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To:
Date: 7/23/2016 9:44:16 AM
Subject: Clips – Saturday, July 23, 2016

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Indian Panorama: Several Indian American Party Stalwarts Still Stumped By Republican Presidential Nominee Trump

<http://www.theindianpanorama.news/featured/politics/several-indian-american-party-stalwarts-still-stumped-republican-presidential-nominee-trump-66583/>

As 16 Indian American delegates pledged to support Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump at the party's national convention in Cleveland, Ohio, several long-time party supporters said they were still on the fence about the nominee. Trump won the nomination July 19 evening after each state announced their delegate vote counts, based on primary elections and caucuses. Trump won 1,725 votes; he needed 1,237 to clinch the nomination. Real estate broker Subba Kolla, a delegate from Virginia, announced the votes from his State during the delegate count. Kolla is the first-ever Indian American delegate from Virginia to the Republican convention. "I'm still concerned about Trump," Sudhir Parikh, founder of the Indian American Republican Council, told India-West. "Trump is too anti-immigrant, too anti-minority, and anti-trade. He sticks to his point of view and I'm not sure this represents the views of the Republican Party," said the New Jersey physician, a prominent fundraiser for the Bush presidential dynasty.

NOTE: South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley – a Republican – declined an invitation to speak at the convention. Haley said she would attend the meet, but maintain a low profile.

SC Political News:

The State: SC Democrats praise Clinton's VP pick

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article91409737.html>

Avery G. Wilks

S.C. Democrats say U.S. Tim Kaine passes the most important test for a vice presidential selection: If needed, he could step in as a strong commander in chief. Those Democrats praised Hillary Clinton's vice presidential pick – announced Friday, ahead of their party's convention next week – as an experienced, steady hand whose resume strengthens the Democratic ticket. "What it shows is that Secretary Clinton has put a lot of thought into the importance of a VP who is ready to become president at any time," said state Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, D-Orangeburg. "Tim Kaine fits the bill on all fronts." Former Democratic S.C. Gov. Jim Hodges said he has known Kaine for about 10 years, calling the Virginian a "terrific choice" given his experience as mayor of Richmond, governor of his home state and a U.S. senator. It does not hurt that Kaine is "affable," speaks fluent Spanish and can help win over independent and moderate voters still on the fence, Hodges said.

Post and Courier: Summey, Sass change vote on gun resolution

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160722/160729760/summey-sass-change-vote-on-gun-resolution-Prentiss-Findlay>

A vote calling on the state to ban certain guns drew so much heat on two Charleston County Council members that they changed their votes retroactively so the public record now says they were against it. The resolution was supported by seven Council members on July 14, and none voted against it. But then the calls started coming. On Tuesday, Council Chairman Elliott Summey and Councilman Herb Sass moved to change their positions after the fact. Gun rights advocates have called the county taking a stand on the issue a pointless display. "I think it's a ridiculous resolution," said James Overby, 1st Congressional District director for Gun Owners of South Carolina. The resolution was initially approved after the sponsor, Councilman Henry Darby, showed council members images of machine guns firing hundreds of rounds and photographs of gory gunshot wounds. His resolution called for council to encourage the governor and the state Legislature to ban "assault-style" weapons statewide.

SC Agency News:

Associated Press : EXCLUSIVE: Corrosive groundwater raises risk of lead exposure in SC

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article91444932.html>

Sammy Fretwell

South Carolina's sandy midsection contains some of the country's most acidic, pipe-corroding groundwater, but many small utilities aren't treating drinking water to prevent lead from washing off pipes and into people's taps. About two-thirds of the utilities that rely on groundwater in the Columbia area do not use treatment methods that can protect drinking water from lead, records show. In several cases, utilities not using corrosion controls have exceeded federal safe drinking water standards for lead contamination, according to S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control records. Previously used in water supply pipes, lead is a toxin that causes brain damage in children, even if consumed in microscopic amounts. Acidic groundwater, like that found in Richland and Lexington counties, can corrode pipes containing lead.

