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Subject: Clips - Tuesday, March 26, 2013

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Governor Nikki Haley News

Times and Democrat: Haley: County is ideal location, educated workers are key assets

http://thetandd.com/industry/haley-county-is-ideal-location-educated-workers-are-key-assets/article_1bf446f0-9585-11e2-805c-001a4bcf887a.html

Gene Zaleski

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley says rural Orangeburg County remains poised and wide open for business because of its ideal location and educated workforce. "You are looking at aerospace, automotive and all the things that we want to do to build a strong economy," Haley said, noting the county is blessed with three institutions of higher learning: Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College, South Carolina State University and Claflin University. "You have a very talented work force," she said of the county.

Times and Democrat: Nikki Haley: Rural counties can be development winners

http://thetandd.com/industry/nikki-haley-rural-counties-can-be-development-winners/article_398b9c4a-9585-11e2-8ecc-001a4bcf887a.html

Staff Report

"Companies are beginning to realize that small South Carolina towns in rural areas can be good places to relocate or start a new business, S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley said at the opening address of the 23rd annual S.C. Rural Summit in Aiken on March 4. "Companies may actually prefer rural areas that are community-driven," Haley said. "With the help of the Commerce Department, jobs have recently emerged in 45 of the 46 counties, she said. Personnel with the agency are getting additional bonuses for their roles in bringing industry to rural counties like Jasper, Barnwell and Clarendon counties.

Times and Democrat: DRIVING THE ECONOMY: Calhoun, Bamberg counties mark key role industries play

http://thetandd.com/industry/driving-the-economy-calhoun-bamberg-counties-mark-key-role-industries/article_01d26fb4-9584-11e2-989b-001a4bcf887a.html

Gene Zaleski

From Starbucks to DAK Americas, Denmark Lumber and Kearsse Manufacturing, Calhoun and Bamberg county industries are considered significant players in the local economy. Pat Black, Calhoun County Development Commission executive director, said industry is key to Calhoun County's success and Industry Appreciation Week is one way to highlight the importance of industries in infusing capital and creating jobs in the economy.

Note: Bamberg County also joined with others across the state for a dinner honoring the Economic Ambassadors in Columbia following Gov. Nikki Haley's ceremony for the ambassadors at the Governor's Mansion March 19.

Times and Democrat: Tobul Accumulator expands into CrossRhodes park

http://thetandd.com/industry/tobul-accumulator-expands-into-crossrhodes-park/article_bc144b0a-9583-11e2-aaa4-001a4bcf887a.html

Staff Report

A Bamberg manufacturer in July announced an expansion and new jobs. On March 21, Bamberg County native Gov. Nikki Haley returned home to help the company celebrate during Industry Appreciation Week. "This is a family business that has invested in the families of Bamberg for more than 25 years, and we are proud that we are able to create more good jobs here at home," said Jim Tobul, Tobul Accumulator president and chief executive officer.

Note: The expansion is "another win for one of our state's rural areas," Haley said. "We are working hard every day to bring investments and new jobs to all areas of South Carolina."

Post and Courier: State wants feedback about healthy-only food stamp program

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329448/1005/state-wants-feedback-about-healthy-only-food-stamp-program>

Lauren Sausser

South Carolina residents don't have to attend one of the four scheduled meetings across the state to weigh in on Gov. Nikki Haley's proposal to limit food stamp purchases to healthy foods. They can just go online. The Department of Health and Environmental Control is soliciting comments about the idea through its website.

The State: Put limits on use of state planes (Opinion)

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/26/2693682/editorial-put-limits-on-use-of.html>

Editorial

It seems almost too obvious to say that it was a gross abuse of our tax dollars for an obscure legislator to send the state plane up to Washington to pick up a celebrity to testify in favor of his bill. Almost, but not entirely, since there are some who are so blinded by partisan and ideological fixations that they can't see beyond the bill that was being debated to the behavior that accompanied it. Here's a way to get past that blind spot: Imagine that the person we paid to fly in was Al Sharpton, and that he was giving political commentary in favor of a purely symbolic bill supporting, oh, slave reparations.

