

From: Symmes, Brian <BrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov>
To:
Date: 12/2/2015 10:25:40 AM
Subject: SC Front Pages – Wednesday, December 2, 2015

SC Front Pages – Wednesday, December 2, 2015



BUSINESS, 11A EATERIES COMING HERE



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The Greenville News

A GANNETT COMPANY

WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 2, 2015
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM



USA TODAY

SPECIAL OPERATIONS STRIKE FORCE HEADING TO IRAQ PAGE 1B

Haley: Flood's pricetag is \$1.4 billion



MYKAL MCELLOWNEY/STAFF
Sandy Roberts wades through the floodwaters to help pick up trash Oct. 5.

State taxpayers' portion is
\$114 million for recovery

TIM SMITH

TCSMITH@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

COLUMBIA - The estimated cost from October's flooding could exceed \$1.4 billion, according to new figures released by Gov. Nikki Haley and previously disclosed numbers by other officials.

Haley said Tuesday the state's share of those costs will be about \$114 million,

which she said could be paid for by growth in state revenues.

However, she is asking members of the state's congressional delegation to find \$140 million to help pay for restoration of an estimated 2,600 units of damaged housing for low- and moderate-income families.

"What we want to do is get people back on their feet," she said.

The flooding in October killed 17 people in South Carolina, forced the closure of 541 roads and bridges and sent thousands fleeing from their homes.

The \$1.4 billion number includes the \$114 million needed from state coffers as the state's share in flood repairs mostly covered by federal aid, almost \$600 million in agricultural losses, \$181 million in private insurance claims, \$82 million in loans from the federal Small Business Administration, \$140 million for housing and \$367 million in payments to public agencies and individuals by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Haley said repairs to the state's infrastructure

See FLOOD, Page 4A

Solicitor: Defendant, ex-maid killed pair

Rhodes pleaded not
guilty to all charges in
2012 double homicide

ROMANDO DIXSON

RDXSON@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

As Solicitor Walt Wilkins painted a picture of the prosecution's case in the double homicide of an Eastside couple, he alleged for the first time publicly that the couple's ex-housekeeper was involved in the slayings, although she has not been charged.

Jonathan Donell Rhodes, 25, of Greenville, is on trial this week. He was charged with murder in the 2012 deaths of Gary Wells, 78, and Helen Wells, 77. Wilkins said during his opening argument Tuesday that Rhodes did not kill the Wellises by himself and implicated Shirley Ann Rogers, the former housekeeper.

"Shirley and Jonathan Rhodes, you'll learn later, decided that Mr. and Mrs. Wells didn't need to be around anymore, and they went to Terra-mont (Drive) on Oct. 1, 2012, and they brutally murdered them," Wilkins told the jury.

Wilkins did not elaborate on Rogers' involvement, only adding that Rogers was the link between Rhodes and the Wellises. Rhodes has pleaded not guilty to all charges, including four counts of possession of a weapon during the commission of a violent crime, two counts of kidnapping and first-degree burglary.

Wilkins said the case against Rhodes was like piecing together a picture puzzle.

"You start with one piece and you find the next matching piece and the next matching piece," he said. "And over the next couple of days, we're going to present to you a picture—a perfect picture—of how this occurred and what happened. And once you get that picture made out perfectly, you will look down and you will see that Jonathan Rhodes murdered Gary and Helen Wells."



Jonathan
Rhodes

PIZZA PARTY A GO, WIN OR LOSE

Clemson's Swinney is planning to have enough free food to feed
20,000 people to celebrate the team after Saturday's UNC game



PHOTOS BY BART BOATWRIGHT/STAFF

If Clemson beats University of North Carolina, the party will start at noon Sunday, when the announcements about the championship bracket are made, and if the Tigers lose, it will be at 3 p.m. The gates will open an hour before the party.



RON BARNETT

RBARNETT@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

INSIDE

Clemson's Swinney is in the ACC and expects

The Post and Courier

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Wednesday, December 2, 2015

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Roof likely to face state trial first

Decision on death penalty in civil rights case up to U.S. attorney general, panel

BY ANDREW KNAPP
aknapp@postandcourier.com

Dylann Roof probably will stand trial in state court first as federal prosecutors continue to ruminate over whether to seek the death penalty in

his civil rights case, one of the authorities said Tuesday.

In the state proceeding set for July 11, the 21-year-old Eastover man will face execution if convicted of murder counts. He is accused of fatally shooting nine parishioners on June 17 at

pc Online
For coverage of the shooting at Emanuel AME Church, including victim profiles, videos and more, go to postandcourier.com/church-shooting

Emanuel AME Church in Charleston. But the decision to seek the same punishment in federal court rests with U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch

and the Review Committee on Capital Cases, which advises her.

