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Subject: SC Front Pages – Tuesday, November 17, 2015

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## **SC Front Pages – Tuesday, November 17, 2015**

# The Post and Courier

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Tuesday, November 16, 2015

POSTANDCOURIER.COM

Charleston, S.C. \$8.00

## Financial chief for schools resigns

Decision comes amid scrutiny of Charleston County district's budget

BY DEANNA RAN  
and RALPH ROVERS  
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Charleston County School District's Chief Financial Officer Michael Bobby has resigned following weeks of scrutiny

over an \$86-million budget shortfall. Meanwhile, some school board members say district employees have been providing inaccurate estimates during the budgeting process and largely ignore board in the dark about unauthorized spending for at least five years. In September, district officials re-



Bobby

vealed that they had oversteered the 2014-15 budget by \$1,750,850 — primarily in salaries and benefits — and miscalculated local property tax revenue by \$6,366,662, resulting in a \$18 million deficit, or roughly 4 percent of the \$407 million general operating fund. The district also has an anticipated

\$4 million shortfall in the current fiscal year based on new revenue projections.

"Staff have manipulated the numbers to keep the board from seeing the budget, and it's not just the financial office. It's system-wide," said board member Todd Garrett, who sits on the audit and finance committee.

He said district employees included "unqualitative assumptions" in the budgeting process, including under-

estimating the costs of salary and benefits, Garrett said he could not specifically say who provided the bad data or approved the additional spending.

When asked who had approved the \$8.65 million in unbudgeted spending, board chairman Garry Hobbs Goan said, "We have that same question." She said the board expects to know more after an internal audit is completed next week.

Please see **B06B1**, Page A3

## Haley would reject refugees from Syria

Cites 'primary duty to ensure safety of citizens' of S.C.



A Syrian man kisses his daughter shortly after disembarking from a dinghy at a beach on the Greek island of Lesbos, after crossing the Aegean sea from the Turkish coast Monday. The civil war in Syria and the Islamic State takeover of large areas in Syria and Iraq have driven millions to flee their homes to seek refuge in Europe.

BY GAVIN JACKSON and  
CYNTHIA KOJAN  
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ckojan@postandcourier.com

COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley isn't ready to close South Carolina's borders to Syrian refugees, she insists. Even if any Syrians are coming to the state after the terrorist attacks in Paris last weekend that killed 129 and injured hundreds.

"As governor, it is my first and primary duty to ensure the safety of the citizens of South Carolina," Haley said in a written letter to Secretary of State John Kerry. "While I agree that the United States should try to assist individuals in such dire situations, it is precisely because of the situation in Syria that makes their admission into the United States a potential threat to our national security."

Haley joined a growing number of mostly Republican governors in saying they would refuse to allow Syrian refugees into their states if the Obama administration goes through with its plan to let 10,000 into the

### Inside

Grid questions giving refugees a path to U.S. in C-LEC speech. **Page A3**

France 10x top Paris attack figure, seeks unity to bomb IS. **Page A6**

Sept. 11th-era fears create focus in U.S. as refugees flee from Syria. **Page A8**

Aspects may renew energy prison debate among tech firms. **Page B1**

### country

Haley has in the past supported faith-based groups — Lutheran Family Services in Columbia and World Relief in Yorkburg — that have resettled refugees in South Carolina, including Christians facing religious persecution in their homelands.

There are no Syrian refugees currently in South Carolina, she said.

Please see **REFUGEES**, Page A8

## Taking a closer look at the refugee dilemma

BY JEFF KASWIR and  
ALYCE A. CACCIWELL  
Associated Press

DETROIT — Several U.S. governors have threatened to stop accepting Syrian refugees following last week's attack in Paris, even as experts counter they lack legal authority to block the resettlement.

Meanwhile, President Barack Obama, whose administration recently pledged to accept about 10,000 Syrian refugees, argued Monday that the United States needs to allow them because many are fleeing terrorism.

Some state leaders disagree with Obama's assertion the country cannot allow refugees without vetting and security. Several have called for a complete halt to resettlement, others for tempo-

rary delays and a closer look at information from federal officials on the vetting process.

