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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Associated Press: SC military leaders say they are pinching pennies

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

Susanne M. Schafer

Commanders from South Carolina's major military installations told Gov. Nikki Haley on Wednesday they are pinching pennies every way they can and in some cases are cutting back on training to deal with federal budget cuts. "We're not flying as much," said Col. Clay Hall, commander of the 20th Fighter Wing at Shaw Air Force Base, home to some of the Air Force's premier F-16 fighter squadrons. Hall was one of more than a dozen military commanders who reviewed the status of their forces during their annual meeting with the governor.

Note: "It's a scary time for military installations," she said. She urged the military installations and their civilian booster supporters to keep her informed about anything that might affect their future, particularly given any chance of a renewed base closure push. "We have to be a little more aggressive on that, and you are my ammunition to do that," she told the group.

The State: SC military commanders: Budget battles have us in 'reaction mode'

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/10/23/3055574/sc-military-base-commanders-tell.html#storylink=cpy>

Jeff Wilkinson

Military leaders from bases across the state complained to Gov. Nikki Haley on Wednesday afternoon that budget cuts and ongoing fights over the federal budget are hurting their ability to complete their missions. At Shaw Air Force Base, the commander of the 20th Fighter Wing, has seen one of his three squadrons of F-16 fighter jets grounded and maintenance on them frozen. He has had to cut training for his pilots. And as installation commander he has had to close the base library, find ways to privatize the golf course and the officers club and even stop cutting the grass.

Note: Haley said she would take that message to Capitol Hill and the Pentagon in Washington in January when she goes to meet with the state's delegation and other officials. "It's a scary time for military installations because ... they have no stability coming out of Washington," Haley said. "They have no certainty on what's going to happen."

WLTX (Video): Military Leaders Concerned About Financial Uncertainty

<http://www.wltx.com/news/article/253938/2/Military-Leaders-Concerned-About-Financial-Uncertainty?odyssey=tab%7Ctopnews%7Cbc%7Clarge>

Jennifer Bellamy

Military leaders across South Carolina say they are facing financial uncertainty as a result of decisions in Washington. Leaders of South Carolina's military installations spoke at a meeting with Governor Nikki Haley Wednesday afternoon. The group said not knowing what could happen with their budgets or sequestration made planning difficult. They also pointed to the recent government shutdown.

Note: "Making sure we put that in front of the President when we see him in January, and then it's making calls as needed to the Department of Defense to make sure that any time they're coming, we're here to host them or anytime we need go there to answer questions, we'll do that," said Haley.

Associated Press: Tempest Brews Over How SC Should Spend \$500 Million On Roads

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

Adam Beam

Coming up with \$600 million to build roads was easy, in retrospect. The hard part is deciding where to spend it. That has some S.C. lawmakers wringing their hands as a powerful state board decides Thursday where and how to spend money that many in the General Assembly consider to be the crowning achievement of the 2013 legislative session. At stake is the fate of four road projects in the Midlands and

Upstate versus the possibility of “more options in the Lowcountry.” The state Transportation Infrastructure Bank board – seven members appointed by various state officials – met earlier this month to approve four road projects in the Midlands and Upstate.

Note: “Governor Haley is watching the (state Infrastructure Board’s) actions very closely,” said Haley spokesman Doug Mayer. “We fully expect the SIB to select construction projects based on priority, not politics,” said Mayer, adding Infrastructure Bank board members Don Leonard Ernest Duncan – both Haley appointees – “agree.”

Associated Press: Haley declares Red Ribbon Week in South Carolina

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

Gov. Nikki Haley has declared the week before Halloween as Red Ribbon Week in South Carolina. Her statewide proclamation coincides with the national campaign designed to raise awareness to the dangers of illegal drug use. Red Ribbon Week dates to 1985, when people began wearing red ribbons to honor an undercover agent in the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration who was kidnapped and tortured to death by drug traffickers in Mexico. His body was found in March 1985, a month after he was forced into a car while on his way to lunch. The week of awareness officially runs from Oct. 23 through Oct. 31.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

The State: Richland County voters should say ‘yes’ to effort to keep library a gem

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/10/24/3055526/editorial-richland-county-voters.html#storylink=cpy>

Editorial

There is no denying the award-winning Richland Library’s invaluable contributions to this community: It is a resource of endless information, an economic engine, a gathering place, a remedy to the digital divide and the place where the young and old still can experience the pleasures of reading — whether via print or eBook. It’s those attributes that compel us — and, we hope, Richland County voters — to support the proposed \$59 million bond issue that would allow the system to continue efforts it already has begun to transform its main location and branches into the high-tech, information-rich meeting places needed to serve this community well into the 21st century.

