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To:
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Subject: Afternoon Clips – Friday, September 16, 2016

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Greenville News : Gas prices rise, Haley issues executive order after Alabama pipeline spill
<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/money/2016/09/16/gas-prices-rise-upstate-stations-after-alabama-pipeline-spill/90495688/>

Amanda Coyne

Upstate drivers have noticed gas prices ticking up this week, sometimes by as much as 15 cents per gallon in a day. The potential culprit: a pipeline spill in Alabama that released 250,000 gallons of fuel. The pipeline, operated by Colonial Pipeline, has been shut down since the spill occurred Sept. 9. On Wednesday, Gov. Nikki Haley (R-S.C.) issued an executive order to increase the number of fuel truck deliveries and mitigate possible impacts on the state's fuel supply. The order also declared a state of emergency limited to complying with other states of emergency declared by Gov. Robert Bentley of Alabama and Gov. Nathan Deal of Georgia. The pipeline cuts through the width of Alabama and Middle Georgia, but only takes a small swing through the Upstate before entering North Carolina. According to GasBuddy.com, the average price of regular grade gas in South Carolina rose by four cents between Sept. 9, when the pipeline was shut down, and Friday, when some Upstate drivers felt a jolt at the pump. The cost hike at some Upstate gas stations exceeded the state average; at the 7-Eleven station on Easley Bridge Road, regular gas went from \$1.79 per gallon on Wednesday evening to \$1.94 on Friday morning.

WIS: Colonial Pipeline leak in Alabama could mean gas price hikes, shortages in SC
<http://www.wistv.com/story/33111533/colonial-pipeline-leak-in-alabama-could-mean-gas-price-hikes-shortages-in-sc>

Jeremy Turnage

A gas line leak in Alabama may soon affect gas prices and even supplies here in South Carolina. The Colonial Pipeline, which stretches from Houston to New York, was shut down in Helena, Alabama last week while pipe employees worked to contain and fix the leak. While pipe officials say there is no threat to the public as a result of the leak, the economic threat is potentially the bigger issue. Since the leak's discovery, 6,000 barrels of gas have leaked, which is an equivalent of 252,000 gallons of gas. According to CNNMoney, oil industry officials are expecting prices to rise and supplies to become potentially limited along the east coast as a result of the leak.

NOTE: Gov. Nikki Haley, meanwhile, has also been proactive in her response. "The governor signed an executive order that increases the number of fuel truck deliveries into the state in an effort to minimize any potential impact on our consumers," Haley spokeswoman Chaney Adams said. "As engineers work to repair pipeline issues, we will continue to monitor the developments in the region."

WACH: Haley issues order after pipeline shut down could raise gas prices
<http://wach.com/news/local/haley-issues-order-after-pipeline-shut-down-could-raise-gas-prices>
Matthew Stevens

Governor Nikki Haley has issued an executive order following a fuel pipeline in Alabama being

shutdown. Coastal Pipeline Company shut down a pipeline last week after more than 250,000 gallons of fuel spilled. The pipeline is used to send gasoline throughout the Southeast, including South Carolina. The pipeline disruption could potentially raise gas prices in the state. As a result, Haley issued the order Thursday which calls for the SCDOT, SCDPS and the State Transport Police to lift regulations that limits the hours that commercial vehicles can drive in order to ensure that gasoline can be transported without interruption.

WYFF4: Haley issues executive order in response to Colonial Pipeline emergency

<http://www.wyff4.com/news/haley-issues-executive-order-in-response-to-colonial-pipeline-emergency/41701124>

Janice Limon

As hundreds of contractors work to repair a gas pipeline leak after a quarter of a million gallons of gas spilled in Alabama, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley has issued an executive order to deal with the emergency. The Colonial Pipeline stretches from Texas across the Southeast and into New Jersey for more than 5,000 miles. The repairs are centered in Shelby, where a section of the pipeline has been closed since Sept. 9 after a spill of roughly 250,000 gallons was discovered. The interruption to service could cause problems along the entire pipeline for days. The governors of Alabama and Georgia have already declared states of emergency. Haley issued an executive order on Wednesday because of the emergency in Georgia. The order cites that an emergency exists in South Carolina because of the Georgia state of emergency. She directs the South Carolina Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Safety and the State Transit Police to suspend the federal rules and regulations that limit the hours operators of commercial vehicles may drive in order to ensure the uninterrupted supply of gasoline.

WCIV: Gov. Nikki Haley signs order to ease impact of pipeline on SC gas prices

<http://abcnews4.com/news/business-news/gov-nikki-haley-signs-order-to-ease-impact-of-pipeline-on-sc-gas-prices>

Brian Troutman

South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley has signed an executive order suspending federal regulations limiting the hours fuel truck drivers can deliver gasoline. The action from the governor is in response to the temporary shutdown of the fuel pipeline in Alabama, an event that experts say will impact Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina. "The governor signed an executive order that increases the number of fuel truck deliveries into the state in an effort to minimize any potential impact on our consumers" said press secretary Chaney Adams. "As engineers work to repair pipeline issues, we will continue to monitor the developments in the region." "If prices rise, the effect could be felt the hardest in Tennessee, which is supplied by a spur off the leaky pipeline. Trade groups for service stations and convenience stores in Tennessee assured consumers that the pumps won't run dry. They said fuel wholesalers were hauling gasoline in from fuel terminals and refineries that don't depend on the downed pipeline.

WSPA: SC, NC, GA face gas shortages, price hikes after pipeline leak

<http://wspa.com/2016/09/16/east-coast-faces-gas-shortages-price-hikes-after-pipeline-leak/>

Motorists in parts of the country could pay a little more for gasoline in coming days because of the shutdown of a leaking pipeline in Alabama. Experts say that any spike in service-station prices will be felt most in the Southeast and should only be temporary. Colonial Pipeline Co. doesn't expect to fully reopen its primary gasoline pipeline, which has spilled more than 250,000 gallons near Birmingham, until next week. The pipeline is used to send gasoline from refineries on the Texas Gulf coast to states in the Southeast and along the East Coast. Prices on futures contracts for wholesale gasoline

rose about 2 percent in afternoon trading Friday to \$1.46 a gallon after rising 5 percent on Thursday. Colonial said that supply disruptions would be felt first in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina. Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal has declared a state of emergency. NOTE: SC Gov. Nikki Haley has issued an executive order to lift the restrictions on the hours fuel truck drivers can drive per the Federal Motor Carrier Safety regulations. Governor Haley's press secretary says "The governor signed an executive order that increases the number of fuel truck deliveries into the state in an effort to minimize any potential impact on our consumers. As engineers work to repair pipeline issues, we will continue to monitor the developments in the region."