The Homeland Security Department says refugees face the highest level of security screening of anybody entering the U.S., but officials will work to allay states' concerns.

Here's a look at why some states are hunkering, what federal officials and refugee experts are saying and how the refugee resettlement process works.

**What are the states' primary concerns and are they calling for?**

Geographic in many states, mainly Republicans, are responding in heightened concern terrorists might use the refugees as cover to sneak across borders.

Please see **STATES**, Page A6

## New S.C. health care headaches expected

Obamacare options fewer, prices to go up

BY LAUREN SAUSNER  
lauren@postandcourier.com

Larry Summers paid \$594 a month in 2014 and \$114 a month this year for an Obamacare insurance policy to cover his family of three in Summerville.

Next year, starting December 1, his 63-year-old Summerville wife will be able to afford health insurance at all. "I might just have to drop myself off completely and not have any coverage," he said.

His decision making is one reason for Affordable Care Act customers. Open enrollment for 2016 health plans on HealthCare.gov started this month and runs through Jan. 15, but shoppers looking for coverage on Jan. 1 must pick a plan by mid-December. In South Carolina, they're facing higher prices, fewer options and narrower networks.

Please see **HEALTH**, Page A3

## Charleston, Mt. Pleasant to vote today

Mayor, council seats at stake in runoff

BY ROBERT DEBBE  
rdebbe@postandcourier.com

Charleston voters will pick a new mayor and two City Council members Tuesday, while voters in Mount Pleasant also will choose two Town Council members.

All four contests are runoff races, unfinished business from the Lowcountry's Nov. 3 municipal elections. The most visible — and expensive — race is the one for the Charleston mayor's job. Voters will choose between state Rep. Leon Starvoe and businessman John Tecklenburg, both of whom finished on top of the city's out-vote in April two weeks ago.

Please see **ELECTIONS**, Page A3

### Inside

#### SPORTS

Tigers' Deshaun Watson takes Heisman race in stride. **C1**

#### STATE

Colbert, Rucker among those to help raise funds for S.C.'s deadliest flood victims. **A5**



Party starts:  
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| Comics      | ..... B10 | Obituary  | ..... B4     | Real Estate   | ..... B1 |

**Charleston Deals** today

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Multi-price tickets for Nov. 28.  
See **A2**







## CLEMSON FOOTBALL, 1C COMPARING COACHES



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TUESDAY,  
NOVEMBER 17, 2015  
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

USA TODAY FEDS REJECT ISLAMIC STATE'S WARNING OF U.S. ATTACK PAGE 1B

## USC students stage walkout



About 150 students walked out of class at the University of South Carolina, protesting alleged inequalities on Monday.

*About 150 leave classes at the campus in Columbia to protest lack of policy changes to promote equality*

NATHANIEL CARY  
HCARNEY@GANNETTNEWS.COM

A group of students at the University of South Carolina staged a walkout of classes at 11 a.m. Monday at the university's Columbia campus to protest what they call a lack of policy changes to promote equality.

The group, which posted a list of demands on change.org addressed to USC President Harris Pastides, signed the petition 2020 Visionaries. About 150 students joined the walk, which started at the Longstreet Theatre and ended at the Osborne Administration Building in the Holsushine.

There, they met with university officials and presented a list of grievances and demands for change.

"We appreciate our students mak-

"The issues they have raised will do much to guide the conversation."

WES HICKMAN  
USC SPOKESMAN

ing their voice heard, participating in civil discourse and continuing the dialogue toward making our campus a safe and welcoming environment for all students," said Wes Hickman, USC spokesman. "The issues they have raised will do much to guide the con-

See WALKOUT, Page 4A



USC public affairs major Aaron Greene asks questions of the school's administration Monday.

## Haley asks feds to not send Syrian refugees

Letter to Kerry questions ability to thoroughly vet

RON BARNETT  
RBARNETT@GANNETTNEWS.COM

Gov. Nikki Haley sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry on Monday saying she questions the ability of federal agents to thoroughly vet Syrian refugees.