Note: And if they can't manage to do that, this year, then they need to follow Gov. Nikki Haley's suggestion, and just sell the planes.

Patch: Video: Sen. Tim Scott Opens Upstate Office

The downtown Greenville location will allow Upstate constituents a more direct connection to the new senator.

http://taylors.patch.com/articles/video-sen-tim-scott-opens-upstate-office#youtube_video-13786928

Andrew Moore

Tim Scott, who was appointed by Gov. Nikki Haley to replace outgoing senator Jim DeMint in December, was in downtown Greenville on Monday for the grand opening of his Upstate office. Scott addressed the media and public who packed the small office on West Broad Street about several issues, including his decision to vote against the Senate-approved budget that included \$1 trillion in new tax revenue.

Greenville News: Biden to speak at S.C. Democrats' annual gathering

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130326/NEWS/303260006/Biden-speak-S-C-Democrats-annual-gathering>

Tim Smith

Vice President Joe Biden's appearance at a May dinner for South Carolina Democrats is being hailed by a top Democrat but derided by a GOP official. Biden is scheduled to speak May 3 at the annual Jefferson-Jackson dinner prior to the party's annual convention in Columbia. Dick Harpootlian, chairman of the state Democratic Party, told GreenvilleOnline.com that Biden has had a relationship with the state for more than 20 years. He was a friend of former U.S. Sen. Fritz Hollings, he said, and gave a eulogy at former U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond's funeral.

Patch: Vincent Sheheen's Book Tour a Pre-Campaign on Issues

Senator's book tour gives him the latitude to talk policy without the election spotlight.

<http://irmo.patch.com/articles/vincent-sheheen-s-book-tour-a-pre-campaign>

Shawn Drury

It's too soon to say if the proposals in Vincent Sheheen's lays out in his book will be effective. But as a public relations device it's already yielded great results. For the last few weeks the Kershaw Co. Senator has travelled the state talking about his book "The Right Way" and his ideas to improve South Carolina. Given that Sheheen seems all but certain to again challenge Nikki Haley for governor, the tour is a pre-campaign of sorts.

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South Carolina News

The State: Biden to speak at SC Democratic dinner in Columbia

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2693210/biden-confirmed-as-speaker-at.html>

Andy Shain

Vice president Joe Biden will headline the S.C. Democratic Party's Jefferson-Jackson Dinner in Columbia

May 3, the party announced Monday. Biden will be the second likely 2016 Democratic presidential candidate to visit South Carolina this spring.

Associated Press: South Carolina group rallying for gay marriage

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=6CMnglZg

Staff Report

Supporters of gay marriage are holding a rally in Columbia as the U.S. Supreme Court takes up the issue. SC Equality's rally is scheduled for Tuesday afternoon on the Statehouse steps in Columbia. Similar events took place Monday in Greenville and Charleston.

Post and Courier: What is marriage? U.S. Supreme Court to hear landmark gay rights cases

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329462/1005/what-is-marriage-us-supreme-court-to-hear-landmark-gay-rights-cases>

Adam Parker

Today and Wednesday the U.S. Supreme Court hears two cases concerning gay marriage that could prove to be a major turning point in a debate that pits defenders of "traditional marriage" against civil rights proponents. The big question before the court is: What is marriage? Is it only a legal union between a man and a woman, and can a law such as California's Proposition 8 limit it in this way? Or can legal marriage be extended to same-sex couples?

Post and Courier: Equality rally crowds Customhouse steps in Charleston

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329463/1005/equality-rally-crowds-customhouse-steps-in-charleston>

Bo Petersen

The mood was mellow. These were people with a sense their time may have come. A crowd of a few hundred filled the U.S. Customhouse steps Monday to rally in support of marriage equality, on the evening before the U.S. Supreme Court began hearing the two cases on the issue.

The State: Secret DNR climate study will be released

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2694028/secret-dnr-climate-study-will.html>

Sammy Fretwell

Criticized for sitting on a report about how climate change could hurt South Carolina, the state Department of Natural Resources plans to release the 102-page study and seek public comment on the implications of rising global temperatures in the Palmetto State. Agency director Alvin Taylor said Monday "it won't be too long" before DNR puts the study out for review, although he said it won't be this week.