The State: Future of I-526 money likely to be delayed

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article91433917.html>

Cassie Cope

A decision on who will get hundreds of millions in state roads money and where it will be spent may have to wait. The chairman of a state roads agency plans to recommend extending the deadline to wind down the planned extension of Interstate 526 in Charleston County. The board that governs the S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank approved unwinding the project last month. The move came after Charleston failed to meet its deadline to come up with a plan to pay its \$353 million share of the cost of extending I-526, also known as the Mark Clark Expressway. That deadline was set in December after the projected cost of the road had increased to \$773 million from \$420 million, which the bank initially set aside for the project. Environmental groups, including the S.C. Coastal Conservation League, opposed extending I-526. Now, Charleston County wants the Infrastructure Bank to agree to spend the remaining balance of the \$420 million set aside for extending I-526 on other projects in that county.

Post and Courier: Charleston County officials working to keep I-526 project alive

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160722/160729763/charleston-county-officials-working-to-keep-i-526-project-alive>

Diane Knich

In behind-the-scenes negotiations with the S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank, Charleston

County officials have been working to preserve options for completing Interstate 526, a controversial big-ticket project the bank's board shut down in May. What they were supposed to be doing was closing out the contract for the controversial highway extension. Among other things, the county has asked for control of all the land purchased for the proposed highway's path, the authority to press ahead for federal approval of the road project, and preservation or outright control of most of the funding. The bank's board voted to shut down the project after Charleston County failed to come up with a solid and binding plan to cover the project's more than \$300 million-plus shortfall. What remained unknown at the time was how \$420 million earmarked for the project would be spent — and how contractual issues with the county would be settled.

LGBT Laws:

Charlotte Observer : Legal fights over HB2 could cost Charlotte the 2019 NBA game, too

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article91376322.html>

Michael Gordon

House Bill 2 has already cost Charlotte one NBA All-Star Game. Now an expected full-court legal fight over the law puts the city's chances of hosting the 2019 event in serious jeopardy, too. Legal experts say battles to overturn the law could still be crawling through the courts two years from now, when the NBA could face another decision on whether to find an alternative venue to Charlotte. "Given the current political situation, I just can't see the General Assembly doing anything about it," said Brian Clarke, a faculty member of the Charlotte School of Law. "A final resolution in the courts is at least two years out. That's cutting it pretty close." On Thursday, NBA Commissioner Adam Silver formally announced that the Charlotte Hornets and the city had lost the 2017 event – and up to \$100 million in economic benefits – due to the state's refusal to amend or repeal HB2. The law withholds legal protections from LGBT individuals and bans transgender people from using bathrooms and other public facilities that match their sexual identities.

SC after Police Shootings:

The State : Love Thy Neighbor rally pushes power of peace, prayer

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article91398907.html>

A Columbia-based Prosper Strong Foundation sponsored a Love Thy Neighbor Rally at the South Carolina State House on Friday, calling for nonviolence and encouraging a sense of community through prayer, second chances and unity. The rally comes amid national concern about shootings by police and of police nationwide.

Post and Courier: Charleston County deputy who began career on Dallas police force visits city after tragedy

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160722/160729746/charleston-county-deputy-who-began-career-on-dallas-police-force-visits-city-after-tragedy>

Melissa Boughton

When Alan Ali heard about the five police officers killed in a Dallas shooting a couple weeks ago, he knew he had to go back to the place he started his 25-year law enforcement career. "It was just like a calling," said the Charleston County sheriff's master deputy first class. "I had to go back, some how, some way." His wife was the first to learn of the July 7 ambush on the news, and when she told Ali he immediately called his best friend, a Dallas Police Department deputy chief. He was OK, but he couldn't talk for long and it wasn't until the next morning that Ali found out about the casualties. "My heart just sank," he said. Ali joined the Dallas Police Department in 1991 as a patrol officer and

eventually worked his way to the gang unit. He went to the Charleston County Sheriff's Office in 1998 and now works on the U.S. Marshals Service task force.