During a hearing Tuesday in downtown Charleston, Assistant U.S. Attorney Jay Richardson said the case is expected to be sent to the committee by the year's end. The panel typically makes a recommendation to Lynch within 90 days after that, he said.

"Various entities and communities" also give input into whether to make it a capital case, Richardson added. With the decision still hanging, he said a

trial in federal court before the state's proceeding would not be realistic.

"It is not a simple, straightforward case," he said. "We have made significant progress... maybe not as quickly as some of us would like."

The bar meeting in U.S. District Court was a chance for prosecutors and defense attorneys to update Judge Richard Gergel on the status of the case.

Please see **ROOF**, Page A6

GOP race gears up in S.C.



Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio appears Tuesday at the College of Charleston as part of the "Bully Pulpit" series.



Republican presidential candidate Carly Fiorina spoke at a Concerned Veterans for America town hall event at The Citadel's Holiday Alumni Center on Tuesday.

Rubio says government 'out of touch,' is quizzed at C of C about marijuana

BY SCHUYLER KROPP
skropp@postandcourier.com

Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio came to the College of Charleston to talk about the country's future with its future leaders, only to find himself put on the spot by a 79-year-old woman who wanted to know where he stood on legalizing marijuana.

"It's an issue with me because I know people can get drugs on every street corner in Charleston," Elaine Pickens

of Charleston told the U.S. senator from Florida during his appearance Tuesday at the downtown campus.

Pickens conceded that her views on legalizing marijuana might not be shared by many in South Carolina, much less those her age.

"I know my ideas don't fall in line with the normal Charleston 80-year-olds," she said. But, she argued, taxing pot would increase government revenues and help clear out the prisons.

Please see **RUBIO**, Page A9

pc Online

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VIDEO
To see videos, go to postandcourier.com/videos

Fiorina slams VA during Citadel stop, courts S.C. Chamber leaders

BY SCHUYLER KROPP
AND GAVIN JACKSON
skropp@postandcourier.com
gjackson@postandcourier.com

Republican presidential candidate Carly Fiorina told a group of business owners in Columbia if she were to be the Republican nominee she could defeat Hillary Clinton, the Democratic frontrunner, in the general election.

"Yes I can beat her but it's also important to have somebody who knows

how to do the job," Fiorina, who has never held public office, said. "We cannot have on-the-job training in the Oval Office again."

Hours later at The Citadel in Charleston, Fiorina told a group of business owners that the Department of Veterans Affairs has shown a pattern of ineptitude, highlighted by administrators getting bonuses when patients are on waiting lists or worse.

Please see **FIORINA**, Page A9

State to cover \$114M in \$1.6B flooding disaster

Haley says S.C. will not need to borrow money

BY GAVIN JACKSON
gjackson@postandcourier.com

COLUMBIA — South Carolina will have to pick up \$114 million of the repair costs from the more than \$1.6 billion in damage caused by deadly floods in October.

Gov. Nikki Haley said Tuesday she has asked House and Senate budget writers to include the state's share of the \$493 million in damage that's eligible for reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. In announcing the cost of the historic flooding, Haley was



Haley

adamant that the state could cover its share without having to borrow the money — as some lawmakers have proposed — by using additional revenue from an expanding economy.

She said she would include the \$114 million in the state budget plan and "we're going to ask the General Assembly to include it in their budget." "What we do know is we have doubled our reserves we're not having to tap into them, and they have already estimated \$1.2 billion in additional revenue this year."

Please see **HALEY**, Page A7

Inside LOCAL



Hanahan police gave assistant fire chief break, says National Action Network. **A6**

STATE

Democrats criticize GOP lawmaker's 'fear mongering' of Planned Parenthood. **A7**

BUSINESS

Forecast calls for growth in S.C. economy in 2016. **B1**

SPORTS

Clemson still No. 1 in College Football Playoff rankings. **C1**

Blind woman longs to buy gifts for 2 grandchildren she's raising

Emma, who is blind, is raising two of her four grandchildren, ages 2 and 6. Without vision, finding work is challenging, and Emma is raising these two children on very limited means. Food and shelter are their priorities, and there is no room in the budget for much else.

Emma longs to be able to buy a gift for each child this holiday season. The children have been asking for new clothes, but she is unable to afford them.

The money you donate to Good Cheer will help individuals like Emma with necessities so they have a little room in their budgets to give their children a gift for Christmas while still keeping them safe and fed.

Contributions to The Post and Courier's Good Cheer Fund have helped the less fortunate in the Lowcountry since 1927.

The six charitable organizations

sharing the funds collected are the Lowcountry Food Bank, the Salvation Army, Star Gospel Mission, Association for the Blind, Coastal

Catholic Charities and Carolina Youth Development Center. Every cent of the money goes directly to the agencies, as there are no administrative costs involved.

Send tax-deductible contributions to the Good Cheer Fund, c/o The Post and Courier, 134 Columbus St., Charleston, SC 29403-6800. Donations also can be made in person or online at www.goodcheerfund.com.