"Therefore, until I can be assured that all potential refugees from Syria have no ties to terrorist organizations, I am requesting that the State Department not resettle any Syrian refugees in South Carolina," wrote Haley, who has been supportive of refugee resettlement in the state.

Haley was one of more than a dozen Republican governors who made such pronouncements Monday.

In the aftermath of the deadly terrorist attacks in Paris last week, and questions over the possibility of one of the attackers having entered

France as a Syrian refugee, several legislators sent letters to the governor urging her to push back against efforts to relocate Syrians in South Carolina.

The two resettlement agencies operating in the state have said they are not approved to receive Syrians, although one of them, in Columbia, said that could change before the end of 2016.

A Haley spokesman has said the governor can't prevent refugees from being resettled through federally approved agencies.

"The international Islamic terrorist organization the Islamic State has openly bragged that they have an ongoing operation to insert trained terrorists into Western democracies by mixing them with the horde of refugees coming out of the war-torn Middle East and North Africa," Sen. Lee Bright and Reps. Mike Burns and Bill Chumley of Greenville and Spartanburg counties wrote in a letter to the governor Monday.

"We hope you will agree that we can no longer continue to ignore the threat to our country posed by these radicals," they added. "While we can never expect President Barack Obama to alter his leftist ideological strategy, the state of South Carolina must

See REFUGEES, Page 7A

## Panel selects two for Supreme Court, deadlocks on third

John Cannon Few chosen; Greenville's Aphrodite Konduros another possible choice



TIM SMITH  
THE GREENVILLE NEWS

COURTUSIA—A state judicial screen-

wright Monday to try and find a solution.

Earlier it chose John Cannon Few of Greenville, chief judge of the State Court of Appeals, and Ralph King

of the appellate court, and Appeals Court Judge H. Bruce Williams of Columbia. The panel went behind closed doors for an executive session.







Behind the scenes of **USC recruiting** as coaching change looms, 1B



Big stats help **Clemson's Watson** attract attention of Heisman voters, 1B

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2015

\$1.00

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TODAY: PARTLY SUNNY 66-84  
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# The State



CITY OF LIGHT

Cartoonist Robert Arias's view on the terrorist attack in Paris

## WIREPULSE

- GOP's Cruz says Muslim refugees should be relocated within Middle East. 3A
- Q&A: How Syrian refugees are vetted for entry to America. 4B
- U.S. agrees to boost intelligence sharing with France. 5A
- Midlands officials urge vigilance on public safety. 5A

## Lawmakers ask Haley to reject refugees

Knee-jerk response "not who we are as the American people," lawmaker and National Guard member says

Haley asks U.S. State Department not to send Syrian refugees to South Carolina

BY JAMES BEELE AND JENNIFER HUNT  
jbeele@thestate.com, jhunt@thestate.com

More than a dozen S.C. lawmakers Monday called on Gov. Nikki Haley to block international refugee flows coming to South Carolina.

The calls came after attacks

that killed more than 120 people in Paris over the weekend, renewing fears of terrorists coming to the United States while posing as refugees.

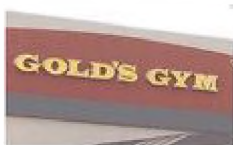
Haley has backed the efforts of faith groups in Spartanburg to resettle refugees in South Carolina. However, late Monday, Haley asked the U.S. State De-

partment not to resettle any Syrian refugees in South Carolina, citing the difficulty of checking their backgrounds.

State Sen. Majority Leader Harvey Beele, R-Charleston, wrote to the governor, saying, "With the bombings and shootings in Paris this weekend, we need to be even more vigilant about protecting the state of South Carolina and her citizens. We do not want potential terrorists in our state."

State Sen. Lee Wright, R-Spartanburg, Rep. Bill Chambliss,

SEE SC REFUGEES, 5A



## BUSINESS NO MORE GOLD'S GYMS IN MIDLANDS

The five Gold's Gym locations in the Midlands will become part of a group of fitness centers. 5B

## USC ATHLETICS FREE ADVICE FOR RAY TANNER



Longtime NFL executive and football consultant has some tips for South Carolina AD in his search for a new football coach. 1B



## 'HUNGER GAMES' FRANCHISE FRIENDSHIP GOES BEYOND FILM

Friday's release of final film

## UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA PROTEST

# A walkout for diversity



About 150 students walked out of class Monday with the USC 2020 Vision group protesting alleged inequalities on campus.