Post and Courier: North Charleston Police Department hosts statewide police Explorers conference
<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160722/160729762/north-charleston-police-department-hosts-statewide-police-explorers-conference>

Gregory Yee

Shaun Weatherford stood with a group of young men in a parking lot of the North Charleston Coliseum watching as a patrol car drove around a complicated course of traffic cones. For Weatherford, a 20-year-old with the North Charleston Police Department's Explorers program, Thursday's event was part of his path to becoming a police officer. It was the latest of a series of competitions in a five-day conference for youth interested in a law enforcement career. Despite nationwide tension fueled by shootings of police officers by civilians and of viral videos of police officers shooting civilians, Weatherford said he's set on his career goals and wants to serve the community where he grew up. "We all hope it's just a period we're working through," said Weatherford, a captain in the Explorers. "I want to help citizens out. When you take that oath, you commit to it. As an officer you're helping out total strangers no matter who it is."

Aiken Standard: Community comes together at prayer vigil in Hopelands Gardens
<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160722/160729853/community-comes-together-at-prayer-vigil-in-hopelands-gardens>

Dede Biles

Local law enforcement officials, during a prayer vigil at Hopelands Gardens on Friday night, thanked the community for its assistance. "I am grateful that we have the relationship between the citizens and law enforcement that we do," said Aiken County Sheriff Michael Hunt. "I have been the sheriff since 2003, and I have had to lead some folks through some tough times. We've had a train derailment, tornadoes, a deputy shot, a deputy stabbed, a deputy killed and two police officers killed (within less than 40 days of each other). Every time we had a tough time, you stood behind us. We know your are behind us, and we appreciate you." Aiken Department of Public Safety Chief Charles Barranco echoed those sentiments.

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: Photographic memorial honors fallen SC military members
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=IP9HbR2w
SC State Wire

The third year has been the hardest for Yolanda Austin. Her son, Barrett, was killed in Afghanistan in 2013, and she has found herself in a difficult place along the path to healing. The wounds are still fresh in Barrett's father, Curt, whose sense of loss is written deeply on his face. The couple is taking some solace, however, in a photographic memorial called Remembering Our Fallen, part of a nationwide project to collect photos of all the members of the military who have lost their lives since Sept. 11, 2001. The collection of photos has been completed in 16 states, including South Carolina. "I'm just glad to know that people want to keep his memory alive," Yolanda Austin said. The memorial will be on public display at Dillard Funeral Home in Pickens through the end of August.

Local News:

Herald-Journal: Spartanburg jail welcomes county's help on mental health issues

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20160722/articles/160729887>

Daniel J. Gross

It's a problem jails across the country know well: Too many people with mental illnesses are ending up behind bars. In Spartanburg County, about a quarter of the jail's inmates have been diagnosed with a serious mental illness. In an effort to find solutions to the problem, the Spartanburg County Council this week passed a resolution supporting the Stepping Up Initiative. The national program charges local governments to bring together county leaders, jail officials and mental health professionals to develop a plan for reducing the number of inmates with mental illness. But what happens now? Under the initiative, Spartanburg County is expected to develop a team of leaders that includes a point person to capture data and measure outcomes. One of the early steps is to make sure leaders at the jail, courthouse, police departments and county council have the same mental health definitions and have the most accurate population totals for those with mental health issues. Programs already underway to handle mental illness in jail would be tracked collectively and streamlined so everyone involved stays up to date on progress.

The State: EXCLUSIVE: Lexington Medical settles civil fraud suit for \$17 million

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article91389192.html>

John Monk

Lexington Medical Center has settled a federal civil fraud lawsuit brought by a whistleblowing former doctor-employee for \$17 million. In settling the lawsuit, Lexington Medical admitted no fault. The U.S. Department of Justice had joined in the lawsuit against the hospital. "The settlement, in which Lexington Medical Center expressly denied any wrongdoing, allowed the medical center to avoid continued costly litigation that could have lasted for several years," hospital spokeswoman Jennifer Wilson said in a statement released Friday afternoon. Wilson stressed none of the matters covered in the lawsuit were related "to the quality of care provided by Lexington Medical Center or inaccurate billing."

Aiken Standard: Aiken police officer named in federal lawsuit resigns from agency

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160721/160729919/aiken-police-officer-named-in-federal-lawsuit-resigns-from-agency->

Maayan Schechter

An Aiken police officer named in a federal lawsuit quietly resigned Wednesday following an internal review into social media posts he made on Facebook. Chief Charles Barranco, of the Aiken Department of Public Safety, confirmed on Thursday that Master Corp. Chris Medlin turned in his resignation on Wednesday. In his resignation letter, Medlin said, "Please accept my immediate resignation from my position as a Public Safety Corporal. It has been a pleasure working for the Aiken Department of Public Safety for the last 20 years." He signed it respectfully, Master Corporal John C. Medlin.

