

From: Symmes, Brian
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Subject: Morning Clips - Thursday, September 19, 2013

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Greenville News (Video): South Carolina, Georgia leaders hope to avoid crisis, courts, to find Savannah River solutions

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130919/NEWS07/309190010/South-Carolina-Georgia-leaders-hope-avoid-crisis-courts-find-Savannah-River-solutions>

Nathaniel Cary

As water lapped the shores of Lake Hartwell on Wednesday, several hundred Savannah River Basin stakeholders were reminded of the vital resource that divides two states and threatens to bring contention unless the leaders of South Carolina and Georgia can work out a solution. How the two states use the Savannah River, a gateway from the ocean into both states and a 400-mile-long ribbon of life-and-economy-sustaining water, is at the center of negotiations between legislators from South Carolina and Georgia.

Note: “I think that as long as states are talking, you stay out of court,” Haley said afterwards. “There are going to be disagreements from time to time, but they usually happen when you don’t even sit in a room together.”

Note: “This is about as big of a congregation of two states that I think I’ve ever seen,” she said. “I think it shows right now that we both have a willingness to get a lot of things done in our two states, that we don’t always have to go to court as our solution.”

Aiken Standard: Savannah River Caucus inks agreement for river studies

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130919/AIK0101/130919420/1007/AIK0101/savannah-river-caucus-inks-agreement-for-river-studies>

Derrek Asberry

The bistate Savannah River Caucus met on Wednesday to sign an agreement to continue a comprehensive study of the Savannah River Basin. Formed this spring, the caucus is made up of senate and house members from both South Carolina and Georgia. The group inked the document in Hartwell and will now study the drought conditions in the river basin.

Note: “We don’t need to wait until there’s a crisis to deal with,” said South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley. “We need to create a business plan for our economic development. This caucus is a great partnership and just a small example of things to come.”

Anderson Independent: Study will look at Hartwell drought rules

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2013/sep/18/study-kicks-off-to-look-at-hartwell-drought/>

Michael Eads

Just months removed from some of the worst drought conditions on record, Corps of Engineers officials formally kicked off a new study Wednesday to look at ways to better manage the Savannah River Basin during future droughts. Col. Thomas Tickner signed the documents at the two-state Savannah River Caucus meeting at Big Oak Recreation Area, next to the Hartwell Dam. The governors of Georgia and South Carolina, along with several legislators, were on hand for the event. Clemson University researchers updated attendees about a new monitoring system for the basin and stakeholder groups up and down the basin sounded off on the need for action.

Note: “We are better together every day of the week than we are separately,” said South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, with Georgia Gov. Nathal Deal looking on. “... What is good for South Carolina is good for Georgia and what is good for Georgia is good for South Carolina.”

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

Post and Courier: Haley’s admirable state of rejection

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130919/PC16/130919290/1006/haley-x2019-s-admirable-state-of->

rejection

Frank Wooten

America owes, due to federal legislation passed nearly a half century ago, good health care to old folks and poor folks. It also looks as if we will eventually owe, due to federal legislation passed three years ago, good health care to just about everybody else — including an enlarged corps of the “poor.” Who’s going to pay for that? So give Haley conservative credit for her principled stand against Medicaid expansion. At least she’s reminding us that nothing we get from Washington — or Columbia — is truly “free.”

Note: Haley said in a news conference last week at the national Medicaid Enterprise Systems Conference in North Charleston: “All the governors had tough decisions. We had to make a decision that we could sleep at night with. I’m very comfortable sleeping at night knowing we’re doing this at our pace and not at D.C.’s.”

Note: And as Haley put it in her speech at last week’s conference: “When we look at the growth of Medicaid and of health care costs in general, over the last 40 years, we’re seeing rises that we know we can’t sustain. It’s crystal clear it’s unsustainable, and if we fail to fundamentally change the system, we will continue to have problems.”

The State: Public Benefits For Private Lobbyists?

