



Title: **Appointed superintendent**
Author:
Size: 16.43 column inches
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Appointed superintendent

As the state’s chief executive, the governor should have a lot more to say about the direction of public education, as one of the state’s preeminent responsibilities. The best way to accomplish that would be to give the governor authority to appoint the state superintendent of education....

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In a letter to lawmakers this week, they point out that South Carolina is one of only 13 states where the superintendent is an elected official, “wholly separate from the administration of the governor.”

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*- Post & Courier
Charleston*

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 Author:
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Title: **Socialmedia was sourceofcomfort, infofor evacuees**
 Author: BY GRAHAMCAWTHON gcawthon@islandpacket.com
 Size: 60.60 column inches
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



WHAT WORKED WELL

Social media was source of comfort, info for evacuees

BY GRAHAM CAWTHON
 gcawthon@islandpacket.com

Oct. 8, 2016, 6:55 a.m.

“So let me tell you what’s going on ...”

Bluffton Mayor Lisa Sulka, her hair drenched, looks back at the screen as she gives her update. In the predawn hours, only darkness is visible behind her.

More than three days had passed since Gov. Nikki Haley ordered an evacuation of coastal counties in advance of the hurricane. Thousands had packed up what they could and left the region, not certain when they would be able to return — or in what shape their homes would be when they did.

After a sleepless night for many, especially those who stayed behind, Hurricane Matthew finally passed Beaufort County’s coast en route to Myrtle Beach.

But how did the Lowcountry fare?

“We have made it through the night,” Sulka says during her Facebook Live broadcast, “but

we have no idea what is outside of Buckwalter Place. ... If you’re in town, stay in your house.”

She was one of the first voices heard after the worst of Hurricane Matthew wreaked havoc on the South Carolina coast. And she shared her words in real time, easily accessible to anyone with a Facebook account.

Within seconds came instant feedback from those watching: “Thank you, Lisa. We so appreciate your updates.”

“Thanks Lisa! Be safe out there.”

“Thanks for your updates — you’re the best!”

In all, the video has been seen 30,000 times — easily more views than Bluffton’s entire population.

Beaufort County is no stranger to hurricanes or evacuations. But this time, its residents had a new tool at their disposal: social media.

LIVE UPDATES

Within hours, as the first images of damage in the Lowcountry emerged, social media became the hub for those desperate for information. At the touch of a button, those who evacuated could reach out and communicate with people still in the closed-off county — complete strangers in most cases — to see how things were back home.

On a single day, Oct. 8, the day Matthew did its worst on the Lowcountry, the Facebook following of The Island Packet and The Beaufort Gazette grew by more than 5,000 as people searched for the latest information and asked those still in the area to tell them how their homes held up.

In the days that followed, Facebook Live — a social media streaming-video technology still

SEE SOCIAL MEDIA, 8A

FROM PAGE 1A

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in its infancy — became the go-to option for elected officials, emergency responders and the media to share their messages.

Embedded reporters used it as they updated readers from the latest news conference or about the condition of sites such as Old Town Bluffton, Hudson’s Seafood and Beaufort National Ceme-

tery. Want to see how bad the traffic is on U.S. 278 heading back into town? A reporter was there, smartphone in hand. Need an aerial view of the damage on Hilton Head? Newsroom staffers captured it in real time from a National Guard helicopter.

And then there were those who filled the role of citizen journalist.

David Vincent Young rode around Hilton Head Island, pulled out his phone and captured live video to update his Facebook friends. Soon, his following grew into the tens of thousands.

“Before long, it was ‘Go here. Go there.’ ... They wanted to know how the island fared,” Young previously said. “All of a

sudden, The Weather Channel contacted me wanting to use my live feed.”

CONNECTING STRANGERS

The need for updates quickly spread across other online communities as well. Local Facebook groups formed, while existing groups swelled with new members.



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around the big question everyone wanted answered: How is my house?

Hilton Head Island’s Camille Copeland created the group.

“People just came out of the woodwork helping each other,” Copeland said of the online community in the weeks following Matthew. “They didn’t even know each other.

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But it’s another benefit, Copeland said, that may have done the most immediate good. Folks stuck hundreds of miles away could learn about the condition of their homes

and neighborhoods and had people to turn to with questions. There would be fewer surprises waiting for them when the evacuation finally lifted.

“One of the biggest things you can put no value on is peace of mind,” Copeland said.

 Graham Cawthon:
 843-706-8138,
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The Island Packet and The Beaufort Gazette’s Caitlin Turner gave storm updates through Facebook Live.



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Title: **Socialmedia was sourceofcomfort, infofor evacuees**
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Title: Gov. Haley calls or statewide prayer vigils today
Author: BY CHRISTINA CLEVELAND ccleveland@aikenstandard.com
Size: 20.15 column inches
Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Gov. Haley calls for statewide prayer vigils today

BY CHRISTINA CLEVELAND ccleveland@aikenstandard.com

Members of the faith community in Aiken County could be among those statewide encouraging residents to use today as a day for prayer.