Associated Press: Mediation resuming in Savannah River suit

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=8QsHyRPT

Bruce Smith

Attorneys working to settle a federal lawsuit challenging the \$650 million deepening of the Savannah River shipping channel meet again this week in another round of court-ordered mediation. Attorneys for both sides are to gather in a private session in U.S. District Court in Charleston on Wednesday.

The State: SC state worker numbers continue to dwindle

No raises, more work contributes to high turnover, unfilled positions

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/26/2694022/sc-state-worker-numbers-continue.html>

Adam Beam

State lawmakers have cut the state's work force by 15 percent over the past 13 years, a result of budget cuts and state agencies relying more on private companies to provide public services. The state's \$22.7 billion spending plan – approved by the House of Representatives earlier this month – has money to pay for 66,149 employees, down 154 positions from the current budget and more than 11,000 from 2000, when the state had close to 78,000 employees.

Post and Courier: Ban texting while driving (Opinion)

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC1002/130329491/1021/ban-texting-while-driving>

Editorial

Any driver can recite a litany of dangerous behind-the-wheel behavior. And increasingly, those lists include texting in addition to speeding, running red lights and passing on the right. Study after study shows that texting is a distraction that contributes to crashes and related injuries and deaths.

The State: Plan for new Birch County stirs questions, passion

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2693921/plan-for-new-birch-county-stirs.html>

Tim Flach

Barbara Judd of Little Mountain is ready to sever ties with Richland County. She's excited at the prospect of creating a new county on the north side of Lake Murray, a project she sees as a way to assure lower taxes and less growth. "Everybody here wants to be left alone," Judd said.

Associated Press: SC school's policy to nix Confederate duds upheld

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=7kDvlv3l

Meg Kinnard

A federal appellate court on Monday upheld a South Carolina school district's decision to bar a student from wearing shirts with the Confederate battle flag on campus, ruling that school officials need to keep order and promote education. "Although students' expression of their views and opinions is an important part of the educational process and receives some First Amendment protection, the right of students to speak in school is limited by the need for school officials to ensure order, protect the rights of other students, and promote the school's educational mission," the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals wrote.

The State: SC schools chief: US Congress repeals state's \$36 million special ed penalty

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2693562/sc-schools-chief-us-congress.html>

Jamie Self

South Carolina will no longer face a \$36.2 million cut in federal special education support — a penalty for not spending enough a few years ago on programs that help students with disabilities. A federal spending bill that passed the U.S. Congress last week included a repeal of the penalty, which the state would have faced every year, S.C. schools chief Mick Zais said.

Associated Press: Nearly 700 SC schools recognized for achievement

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

Staff Report

The state Department of Education is recognizing 662 of South Carolina's public schools for student achievement. The agency on Monday announced the recipients of this year's Palmetto Gold and Palmetto Silver awards. The winners are based on students' scores on standardized tests last spring.

The State: 90 Midlands schools honored for performance, closing the achievement gap

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2693697/90-midlands-schools-honored-for.html>

Jamie Self

The S.C. Department of Education announced the recipients of the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards for high-performing schools. The awards go to schools that are recognized for high levels of academic achievement, academic improvement, or both for the 2012-2013 school year.

Greenville News: Greenville, Pickens schools earn Palmetto Gold and Silver awards

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130326/NEWS/303260011/Greenville-Pickens-schools-earn-Palmetto-Gold-Silver-awards>

Ron Barnett

Sixty-seven schools in Greenville County and 17 in Pickens County were named winners of Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards by the state Education Oversight Committee on Monday. Schools earn the honor based on their overall academic performance or by raising the achievement levels of traditionally under-performing student groups. Statewide, 662 schools won the awards, according to the state Department of Education.

Associated Press: USDA expanding program to fight rural poverty

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=zW6tSmmw

Meg Kinnard

U.S. officials are expanding a program intended to reduce poverty and improve life in rural areas through better access to federal funding. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack was expected in South Carolina on Tuesday to announce the expansion of the so-called StrikeForce initiative, which already operates in 10 states. The program will now also be available in the Carolinas, the Dakotas, Alabama and Virginia.