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=r7zeoyPk

Cindi Scoppe

The folks at the S.C. Municipal Association and the S.C. Association of Counties spend a lot of their time trying to hold the Legislature to the promises of the Home Rule Act - that is, to allow elected city and county council members to make decisions about how to run the communities they were elected to run, rather than being dictated to by legislators. Often, that means begging legislators not to roll back what little autonomy those local elected officials have. It’s an agenda I share, and one everybody who believes in representative democracy and majority rule and local control ought to share. But should that entitle those groups to state employee benefits? Specifically, to state pensions and state health insurance.

Note: A few lawmakers talk a good game about wanting to eliminate this practice, and Gov. Nikki Haley and Mark Sanford before her bragged about prohibiting their Cabinet agencies from having lobbyists.

Aiken Standard: Poor communication plaguing Obamacare

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130918/AIK0201/130919468/1018/AIK02/editorial-poor-communication-plaguing-obamacare>

Editorial

Recent surveys are showing that Americans are still very, very confused about the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare. A new Wall Street Journal/NBC poll found that those most likely to benefit from the overhaul are actually largely unaware of the changes at the heart of the law that will take place on Oct. 1. Scrutiny of the program will likely increase as the new insurance marketplaces known as exchanges are set up in October, but even three years after President Obama signed his signature law, it’s still difficult to navigate.

Post and Courier: Biden’s straight talk on harbor

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130919/PC1002/130919266/1021/biden-x2019-s-straight-talk-on-harbor>

Editorial

More than a year ago, the White House included Charleston Harbor on a list of “We Can’t Wait” dredging projects. President Barack Obama has since re-confirmed his support for deepening our harbor to help accommodate the increased size of cargo ships due to the ongoing expansion of the Panama Canal. But it was still reassuring to hear Vice President Joe Biden, in a Monday speech at the Columbus Street Terminal, re-confirm the administration’s commitment to deepening Charleston Harbor. As the vice president put it: “We’ve got to find the resources for it because it pays multiple dividends for the economy, the people of South Carolina and the country.”

Greenville News: Weakness revealed in Syria crisis

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130919/OPINION/309190005/Editorial-Weakness-revealed-Syria-crisis>

Editorial

Americans are accustomed to leading the way in international diplomacy. When a crisis unfolds, Americans have traditionally voiced specific goals and specific strategies for achieving those goals. We have acted decisively and we have acted from a position of leadership. That did not happen during the Syrian crisis, and the United States’ weak posture calls into question the nation’s role in an increasingly unstable region that is

home to numerous groups that are hostile to our ideals and our interests. It also highlights the foreign policy shortcomings of the Obama administration and brings to mind criticism even from those in his own party that his lack of foreign policy experience is a problem.

Rock Hill Herald: No easy answers to shooting

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2013/09/18/5222533/no-easy-answers-to-shooting.html>

Editorial

In all likelihood the nation will grieve over those killed in Monday's latest shooting rampage, discuss the motivation of the shooter, consider possible causes and remedies. And then this massacre will be added to the too-long list of others as we once again throw up our hands in frustrated resignation, dreading the next one. In a sense, the shooting at the Washington Navy Yard teaches us little new about the phenomenon of mass shootings. It offers us few useful insights into how to prevent future massacres. Yes, security at the Navy Yard was lax. Yes, it is difficult to comprehend how someone with the documented mental problems of Aaron Alexis, the 34-year-old gunman, still had a security clearance to enter the facility.

Florence Morning News: Treating mental health needs to be a priority in this country

http://www.scnw.com/opinion/editorials/article_d416e23e-20b2-11e3-a76a-001a4bcf6878.html

Editorial

It's a sobering reality. It is easier to get a gun in this country than mental health care. The Washington Navy Yard shooter, Aaron Alexis, heard voices in his head and suffered from apparent paranoia. He displayed violent tendencies. He was twice arrested on gun-related charges. He reportedly sought help for sleep disorders from VA hospitals. Yet the flags were not red enough. He had clearance to work at a military facility.