For more information, email Robbie Scott at rscoot@postandcourier.com.

Please see **CHEER**, Page A6



Chance of storms. High 76, Low 50. Complete 5-day forecast. **B10**

Bridge... B7 Crossword... B8 E6 Obituaries... B4
Business... B1 Editorials... A14 Sports... C1
Classifieds... F1 Food... D1 Sudoku... B7
Comics... B8-9 Movies... B7 Television... B6

Charleston Deals today

Brown Dog Deli
Pay \$10 for \$20.
See A2

THE OLDER THE SMARTPHONE, THE BETTER? 6B



The Beaufort Gazette

WEDNESDAY, December 2, 2015

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NEW PLAYGROUND FOUND VANDALIZED



Children play at the new playground in Naval Heritage Park on Tuesday afternoon in Port Royal.

DELAYNA EARLEY • Staff photo

Adjacent skate park to remain closed indefinitely

By STEPHEN FASTENAU
sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com
843-706-8182

A recently opened Port Royal playground has been vandalized, leading the town to close the adjacent skate park.

Someone removed the steering wheel from the large wooden replica of a Spanish galleon, the centerpiece of the playground built last month in Naval Heritage Park. White spackle had also been thrown on the ship, town manager Van Willis said.

That, in addition to garbage strewn throughout the area, led the town to cordon off the skate park with crime tape and threaten anyone seen in the skate park with trespassing charges. The town is offering a reward for information about the vandalized ship.

Willis was prepared to reopen the skate park Tuesday afternoon but changed his mind after seeing the crime tape and signs torn down less than 24 hours after going up. The skate park will open when the trash in the area is picked up, he said.

"My staff will resume their cleanup efforts after the community that supposedly cares so much about this facility steps up and makes an effort," Willis said.

Closing the skate park set off a debate on the town's Facebook page.

Someone suggested charging fees. Others said the town should police the area more heavily.

Some said the act penalizes skateboarders who aren't part of the problem and have nowhere else to

56 arrests in US related to ISIS

It's the largest number of terrorism-related arrests in the country in a single year since September 2001.

By ERIC SCHMITT

New York Times News Service

WASHINGTON — U.S. authorities this year have arrested nearly five dozen people in the United States for helping to support or plot with the Islamic State, according to a new study, the largest number of terrorism-related arrests in the country in a single year since September 2001.

The Islamic State recruits defy any single profile, the study found, although they are younger than previous terrorism suspects, draw heavily on converts to Islam and reflect increasingly prominent roles for women in the terrorist organization.

A demographic snapshot of the 71 individuals arrested on charges related to the Islamic State since March 2014, including 56 this year, emerged from a comprehensive review of social media accounts and legal documents of nearly 400 U.S. sympathizers of the Islamic State conducted by researchers at George Washington University.

The volume and diversity of those arrested underscore the growing challenge the FBI and local law enforcement agencies face in trying to identify, monitor and, if necessary, apprehend suspects at a time when the Islamic State has sharply increased its appeal to Westerners through Twitter, Facebook and other social media.

"The individuals range from hardened militants to teenage girls, petty criminals and college students," said Lorenzo Vidino, the director of the university's program on extremism, which conducted the study. "The diversity is staggering." The report, titled "ISIS in America — From Retweets to Raqqa," was made public Tuesday.

Please see PARK on 8A

Please see ISIS on 8A

Beaufort County libraries to change hours in January



TERRIERS GIVE YELLOW JACKETS A FIGHT

SPORTS, B1



STRUGGLES CONTINUE FOR COAL INDUSTRY

BUSINESS, C5

Herald-Journal

SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

Wednesday, December 2, 2015



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TODAY THU FRI
62°/40° 54°/30° 53°/31°
Complete forecast, B8

UPSTATE



Vigil honors victims of violence

The pews of Morningside Baptist Church were lined Tuesday night with family members honoring the memories of their loved ones who lost their lives as a result of violence. **C1**

Two arrested in Union County homicide

The Union County Sheriff's Office announced Tuesday that two arrests have been made in the Nov. 20 death of Rebecca W. Tyler. **C1**

Nonprofits to share Duke grant money

Thirteen nonprofit organizations in South Carolina and North Carolina will share more than \$1 million in grants through the Duke Energy Water Resources Fund. **C4**

NATION & WORLD



Obama: Parts of deal must be binding

President Barack Obama said Tuesday that parts of the global warming deal being negotiated in Paris should be legally binding on the countries that sign on, setting up a potential fight with Republicans at home. **A4**

OCTOBER DISASTER

SC's share of flood damage: \$114M

Governor: State won't need to borrow money

By Jeffrey Collins
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina taxpayers will need to pay at least \$114 million for the state's share of damage caused by October's massive flooding,

which has a price tag topping \$1 billion, the governor said Tuesday.