Associated Press : Pipeline shutdown in Alabama could send gas prices higher

<http://bigstory.ap.org/516e1af3058e4e368bd3fa3e34c90b37>

David Koeing

Motorists in the Southeast and East could pay more for gasoline in coming days because of the shutdown of a leaking pipeline in Alabama. Experts say, however, that any spike in service-station prices should only be temporary. Colonial Pipeline Co. said Friday that it doesn't expect to fully reopen its primary gasoline pipeline until next week. It is one of two major pipelines that connect more than two dozen refineries in Texas and Louisiana with cities in the East, from Atlanta to New York. The Colonial pipeline provides nearly 40 percent of the region's gasoline and usually runs at or near full capacity. Prices on futures contracts for wholesale gasoline rose about 2 percent Friday to \$1.46 a gallon after rising 5 percent on Thursday. Colonial said that supply disruptions would be felt first in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina. Tom Kloza, an energy analyst with the Oil Price Information Service, said some stations in the Southeast could run short on supply and boost their prices by 20 or 30 cents a gallon.

USA Today : White House says refugee resettlements will go on, even if governors object

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2016/09/15/white-house-says-refugee-resettlements-go-even-if-governors-object/90424904/>

Mary Troyan

President Obama's plan to increase the number of refugees allowed into the U.S. won't be sidetracked by governors who oppose resettling the refugees in their states, a White House official said Thursday. The administration plans to accept 110,000 refugees in fiscal 2017, which begins Oct. 1. That's a 29% increase over the 85,000 accepted this year and a 57% increase over the number allowed into the country annually between 2013 and 2015. About 30 governors last year objected to the resettlement program after the terrorist attacks in Paris because they feared refugees — especially those from war-torn Syria — posed security risks. Those governors should take comfort in the federal government's record of screening out refugee applicants with criminal or terrorist connections, said Avril Haines, principal deputy national security adviser at the White House. The U.S. has admitted 840,000 refugees into the country since Sept. 11, 2001.

NOTE: In South Carolina, Gov. Nikki Haley remains unconvinced that the vetting of Syrian refugees is sufficient. "We are a compassionate state with a history of welcoming those in need, but the safety and security of South Carolinians is the governor's highest priority," said Haley's press secretary, Chaney Adams. "While we cannot stop the federal government from sending Syrian refugees to South Carolina, the governor has been in contact with FBI Director James Comey and made it clear to Secretary of State Kerry: Until refugees from Syria can be properly vetted, it's not appropriate for them to be sent to South Carolina or any other state."

NOTE: State Department records show 22 Syrians moved to South Carolina in June and another seven arrived in August.

WFXG: Flags to be flown at half-staff until noon on POW/MIA Recognition Day

<http://www.wfxg.com/story/33109572/flags-to-be-flown-at-half-staff-until-noon-on-powmia-recognition-day>

Dal Kalsi

South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley has ordered that flags be flown at half-staff from sunup until noon on Friday in observance of POW/MIA Recognition Day. POW/MIA Recognition Day is a national holiday observed on the third Friday of September each year. It is a day to remember and honor US veterans who were prisoners of war and those service members who went missing in action.

President Obama issued a proclamation about POW/MIA Recognition Day on Thursday.

Associated Press: Auto parts maker adding 50 new jobs in Greenville

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

SC State Wire

A company that makes auto parts is expanding its Greenville operations, investing almost \$6 million and creating about 50 jobs. The company, AFR, announced Thursday it is adding about 30,000 square feet at its plant. The expansion should be complete by the middle of next year. Hiring for the new positions will begin early next year. The company makes parts for fuel systems and seats among other automotive components.

Area Development: Alfmeier Friedrichs & Rath Expands Greenville, South Carolina, Factory Plant

<http://www.areadevelopment.com/newsItems/9-16-2016/alfmeier-friedrichs--rath-greenville-county-south-carolina.shtml>

Alfmeier Friedrichs & Rath, a manufacturer of automotive components, is expanding its operations in Greenville County, South Carolina. The expansion is expected to bring \$5.8 million of new capital investment and create approximately 50 new jobs. Located at 120 Elcon Drive in Greenville, the company will be expanding their factory floor by 20,000 square feet and their office facility by approximately 10,000 square feet. The expansion is projected to be complete by the second quarter of 2017. "AFR is pleased to be expanding operations in Greenville to accommodate our increasing business. Our success is a direct result of the dedication and hard work of all of our associates, particularly those on the factory floor who strive to do things a little better each day. We are proud to be part of a community and state that recognizes and supports the benefits of manufacturing and look forward to continued future growth," AFR President Markus Farrenkopf said.

NOTE: "It's always exciting when we are able to celebrate the success of a South Carolina company and its decision to expand here. The 50 new jobs that this \$5.8 million investment means for Greenville County will really make a difference in the lives of South Carolinians, and that's a reason to celebrate throughout the entire state," said Governor Nikki Haley.

SC Political News:

Associated Press: Lawmakers applaud Senate action on Charleston deepening

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=uZodUGA0

SC State Wire

In an unusual show of unity, all of the members of South Carolina's congressional delegation are applauding Senate passage of a bill that is key to the half-billion dollar deepening of Charleston Harbor. The Senate voted 95 to 3 to approve the Water Resources Development Act on Thursday. It includes \$200 million in federal money for the \$500 million deepening project. The Post and Courier of Charleston reports (<http://bit.ly/2cTKuBh>) all seven members of the House delegation issued a joint statement applauding the move. U.S. Sens. Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott also praised the vote. The

measure still must pass the House. The South Carolina Ports Authority wants the shipping channel deepened to 52 feet from 45 feet to accommodate larger container ships.