## Student group's demands include investigation of three administrators, more money for multicultural student affairs office

BY ANDREW STALZ  
astalz@thestate.com

## DAJIAN

AT THESTATE.COM: See video and more photos from Monday's protest.

A group of mostly Black University of South Carolina students gathered Monday outside a theater named after a former president of the college who defended slavery — to begin a march to tell the current pres-

ident that they want more attention paid to diversity on campus.

Dressed in black, the protesters marched silently two-by-two, locked in arms from the Langreth Theatre through the Horseshoe to

USC's administrative building. There, they presented 12 demands to three university administrators.

"The future of USC is in your hands," said Clarie Randall, a biology/psychology major from Greenville who

handed the list to administrators.

The group, known as USC 2020 Vision, asked when school leaders would meet their demands, including expanded minority student and faculty recruitment efforts.

USC provost Juan Gabriel, standing next to chief diversi-

SEE USC, 7A





Retired Aiken teacher debuts first book • 1C

## Aiken GOP: No refugees in S.C.



BY DAN BROWN  
dbrown@aikensstandard.com

The head of the Aiken County Republican Party will introduce a resolution Tuesday night asking Aiken County Council to reject all potential United Nations resettlement funds designated for Syrian refugees to be sent to Aiken County.

The request follows Friday night's terrorist attacks in Paris that left more than 130 people dead and hundreds wounded.

The request winds out of the fear that because

one of the suicide bombers in the Paris attacks reportedly entered Europe with Syrian refugees, others could, too.

President Barack Obama's administration has said it will take in 10,000 Syrian refugees within the next year.

"We're asking County Council in the resolution to reject all refugee funding for the Syrian refugees in the wake of the Paris attacks," said R.T. Rutherford, the chairman of the Aiken GOP.

"With the proximity of the Savannah River Site to Aiken, this becomes a matter of national security."

### INSIDE

Expert says states lack legal authority to block refugees. 9A

South Carolina Sen. Tim Young, R-Aiken, also joined the call in a letter sent to Gov. Nikki Haley on Monday urging her not to accept refugee funding to accept Syrians in the wake of the Paris attacks.

"My understanding is that there currently is not a way to adequately and sensibly examine refugees coming to the United States and po-

tentally relocating in South Carolina," Young wrote. "I ask that you take this step to protect South Carolina and our citizens' safety in view of what we know at this time and in light of what happened in Paris this past Friday."

S.C. House Rep. Chris Corley, R-Charleston, also issued his own letter to Haley, encouraging her to "take a stand against any Syrian refugees being placed in the state of South Carolina."

"As governor your first and most sacred duty

Please see REFUGEE, Page 12A

## Caught in crossfire

Aiken native a witness to massacres in Paris streets

BY DAN BROWN  
dbrown@aikensstandard.com

Paris Cameron had always dreamed of living in Paris.

The 20-year-old Aiken native calls the "City of Light," and her name sake, her favorite city in the entire world. Currently a student in Paris at France Langue, her desire is to live there and become an English teacher one day.

On Friday, Nov. 13, around 9 p.m. local time, Cameron found herself caught in the crossfire of the terrorist attacks that killed more than 130 people and wounded hundreds more.

What began as an evening out with friends turned deadly and frightening. "I was heading out for the evening with friends, and the 13th district where the shooting happened is a place where everybody goes if they want to eat, or grab a drink, see a concert," she said.

They had just arrived on the street where her friend's second-floor apartment was located when they began hearing what they thought were fireworks.