Gov. Nikki Haley said the state won't need to borrow any money, and she will ask lawmakers to use part of a predicted increase of more than \$1 billion in revenue to pay the bills.

The estimates released at a news conference Tuesday include the state's obligations

for damaged roads, houses and other infrastructure like the Columbia Canal, which was damaged and left the state's largest city without clean water for more than a week.

The governor also said there have been \$181 million in insurance claims to private companies, and the federal government plans on paying about \$500 million to help with

roads, individual damage claims and assistance to government agencies. Add in the estimated \$375 million in direct damage to agriculture, and the total bill for flood damage is around \$1.2 billion.

The floods happened after up to 2 feet of rain fell over a few days in early October. The

SEE DAMAGE, A6

DOWNTOWN SHOOTOUT

Greer man, 18, killed in clash with Atlanta police



A car involved in an officer-involved shooting that left an 18-year-old Greer man dead sits on the sidewalk as a police officer stands by in downtown Atlanta on Monday night. DAVID GOLDMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Police officers ducked behind cars as gunshots whizzed through a busy part of downtown Atlanta, killing a Greer, S.C., man who was driving in the car. The

POLICE SHOOTOUT

Smith had run-ins with law enforcement in SC



PANORAMA

Give the gift of art

Sumter Artists Guild holds annual Holiday Mart c1

City may transfer land for Main Street hotel

BY ADRIENNE SARVIS
adrienne@theitem.com

Sumter City Council approved first reading of an ordinance to transfer .75 acres on Main Street to Sumter Hotel Venture LLC during its meeting Tuesday.

The extension of land will include 10 N. Main St. to 14 N. Main St., according to the proposed ordinance.

Mayor Joe McElwain said it is not

unique for the city to transfer land to prospective economic partners.

He said construction of the hotel is anticipated to start at the beginning of next year.

In other action, after a discussion of its conditions, council approved first reading of an ordinance to add exemptions from the prohibition against drinking on streets and other public areas to include approved sidewalk dining locations in the Central Business District.

According to the proposed ordinance, restaurants with the appropriate licenses to sell alcoholic beverages will be allowed to serve alcohol in designated dining areas on the sidewalk.

City Attorney Eric Shytle said the city could offer sidewalk dining permits, which would be easier than creating an ordinance.

Councilwoman Ione Dwyer and Councilman Calvin Hastie voted in opposition of the ordinance.

Also, council approved first reading of an amendment to a section of the city's code of ordinance regarding the demolition appeals process for property owners.

According to the proposed amendment, the chief codes enforcement official will have 10 days to schedule a hearing after receiving a demolition appeal.

SEE CITY, PAGE A5

Midlands economy keeps pace

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@theitem.com

Economic growth in the Midlands, including Sumter, has traditionally lagged behind other areas of South Carolina, says Joseph Von Nessen, an economist at University of South Carolina's Darla Moore School of Business; but this year's numbers show the region keeping pace with other areas in the state.

"The Midlands has been doing better this year," he said. "Traditionally the Midlands has been growing at a more moderate pace — that has changed."

He said Columbia has been growing on pace with Greenville and Charleston, boosted by growth in the education, military and state government sectors. That has benefitted the Sumter area as well.

"This time last year we were looking at sequester," he said, in reference to cuts in military spending at Fort Jackson and Shaw Air Force Base. "We had sequester, but not nearly as severe as expected."

South Carolina's highest rate of growth in six years will persist in 2016, said Von Nessen and Doug Woodward, economists in the Division of Research at the school, at an economic briefing Tuesday in Columbia promoting the Economic Outlook Conference scheduled for Dec. 17. Residents can expect broad-based growth across most industries with accompanying gains in employment and income, they said.

Job creation — one of the best indicators of economic performance, Von Nessen said — is expected to grow by 2.9 percent in 2016, according to projections.