Times and Democrat: Harbor-deepening bill boosts Lake Marion water agency

http://thetandd.com/news/local/harbor-deepening-bill-boosts-lake-marion-water-agency/article_c964f81c-7e47-571e-a473-d682975bf08e.html

The U.S. Senate has passed the Water Resources Development Act, which advances the harbor-deepening project in Charleston and includes funds for the Lake Marion Regional Water Authority. U.S. Sen. Tim Scott said the legislation, which passed by a vote of 95-3 on Thursday, contains language he inserted making improvements to the Lake Marion Regional Water Authority. The authority serves areas in The T&D Region along the I-95 and I-26 corridors. "As our economy continues to grow alongside our population, it is critical that we ensure the proper water infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of our state. The improvements contained in this legislation will be very helpful in that regard," the South Carolina Republican said. The harbor-deepening project will make the Port of Charleston the deepest port on the East Coast at 52 feet. It will be able to accept significantly larger ships coming through the now-expanded Panama Canal. These post-Panamax vessels will account for 62 percent of container shipping fleets worldwide.

Post and Courier : Widow of slain Emanuel AME pastor sets the tone during Greenville gun hearing
<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160915/160919572/widow-of-slain-emanuel-ame-pastor-sets-the-tone-during-greenville-gun-hearing>

Maya T. Prabhu

The widow of slain Sen. Clementa Pinckney, one of the nine worshippers gunned down at Emanuel AME Church, told a panel of senators examining South Carolina's gun laws that his murder should be a lesson. "Clementa's death can teach us lessons and can make our society safer and more secure," Jennifer Pinckney said. "It would have been so like my husband, the late Sen. Clementa Pinckney, to be standing here before you, imploring, urging, pleading with you to do something about the current gun laws that we have." Pinckney was one of more than 50 people who spoke during a nearly three-hour public hearing in Greenville — the first of four such meetings across the state — either pushing for restrictions to gun laws or asking lawmakers to expand access. Many reform advocates have focused on the errant background check process that allowed accused Emanuel AME Church shooter Dylann Roof to buy a pistol two months before the nine worshippers were gunned down during Bible study last year in Charleston.

The State: Fear of more rules, desire for longer waiting period dominate gun forum

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article102154162.html>

Cynthia Roldan

The widow of the state senator who was gunned down along with eight of his parishioners at a Charleston church last year was the first of about 50 speakers who shared their views Thursday on whether legislators should tighten the state's law governing background checks. Jennifer Pinckney, widow of fallen Sen. Clementa Pinckney, said expanding the background check law from the current three-day waiting period to 28 days is reasonable. "We know that the man who killed my husband should have not been able to buy the gun that was used to kill him," Pinckney said. "It was human error that permitted that purchase that happened. But it was a law that limited the amount of time for record review that allowed an oversight to become a fatality." She was referring to a drug charge faced by the alleged gunman, Dylann Roof of Columbia, that did not turn up in an FBI check because a local clerk entered the information improperly. Roof was allowed to buy the gun after three days when the FBI did not object.

Greenville News: Passions flare at senate gun forum in Greenville

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/09/15/passions-flare-senate-gun-forum-greenville/90410136/>

Nathaniel Cary

A standing-room only crowd greeted South Carolina senators to a hearing about South Carolina gun law reform in Greenville on Thursday. The group was predictably divided on gun rights, split on whether state laws should require background checks to be completed before guns could be purchased or whether changes to gun laws would chip away at citizens Second Amendment rights. The Senate subcommittee gathered to hear from residents in the first of four public hearings scheduled across the state to gather input for what some senators hope will turn into a consensus bill to address the waiting period for background checks before firearms can be purchased. Jennifer Pinckney rose from her seat in the front row closest to the podium inside Greenville County Council chambers and spoke first before the packed room. She spoke of her husband, the late Sen. Clementa Pinckney, who was gunned down at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston last June and how he was killed by a man who should not have been allowed to purchase a gun.

Greenville News: Senators hear about gun issues in Greenville

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/2016/09/14/senators-hear-gun-issues-greenville/90350246/>

Nathaniel Cary

A South Carolina Senate subcommittee of five sitting senators will hold a public hearing Thursday at Greenville County Square about gun issues. The forum has no specific design or agenda other than to hear from residents on issues related to guns in South Carolina. Senators expect to hear from a variety of residents with varying positions on guns, including advocates for Second Amendment rights, victims of domestic violence and other crimes or those who are for or against extending the waiting period for background checks when purchasing a gun in South Carolina, said Sen. Gerald Malloy, the subcommittee's chairman. The forum will be held from 6-8 p.m. at Greenville County Council Chambers, 301 University Ridge.

The State: Advocates stress need of shelters for human trafficking victims

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article102225852.html>

Cynthia Roldan

Money has become one of the biggest obstacles to those fighting human trafficking in South Carolina. During a quarterly meeting of Attorney General Alan Wilson's Human Trafficking Task Force, advocates voiced concern over the lack of money to build shelters for victims of human trafficking. The state's only shelter is a small one in Greenwood, said Shannon Piller, an investigator who runs Greenville County Sheriffs Office's human trafficking task force. As a result, Piller said he often has to place survivors in out-of-state shelters or those within the state that are designated for domestic violence victims. "The biggest thing with the shelter is not that we don't have funding," Piller said. "We need more (shelters) in the state." Marie Sazehn, an assistant South Carolina Attorney General, said the state also needs a shelter that specifically caters to under aged victims of sex trafficking. Having specialized shelters allows victims to receive services they need, like job training or counseling, Sazehn said. She added that there is also a need to create a central database that allows investigators and advocates to share information with each other. Piller said that kind of database has to be funded either through an agency or some kind of government organization.

Independent Mail : Tri-County celebrates \$42M project

<http://www.independentmail.com/story/news/2016/09/16/tri-county-celebrates-42m-project/90504518/>

Mike Eads

A decade's worth of planning and wrangling paid off Friday for Tri-County Technical College President Ronnie Booth as local dignitaries gathered on the school's main campus to break ground on a new \$42 million student center. "I was foolish – I had no idea how long it takes to get things done," joked Booth, referring to conversations in 2005 with fellow administrators about the need for the center. "That's when we started seriously asking what we were going to do, so it's been a long time coming. U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham led contingent of Upstate politicians, including state House Ways and Means chairman Brian White, an Anderson Republican, Anderson County Council Chairman Tommy Dunn and state Rep. Bill Sandifer, a Seneca Republican, all of whom tossed shovelfuls of ceremonial dirt with Booth.