Post and Courier: S.C. home insurance reform: Bill sets stage for efforts to reduce premiums

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329468/1005/sc-home-insurance-reform-bill->

sets-stage-for-efforts-to-reduce-premiums

Tony Bartelme

In the first serious shot at home insurance reform in six years, a Lowcountry legislator introduced a bill that would provide tax credits to coastal insurers and arm consumers with better information to shop. Sponsored by state Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, the bill sets the stage for a debate over the hot-button issue of high property insurance rates. "It's the beginning of a conversation," Davis said Monday.

Associated Press: Professor on AG's order: I've taken Web site down

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

Staff Report

Attorney General Alan Wilson has ordered a University of South Carolina Upstate professor to stop asking people to invest in a private college he's starting. Wilson's office announced Monday it issued a cease and desist order against professor Richard Routh and his business, Invictus University. The order issued Friday accuses Routh of offering unregistered securities.

Post and Courier: Transportation center woes continue

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329476/1005/transportation-center-woes-continue>

Diane Knich

The departure of Dr. Kenneth Lewis this month may have extinguished a spark of hope for the troubled James E. Clyburn University Transportation Center. But John Rosenthal, vice president of research and economic development, said he has plans to move biofuel research already under way on campus to the transportation center building, and to continue to apply for grants to bring in new research.

Associated Press: SC State researcher: Fired for asking questions

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

Staff Report

A former research scientist at South Carolina State University in Orangeburg says he has been fired for questioning the use of grant money. The Post and Courier of Charleston reports (<http://bit.ly/1050FyK>) that Kenneth Lewis said he was fired after asking questions about grant money being diverted to a little-known foundation run by his supervisor.

Post and Courier: Former S.C. State researcher says his questions about grant led to firing

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329464/1006/former-sc-state-researcher-says-his-questions-about-grant-led-to-firing>

Glenn Smith

A former research scientist at South Carolina State University said he was fired last week after raising concerns about scientific grant money being diverted to a little-known foundation run by his boss at the Orangeburg school. University officials said Dr. Kenneth Lewis' allegations are the claims of a disgruntled ex-employee and lack merit.

Associated Press: South Carolina congressmen spending time at home

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=XARf1o4j

Staff Report

Some of South Carolina's representatives in Washington are spending some time talking about business in their home state. U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham and Congressmen Jim Clyburn, Trey Gowdy, Mick Mulvaney and Tom Rice are taking part in Washington Night on Tuesday at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

Greenville News: Budget deal 'almost impossible,' Scott says

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130325/NEWS/303250037/Budget-deal-almost-impossible-Scott-says>

Rudolph Bell

Reconciling budgets passed by the Republican-controlled House and Democratic-controlled Senate would require a "miracle," but there's reason to be "cautiously optimistic" that Washington can strike a deal on entitlement reform, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott said in Greenville this morning. The Republican Scott, who just replaced Jim DeMint as South Carolina's junior senator, spoke to reporters while at his new office in downtown Greenville to greet constituents.

Independent Mail: U.S. Sen. Scott praises workers for overcoming disabilities

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2013/mar/25/us-sen-scott-praises-workers-for-overcoming/>
Kirk Brown

While touring the Walgreens Distribution Center on Monday, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott praised employees he said “have overcome the odds and are maximizing their potential.” About 40 percent of the distribution center’s 500 employees have mental or physical disabilities. Visible from Interstate 85, the cavernous building on Alliance Parkway has an array of features such as work stations that rely heavily on symbols to make tasks easier for these employees to complete.

Post and Courier: Former Gov. Mark Sanford leading endorsement race in 1st District primary runoff

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329472/1268/former-gov-mark-sanford-leading-endorsement-race-in-1st-district-primary-runoff>

Robert Behre

Former Gov. Mark Sanford is leading in endorsements, cash and expectations as he heads into the final week of his runoff battle against former Charleston County Councilman Curtis Bostic. On Monday, Sanford picked up the endorsement of former Dorchester County Sheriff Ray Nash, who was one of the 16 GOP candidates vying for the 1st Congressional District race last week.