South Carolina News:

Greenville News: S.C. leaders at odds over Affordable Care Act

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130919/NEWS/309190007/S-C-leaders-odds-over-Affordable-Care-Act>

Mary Orndorff Troyan

New online marketplaces where people can start shopping for health insurance next month aren't secure and will be subject to fraud and abuse, South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson told Congress on Wednesday. However, South Carolina state Sen. Bradley Hutto said the health care law will provide insurance to between 350,000 and 400,000 South Carolina residents, reducing their reliance on emergency rooms. Wilson, who was part of the unsuccessful effort to have the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act declared unconstitutional, said his comments were intended to protect consumers.

The State: Declining Income, Rising Poverty Plague SC Economy

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=EYB7jKgW

Kristy Eppley Rupon

South Carolinians were better off at the turn of the century than they are today, according to a new report released Thursday. It finds the state's residents bring home less money in their paychecks and more are living in poverty than in 2000. Also, fewer have health insurance compared with five years ago, according to the U.S. Census' American Community Survey. In 2000, the Twin Towers still were standing, the tech bubble had not crashed and the Great Recession was more than a half-decade in the future. Now, South Carolina and many other states are struggling to regain jobs lost during the recession and cope with a changing employment market, including more low-paying service jobs.

Post and Courier: Wages stagnant as households make less money than before recession

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20130919/PC16/130919261/1006/wages-stagnant-as-households-make-less-money-than-before-recession>

David Slade

If it feels like the Great Recession didn't really end during the summer of 2009, the latest reports on income in the U.S. put some hard numbers on the reason why. More than three years after the recession ended, most households are earning less than they did before it began. In fact, most households had less inflation-adjusted income last year than before the 1990-1991 recession. And if that's not bad enough, South Carolina has seen a greater drop in real income than most states during the past dozen years, according to a Census Bureau report released Thursday morning.

The State: SCE&G Can Raise Rates Nearly 3%, State Regulators Rule

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=dpPcfU7C

Roddie Burris

An electric-rate hike for SCE&G customers was approved Wednesday by the S.C. Public Service Commission. The rate increase will cost residential customers \$4.17 extra for each 1,000 kilowatt hours of power they use. Residents using that amount would see an average monthly bill of \$142.28, the Public Service Commission said. The new rates go into effect Oct. 30. The overall 2.87 percent increase of \$67.2 million was granted to pay the capital financing costs for two new nuclear reactors under construction at the V.C. Summer Nuclear Station near Jenkinsville, the commission said. S.C. Electric & Gas is building the \$10 billion reactors with state-owned utility Santee Cooper at the plant 25 miles north of Columbia in Fairfield County.

Associated Press: SCDOT to give update on roads damaged by floods

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2013/09/19/2692183/scdot-to-give-update-on-roads.html#storylink=cpy>

State transportation officials plan to give an update on how much damage a summer of record-setting rains did to roads and bridges in South Carolina. The update is on Thursday's agenda for a meeting of the state Transportation Commission. The agency said in July that rains up to that point had damaged 99 roads, costing the state \$1.3 million. At least a dozen places across South Carolina reported the wettest period they have ever had between June and August. Areas in the Upstate received more than 30 inches of rain.

Local News:**The State:** Columbia Headed For A Dec. 3 Vote On Strong Mayor

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=g77GfPb8

Clif LeBlanc

Columbians might get to vote Dec. 3 on changing the city's form of government if a citizens' petition drive forces a referendum, City Council decided Wednesday night in yet another close vote. There were not enough votes to put a referendum on the November ballot. Councilman Sam Davis again cast the deciding 4-3 vote that separates the Nov. 5 City Council elections from a strong-mayor referendum. Last week, Davis voted for a decision on the form of government in November.