Greenville News: Shooting highlights huge challenge

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20131024/OPINION/310240005/Editorial-Shooting-highlights-huge-challenge>

Editorial

It took the shooting of University of South Carolina freshman Martha Childress to get the attention needed in Columbia to the problem with gangs and other thugs in the popular Five Points area near the campus. The 18-year-old Childress graduated earlier this year from J.L. Mann High School, and today she is at Shepherd Center in Atlanta learning, in the words of her uncle Jim Carpenter, “how to live life again.” Childress was the victim of a random shooting in the early morning hours of Oct. 13. She was doing nothing wrong and in fact was being exceptionally cautious. She and a friend had done what so many young people, particularly college students, do on a late Saturday night.

Times and Democrat: Extremes don't hold answers in gun debate

http://thetandd.com/news/opinion/editorial/extremes-don-t-hold-answers-in-gun-debate/article_fe5ba388-3c26-11e3-9a08-001a4bcf887a.html

Editorial

THE ISSUE: Gun control; OUR OPINION: Valid points by two writers in context of latest school incident. Today’s editorial page features divergent opinions on guns. The latest high-profile incident of gun violence offers examples of wisdom in both the words of a Southern columnist and a Southern mother whose daughter was a shooting victim (articles under Opinion). The incident occurred Monday in Nevada when a 12-year-old student opened fire on a middle school campus, wounding two classmates and killing a teacher before he turned the gun on himself. According to The Associated Press, authorities said Tuesday he got the weapon from his home.

Post and Courier: Help displaced residents

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20131024/PC1002/131029719/1022/help-displaced-residents>

Editorial

Some government actions are legal, and even politically astute, but are still unkind. That’s when the debate begins over government’s duty to the people. Last week, North Charleston City Council gave initial approval

to a zoning change that effectively puts residents of 27 mobile homes out of their homes. Yes, a property owner has a right to sell his property. Yes, the College of Charleston needs a new site for its Lowcountry Graduate Center. Its present one has been purchased, and they need a North Campus functioning by next fall.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: SC taxpayers can sign up for free monitoring

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=7pkk8PUY

Taxpayers can start signing up for a second year of state-paid credit monitoring resulting from last year's massive hacking of South Carolina's tax collection agency. Enrollment for consumer protection services through CSIdentity Corp. begins Thursday. It's free to the millions of residents and business owners whose unencrypted personal data was stolen last September from the Department of Revenue's computer servers. South Carolina is paying CSID up to \$8.5 million for its services, depending on how many people sign up. About 1.4 million people signed up for free credit monitoring through Experian. That \$12 million state contract is expiring, and enrollments will not transfer.

Aiken Standard: South Carolina residents can sign up today credit monitoring

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20131024/AIK0101/131029719/1007/AIK0101/south-carolina-residents-can-sign-up-today-credit-monitoring>

Maayan Schechter

Residents can enroll in free credit monitoring protection beginning today with CSIdentify Corporation. After S.C. Department of Revenue tax data was compromised in a security breach last year, the department implemented new processes to strengthen its security. The state contracted with Experian to provide identity protection services to the more than 3.8 million individuals whose information was compromised, but the contract expires at the end of this month. The state recently awarded a contract to CSIdentify Corporation to continue credit monitoring and identification protection services for the residents and businesses affected by the data breach.

Greenville News: Graham calls for GOP unity

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20131024/NEWS03/310240011/Graham-calls-GOP-unity>

Rudolph Bell

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham said in Greenville Wednesday that he expects the Republican Party to rethink its strategy following a partial government shutdown that he said helped Democrats politically more than Republicans. He called for party unity against Democrats, but his three challengers for the GOP nomination criticized him for not standing up for conservative principles. Graham also called for a bipartisan effort to pass a one-year "time-out" from President Barack Obama's health care reform law during a press conference at Soby's restaurant downtown as he campaigns for a third term.

Associated Press: Public Opposition To S.C. Private-school Choice Flares

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=hZtR0DOI

Jamie Self

Suspicion that private-school choice would dismantle public education and revive a segregation-era expansion of private schools fueled criticism Wednesday of a state Senate bill that would expand the state's first private-school choice program. Speaking before a Senate panel in North Charleston, the Rev. Joe Darby, a Columbia native, said he worried the program, started with good intentions, would expand and lead to more inequity in the public-school system. Darby compared the push for private-school choice to the segregation era, saying what seemed, at first, as "incremental and sensible" laws designed for public safety "eventually became Jim Crow."