South Strand News: U.S. Sen. Tim Scott awarded ACU's Conservative Excellence Award

<http://www.southstrandnews.com/20160915/160919948/us-sen-tim-scott-awarded-acus-conservative-excellence-award>

For the third consecutive year, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC) has been awarded the Conservative Excellence Award from the American Conservative Union in recognition of his consistent track record in promoting conservative principles and values while serving as a member of Congress. "I am humbled by the recognition, and honored the American Conservative Union has taken the time to recognize my commitment in supporting ideals that I truly believe will continue to improve the lives of Americans from all walks of life," Scott said. "I genuinely believe conservative solutions will bring real change to America. The kind of change that does not create temporary fixes, but instead grows our economy, creates jobs, and protects the liberties granted to every American by our Constitution." The award is presented to members of the House and Senate who score between 90 and 100 percent on a variety of issues of concern to grassroots conservatives. Scott received a 92 rating on his voting record for 2015.

McClatchy DC: SC Rep. Clyburn says it's time to expose Trump 'for the fraud that he really is'

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/election/article102251047.html>

Vera Bergengruen

Rep. Jim Clyburn called Donald Trump "a fraud" who is "on a mission" to delegitimize President Barack Obama's presidency on Friday after the Republican nominee finally acknowledged that the president was born in the country after years of leading the efforts to prove otherwise. "These are in-your-face kind of efforts on the part of one man who is misusing the media in order to heap indignities upon the president of these United States," the South Carolina Democrat told reporters at a hastily assembled press conference with members of the Congressional Black Caucus after Trump made his remarks. Clyburn warned that Americans may wake up the day after the election regretting "what we could have done and did not do" if Trump becomes president. "Let's do what is necessary now to expose this man for the fraud that he really is," he said. The chair of the caucus, Rep. G. K. Butterfield, D-N.C., demanded that Trump apologize to Obama.

Post and Courier: Trump leads in Charleston County, GOP poll says

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160916/160919528/trump-leads-in-charleston-county-gop-poll-says>
Schuyler Kropf

A poll paid for by the Charleston County Republican Party gives GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump a slight lead over Democrat Hillary Clinton among local voters. Trump is at a 38 percent level of support in the survey of 500 likely voters in the county, with Clinton at nearly 36 percent. About 23 percent were undecided. Charleston GOP Chairman Larry Kobrovsky said he contracted the poll to

give the party a snapshot of the race here after Democrat Barack Obama carried Charleston in the two previous presidential elections. One significant takeaway, he said, is that while Obama had enthusiastic support, including from young people, Clinton isn't drawing the same levels this year. "I don't see that this time," Kobrovsky said. "Charleston County is legitimately in play."

Post and Courier: Lawyer: Woman 'flat-out lied' about being punched by Edisto man Trump rally
<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160916/160919531/lawyer-woman-flat-out-lied-about-being-punched-by-edisto-man-trump-rally>

Derrek Asberry

The lawyer for a 73-year-old Edisto Island man accused of punching a 68-year-old woman at a Donald Trump rally in North Carolina says the accuser "flat-out lied" about being assaulted. Earlier this week, police in Asheville, N.C., issued an arrest warrant for Richard L. Campbell, the Edisto man accused of assaulting Shirley Ann Teter outside the U.S. Cellular Center in the middle of a crowd of protesters. Campbell turned himself in Friday morning in Asheville and is cooperating with police in the investigation, according to Ruth Smith, his lawyer. A video captured at the event and posted on Facebook suggests that there were two separate altercations within seconds of each other, but it doesn't show either of the incidents. Around the 40-second mark of the video, after Campbell walks out of sight, a person can be heard saying, "Hey, hold on, whoa," which caused the person taking the video to shift the camera view over toward Campbell.

Aiken Standard: At annual Aiken Fish Fry, Democratic candidates urge party members to make S.C. a blue state

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160916/160919672/at-annual-aiken-fish-fry-democratic-candidates-urge-party-members-to-make-sc-a-blue-state>

Dede Biles

Speakers during the Aiken County Democratic Party's 12th annual Fish Fry on Thursday night urged the audience to work hard and try to turn South Carolina from a red state to a blue state. "In South Carolina, the barbarians aren't at the gate," said Arik Bjorn. "They own the gate, and they will continue to own the gate until we get over our political depression and know that we can win." A librarian from Columbia, Bjorn is the Democrat who is challenging Republican U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson in the Palmetto State's 2nd Congressional District. Thomas Dixon delivered a message similar to Bjorn's during his appearance at the Fish Fry, which was held in Aiken Electric Cooperative's Community Room. Dixon is running against Tim Scott, who is one of South Carolina's two Republican U.S. Senators. "We are going to continue to be losers in the state of South Carolina as long as keep telling ourselves we are losers," Dixon said. "We're Democrats, and we are winners. And winners never quit and quitters never win. We need to stop listening to the voices that are whispering in our ears that Hillary Clinton won't win in South Carolina, and Donald Trump will win in South Carolina."

SC Agency News:

WYFF4: SC prisons to use tracking device to locate contraband cellphones

<http://www.wyff4.com/news/sc-prisons-to-use-tracking-device-to-locate-contraband-cellphones/41700650>

Tim Waller

The South Carolina Department of Corrections has received early approval to use a device that can track the location of contraband cellphones. The Cell Phone Interdiction System, or CPIS, can pinpoint cell signals within a few feet, according to SCDOC Director Bryan Stirling. "We will be able to triangulate those signals and find out exactly where the cell phone is," Stirling said. He said CPIS has

been used by other state prison systems with great success."They say they virtually have no need for cellphones anymore. The inmates don't want to buy the cellphones and waste their money because they find them so quickly," Stirling said.Stirling said the technology will cost \$1.2 million. He also plans to utilize a Managed Access System that will restrict calls from contraband phones."For example, my phone would be allowed to go through, but the contraband cellphone would not be allowed to go through," Stirling said.Last year, more than 4,000 cell phones were confiscated from South Carolina prison inmates.