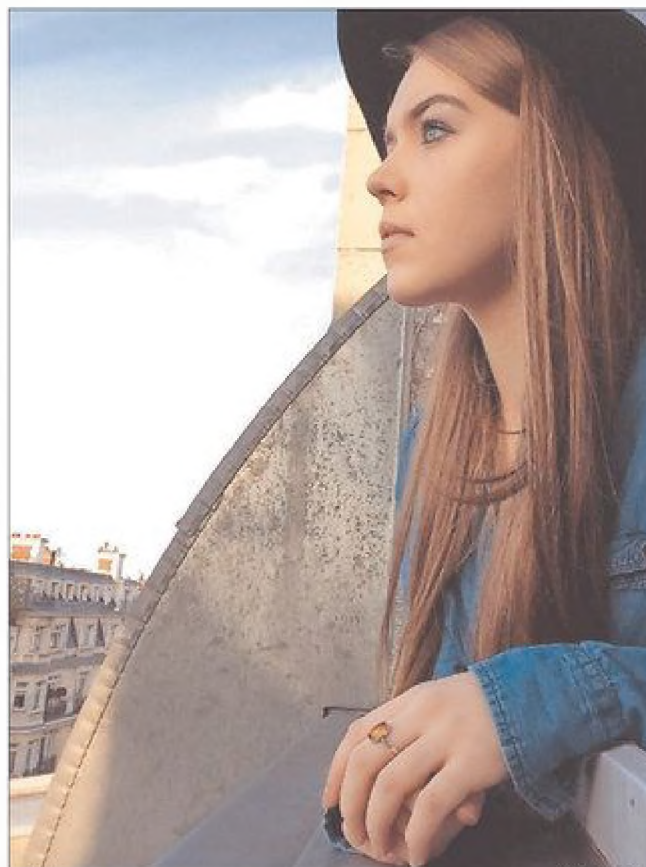
"There were fireworks and then explosions followed," she said. "We didn't know what was happening, but these fireworks and explosions kept going off. We looked outside the apartment, and we saw people running. It looked like a scene out of a horror movie."

Though locked in the heart of the action with the tragedy playing out literally at her feet, Cameron and her friends had no clue what events were transpiring as there was little information being sent out from local news due to the ongoing mayhem with the terrorists at large.

"We turned the news on straight away," she said. "But we all started getting emails from friends and family from home. This is how we first found out something horrible was happening outside. We didn't know what was going on even though it was happening right across the street."

An email from her mother, Melanie, relayed the news. Cameron and her friends were suddenly afraid for their lives.

"My mom was physically sick when she first heard the news and I believe



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Aiken native Paris Cameron looks out over the city that shares her name in the wake of Friday's attacks that killed more than 120 people.



COURTESY PHOTO



WEEKS PHOTO



AP PHOTO/JACQUES BRUNEN

The French flag waves at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Sunday as French President Francois Hollande vowed to attack the Islamic State group without mercy as the jihadist group admitted responsibility Saturday for orchestrating the deadliest attacks inflicted on France since World War II.

## France seeking unity to bomb IS

BY GREG KELLER AND RAF CASPERT  
Associated Press

PARIS — France identified a 27-year-old Belgian, who once boasted about killing "infidels" and fought for the Islamic State group in Syria as the mastermind of the Paris attacks, and President Francois Hollande vowed Monday to forge a united coalition capable of defeating the jihadists at home and abroad.

Addressing lawmakers after France observed a minute of silence honoring the 129 people killed and 350 wounded, Hollande said the victims came from at least 19 nations, and the international community, led by the United States and Russia, must overcome their deep-seated divisions over Syria in defeating Islamic State on its home turf.

"Friday's acts of war were decided and planned in Syria. They were organized in Belgium and perpetrated on our soil with French complicity with one specific goal: to sow fear and to divide us," Hollande told Parliament in a rare joint session convened at the Palace of Versailles.

"Syria has become the biggest factory of terrorism the world has ever known, and the Islamic State is the most



**SPORTS:** Watson becoming Heisman hopeful, 1B

# INDEX-JOURNAL

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2 SECTIONS, 16 PAGES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2015

DAILY 75¢ SUNDAY \$4.50

## KETTLE TIME



JOHNNY WILLIAMS/INDEX-JOURNAL

Maj. Cedric McClure, of The Salvation Army delivers a kettle to Kmart on Monday. McClure delivered kettles to 22 locations around Abbeville, Greenwood and Laurens counties days before the annual fundraising drive begins.