The State: Wastewater workers prevented sewage disaster during October flood

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article90874317.html>

Sarah Ellis

More than 150 million gallons of sewage were surging into the Columbia wastewater treatment plant, and a nearby dike was threatening to break at the height of the city's historic flooding disaster last October. The plant workers were told to shut down the plant and evacuate, but five men voluntarily stayed behind to ensure the filthy deluge of wastewater would not contaminate the Congaree River and, ultimately, the city's drinking water. "We decided we weren't going to let that happen," said Adrian Martin, one of the plant's chief operators. Martin and three other staffers of the City of

Columbia Metro wastewater treatment plant were recognized for heroic actions that prevented an even larger catastrophe from hitting the city during the October 2015 flood.

Post and Courier: Charleston County aims to curb rural drowning

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160722/160729814/charleston-county-aims-to-curb-rural-drowning>

Abigail Darlington

What's most important, according to PRC Executive Director Tom O'Rourke, is that Thornton and the estimated 435 other children in the rural camp programs are learning skills that could save their lives. The recreation agency started using the portable training pool in the Odyssey Camps in McClellanville, Baptist Hill and Johns Island because most kids in those rural areas didn't otherwise have a safe environment where they could learn how to swim with trained instructors and lifeguards. That's part of the reason those communities, which are surrounded by creeks and other bodies of water, see a higher rate of drowning deaths than urban areas, where public pools with swimming lessons are more available. But O'Rourke said the training program isn't enough to curb the problem.

Associated Press: No Vacation from Hunger: South Carolina parks collect food

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=EhDRg8H6

SC State Wire

Workers at South Carolina's state parks want people to know there is no vacation from hunger. That's why the parks are holding a food drive this weekend. There are trucks at all 47 state parks on Saturday and parks officials are hoping visitors will fill them up with canned goods and other non-perishable food. Everything that is collected will be donated to local food banks. The event, dubbed "Pack A Park Truck," is part of a five-month campaign to raise food for the needy. The "Hunger Takes No Vacation" food drive being held with the South Carolina Food Bank Association ends after Thanksgiving.

Aiken Standard: With new exec director, Augusta airport aims for continued growth, community partnership

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160722/160729872/with-new-exec-director-augusta-airport-aims-for-continued-growth-community-partnership->

Christina Cleveland

Augusta Regional Airport has become more competitive, according to its new executive director, who is aiming for continued growth and community partnerships, including those within Aiken County. Executive Director Herbert Judon began in May and said he sees the success of what has become his new home, but also its potential. "I'm very excited about being in Augusta," said Judon, who is the former assistant aviation director of the Charlotte Douglas International Airport. "I think that the Augusta airport, although it's been successful, we use the term often times about the great potential we have at the airport and in the region. That's one of the very exciting things to me is to continue to grow it and to continue for it to be a regional asset." Judon said goals include getting more flights in and out of Augusta and for the airport to keep offering a "premier" customer service experience.

Independent Mail: Both jobless rate and labor force size rise in Upstate counties

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/both-jobless-rate-and-labor-force-size-rise-in-upstate-counties-383e1a0c-36fe-0b93-e053-0100007f061f-387997022.html>

Abe Hardesty

Nearly 100 people in Anderson County found work in June. But a far larger number began or resumed the search for work. That made the unemployment rate in Anderson and surrounding counties soar, according to the June estimates by the South Carolina Department of Employment and

Workforce. Anderson County Governmental Affairs/Special Projects Director Steve Newton said the June unemployment jump is typical. "We see the same thing every year for June — a slight increase in the number employed and a big jump in labor force," Newton said Friday. The number of working Anderson County residents grew by 81 from May to June, but the number of unemployed jumped by 785 — leaving the county with a higher total in the workforce, but a 5.3 percent unemployment rate. The rate in May was 4.5 percent.