Gov. Nikki Haley announced this month a day of prayer vigils throughout the state today ahead of Thanksgiving and the holiday season, as residents in the Pee Dee region are still recovering from Hurricane Matthew and two high-profile criminal trials are underway in Charleston.

Former North Charleston police officer Michael Slager is charged in the shooting death of unarmed motorist Walter Scott, and in a separate case, Dylann Roof is charged in the shooting deaths of nine black parishioners at the historic Emanuel AME Church in Charleston. Both incidents took place last year, a time the governor has described as "challenging."

In a news release issued by the governor's office, Haley, along with leaders of the faith com-



Gov. Haley

munity, urge all people regardless of their faith or denomination to "pray for continued strength and healing across the state and give thanks for the state's

blessings."

Prayer vigils are set to take place in individual places of worship at noon when bells will ring in observance of services statewide, according to the release.

"Faith, prayer and helping our neighbors is what got us through a challenging time last year, and those things will get us through these two trials and the aftermath of this hurricane," Haley said in the statement. "In South Carolina, we know how to have compassion toward each other, count our blessings and remember that we are one state, one people."

The governor will reportedly pray at Emanuel AME today.

Title: **Public Safety Animal Team reflects on flood rescues**
 Author: BY TRIPP GIRARDEAU tgirardeau@aikenstandard.com
 Size: 102.3 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Public Safety Animal Team reflects on flood rescues

BY TRIPP GIRARDEAU
 tgirardeau@aikenstandard.com

Many residents may not realize that the Aiken Department of Public Safety has a Large Animal Rescue Team that is called on to save horses, cows, or any other large domesticated animal in danger in Aiken County and around the state.

Just recently, the team from Aiken spent time in Marion County after Hurricane Matthew hit the Southeast.

Sgt. Daymon Spann, with Aiken Public Safety, heads up the Large Animal Rescue Team, which has 24 members. The team is a part of the Technical Rescue Team with the agency.

When the hurricane reached the up-

Rescue

from 1A

themselves, their children and maybe their dogs and cats from inside the house. They had no chance to go out into the fields to try and save their cattle or move them to higher ground."

Spann said the highest recorded flood in that area was in 1920, but this was a foot or more higher than that.

Once the storms died down, the floodwaters remained 4 feet high in the area for more

per parts of the state in mid-October, some small rural farming communities in Marion County saw flooding like never before, Spann said.

"In that area they have two rivers that intersect — the Lumber River and the Little Pee Dee River," Spann said. "Hurricane Matthew moved up the coast and dumped all that rain on South Carolina, but it was even more so in North Carolina. There is a dam in North Carolina on the Lumber River, and all that rain ran down the Lumber River and breached that dam. When the dam was breached, all that water suddenly flowed down across the state line into Marion County."

Spann said where the Lumber River intersects with the Little Pee Dee River sits right outside the Town of Nichols, the Town of Mullins and the Community of Brittons Neck in Marion County.

"The river literally flooded 3 to 4 miles outside of its banks in both directions," Spann said. "The water rose 4 feet overnight in those areas, and those people basically woke up with a really huge problem. These

people were lucky enough to save

Please see **RESCUE**, Page 10A

than a week. That's when the members of the Aiken Public Safety's Large Animal Rescue Team came to help.

"We were sent pictures of a pasture of about 30 black Angus cows just standing in water up past their stomachs," he said. "These farmers lost a lot more than their homes and cars. Those cows and livestock are their livelihood. So, we packed up and got up there as quickly

as we could to try our best to help."

The team met up with members of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and by the time they finally got there, it was eight days after the storm had hit the area. Spann said any large animals still alive were in bad shape.

"It was sad to see when we finally got there, those cows were sick, shaking, hypother-

mic, getting foot rot, starving and, on top of that, they had not been able to lay down in eight days," he said. "There were also cows that obviously just did not make it."

The team originally planned on floating the cows out of the area, but by the time they arrived the water level had receded some and the cows could no longer be floated out, Spann said.



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 Author: BY TRIPP GIRARDEAU tgirardeau@aikenstandard.com
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“We can’t float a cow with 90 percent of their body weight above the waterline,” he said.

The team had to take a boat about 3 miles to the pasture where the cows were located.

“It seriously looked like we were boating down a river, but in reality we were using the roads — they were just filled up with water,” Spann said.

The team started working with the farmer to float out food for the cows, and the weaker cows would be fitted with a life preserver around their neck in an attempt to keep their heads above water.

Spann said they managed to

save the first group of cows, but after speaking with the farmer later, he found out that sadly none of those 30 cows made it.

“They were just too sick,” he said.

Later, the team was called all over the area for the next three days, working non-stop to help save what they could.

“We found a tree with about three cats in it,” Spann said. “Those cats basically jumped into our arms. They were so happy to see someone to get them out of there.”

Spann said one of the team’s last missions was to try and find three cows that had been

spotted in a heavy rural area of Marion County that was still under water.

“We got to the area and found the first cow floating dead right next to a trailer,” he said. “However, we walked behind this trailer and found a young calf still alive on the back porch. That porch luckily had this floating material underneath it and I guess that calf managed to make its way up there before the porch floated up.”