### Salvation Army getting ready for holiday fundraiser

By MARY KATE MCGOWAN  
mmcgowan@indexjournal.com

**A**s Thanksgiving approaches, a holiday tradition is gearing up: The bells are about to ring.

Maj. Cedric McClure, of The Salvation Army, is setting up its annual kettle drive at 22 locations in Abbeville, Greenwood and Laurens counties.

McClure said he prefers to set up the kettle stands about a week, to 10 days

will not stop, except on Sundays, until Christmas Eve.

McClure said it is "quite an undertaking" to make sure the kettle ringers are where they need to be in order to reach the campaign's net goal of \$100,000.

During the ringing season from Monday to Saturday, about 80 volunteers from civic and religious groups and families along with employees from The Salvation Army will ring their bells by store entrances to raise money for the majority of the organization's

#### WHERE ARE THEY?

The Salvation Army kettle locations in Greenwood:

- Walgreens at 137th S. Main St.
- Walgreens at 1014 McQueen Ave.
- Kmart
- Gas
- JC Penney
- Wal-Mart at 300 US-25
- Wal-Mart at 508 SC-72
- Big Lots
- Hobby Lobby
- B&B at 712 Bypass 25 NE



COLIN RIDDLE/INDEX-JOURNAL

Greenwood City Council approved first reading 5-2 of the 2016 budget Monday night, which comes with a 7.99-mil increase. Councilmen Ronnie Ables and Johnny Williams, left, voted against it.

## Council at odds

### City tax hike survives, 5-2, at first reading

By COLIN RIDDLE  
criddle@indexjournal.com

City Council took their first vote on next year's budget Monday with a 5-2 vote sending it to a second reading.

The \$15 million budget comes with a 7.99-mil increase in order to provide a 2-percent cost of living adjustment for city employees along with some targeted wage increases in public works and sanitation, bringing all employees at or above \$10 per hour. The millage increase also offsets an increase in the cost of health insurance for employees.

The hike, which would take effect on next year's tax bill, represents the maximum increase allowed

for Greenwood under state law. The city's last millage increase, which was passed two years ago, was 5 mills.

Councilmen Ronnie Ables and Johnny Williams voted against the measure, citing the millage increase for their votes.



JOHNNY WILLIAMS



RONNIE ABLES

"I just don't believe people can afford it. 7.99 mills is a big step," Ables said.

The increase equates to a \$32 increase on a \$100,000 owner-occupied home, which would be \$28.76 for the average homeowner. For rental property, the average increase would be \$24.65.

City Manager Charlie Barreineau said the only other way to

See TAX, page 4A

## Haley still supports giving refuge to persecuted immigrants

By SEANNA ADCOX  
Associated Press

#### Related

■ Obama stands fast on allowing Syrians to resettle in U.S. despite outcry, 7A

COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley said Monday she continues to support allowing persecuted immigrants to come to South Carolina — as long as they're not from Syria.

Republicans in the House

to Haley. A similar letter signed by 13 House Republicans called it "unquestionably clear that these terrorists will execute







## OFFICIALS WORK TO FIX WATER MAIN BREAK

UPSTATE, C1



## SMC PULLS AWAY FROM CATAWBA VALLEY

SPORTS, B1

# Herald-Journal

SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

Tuesday, November 17, 2015



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TODAY WED THU



60°/50° 64°/57° 80°/43°

Complete forecast, B6

### NEWS DIGEST

#### Polls open today

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. today for a runoff election for a Spartanburg commissioner of public works position. Stephanie Burton, an attorney, and Angela Viney, director of Upstate Forever's Spartanburg office, will face off today after winning the most votes in a four-person race on Nov. 3. Mailed absentee ballots must be physically received by the elections office no later than 7 p.m. today. See a precinct list on page C2.

### UPSTATE

#### Behavioral health focus area chosen for \$25K

Spartanburg County has selected its behavioral health focus area to receive \$25,000 that was recently awarded through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 2015 Culture of Health Prize. C1

#### USC students call for more diversity

A group of mostly black University of South Carolina students gathered Monday — outside a theater named after a former president of the college who defended slavery — to begin a march to tell the current president that they want more attention paid to diversity on campus. C1

### BUSINESS



#### Energy stocks lead rally

U.S. stocks mounted a broad rally on Monday, snapping a three-day losing streak.