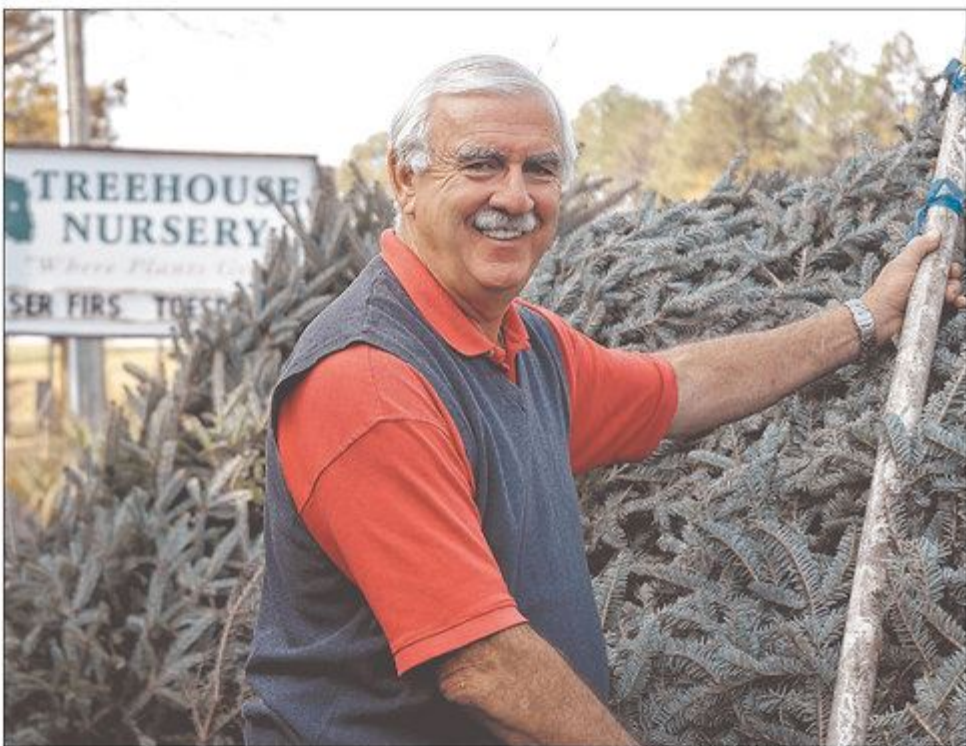


VON NESSEN



WOODWARD

Liked and shared



RICK CARPENTER / THE SUMTER ITEM

Harold Johnson, owner of Treehouse Nursery, illustrates how he uses a plastic pipe to determine the length of a tree.

Facebook post helps Treehouse Nursery recover from flood

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@theitem.com

No one has yet been able to determine the cost of damage from the 1,000-year flood, but one thing that was not uprooted by the deluge is the willingness of Palmetto state residents to help each other out.

Harold Johnson, owner of Treehouse Nursery & Feed Supply, 3750 Thomas Sumter Highway in Dalzell, found that out first hand after a local resident explained his predicament on Facebook.

A former Sumter police chief, Johnson said he suffered as much as \$70,000 in damage to merchandise, equipment and infrastructure when floodwaters

tired as police chief.

"We lost 3,500 plants that averaged \$15 to \$50 apiece," he said. "It washed them down the road a couple of miles."

Most of those plants were being readied for the spring season, he said, but that was only part of it.

"My office flooded, and my warehouse flooded," he said. "We lost about 125 bales of hay and probably close to 200 bags of horse feed and lime and fertilizer and seeds — all that kind of stuff."

The water in his office destroyed two computers and a credit card machine, he said.

"It hurt us pretty bad."

Johnson said other than an offer of a 30-year, 6 percent Small Business Ad-

vice for government assistance.

"I am 64 years old and don't need to be paying a mortgage at 94," he said. "I told them 'No thank you.'"

Johnson said it's been a tough year. "We are out of hay because of the drought," he said. "We had nine weeks without cutting any hay. We normally would have hay in the barn right now, and we don't have any. Income from things we normally would have we just haven't had this year."

He said he talked to Linda and they decided to pray about it.

Through it all, they weren't even thinking about going out of business, he said.

"We built it without any help and we

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DAILY 75¢, SUNDAY \$1.50

CRYING FOUL

Residents ask County Council to take on Hodges odor issue

By COLIN RIDDLE
criddle@indexjournal.com

Hodges Mayor Michael George said Tuesday he was hanging Christmas lights downtown the night before when the smell of dog food wafted across the small town of 150 residents as he said it does often.

While the odor didn't fill Greenwood County Council chambers Tuesday, Council continued its search for a solution to an issue Councilman Bob Fisher brought up at a meeting last month.

Fisher asked Council to take up a

new odor ordinance to help eliminate odors he associated with SPF North America, which produces pet food flavor enhancers and is located off Highway 25 two miles from Hodges.

Four residents, including George and state Rep. Shannon Riley, R-Greenwood, spoke during public comments, pleading with Council to fix an issue with odors coming from two sewage pump stations in the area.

The pump stations and surrounding sewer are owned by Greenwood Metropolitan District and are operated by Ware Shoals Water and Sewer District in a long-term lease.

Council voted Tuesday to table the ordinance after receiving legal advice from County Attorney Stephen Baggett in a closed-door meeting, referred to as executive session.

Baggett previously shared concerns over drafting an odor ordinance since it is difficult to measure what is considered an offensive odor.

"We're considering other options that may be beneficial," Fisher said. "We think we may have a better way that would be more direct."

Fisher said an ordinance is not off the table.

See ODOR, page 4A



COLIN RIDDLE | INDEX-JOURNAL

Hodges Mayor Michael George asks Greenwood County Council for their help in addressing an odor issue from SPF North America's plant off Highway 25.