Associated Press: Ashley Hall suspect getting mental evaluation

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

Staff Report

A 28-year-old woman who authorities say unsuccessfully tried to fire a gun at officials at a private Charleston girls' school has been ordered to get a mental evaluation. A judge says court officials need to know if Alice Boland is competent for trial and also if she was insane at the time of her alleged offenses.

Associated Press: Clemson, Univ. of Georgia hosting wildlife meeting

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=taL2K7G4

Staff Report

Clemson University and the University of Georgia are hosting a conference on conflicts between humans and wildlife. The meeting is happening this week at Clemson's Madren Center. Researchers are getting updates on the unintended consequences humans and animals living together in America.

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Hyperlocal News

The State: Bolden never took his eyes off stars

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/26/2694027/bolden-never-took-his-eyes-off.html>

Phil Noble - EnvisionSC

Many people have “seen the world,” but few have actually seen it from the vantage point NASA administrator Charles Bolden has. He is a veteran of four space missions and has logged more than 680 hours in space. His rise to become the head of U.S. space operations reflects the values and life lessons he learned as a child in South Carolina. After working as a pilot and test pilot for the Navy and Marine Corps, as well as serving as deputy NASA administrator, Bolden was nominated by President Barack Obama to lead NASA and on July 15, 2009, was confirmed by the Senate to become the first African-American and 12th overall leader of the agency.

Greenville News: Pickens school board changes prayer policy

Student-led prayers no long allowed to open board meetings

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130326/NEWS/303260016/Pickens-school-board-changes-prayer-policy>

Julie Howle

A divided Pickens County school board Monday night gave final approval to change its prayer policy during board meetings despite pleas to by residents and local pastors to keep it as it was. The school board voted 3-2-1 to approve a policy to open its regular public meetings with a nonsectarian invocation given voluntarily by a school board member on a rotating basis instead of the previous student-led prayers which could be sectarian.

The State: Housing rebound trickles down for Midlands companies

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2694010/housing-rebound-trickles-down.html>

Kristy Eppley Rupon

As sales plummeted more than 40 percent the past two years, Window World's owners went into survival mode: laying off their five-person staff, taking on all the work themselves and pinching every penny to make it through to better times. "It was beans and weenies time," said Kim Sutton, co-owner of the St. Andrews Road business with her partner Anne Dumont. "That's what you have to do sometimes."

The State: Midlands businesses ready for home sales to spring back

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2694069/mildands-businesses-ready-for.html>

Roddie Burriss

The Midlands' housing market is beginning to bloom again after a harsh economic downturn. And businesses — from remodelers to landscapers to hardware store owners — are anxiously awaiting the arrival of spring's warm weather and a pickup in home sales activity.

Post and Courier: County Council to vote on \$1,000 cost-of-living adjustments tonight

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329450/1005/county-council-to-vote-on-1000-cost-of-living-adjustments-tonight>

Diane Knich

Charleston County employees will know by the end of the evening if they will get a one-time \$1,000 check to offset the current tough economy. County Council's Finance Committee approved the plan last week as part of a mid-year budget review with a 7-2 vote. The full council will vote on it tonight.

The State: Columbia announces first all-electric, free shuttle

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2693516/columbia-getting-first-all-electric.html>

Clif LeBlanc

Visitors and workers in Columbia's central business district have use of the city's first all-electric, free shuttle. A 2012 Nissan LEAF hatchback has been available since early February on a first-come, first-served basis. An updated version, wrapped in bright yellow and blue vinyl, will be presented at a 10 a.m. announcement today Tuesday by City Center Partnership, city officials and representatives of Dick Smith Nissan.

Post and Courier: Bonus needs full scrutiny (Opinion)

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC1002/130329492/1021/bonus-needs-full-scrutiny>

Editorial

Charleston County employees deserve to be valued, but so do Charleston County taxpayers. When County Council meets today, it should delay action on a \$1,000 bonus per employee until the proposal gets the same level of scrutiny that it would during regular budget deliberations. The bonus was endorsed by council's Finance Committee, which is a committee of the whole, on Thursday. Presented as part of the administration's mid-year budget review, information on the pay raise was provided to council on Tuesday.