### SYRIAN RESETTLEMENT

## Haley seeks to block refugees

Governor contacts Secretary of State

By Daniel J. Gross and Chris Lavender  
Staff writers



Haley

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, after requests from lawmakers, has asked the federal

government not to send any Syrian refugees to South Carolina.

Haley sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry stating that "... until I can be assured that all potential refugees from Syria have no ties to terrorist

organizations, I am requesting that the State Department not resettle any Syrian refugees in South Carolina."

Haley stated in the letter that it is her "first and primary duty to ensure the safety of the citizens of South Carolina," and she believes it is "impossible" for federal officials to "thoroughly vet" those fleeing Syria.

In the wake of terrorist attacks in Paris, several senators and representatives in the Upstate called on Haley to stop a refugee resettlement program that is already underway.

According to media reports, authorities discovered that one of the bombers in the Paris

SEE HALLEY, A6

### GLOBAL TERRORISM MASSACRE IN PARIS



People walk and take pictures in front of the Eiffel Tower — illuminated in the French colors in honor of the victims of the attacks on Friday in Paris — on Monday. France is urging its European partners to move swiftly to boost intelligence sharing, fight arms trafficking and terror financing, and strengthen border security in the wake of the Paris attacks. DANIEL OCHOA DE OLZA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## France IDs top attacks figure, seeks unity to bomb Islamic State

By Greg Keller and Rafi Casert  
The Associated Press



Abaaoud

PARIS — France identified a 27-year-old Belgian who once boasted about killing "infidels" and fought for the Islamic State group in Syria as the mastermind of the Paris

capable of defeating the jihadists at home and abroad.

Addressing lawmakers after France observed a minute of silence honoring the 120 people killed

international community, led by the United States and Russia, must overcome their deep-seated divisions over Syria to destroy Islamic State on its home turf.

"Friday's acts of war were decided and planned in Syria. They were organized in Belgium and perpetrated on our

Hollande told Parliament in a rare joint session convened at the Palace of Versailles.

"Syria has become the biggest factory of terrorism the world has ever known and the international community is still too divided and too incoherent."

As he spoke, thousands





# the Sumter ITEM

Haley announces flood relief fund to rebuild homes

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2015 | Serving South Carolina since October 15, 1894

75 cents

A3

## Obama rejects calls for shift in ISIS fight

BY JULIE PACE

AP White House Correspondent

ANTALYA, Turkey — President Obama on Monday firmly rejected calls for a shift in U.S. strategy against the Islamic State after the Paris at-

tacks, saying Republicans who want to send ground troops into the volatile region are "talking as if they're tough" but fail to understand the potentially grave consequences.

"Folks want to pop off and

have opinions about what they think they would do," Obama said in a news conference wrapping up a two-day summit of world leaders in Turkey. "If they think that somehow their advisers are better than the chairman of

my Joint Chiefs of Staff and the folks who are actually on the ground, I want to meet them. And we can have that debate."

In a stinging rebuke, the president condemned Republicans who have suggested

U.S. assistance to refugees fleeing the Middle East should focus on Christians, not Muslims. GOP presidential candidates Jeb Bush and Ted Cruz have made such suggestions.

SEE ATTACKS, PAGE A8



PHOTOS BY KATHY SEARJANE / THE SUMTER ITEM

Marchers in the Walk Against Domestic Violence are seen on the Sumter County Courthouse steps Saturday morning after the walk which was organized by the Sumter High School International Baccalaureate program. The group collected household items for and donated money to the Sumter YWCA.

## SHS students host 9th walk against domestic violence

BY ADRIENNE SARVIS

adrienne@theitem.com

Sumter High School's International Baccalaureate program hosted its ninth Walk Against Domestic Violence on Saturday to raise awareness about an issue that has put South Carolina at the top of one of the most unfortunate lists.

Before the walk began, the IB program students presented YWCA, an

organization that provides support services to victims of domestic violence, with a check for \$300.

Susan Hilton, the IB creativity activity service supervisor, said the students raised the money by selling shirts they created for the event and cause.