LIGHTING LANDER



JOSHUA S. KELLY | INDEX-JOURNAL

A horse pulling a carriage on Tuesday trots along the Lander University campus. The school is hoping to start a new holiday tradition with a tree lighting and other Christmas-themed events.

University brings back holiday tradition

By ARIEL GILREATH
agilreath@indexjournal.com

The sound of hooves and Christmas music filled Lander University's campus Tuesday night as the school starts what it hopes will become a holiday tradition.

The event was a kick-start to the holiday season with a tree lighting and holiday activities, horse-drawn carriage rides, performances by the Greenwood and Emerald High School choir and a performance by the university student brass ensemble.

Students ate s'mores and drank hot cocoa while decorating gingerbread houses and walking around in tacky Christmas sweaters.

Randy Bouknight, vice president of student affairs, said they decided to have a Christmas tree lighting ceremony this year

because University President Richard Cosentino wanted to start a holiday tradition.

Bouknight said this will be the first tree-lighting ceremony in more than 15 years.

See HOLIDAY, page 3A

FLOODING

Haley extends FEMA deadline

By MARY KATE MCGOWAN
mmcgowan@indexjournal.com

Gov. Nikki Haley announced Tuesday that Federal Emergency Management Administration approved her request for the

30-day deadline extension for individual assistance in the cleanup efforts from October's historic flooding and heavy rains, but George McKinney said it will not affect much in Greenwood County.

McKinney, Greenwood County Emergency Management coordinator, said individual assistance application denials "have nothing to do with" the deadline extension that also includes the low-interest Small Business Administration loans, which was originally set for Friday. The new deadline is Jan. 4.

He said people who are denied are granted 60 days to reapply no matter the registration deadline.

"It gives people a longer time just to apply," he said.

With the deadline extension, McKinney said there might not be a significant increase in people who register for individual assistance.

He said 200 individuals applied within the first few weeks after the weather event, and the numbers have slowed down even as the original deadline approached.

"We really slowed down on the numbers that are applying now significantly," McKinney said.

FEMA spokesman Carl Henderson said 316 individuals or households have registered for individual assistance in Greenwood County as of Monday night. He said he did not know how many people's



GEORGE MCKINNEY

Active Day creates freedom, family environment

By MARY KATE MCGOWAN
mmcgowan@indexjournal.com

Active Day of Greenwood center director Ali McAlister ensures the center does more than keep clients healthy and safe. She makes sure the center is a family environment.

The adult day program looks after clients ranging in age from 20 to 80 while their families work and take

more quality time with their family when they leave for the day.

Tanya Anaker, Active Day of Greenwood nurse, said the individuals range in mobility. As the center is a way for them to see the community and leave their houses, she said they never cease to amaze her.

In addition to keeping up with the clients' medicine and medical appointments, McAlister, who has



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Darlington Middle hosting qualifier for robotics championships

From staff reports

DARLINGTON — Darlington Middle School will transform into a hub for robotics on Saturday when the school hosts the Pee Dee Area Qualifier for the 2016 South Carolina First Lego League State Championships.

Students from five public school districts and one private school who are passionate about

science and engineering will participate in the competition. This will be the first time Darlington Middle has been selected to host the Pee Dee Area Qualifier. Florence-Darlington Technical College previously hosted the event at the Southeastern Institute of Manufacturing and Technology.

"We are extremely excited and look forward to having an amazing time," DMS Principal Eddie

Shuler said. "Hopefully, we will continue to host the event each year. We will have a DMS team that will participate in the event. This group has been working since the beginning of the school year to assure it represents our school and district well."

Two other Darlington County School District schools will send teams to the competition: the Darlington County Institute of

Technology and Spaulding Middle School.

Saturday's competition will begin at 8 a.m. and continue until 3:30 p.m. at Darlington Middle School, which is located at 150 Pine Dale Drive in Darlington.

The Pee Dee Area Qualifier will be one of 15 qualifying competitions held statewide during December and January. The East State Championship will be

held Feb. 13 at Carolina Forest High School, and the West State Championship will be held at Easley High School on Feb. 6.

The competitions are sponsored by S.C. First Lego League and Robotics Education Inc. (S.C. FLL), which partners with FIRST LEGO League and Junior FIRST LEGO League in South Carolina.

See **ROBOTICS**, Page 3A

Hartsville to begin using CodeRED

From staff reports

The city of Hartsville has contracted with Emergency Communications Network to license its CodeRED high-speed notification system. CodeRED provides City officials the ability to deliver important or critical messages to phones in targeted areas or throughout the city quickly.

CodeRED allows in-city residents and businesses to receive critical messages from their local government about emergencies, or some general notifications if desired, by phone, text or email. The system uses a telephone database, although not all in-city phone numbers have necessarily been included in this. Individuals and businesses may add their own phone numbers directly into the system's database by visiting the city of Hartsville website, www.hartsvillenc.gov, and following the link to the CodeRED Community Notification Enrollment page, found on the front page of the website. Those without Internet access may call the city of Hartsville Public Service Department at 843-383-3006 to provide their information over the phone. Businesses and individuals may also opt out of receiving notifications if desired.