Post and Courier: Two rural Charleston County school communities win fight to maintain current grade configuration for 2013-14

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329469/1005/two-rural-charleston-county-school-communities-win-fight-to-maintain-current-grade-configuration-for-2013-14>

Diette Courrage Casey

Two rural communities scored a victory Monday night after a loud and hard fight about whether middle grades would be moved from their schools. The Charleston County School Board bowed to the community's desires and unanimously reversed its previous decision. That means seventh- and eighth-graders will stay put at Lincoln High for 2013-14, as will sixth-graders in Holly-wood area elementary schools. The vote was met with cheers and applause from dozens of residents in the audience.

Greenville News: Greenville company will invest Perot money in aerospace industry

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130326/BUSINESS/303260014/Greenville-company-will-invest-Perot-money-aerospace-industry>

Rudolph Bell

A Rhodes Scholar and longtime aviation executive is launching a new business in Greenville that will tap the Ross Perot fortune to buy aerospace companies. Bill McLendon, who graduated first in his class at the Air Force Academy, said he takes the helm of Perot Aerospace April 1.

Greenville News: Group seeks to help teens in Upstate schools avoid crime

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130326/NEWS/303260009/Group-seeks-help-teens-Upstate-schools-avoid-crime>

E. Richard Walton

"Beyond Differences," a group which promotes racial harmony, wants to help teens recognize the dangers that accompany being involved with gangs and violence and provide them ways to avoid problems, two organizers said. Coordinators of the non-profit group, Paul Guy and Donald Smith, said they want to short-circuit violence starting with middle-school students in six-hour orientations.

The State: Bi-Lo laying off 130 from former SC headquarters

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/26/2694677/bi-lo-laying-off-130-from-former.html>

Staff Report

Bi-Lo is laying off more than 100 workers at its former corporate headquarters in Mauldin. Spokesman Brian Wright said Monday 130 employees were being laid off starting next month because of the company's merger with Winn-Dixie.

Greenville News: BI-LO to cut jobs at Mauldin complex next month

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130326/NEWS/303260018/BI-LO-cut-jobs-Mauldin-complex-next-month>

Angelia Davis

BI-LO said it will reduce the workforce at its former corporate headquarters in Mauldin as a result of the company's merger and corporate-wide reorganization that began a year ago. Brian Wright, the supermarket's corporate senior director of communications and community, told GreenvilleOnline.com that approximately 130 workers will be affected and separations will begin April 17.

The State: Columbia City Council to weigh a second tax bond for major projects.

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2694039/columbia-city-council-to-weigh.html>

Clif LeBlanc

Columbia City Council might decide Tuesday to authorize borrowing between \$10 million and \$20 million this year through a second meal-tax-backed bond. It will be the first public conversation by council of an idea that members have been kicking around for a while. Two votes are required before a second hospitality-tax bond can be issued.

Post and Courier: New group launches to address Charleston County school issues

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329477/1005/new-group-launches-to-address-charleston-county-school-issues>

Diette Courrege Casey

A downtown high school's foundation has spawned a new citizens group dedicated to addressing concerns in Charleston County schools. The Coalition of Citizens for Schools that Work is an outgrowth of the Burke High School Foundation, which launched a project addressing the future of the downtown school. The project was expanded to include all areas of the county after foundation leaders received input from residents across the district who had concerns.

The State: Former state school protests lost charter at district office

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/03/25/2693669/former-state-school-protests.html>

Jamie Self

Supporters and students of a former state school in Sumter rallied Monday to protest the recent loss of the school's charter. The group, which included a couple pastors who spoke, school teachers and about 35 children brought in by school bus, rallied at the S.C. Charter School District Office near Forest Drive in Columbia. The students carried signs. Some read prepared statements asking for the district to stop bullying the school. Others said they were improving academically and learning in a safe environment.