Aiken Standard: Interested in service academies? Attend workshop in Aiken

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20130918/AIK0101/130919447/1007/AIK0101/interested-in-service-academies-attend-workshop-in-aiken>

Maayan Schechter

U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., will host a workshop in Aiken on Saturday for those interested in applying for service academies throughout the United States. The workshop will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Aiken County Public Library, 214 Chesterfield St. S.W. "It is the first time we have held these workshops," Scott said. "We had lots of questions from students who wanted to get into an academy, their grades, SAT scores and all other questions pertaining to military academies, as well. One of my staff members said we should do some workshops, and I thought it was a fantastic idea."

Florence Morning News: Wells Fargo gives to 14 Pee Dee nonprofits

http://www.scnow.com/news/local/article_f17a47de-20c2-11e3-8acc-001a4bcf6878.html

Gavin Jackson

For Daphne Tedder, \$1,000 means keeping the lights, gas and water on at the Manna House. For Susan Goldstein it means covering the cost of one child through both the school year and summer at a local Boys and Girls Club. These are just two examples of what the 14 recipients can do with the individual, \$1,000 donations from Pee Dee area Wells Fargo banks that were handed out Wednesday at Victor's Bistro by Kathy Heffley, community bank president at Wells Fargo Capital Finance, branch managers and other bank leaders.

Greenville News: Upstate education event envisions new path

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20130919/NEWS/309190006/Upstate-education-event-envisions-new-path>

Amy Clarke Burns

One Upstate school is trying to change education, and not just in the way it teaches kids inside its own walls. Five Oaks Academy, a Montessori school in Simpsonville, is holding an event tonight to welcome renowned education scholar, author and speaker Yong Zhao. Synergy, held to honor the school's 10-year

anniversary, will host representatives from art, education and business communities to hear Zhao's message about preparing today's students for 21st-century jobs.

Associated Press: SC Justice Pleicones to speak at Wofford

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2013/09/19/3718857/sc-justice-pleicones-to-speak.html#storylink=cpy>

Wofford College has invited one of its graduates who now sits on the South Carolina Supreme Court to return for the school's Constitution Day observance. Associate Justice Costa Pleicones is scheduled to talk Thursday about how the U.S. Constitution has shown flexibility and resilience throughout its 226 years as the guiding document for the country's government. Pleicones says the constitutional protection of freedom of speech is especially important to make sure ideas can be freely exchanged at a university.

National News:

Politico: Senate GOP mum on House CR plan

<http://www.politico.com/story/2013/09/senate-republicans-house-cr-plan-97023.html>

Burgess Everett

When it comes to Senate Republicans' thoughts on the House plan to pass a short-term spending bill defunding Obamacare, mum's the word. GOP Sens. Marco Rubio (Fla.), Mike Lee (Utah) and Ted Cruz (Texas) — who have loudly been calling for defunding the health care law — quickly praised House Speaker John Boehner for crafting a bill that strips funding from the much-reviled Affordable Care Act. So too did Senate Minority Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), who "supports the House effort," said spokesman Don Stewart. But after GOP senators huddled for an afternoon strategy meeting in reaction to the House's plan, most rank-and-file members opted to stay quiet until the House actually passes its proposal.

Bloomberg: Obamacare Unleashes Benefit Changes From Companies

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-09-19/obamacare-unleashes-benefit-changes-from-companies.html>

Alex Nussbaum

Barack Obama wanted to change American health-care as we know it. And he is, in ways that go far beyond the goals of the Affordable Care Act. For weeks, headlines have cataloged the upheaval at private employers: UPS dropping coverage for employed spouses, IBM reworking retiree benefits. Yesterday came the biggest change: Walgreen Co. (WAG), the largest U.S. drugstore chain, told 160,000 workers they must buy their insurance through a private exchange rather than having the company arrange their coverage. None of the moves was dictated by the health-care law. All, though, have occurred in an environment shaped by Obamacare, which has pushed businesses and governments to reexamine their health-care role as costs soar and national priorities shift.

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