Post and Courier: S.C. uninsured rate improves but still among nation's highest

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160916/160919491/sc-uninsured-rate-improves-but-still-among-nations-highest>

Derrek Asberry

The uninsured rate in South Carolina continues to improve but still ranks among the highest in the nation, according to data released this week by the U.S. Census Bureau.South Carolina's uninsured rate for 2015 dropped to 10.9 percent, which ties it with New Mexico for the 13th highest in the nation. The Palmetto State recorded an uninsured rate of 15.8 percent in 2013 and a 13.6 rate in 2014.The nation's uninsured rate has dropped to 9.1 percent, down from 10.4 percent in 2014 and 13.3 percent in 2013.Ray Farmer, the director of the South Carolina Department of Insurance, said earlier this month that one of the reasons the uninsured rate keeps dropping is because insurers cannot deny or limit coverage based on a consumer's health status.That is in large part due to the federal Affordable Care Act, which covers about 216,000 South Carolinians and allows residents to access tax credits and subsidies to purchase policies.

Greenville News : Inspector general to DDSN: 'your audit techniques are not measuring quality of care'

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/09/15/sc-inspector-general-presents-ddsn-report/90399614/>

Tim Smith

State Inspector General Patrick Maley is recommending the state's disabilities agency change the way it audits private providers after finding that one of those providers with a nearly \$20 million contract has had admissions frozen three times by the agency but has had continued problems, including more arrests of staff than its peers.Maley presented his findings about provider SC Mentor at the state Disabilities and Special Needs Commission meeting Thursday, two months after a report on Mentor in The Greenville News.The News reported in July that documents, interviews and recordings obtained by the newspaper reveal that Mentor had a troubling record of resident deaths, staff arrests, lawsuits and allegations of abuse and neglect. The provider is one of dozens in the state that contracts with DDSN to care for those with intellectual disabilities.

Greenville News : DDSN director: There's 'Substantial risk' from lack of med training

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/09/16/ddsn-director-theres-substantial-risk-lack-med-training/90467476/>

Tim Smith

The director of the state's disabilities agency says there is "substantial risk across the system" because of the apparent lack of training of some workers in administering medications.But Beverly Buscemi, director of the state Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, told DDSN commissioners Thursday that she does not know how many providers are not training workers or whether employees without training are handling medications or assisting vulnerable adults in self-administering drugs.Buscemi issued a directive Aug. 31 telling providers and DDSN boards that if

employees are not certified as a medication technician, they should not be administering medications, and if they are not certified in medication assistance they should not be helping clients to self-administer medications.

Post and Courier: Local officials propose spending \$150 million more to build part of I-526

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160916/160919554/local-officials-propose-spending-150-million-more-to-build-part-of-i-526>

Diane Knich

Charleston city and county officials quietly developed a plan to use \$150 million in local money to pay for improvements near the new port terminal in exchange for moving forward with the extension of Interstate 526 across Johns and James islands. The plan, detailed in a Thursday letter County Council Chairman Elliott Summey and Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg sent to members of the S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank board, involves money from the county's proposed half-cent sales tax. That means that before voters even have had a chance to weigh in on the \$2 billion November referendum, the county has offered to alter the project list. Summey, in response to questions from The Post and Courier at a press conference Wednesday, said his plan for I-526 included building the road in phases. He said it did not include any changes to a list of projects that would be funded by the half-cent sales tax if voters approve it.

SC Law Enforcement News:

Associated Press : Indictments: Former officers coerced sex; ignored cases

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=1aXcEnDU

Jeffrey Collins

Four former South Carolina police officers who worked in the criminal investigations division for Horry County coerced women into sex or ignored nearly 100 cases they were supposed to be investigating, according to indictments released Friday by a state grand jury. At least four lawsuits have been filed against one of the officers, Troy Large. One of the lawsuits accuses him of ignoring the case of a woman who said she was raped and then demanding she participate in a nude catfight or else he would make sure she lost visitation with her children. Large is charged with six counts of misconduct in office and five counts of third-degree criminal sexual conduct. Indictments against him said he coerced women into sexual acts and had inappropriate relationships with victims in cases he was investigating. Large denied coercing women into sex in a deposition in one of the lawsuits. He couldn't be reached for comment Friday. The three other officers indicted Friday all face misconduct in office charges.

Associated Press: The Latest: Indictments show 88 cases not investigated

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=IJ798ovT

SC State Wire

Indictments say a South Carolina police officer failed to properly investigate 88 cases assigned to him over four years. A state grand jury charged former Horry County Police officer Darryl Williams with misconduct in office. The indictment released Friday says Williams also worked for the Department of Social Services on county time. Williams was one of four Horry County officers indicted. The documents say officer Todd Cox closed or made inactive more than a dozen cases without investigating them fully. They involved crimes ranging from child abuse to attempted murder. The indictments accuse detective Troy Large of using threats to get several victims in cases he was investigating to commit sexual acts. They also allege that Luke Green had a sexual relationship with an informant and sexual contact with a suspect during an arrest.

Sun News: Grand jury indicts 4 former Horry police officers; 2 face sexual misconduct charges

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/crime/article102290497.html>

Audrey Hudson

Several former Horry County Police officers were indicted by a grand jury Thursday, according to the S.C. Attorney General's office, including former Detective Allen Large. Also indicted were former officers Luke Green, Todd Cox and Daryl Williams. Large was indicted on five counts of criminal sexual conduct third degree and six counts of misconduct in office. The indictments allege that Large knowingly used coercion to engage in sexual battery with multiple victims and knowingly engaged in inappropriate relationships with victims of cases he was investigating. The Sun News reported that Large confessed during a March deposition to encouraging women to participate in nude catfight videos, but he has denied sexually harassing or assaulting four women who have filed lawsuits against him and the Horry County Police Department.