Post and Courier: Summerville firm sought bankruptcy to protect jobs, lawyer says

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329481/1005/summerville-firm-sought-bankruptcy-to-protect-jobs-lawyer-says>

John McDermott

A Summerville water heater maker that filed for bankruptcy protection last week did so to keep its employees working while it tries to settle a legal dispute, the company's attorney said. Geoffrey Levy of Columbia said in a written statement late Friday that Eccotemp Systems LLC also wanted to be able to continue to serve its customers.

Associated Press: Missing SC inmate captured in Columbia

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

Staff Report

Prison officials have captured an inmate at a pre-release work center in Columbia who was reported missing after he didn't show up for a count. Department of Corrections spokesman Clark Newsom says 25-year-old Maurice Bailey was arrested in Columbia at 9:20 a.m. Monday by prison investigators.

Associated Press: Lawyer: Family upset with no charge in SC shooting

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=T1071ieA

Staff Report

The lawyer for the family of a man shot to death by Eutawville's police chief say they are disappointed that federal prosecutors will not pursue charges in the case. Carl B. Grant told The Post and Courier of Charleston (<http://bit.ly/16d5QjM>) that his investigation showed that Police Chief Ricky Combs was saying racial epithets to 54-year-old Bernard Bailey when he shot him outside Eutawville Town Hall in May 2011.

Post and Courier: Attorney: Bailey family disappointed over federal agency's conclusion

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130326/PC16/130329465/1005/attorney-bailey-family-disappointed-over-federal-agency-x2019-s-conclusion>

Natalie Caula

The family of Bernard Bailey, who was shot and killed by Eutawville's police chief in 2011, believes they were robbed in more ways than one. After federal authorities spent nearly two years investigating the death of 54-year-old Bailey, they closed the case without filing charges.

Associated Press: Westminster police chief charged with embezzlement

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=ICVKCW50

Staff Report

A former police chief in Westminster has been charged with embezzling more than \$100,000 from the Oconee County town. The State Law Enforcement Division says 45-year-old Johnny Scott Bannister was arrested Monday and charged with embezzlement, forgery and misconduct in office.

Post and Courier: Berkeley authorities confiscate 8 poker machines following raids

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130325/PC16/130329495/1005/berkeley-authorities-confiscate-8-poker-machines-following-raids>

Staff Report

Earlier this month, Berkeley County Sheriff Wayne DeWitt told businesses to lose any gambling machines, or else. On Monday, the hammer started dropping. Eight video poker machines were seized from six businesses in the Goose Creek and Summerville areas, and the crackdown is continuing, a sheriff's news release said.

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National News

Associated Press: Calif. gay marriage argument at high court Tuesday

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=si4OrAd9

Mark Sherman

The Supreme Court is wading into the fight over same-sex marriage at a time when public opinion is shifting rapidly in favor of permitting gay and lesbian couples to wed, but 40 states don't allow it. The court's first major examination of gay rights in 10 years begins Tuesday with a hearing on California's ban on same-sex marriage. On Wednesday, the justices will consider the federal law that prevents legally married gay couples from receiving a range of benefits afforded straight married Americans.'

CNN: North Korea issues new threat to U.S. bases

<http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/26/world/asia/north-korea-us-threats/index.html>

Jethro Mullen

North Korea on Tuesday served up its latest round of threats against the United States, saying it plans to place military units tasked with targeting U.S. bases under combat ready status. The Supreme Command of the North Korean military said it "will put on the highest alert all the field artillery units including strategic rocket units and long-range artillery units, which are assigned to strike bases of the U.S. imperialist

aggressor troops in the U.S. mainland and on Hawaii and Guam and other operational zone in the Pacific, as well as all the enemy targets in South Korea and its vicinity."

Associated Press: NKorea puts artillery forces at top combat posture

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=auZ3T1HI

Hyung-Jin Kim

North Korea's military warned Tuesday that its artillery and rocket forces are at their highest-level combat posture in the latest in a string of bellicose threats aimed at South Korea and the United States. Seoul's Defense Ministry said it hasn't seen any suspicious North Korean military activity and that officials were analyzing the North's warning. Analysts say a direct North Korean attack is extremely unlikely, especially during joint U.S.-South Korean military drills that end April 30, though there's some worry about a provocation after the training wraps up.

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