Associated Press: Taking flight: Ladybugs being released in Lowcountry

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Lg4zkqfV

SC State Wire

Thousands of ladybugs are about to head home. The third annual Ladybug Release is scheduled for Saturday. That's when hundreds of children will release about 150,000 of the insects at Magnolia Gardens, the historic plantation on the Ashley River. Ladybugs are natural predators to harmful smaller insects such as aphids. A Volkswagen Beetle, painted to resemble a giant ladybug, arrives at the plantation about 10 a.m. to signal the ladybug release. A ladybug costume contest and nature displays and interactive demonstrations are also planned.

National News:

Associated Press: Clinton and Kaine to debut as Democratic ticket in Florida

<http://bigstory.ap.org/5c4f1ffe850747e684f16a18e8fadf6b>

Ken Thomas

Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine will debut as a presidential ticket in the crucial battleground state of Florida as they head toward next week's Democratic Party convention. Clinton ended a monthslong search for a running mate with a Friday evening phone call to the senator from Virginia, the state's former governor and mayor of Richmond. Long viewed as a likely choice to partner with Clinton, he is a fluent Spanish speaker with a reputation for working with Republicans. "Trying to count the ways I hate @timkaine," Arizona Republican Sen. Jeff Flake wrote on Twitter. "Drawing a blank. Congrats to a good man and a good friend." Kaine's selection completes the line-up for the general election. Clinton and Kaine will face Republican Donald Trump and his running mate, Mike Pence, the Indiana governor.

Associated Press: California governor denies parole for Manson follower

<http://bigstory.ap.org/9f0f2b5aa8384d47ac81f56110c827d7>

Jonathan J. Cooper

Leslie Van Houten, the youngest member of the Manson "family" to take part in a series of gruesome California murders in 1969, has been denied freedom again — her past overshadowing her decades as a model prisoner. California Gov. Jerry Brown on Friday overturned a parole board recommendation in April that found Van Houten, 66, was no longer the violent woman who helped slaughter a wealthy grocer and his wife. The board noted that during her 46 years in prison, Van Houten completed college degrees, ran self-help groups for other inmates and had a spotless disciplinary record. Brown disagreed with their conclusion. "She remains an unacceptable risk to society if released," he wrote in a five-page review that denied Van Houten parole for the 20th time.

Associated Press: AP Poll: Support grows among Americans for stricter gun laws

<http://bigstory.ap.org/81b6044778f34517b195dd406a8af4f0>

Lisa Marie Pane and Ryan J. Foley

Americans increasingly favor tougher gun laws by margins that have grown wider after a steady

drumbeat of shootings in recent months, but they also are pessimistic that change will happen anytime soon, according to a new Associated Press-GfK poll. Nearly two-thirds of respondents expressed support for stricter laws, with majorities favoring nationwide bans on the sale of semi-automatic assault weapons such as the AR-15 and on the sale of high-capacity magazines holding 10 or more bullets. The percentage of Americans who want such laws is the highest since the AP-GfK poll started asking the question in 2013, a survey taken about 10 months after the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, that killed 20 children and six educators. High-profile shootings also appear to have taken a toll on Americans' sense of safety. Strong majorities of those polled expressed some degree of concern that they or a relative will be a victim of gun violence or a mass shooting.

World News:

Associated Press : Police say Munich suspect was obsessed with mass shootings

<http://bigstory.ap.org/29af8dffe98f4e24a9bfefbc1d0a58e4>

Paul Wheatley and Frank Jordans

The 18-year-old gunman who opened fire at a crowded Munich shopping mall and fast-food restaurant, killing nine people and wounding 16 others before killing himself, was obsessed with mass shootings, police said Saturday. Investigators searched the unnamed German-Iranian man's home overnight and found a considerable amount of literature about mass killings, including a book titled "Rampage in Head: Why Students Kill," but no evidence that he was linked to extremist groups such as the Islamic State. They believe he acted alone. "Documents were found about mass shootings," Munich's police chief Hubertus Andrae told reporters. "The perpetrator was obviously obsessed with the issue." Robert Heimberger, the head of Bavaria's criminal police, said it appeared the shooter had hacked a Facebook account and sent a message inviting people to come to the mall for a free giveaway.

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