Sun News: Two new names emerge in Horry police misconduct case

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article102245972.html>

Chloe Johnson

Former Horry County police officers Todd Cox and Luke Green largely stayed out of the spotlight as Detective Allen Large's story unfolded. However, both men were indicted Thursday night by an Horry County grand jury. Cox has been charged with 16 counts of misconduct in office. Prosecutors say he closed cases without proper investigation and left other cases without an investigator. Green is charged with three counts of misconduct, which say he engaged in an inappropriate sexual relationships with two confidential informants and made inappropriate sexual contact with a suspect during an arrest. Neither man could be reached for comment by online message. The Sun News could not locate a current phone number or address for Green. When contacted at home, Cox told a reporter from The Sun News she was trespassing and to leave his property.

Sun News: Former cop who sued county for discrimination indicted by grand jury

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article102222457.html>

Audrey Hudson

A former Horry County Police detective who sued the agency for racial and religious discrimination was indicted late Thursday by an Horry County grand jury on several counts of misconduct in office. The nine indictments accuse Daryl Williams of failing to properly investigate multiple alleged crimes, according to the S.C. Attorney's General office. Williams is also accused of working for a separate state agency while employed by the county police, and using his police vehicle and work time to conduct business for that unnamed agency. The charge is a misdemeanor offense punishable by up to 10 years in jail, which means Williams faces a maximum 90 years if convicted, according to a statement from the attorney's general office.

Sun News: Former Detective Allen Large indicted for criminal sexual conduct

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article102239397.html>

Audrey Hudson

Former Horry County Detective Allen Large was indicted by a Horry County grand jury late Thursday on five counts of criminal sexual conduct for allegedly coercing victims whose cases he was assigned to investigate to engage with him in sexual situations. Large was also indicted on six counts of misconduct in office. Combined, the two charges and 11 counts carry a maximum penalty of 110 years in jail, according to a statement issued by the S.C. Attorney's General office. The indictments are the results of a 10-month investigation conducted by the S.C. Law Enforcement Division (SLED),

which also resulted in charges against three other former Horry County police officers in unrelated matters of misconduct of office. Large is the target of four lawsuits filed against the Horry County Police Department by women identified as Jane Does alleging that he coerced them to participate in a genre of pornography called catfighting.

Aiken Standard: Aiken Public Safety, couple calling former officers to give expert testimony in traffic stop lawsuit

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160916/160919667/aiken-public-safety-couple-calling-former-officers-to-give-expert-testimony-in-traffic-stop-lawsuit>

Maayan Schechter

Attorneys representing current and former police officers with the Aiken Department of Public Safety plan to call a former officer to testify on behalf of the agency and the City of Aiken over an alleged unconstitutional traffic stop and search in 2014. In new court documents filed on Thursday, records state attorneys representing four current and former police officers with Aiken Public Safety, the agency itself, its Chief Charles Barranco and the City of Aiken will call Jack Ryan as an expert witness. Ryan is listed online as a Rhode Island attorney and co-director of the Legal and Liability Risk Management Institute, described as a network of risk management professionals dedicated to the risk management of public safety/criminal justice through training, policies, procedures and legal support. It also states Ryan has 20 years of experience as a police officer with the Providence Police Department in Providence, Rhode Island.

The State: Richland deputy charged, disciplined after Kershaw County incident

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article102158317.html>

Rachael Myers Lowe

Richland County deputy Lisa Grazioli was charged with hindering officers after she allegedly arrived on the scene of a Kershaw County incident involving her son, Victor Manuel Ortiz Jr. Her son was charged by Kershaw deputies with disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and operating a vehicle without registration and license. Grazioli was disciplined by the Richland County Sheriff's Department, but what form that discipline took was not disclosed Thursday. Ortiz was pulled over on U.S. 601 in Kershaw County around 8:20 p.m. Sept. 6 when the deputy noticed the Chevy Impala driving without lights on. The arresting deputy told his boss that "he was just going to tell Ortiz to turn on his lights and give him a warning ticket, but he got an attitude that escalated the encounter," Sheriff Jim Matthews told The State newspaper Thursday. According to the incident report, the deputy thought he might be dealing with a DUI after seeing the car swerve several times before turning on his blue light and stopping the driver south of downtown Camden.

Associated Press: Richland deputy charged with interfering in Kershaw stop

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=yMC72ycE

SC State Wire

A South Carolina sheriff's deputy has been arrested and charged with interfering with a traffic stop in a neighboring county. Multiple media outlets reported that Richland County Deputy Lisa Grazioli was charged with interfering with Kershaw County officers Sept. 6 when they stopped her 28-year-old son for a traffic violation. Her son, Victor Manuel Ortiz Jr., was charged with disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and operating a vehicle without registration and license. Kershaw Sheriff Jim Matthews told local media that his deputy had only intended to tell Ortiz to turn on his lights and give him a warning ticket when the situation escalated because of the man's attitude. Richland Lt. Curtis Wilson said Grazioli was disciplined, but he did not elaborate. It was not clear if she has an attorney on the Kershaw County charge.

Morning News: Latta council votes to uphold firing of Crystal Moore as police chief

http://www.scnow.com/news/local/article_d1a72644-7b9a-11e6-9e13-a7f33b16b48f.html

Jessica Imbimbo

The Latta Town Council voted unanimously Thursday night to uphold the firing of Crystal Moore as chief of police. The vote came at a special meeting called after Moore's lawyer challenged the validity of the firing, which was done by Town Administrator Jarett Taylor. A lawyer for the town said Taylor had the authority to fire the chief. Moore was fired on Sept. 8 during an emergency town council meeting. Prior to her termination, Moore served a five-day suspension after several reprimands were issued against her by Taylor for not following town policies. Moore's legal counsel challenged the town council, saying the vote needed to be done in open session and the council's proceeding on Sept. 8 did not follow proper procedure. Prior to the vote on Thursday, Taylor explained how the council had previously voted to fire Moore on Sept. 8 and said Thursday's vote was held "to bring formality to this matter."