She said the walk was started by a former SHS student, 2008 graduate



Walkers in Sumter High School's International Baccalaureate program's Walk Against Domestic Violence fill Main Street on Saturday morning as they walk to raise awareness on the subject. The proceeds from the walk were donated to the Sumter YWCA.

SEE WALK, PAGE A8







# Morning News

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 17, 2015

**TODAY'S WEATHER**  
Partly sunny and nice.  
High 73, low 52.  
DETAILS 2A

WWW.WACHO.com

The Voice of the Pee Dee

75 cents

## Operation Christmas Child collection week underway



BY SHAMIRA MOGARY  
Morning News  
on a special from Wachos.com

FLORENCE — Children in third-world countries who will receive gift-filled shoeboxes this year will not only receive presents but a chance to know Jesus through Operation Christmas Child.

Each year the Christian relief organization spearheads a project to collect gift-filled shoeboxes and delivers them to children living in desperate situations. This is all done in the name of Jesus.

Sites such as Calvary Baptist Church in Florence collect packed boxes from churches, schools and individuals in the Pee Dee area, then send them to Charlotte where they are sorted and sent to children in need.

"When you pack a shoebox, you're delivering a box of simple gifts to a child in a third-world country, a child who may have never received a gift in their lives," said Tim Smith, Operation Christmas Child Church Relations coordinator for the Pee Dee.

Smith said she has heard

stories of children who have received items such as toothpaste in their box and have shared it with their entire neighborhood. Some children receive school supplies in their boxes that then give them an opportunity to go to school, since they wouldn't be able to otherwise.

"You get to bless a child with a box of simple gifts, but then on top of that, every single child that receives a box is given the opportunity to attend a discipleship class called The Greatest Journey," Smith said.

Children are invited to attend the class at a local church or arena in their county and get to learn about Jesus and to know him as their personal savior.

"When they finish the class, they actually have a graduation ceremony where they would have yellow caps and gowns and the whole nine yards," said Louanne Stewart, the Calvary collection center coordinator.

Stewart said one shoebox not only touches the child

See **CHILD**, Page 3A

## Gas tax backers face new \$1.2B hurdle

BY CASIE COPE  
The State  
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COLUMBIA — Efforts to raise the state's gas tax to pay for road repairs suffered perhaps a fatal setback last week when South Carolina lawmakers found out they will have \$1.2 billion in added money to spend next year.

Momentum to raise the tax had been building since early October, when more than 2 feet of rain drenched portions of the state, washing out and damaging 541 roads and bridges.

However, the \$1.2 billion added to the state's budget last week will fuel the arguments of conservative lawmakers who say the state's surpluses and growing revenues can pay for road repairs without a tax increase.

Advocates of a higher gas tax say it's not realistic to put all \$1.2 billion toward the cost of road repairs. Other causes — flood damages, rural schools, the funding needs of state agencies cut during the Great Recession — will lay claim to some of that money, they say. And, they add, a one-time \$1.2 billion windfall will not address the state's long-term road needs — estimated to cost up to an added \$1.5 billion a year for the next 30 years.

To get a long-term road repair solution, lawmakers will have to strike a deal on three issues — raising the state's gas tax, cutting its income tax rates and reforming the state Transportation Department.

"It's going to be difficult, but I don't think it's impossible," said state Sen. Shane Mussey, R-Edgefield. But to make a deal, many law-

## HOOPING IT UP



Eli Seid, 5, gets some after-school exercise at Montessori School of Florence. The West Palmetto Street school has students from 2 years old to sixth grade.



Missy Hodges, 9 (left), and Jordan McKnight, 7, have some fun with Hula-Hoops on Monday at Montessori School of Florence during their after-school care program.

A beautiful fall afternoon offered a nice opportunity for Montessori School of Florence students to play outside Monday before they were picked up from their after-school program.



## Financial firm giving back to Florence

Day of Thanks to feed the homeless and those in need

BY JOE PERRY  
Morning News  
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of Thanks the day before Thanksgiving. Florence has been good

Butler committed to South Dargan Street's Walters Building about 3%



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