Required information includes a contact person's first and last name, a street address (physical address only, no P.O. boxes), city, state, zip code and a primary phone number. Additional phone numbers may be entered as well. Because CodeRED can use geographically based delivery of messages, street addresses are required to ensure that emergency notification calls are received by those who need them in a given situation.

All businesses should consider registering, as well as individuals who have unlisted phone numbers, individuals who have changed their phone number or address within the last year and those who use a cellphone or a VoIP phone as

See **CODERED**, Page 3A

Decked for the holidays



PHOTO BY ARDIE ARVIDSON/HARTSVILLE MESSENGER

Judy Walker, right, a member of the John L. Hart Cottage Guild, gives a tour of the home during last year's Christmas Open House. The Hart Cottage will be open to visitors on Sunday for its annual open house.

Hartsville's historic homes ready for Sunday's open house

BY ARDIE ARVIDSON

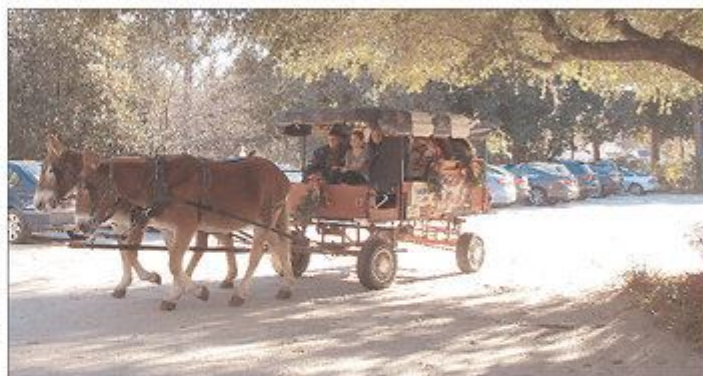
arvidson@hartsvillenc.gov

Hartsville's three historic homes will open to visitors Sunday for their annual Christmas tour from 3 to 5 p.m.

Featured on tour will be the Jacob Kelley House in Kelleystown, the Thomas Hart House at Kalmia Gardens and the John Hart Cottage on Home Avenue. The three historic homes, all listed on the National Register of Historic Places, will be decked out appropriately in period decorations for the holidays. Admission is free.

Jacob Kelley House

"It is that magical time of the year when the aromas of greenery, spices, cookies, and



Guests to the Historic Homes annual Christmas Open House on Sunday can enjoy carriage rides at the Thomas E. Hart House at Kalmia Gardens.

celebration," Lee said. "The children will experience the barn and learn about ways children

THE OLDER THE SMARTPHONE, THE BETTER? 6B



THE ISLAND PACKET

WEDNESDAY, December 2, 2015



Hilton Head Island • Bluffton

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ANALYSTS: SHUTDOWN ODDS OVER REFUGEES AT 50-50

Congress must approve \$1.1 trillion spending bill before Dec. 11

By WILLIAM DOUGLAS AND LESLEY CLARK
McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Congress returns to Washington this week facing a potential showdown over Syrian refugees resettling in the U.S., a battle that could lead to a partial shutdown of the government.

Lawmakers must approve a \$1.1 trillion spending bill before Dec. 11. And some opponents of President Barack Obama's effort to resettle 10,000 Syrian refugees in this country view the must-pass funding measure as the perfect vehicle to thwart the administration's plan.

"I think it's better than 50-50 that we're going to get one," Norman Ornstein, a centrist scholar on politics and Congress at the American Enterprise Institute, said of a shutdown.

The House of Representatives passed a bill before its Thanksgiving recess that essentially blocks the resettlement of Syrian and Iraqi refugees in the U.S. unless they pass heightened security background checks.

But Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has vowed to block the bill sponsored by Republican Reps. Richard Hudson of North Carolina and Michael McCaul of Texas. And Obama threatens to veto it if the bill arrives at his desk, even though it passed the House on a veto-proof bipartisan 289-137 vote.

That leaves the spending bill, said Rep. Mick Mulvaney, R-S.C.

"That's the logical next step, especially if the Senate doesn't take up the issue," said Mulvaney, a member

Please see 50-50 on 8A

County approves Bluffton Walmart

Commission votes unanimously to allow plans for a shopping center at the intersection of S.C. 170 and Bluffton Parkway to advance.

By ASHLEY FAHEY
afahey@islandpacket.com
843-706-8137

Beaufort County's first Walmart grocery store has moved one step closer to breaking ground.

In a special meeting, the Bluffton Planning Commission voted unanimously to give approval, with conditions by town staff and board members, for a certificate of appropriateness to a proposed shopping center at the intersection of S.C. 170 and Bluffton Parkway. The project is part of the Buckwalter planned-unit development.