South Carolina News:

Associated Press : The Latest: Ian no longer tropical as it races northeast

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=IQX1HhKv

SC State Wire

Ian has become a post-tropical storm and is moving quickly northeast after spinning around for days in the middle of the Atlantic. The National Hurricane Center issued a final advisory on the storm at 11 a.m. Friday, as Ian moved northeast at 53 mph (85 kph). Ian was located about 1,200 miles (1,900 kilometers) south-southwest of Reykjavik, Iceland, but still had winds of 65 mph (100 kph). Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Julia continues to spin at sea well off the coast of the Carolinas while a third system, Tropical Storm Karl, continues to move westward through the Atlantic. Karl had tropical storm force winds of 45 mph (75 kph) late Friday morning. Little change in strength was expected through the weekend.

The State: Sumter County's Poinsett bombing range to host Army special forces

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/military/article102288807.html>

Jeff Wilkinson

Army special forces soldiers from the 75th Ranger Regiment are scheduled to perform live night fire exercises on Poinsett Electronic Combat Range in Wedgefield next week. The regiment's 3rd Battalion from Fort Benning, Ga., is also training this week and next at McEntire Joint National Guard Base in Eastover. Air Force F-16 jets will also be training with inert rockets at the range from noon to 10:30 p.m. through Thursday. Residents and land owners in the area surrounding Poinsett Range might experience loud noises and ground vibrations, as well as noise from rocket training. The training involves soldiers from the U.S. Army's Special Operations Command stationed at Fort Benning. It was described in an S.C. National Guard release last week as "a routine military exercise to maintain their high level of readiness."

Local News:

The Herald: York County Council to again consider hiring 6 deputies for court security

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/article102198417.html>

Andrew Dys

Almost three months after the York County Council declined to approve the sheriff's hiring six new

deputies to bolster court security, the council will again take up Sheriff Bruce Bryant's request for more officers when it meets Monday night. Bryant asked the council earlier this year for the six positions, saying he had been forced to take deputies from patrol and other duties to fill mandated court security roles. Some councilmen said that open deputy slots for other jobs should be cut if new jobs were added, but Bryant kept pushing for the positions. The cost of hiring six new deputies is about \$220,000, plus the cost of benefits. Court security officers are not a choice but a requirement, Bryant said.

Associated Press: 2 found dead after firefighters put out blaze at Aiken home

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=0adUzte0

SC State Wire

Authorities say two people have been found dead inside a burning home in Aiken. Aiken County deputies said in a press release that firefighters were called to the home around 7:20 a.m. Friday and neighbors and family told them there might be people trapped inside. Authorities say the home was fully engulfed in flames, and once the fire was put out, investigators found the two bodies. The coroner's office has not identified the two victims. Deputies say a car belonging to the homeowners was parked in front of the house. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Associated Press: Georgia woman pleads to stealing \$2 million from dealership

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=eJ0ltvEJ

SC State Wire

A Georgia woman has been sentenced to eight years in prison after pleading guilty to stealing almost \$2 million from a South Carolina auto dealership. News outlets report that 54-year-old DeAnne Ogden of Jesup, Georgia, pleaded guilty Thursday in state court to breach of trust over \$10,000. Authorities say that Ogden worked for O.C. Welch Ford Lincoln in Hardeeville for more than a decade as assistant comptroller where she prepared checks for vendors who sold parts to the dealership's repair department. Authorities say the thefts occurred from 2008 until last October. Ogden has surrendered more than \$850,000 in assets including her home, her 401K account and several vehicles.

Post and Courier: Crash damages Charleston 9 Memorial, firefighters, families call for support

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160916/160919540/crash-damages-charleston-9-memorial-firefighters-families-call-for-support>

Derrek Asberry and Gregory Yee

Ann Mulkey breathed a sigh of relief after seeing the Charleston 9 Memorial site Friday. A suspected drunken driver crashed into the site, which honors nine firefighters including Mulkey's son, Capt. Louis Mulkey, who died fighting an inferno at Sofa Super Store on Savannah Highway in 2007. But the damage to the memorial was far less than originally feared, Mulkey said. "I just thank God he didn't knock over any of the markers," she said. "It's just a sad, sad thing. I hope and pray (the driver) get help." Police say Daniel James Doherty, a 38-year-old resident of Piper Drive in Charleston, struck a light pole near Wappoo Road and drove into the memorial around 11 p.m. Thursday.

The State: USC board approves new Bull Street medical school

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/education/article102199322.html>

Avery G. Wilks

A plan to build a new \$200 million campus for the University of South Carolina's medical school in downtown Columbia's Bull Street residential-and-retail development received preliminary approval Friday from the school's trustees. USC's trustees unanimously approved placing the planned four-building campus on 16 acres donated by Greenville developer Bob Hughes. "We're positioning

Carolina to be one of the best health sciences universities in the Southeast and in the country, and we need to keep pace with our facilities," University of South Carolina president Harris Pastides said. Plans for the new campus – to be across Harden Street from Palmetto Health Richland hospital – include a new medical school building, a life-science facility, a private medical-research office and a parking garage.

Presidential Election 2016:

Associated Press: Reversing course, Trump admits Obama was born in the US

<http://bigstory.ap.org/61f7085d848248cd98410027d33f2101>

Jill Colvin and Jonathan Lemire

After five years as the chief promoter of a lie about Barack Obama's birthplace, Donald Trump abruptly reversed course Friday and acknowledged the fact that the president was born in America. He then immediately peddled another false conspiracy. "President Barack Obama was born in the United States, period," Trump declared, enunciating each word in a brief statement at the end of a campaign appearance. "Now we all want to get back to making America strong and great again." But as the GOP presidential nominee sought to put that false conspiracy theory to rest, he stoked another, claiming that the "birther movement" was begun by his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton. There is no evidence that that is true. "Hillary Clinton and her campaign of 2008 started the birther controversy. I finished it," Trump said.

Associated Press: Michelle Obama makes campaign trail debut for Clinton

<http://bigstory.ap.org/3ffeeb69937a45d0bd213d0b8b2855c7>

Julie Pace

Stepping deeper into the political fray, Michelle Obama on Friday warned young voters against being "tired or turned off" in the 2016 election. She urged them to rally behind Hillary Clinton, "particularly given the alternative." Mrs. Obama is emerging as one of Clinton's most effective advocates, especially with voters who backed President Barack Obama but are less enthusiastic about his potential Democratic successor. The Clinton team's biggest challenge regarding Mrs. Obama is getting the reluctant campaigner to commit to more events. Friday's rally in Virginia was Mrs. Obama's first solo campaign event for Clinton and comes nearly two months after her star turn at the Democratic convention. Speaking to mostly students at George Mason University, she repeatedly jabbed Trump without mentioning him by name, declaring that being president "isn't anything like reality TV."