Greenville News: Investigation of pension board chair dropped

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20131024/NEWS/310240014/Investigation-pension-board-chair-dropped>

Tim Smith

The state's pension fund investment board says its chairman has been exonerated by a year-long state investigation into fees paid to his law firm, but a spokesman for State Treasurer Curtis Loftis is questioning the probe because no subpoenas were issued or sworn testimony taken. W. Allen Myrick, senior assistant deputy attorney general, wrote a letter to the State Law Enforcement Division that said his office was not pursuing any charges in the case after reading SLED's report on the matter, according to a copy of the letter

released by the state Retirement Systems Investment Commission. The investigation centered on an investment in a timber company by the investment commission that resulted in \$89,484 in legal fees being paid to the Florence law firm of Commission Chairman Reynolds Williams, said Williams.

Spartanburg Herald Journal: State education superintendent visits Spartanburg schools
<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20131023/ARTICLES/131029844/1083/ARTICLES?Title=State-education-superintendent-visits-Spartanburg-schools>

Lee G. Healy

S.C. Superintendent of Education Mick Zais was in Spartanburg Wednesday to meet with educators from two school districts and discuss the various successes and challenges that exist in local schools. In Spartanburg District 7, Zais stopped by the McCarthy Teszler School — a countywide school for students with special needs — and Spartanburg High School. He later visited Lyman Elementary and Byrnes High School in Spartanburg District 5. Zais said the visits are an opportunity to see how schools are performing, compared to others in South Carolina with similar levels of poverty.

Associated press: Wet summer hurts South Carolina's pecan crop

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=jdr6RhpC

Farmers and buyers say this year's rainy summer has taken its toll on South Carolina's pecan crop. Golden Kernel Pecan Co. owner David Summers told The Times and Democrat of Orangeburg (<http://bit.ly/1ahP06w>) that he expects to only crack and shell about 300,000 pounds of pecans this year. He normally processes about 1 million pounds. Orangeburg County Clemson Extension fruits and vegetables agent Morgan Judy says excessive rains this summer when the nuts were blooming kept pollen from transferring properly to the flowers. The moist weather also contributed to more disease in the trees.

Local News:

Greenville News: Oconee reactors drew scrutiny, new documents show

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20131024/NEWS07/310240006/Oconee-reactors-drew-scrutiny-new-documents-show>

Eric Connor

The Oconee Nuclear Station has avoided the fate of some of America's aging reactors that have been shut down over the past decade — but a new government study shows that over that time the station has required among the highest levels of scrutiny in the industry because of ongoing safety concerns. The study, conducted by the federal Government Accountability Office, also determined that the agency responsible for nuclear oversight, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, has enforced its rules unevenly depending on what part of the country a reactor operates in. The NRC has acknowledged the discrepancies and in its response to the study pledged to investigate why they exist.

Sun News: New CEO named for Grand Strand Regional Medical Center

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2013/10/23/3790599/new-ceo-named-for-grand-strand.html#storylink=cpy>

Dawn Bryant

A man with two decades of experience at hospitals will take the helm as CEO of Grand Strand Regional Medical Center in Myrtle Beach later this year, the hospital announced Wednesday. Mark Sims has worked for HCA, the parent company of Grand Strand Regional for 20 years, most recently as CEO of TriStar StoneCrest Medical Center in Smyrna, Tenn. He has also served as CEO of two other Tennessee hospitals, Parkridge East Medical Center in Chattanooga and Grandview Medical Center in Jasper. Sims replaces Doug White, who retired in September after 18 years at Grand Strand Regional.

Sun News: Back gate project in Horry County on schedule to meet August 2014 deadline

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2013/10/22/3789052/back-gate-project-in-horry-county.html#storylink=cpy>

Jason M. Rodriguez

Passersby of the Highway 17 Bypass and S.C. 707 interchange have been noticing some differences as the size and span of the bridge is beginning to take shape. "Right now we're able to start moving upward and that includes the construction of the columns that will support the bridge," said Mike Barbee, regional production engineer for S.C. Department of Transportation. "That will be ongoing throughout the fall." Workers spent much of the summer focused on the underground portions of the project and the mechanical reinforcement of the soil at the location.

Aiken Standard: School trustees hope sales tax election option emerges in 2014

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20131024/AIK0101/131029720/1007/AIK0101/school-trustees-hope-sales-tax-election-option-emerges-in-2014>

Rob Novit

Three years after a failed public referendum that would have increased property taxes for facility needs, Aiken County School Board members are seeking another avenue for 2014 – a referendum that, if approved, would provide a penny sales tax instead. “A sales tax would be an easier proposition for voters,” said Board member Tad Barber. “The scale of the project would be reduced and easier to sell as a shared cost.” Such a referendum would take place in November 2014. The School Board has set up a timeline that would include proposed projects for new construction and general maintenance, construction methods and a referendum campaign next summer.