A 43,000-square-foot Walmart Neighborhood Market and Pharmacy will anchor the development, which sits on a 24.7-acre site. A Walmart gas station, with six fueling stations and a 757-square-foot kiosk, and two retail buildings, one 8,400 square feet and the other 9,000 square feet, are also included in the center.

Conditions for approval include additional drawings for dumpster enclosures on the property and an integrated sign package. Additionally, the Planning Commission requested further changes to the landscaping plan, suggesting the use of more "native plant materials" in the development.

"There are some (proposed) trees that may or may not be good for this region," said commission member Daniel Keefer. He cited honey locusts and other deciduous trees mentioned in the landscaping plan as being particularly problematic in humid Lowcountry weather. "There might be better plants and trees that are more suited for this area," Keefer added.

The Planning Commission also

Please see WALMART on 8A



Beaufort County libraries to change hours in January

FLORENCE COUNTY FLOOD RECOVERY

Two state roads remain closed

BY JOSHUA LLOYD
Morning News
jlloyd@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Nearly two months after historic rainfall hit the state and left dozens of Pee Dee roads in shambles, state road repair crews have narrowed flood-related closures down to just two in Florence County. In the Effingham area, Hill-

Harrell Road remains closed from McLaughlin Road to Stagecoach Road, and in the vicinity of Pamplico, the bridge on South Old River Road between Keefe Road and River Road remains out.

Marion Street from U.S. 52 (North Ron McNair Boulevard) to North Matthews Road in Lake City is also closed, but that is for regularly scheduled main-

tenance, not flood related damages.

David Johnson, a construction engineer for the South Carolina Department of Transportation's fifth district, said most of the state roads damaged in the Pee Dee during the "1,000-year flood" have been repaired.

He said Hill Harrell Road is on track to reopen by the end of next week.

"Hill Harrell Road is under an active contract and is in the process of being repaired now," Johnson said. "We're looking at an approximate finish date of Dec. 11 for that project."

The closed section of Old River Road includes a bridge that needs a complete overhaul, which could take up to six

See **ROADS**, Page 4A

Current Florence County road closings

- Hill-Harrell Road — from McLaughlin Road to Stagecoach Road
- Marion Street — from U.S. 52 (North Ron McNair Boulevard) to North Matthews Road
- South Old River Road — from Keefe Road to River Road

Here for the cheer

Pee Dee holiday happenings

BY DEBORAH SWEARINGEN
Morning News
dswearingen@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — It is officially December, and we all know what that means. 'Tis the season for tree lightings, home tours and parades galore.

Organization can be a tough feat as datebooks begin filling up with holiday happenings.

So, The Morning News is here to help. We have made a list. And we've checked it twice.

Want to spread holiday cheer? Refer to the list.

Hope to take the kids to meet Santa? Refer to the list.

Craving some festive tunes? You got it. Refer to the list.

In said list, you will find tree lighting events such as the 30th annual "A Light for Someone You Love" tree lighting ceremony for McLeod Hospice at 5:45 p.m. Thursday and the Timrod Park tree lighting before

See **CHEER**, Page 3A

HOLIDAY EVENTS

LIGHTS

Fantasy of Lights: 5-9 p.m. today at Swan Lake Iris Gardens in Sumter. The lights run every day until Dec. 31. Fantasy of Lights will be open until 10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Admission is free. For more information, call 803-436-2640.

Night of A Thousand Candles: 3-10 p.m. Thursday to Saturday, plus Dec. 10-12 and Dec. 17-20 at Brookgreen Gardens in Murrells Inlet. Only the gardens are open. Prices are \$14 for members and \$18 for the general public. For children, admission is \$8 for members and \$10 for general public. For more information or to learn about group pricing, call 843-235-6021.

See **HOLIDAYS**, Page 3A

LIGHTING UP THE HOLIDAYS



PHOTOS BY JOSHUA LLOYD/MORNING NEWS

Florence County Council Chairman Roger Poston speaks Tuesday at the 2015 city-county Christmas tree lighting.



Alex Cotran, 7, asks Santa Claus for a mini-iPad and a Crayola Marker Maker during the 2015 tree lighting ceremony.

'Tis the season, officially, in Florence County. On Tuesday evening, dozens of people gathered for the 22nd annual Florence City-County Tree Lighting Ceremony. Gatherers were greeted with warm beverages and live and jolly Santa Claus, who rode in on a city firetruck and took time to hear Christmas wishes throughout the event.

Timmons ville Christmas Festival begins Thursday

BY SHAMIRA MCCRAY

Chairperson Pat Driggers said at performances by the Brocking- "We need everybody's sup- immediately follow at noon.

Brian Symmes

Cell: 803-673-9437

Office: 803-734-0304