her political future.

On Wednesday, however, she said she would "of course" sit down and

talk if the eventual GOP nominee approaches her. She would not repeat her previous pledge to serve out her second term.

But she did offer advice to her party.

Haley said that while she strongly believes Republican policies on education and jobs offer the best way to lift up all people, the GOP does a "shameful" job communicating with minorities.

"The problem for our party is that our approach often appears cold and unwelcoming to minorities," she said. "It's on us to communicate our positions in ways that wipe away the clutter of prejudices."

Haley said South Carolina's come a long way since her childhood in tiny Bamberg.

The daughter of Indian immigrants said she would not have won a four-way Republican primary in 2010 and gone on to become the nation's youngest governor if South Carolinians were racially intolerant.

"With the grace of the aftermath of the Mother Emanuel church massa-

cre, the world saw South Carolina as we are," she said. "We've been that way for some time now — it's just that a lot of people outside of our state never noticed."

South Carolina Democratic Party Chairman Jaime Harrison said Haley's trying to rewrite her record.

He pointed to a legislative panel's findings, reported Monday, that many students spend up to three hours daily on a school bus.

Harrison also notes Haley has refused to expand Medicaid under the federal health care law and has opposed efforts to raise the gas tax to fund roadwork.

"Time and time again Gov. Haley and the Republican-led state Legislature have failed to lead on key investments that would bring about long-term growth for South Carolinians," Harrison said. "While she's speaking about leading the 'New South,' South Carolina children and working families are falling further and further behind."