Associated Press: Many black voters skeptical at Trump's birther about-face

<http://bigstory.ap.org/4599cd40851a444d940e4254a3e6b373>

Jesse J. Holland

Black voters reacted skeptically Friday to Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump's admission that he now believes the nation's first black president was indeed born in the United States. Many said the fact that Trump spent years questioning President Barack Obama's national origin was disrespectful, and an insult to all black Americans. Despite the fact that Obama himself said he viewed this renewed burst of commentary about his birth as "fairly typical" and not surprising, members of the Congressional Black Caucus were clearly angry. During a heated news conference Friday during the CBC's annual legislative conference in Washington, several lawmakers denigrated Trump for perpetrating birther falsehoods for so long. "He owes an apology to President Barack Obama, he owes an apology to African-American community and he owes an apology to the United States of America," said Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., adding that he considers Trump to be

"nothing but a two-bit racial arsonist." Reps. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas, and G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C., called Trump a "cheap racist" and a "disgusting fraud," respectively.

Associated Press: Congressional Black Caucus denounce Trump, demand apology

<http://bigstory.ap.org/5607476a3b55460a953063f08f178d04>

Members of the Congressional Black Caucus on Friday called Donald Trump a "disgusting fraud" and demanded that he apologize to President Barack Obama for repeatedly challenging the first African-American president's U.S. citizenship before retreating from the claim on Friday. One by one, outraged members of the CBC denounced the Republican presidential nominee who for five years was the chief promoter of the false notion that Obama was born somewhere other than Hawaii. Trump said in a brief statement Friday morning that Obama was "born in the United States, period. "Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., called Trump a "two-bit racial arsonist" who has fanned the flames of bigotry and hatred. Rep. G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C., called Trump a "disgusting fraud" who had no proof of his false claims. Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Calif., said Trump is a liar.

National News:

Associated Press: Israeli settlements have grown during the Obama years

<http://bigstory.ap.org/93e1597c5da7493ea49c29260f7f8004>

Josef Federman In his landmark speech to the Arab world seven years ago, President Barack Obama warned that Israeli settlements on occupied territories were undermining hopes for peace. "It is time for these settlements to stop," he declared. As Obama heads into the home stretch of his presidency, he leaves behind an unfulfilled vision. Not only did he fail to stop it, but he watched Israeli construction in the West Bank and east Jerusalem thrive — despite repeated White House condemnations. According to Israeli government data obtained by The Associated Press, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pushed a wave of construction during the Obama presidency that matched, and even exceeded, the amount of building that took place under his predecessors during the Bush years. The figures show the limits of U.S. influence over its close ally and a reluctance to link financial support to Israel with policy differences. Despite the Israeli defiance over settlements and a long history of friction between Obama and Netanyahu, the two countries signed a deal this week giving Israel \$38 billion in U.S. military aid over 10 years, the largest deal of its kind in American history.

Associated Press: FAA contemplating whether millions of drones will fill skies

<http://bigstory.ap.org/be086f2e1a7345b697f627adc732dfb1>

Joan Lowy

So many people are registering drones and applying for drone pilot licenses that federal aviation officials said Friday they are contemplating the possibility of millions of unmanned aircraft crowding the nation's skies in the not-too-distant future. In the nine months since the Federal Aviation Administration created a drone registration system, more than 550,000 unmanned aircraft have been registered with the agency, said Earl Lawrence, director of the FAA's drone office. Speaking at the first meeting of a new government-industry drone advisory committee, Lawrence said new registrations are coming in at a rate of 2,000 a day. By comparison, the FAA says there are 260,165 manned aircraft registered in the U.S. The FAA began issuing drone pilot licenses to commercial operators less than a month ago. Already, 13,710 people have applied to take the pilot exam, and 5,080 have passed it, Lawrence said. It's clear the agency's estimate of 15,000 licensed drone pilots by the end of 2016 will easily be exceeded, he said.

World News:

Associated Press: EU leaders look at 6 months for rebuilding EU dream

<http://bigstory.ap.org/ad9a192914042a9be4b8dd7b4a77c08>

George Jahn and Raf Casert

With policy splits among European Union countries putting their bloc under existential threat, national leaders agreed Friday on a six-month time table to come up with solutions for the multiple crises hobbling their union. But they delivered few concrete commitments on ways to bridge the deep differences. While not on the agenda, Britain's decision to leave the EU hung over the meeting, reinforced by the absence of British Prime Minister Theresa May. But the 27 leaders attending talks in the Slovak capital had plenty of other divisive issues to discuss: Migration, a common European defense policy, worrying unemployment and the anemic state of the economy. In the end, the leaders committed to have a clear roadmap of the way ahead and some practical results when they meet in late March to mark the 60th anniversary of the EU founding Treaty of Rome in the Italian capital.

Associated Press : Aid convoys for Syria's Aleppo delayed amid rising violence

<http://bigstory.ap.org/21dcd0896f284f2d8bfc0b209bfa5f9e>

Bassem Mroue and Vladimir Isachenkov

Trucks carrying humanitarian aid to Syria's besieged rebel-held part of the city of Aleppo were held up for yet another day as heavy fighting broke out Friday on the edges of Damascus between government forces and insurgents. The clashes were some of the most serious since a U.S.-Russia-brokered cease-fire went into effect this week. The fighting and mutual accusations of violations sparked concern that the fragile cease-fire, which brought some relief to millions of people across the war-ravaged country, may be starting to fray. In a further sign of tensions picking up, the Obama administration warned Russia that potential military cooperation in Syria will not happen unless humanitarian aid begins to flow into Aleppo and other besieged communities. The Russian military had said that the Syrian army withdrew its armor, artillery and other weapons from a key highway near Aleppo early Thursday, signaling the possible arrival of aid convoys after several days of delay. Syrian state TV said bulldozers began clearing the road on the northwestern edge of Aleppo that leads into besieged rebel-held neighborhoods to make way for the convoys.

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