Post and Courier: Charleston’s African American Museum project re-energized

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20131023/PC16/131029745/1006/charleston-x2019-s-proposed-african-american-museum-effort-re-energized>

Schuyler Kropf

A pier will jut out into the harbor, where a stone brought from Africa will invite a visitor’s touch. Inside the museum, the stories of black influence in America will be told through slavery, Emancipation, Jim Crow, the civil rights era and beyond. And if the timetable stays to schedule, the International African American Museum will be open to the public in 2018. Charleston Mayor Joe Riley on Wednesday announced a kick-start to the project, saying the time is right to ramp up pursuit of the much-needed public and private dollars to construct the now-\$75 million museum.

Times and Democrat: OCSD 5: Superintendent reports progress, says district still improving

http://thetandd.com/news/local/education/ocsd-superintendent-reports-progress-says-district-still-improving/article_44b31920-3c58-11e3-8ebf-0019bb2963f4.html

Dale Linder-Altman

Some 350 community and educational leaders, volunteers and members of the faith-based community celebrated the successes and discussed the dreams for Orangeburg Consolidated School District Five at Wednesday’s State of the Schools Luncheon. Superintendent Cynthia Wilson told those gathered that the administration, trustees and community are working together to make OCSD 5 the best district in South Carolina. “We have embraced a common purpose across our school district,” Wilson said. “We keep the main thing — the main thing.”

Times and Democrat: Holly Hill getting \$500,000 for infrastructure upgrades: County says it’s prepping for growth

http://thetandd.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/holly-hill-getting-for-infrastructure-upgrades-county-says-it-s/article_0549df70-3c54-11e3-93bb-0019bb2963f4.html

Martha Rose Brown

Orangeburg County officials said Tuesday the infrastructure being built in the eastern part of the county is paving the way for the area’s future growth. And it announced the region is getting \$500,000 to build more of it. Sen. John Matthews, D-Bowman, presented the Town of Holly Hill with a check for \$500,000 during a public forum on Tuesday. Matthews said the state money is to be spent “strictly for infrastructure” such as sewer and connecting Holly Hill to the Lake Marion Regional Water System. The town will need at least another half-million dollars to match the grants planners think will be needed to complete the work.

The State: University of South Carolina plans to restart shuttles to Five Points in wake of shooting

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/10/23/3055811/university-of-south-carolina-plans.html#storylink=cpy>

Andrew Shain

The University of South Carolina is expected to start a new shuttle service from the Five Points entertainment district to its campus this weekend after a freshman was paralyzed by a stray bullet last week. The school will announce details Thursday, administrators said – the same day as a free concert on campus to show support for shooting victim 18-year-old Martha Childress and increased safety in Five Points. USC’s Greek fraternity and sorority leaders, who organized the concert, said the campus event is not a protest against the bar-heavy entertainment hotspot, which has been the location of several high-profile crimes in recent years.

National News:

Associated Press: Website contractors blame Obama administration

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=EeByZzan

Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar and Stephen Ohlemacher

The principal contractors responsible for the federal government's trouble-plagued health insurance website say the Obama administration shares responsibility for the snags that have crippled the system. Executives of CGI Federal, which built the federal HealthCare.gov website serving 36 states, and QSSI, which designed the part that verifies applicants' income and other personal details, are testifying Thursday before the House Energy and Commerce Committee. The hearing comes as President Barack Obama's allies are starting to fret about the political fallout. Democrats had hoped to run for re-election next year on the benefits of the health care law for millions of uninsured Americans. Instead, computer problems are keeping many consumers from signing up through new online markets.

Bloomberg: Obamacare Vendor Blames U.S. Agency for Website Delays

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10-24/obamacare-vendor-blames-u-s-agency-for-website-delays.html>

Kathleen Miller and Roxanna Tiron

CGI Group Inc., the main contractor for the Obamacare health exchanges, will tell lawmakers today it did nothing wrong and blame another vendor and a federal agency for website flaws hobbling online registration. The U.S. government is the "ultimate responsible party," Cheryl Campbell, a senior vice president at the company's CGI Federal Inc. unit, said in testimony posted yesterday on the House Energy and Commerce Committee website. The panel is set to hold the first hearing on failures that slowed sign-ups. Campbell said the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services was the project's "quarterback" while Quality Software Services Inc., owned by UnitedHealth Group Inc. (UNH), helped design a system that created a "bottleneck" blocking a majority of users from gaining access to the site.

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