The team saved the calf by swimming her to dry land. She lived and was named “Little Nikki,” after Gov. Nikki Haley, who had been calling to get up-

dates on their rescue, Spann said.

Spann and his crew worked non-stop for 12- to 15-hour days in order to save as many animals as they could after the devastating flood.

“This is the kind of job you have to love,” Spann said. “It was really hard work. It was sad at times, but it was all worth it for those animals that we did save.”

The Large Animal Rescue Team is completely funded by donations from the equine community.

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PHOTO SUBMITTED BY THE AIKEN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The Aiken Department of Public Safety's Large Animal Rescue Team was sent on a mission to Marion County after Hurricane Matthew caused extreme flooding in the area in October. The team managed to save a young calf named "Little Nikki," pictured, which somehow managed to survive in the floodwaters for over a week. Pictured with Little Nikki are members of the rescue team, Environmental Control Officer Alan Willing, from left, Sgt. Daymon Spann, firefighter T.C. Rushton and Cpl. Jason Fogle. The team named the lucky calf after Gov. Nikki Haley.

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Members of the Aiken Department of Public Safety's Large Animal Rescue Team were sent to Marion County after Hurricane Matthew hit the area in October, causing historic flooding. The team's first mission was to save more than 30 cows that were standing in a flooded pasture for over eight days.

Title: **Bill would let governor appoint S.C. schools chief**
 Author: BY LARRY WOOD lwood@aikenstandard.com
 Size: 46.81 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Bill would let governor appoint S.C. schools chief

BY LARRY WOOD
 lwood@aikenstandard.com

S.C. Sen. Tom Young, R-Aiken, said he intends to co-sponsor new legislation that would move the office of the state superintendent of education from an elected position to a cabinet position when the State Legislature convenes in January for the 2017 session.

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley and S.C. Superintendent

of Education Molly Spearman voiced their support for the change last week in a letter to members of the General Assembly.

Young was the primary sponsor of similar legislation in 2011 when he was a member of the S.C. House of Representatives, representing District 81. He said state government restructuring plans have recommended making the superintendent's position a cabinet post chosen by the governor since the early 20th

century.

"All seven restructuring studies of state government since 1920 have recommended that state law change to allow the governor to appoint the state superintendent of education to increase accountability, efficiency and coordination in public education in South Carolina," Young said. "Like the previous bills proposing this change, the bill to be filed for the January 2017 session will allow the public to decide

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from 1A

by constitutional referendum whether the state superintendent of education should be appointed by the governor or popularly elected."

In their letter, Haley and Spearman asked members of the General Assembly to pass a resolution that, with voter approval, would allow for the change "with advice and consent of the Senate beginning in 2023."

In their appeal to legislators, they wrote: "South Carolina is one of only 13 states where Superintendent of Education is an elected official, wholly separate from the administration of the Governor. Instead of moving the state forward with a common vision for education priorities, this divided leadership structure can result in incompatible positions, a lack of coordination, and fragmented accountability for failures in our PreK-12 education system."

Spearman reiterated her support for the change Friday in a

statement to the *Aiken Standard*, saying voters should be allowed a referendum on the decision.

"Having a common vision for our state's education system is vital in ensuring student success," she said. "The current structure of divided leadership between the governor and state superintendent could result in conflicts that negatively impact achievement in our schools.

"I firmly support the position of state superintendent being appointed and held accountable by the governor with advice and consent of the Senate. It is time to let the voters of our state decide on this issue."

If the Legislature approves

the resolution, voters approve it and it is implemented, the governor would be required to be more engaged in advancing public education in the state, Young said.

"If the change occurs, the buck will stop with the governor, if he or she appoints the state superintendent," he said.

Because the bill to make the superintendent a cabinet position would require a constitutional change, two-thirds of both the House of Representatives and the Senate would have to vote in favor of the bill.

In 2011, the House of Representatives passed such a bill with just enough bipartisan support to reach the necessary two-thirds of the legislative body required to support it, Young said.

"Unfortunately, neither the 2011 or 2012 Senate voted on the bill before the two year session ended," he said. "In March 2015, a similar bill fell short by

two votes on the Senate floor."

S.C. Rep. Bill Taylor, R-Aiken, who represents District 86, said he has supported legislation giving voters the choice to amend the state constitution to allow for the state superintendent of education to be appointed, rather than elected at large, since he was elected.

"In each of the last three legislative sessions, I have co-sponsored bills calling for the governor to appoint the superintendent," he said. "Each time, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly votes approval, then the legislation dies in the Senate. Hopefully, this session will be different."

Taylor said he will support the appointment of the education superintendent again, "because

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South Carolina does not need the potential of competing statewide political agendas for public education as we have experienced historically. We must

all pull together in the same direction to provide the best and most efficient public education for students."

Haley and Spearman ended

their letter, writing, "Now is the time to take action and let the voters of South Carolina decide.

As Governor and Superintendent of Education, we urge you with

the fullest measure of our support to turn this decision over to the voters, empowering them to decide the future governance of our K-12 education system."



Young



Spearman



Taylor