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To:
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Subject: Afternoon Clips – Tuesday, December 30, 2014

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Post and Courier: South Carolina tourism agency calls 2014 a record year for hotels, state parks, new developments

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141230/PC05/141239972/1177>

Abigail Darlington

It's been a record year for South Carolina's tourism industry, and researchers predict 2015 could be even better. Duane Parrish, director of the state department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, called 2014 a "memorable and record-setting" year for the statewide tourism industry in a written statement Monday.

Note: Parrish traveled to India for two weeks last month with Gov. Nikki Haley to promote the state as a top Western destination. As a result, representatives of several top travel groups from the Asian nation will visit Charleston next year.

Area Development: Cox Industries Invests \$11.2 Million To Expand Production Centers Throughout South Carolina

<http://www.areadevelopment.com/newsItems/12-30-2014/cox-industries-manufacturing-center-expansions-orangeburg-county-south-carolina635234.shtml>

Cox Industries, Inc., a leading manufacturer and distributor of treated outdoor wood products, is expanding its Orangeburg County, South Carolina, manufacturing centers. The company is investing \$11.2 million to expand and upgrade its facilities in Eutawville, Bowman, Orangeburg and Branchville, South Carolina. The investment is expected to create 60 new jobs over the next five years.

Note: "It's always exciting when a great South Carolina company like Cox Industries decides to grow and invest in our state. This expansion is another reason to celebrate in Orangeburg County, and we look forward to watching Cox Industries continue to find success here for many years to come," Governor Nikki Haley noted.

WACH: Cox Industries investing \$11.2 million in South Carolina

http://www.wach.com/news/story.aspx?id=1142637#.VKMchyvF_4Y

Cox Industries of Orangeburg County is investing \$11.2 million to upgrade and expand facilities in four South Carolina locations. This investment will create approximately 60 jobs within the company over the next 5 years. Cox, a manufacturer and distributor of outdoor wood products, have had their headquarters in Orangeburg since 1954.

Note: Governor Nikki Haley said of the expansion, "It's always exciting when a great South Carolina company like Cox Industries decides to grow and invest in our state. This expansion is another reason to celebrate in Orangeburg County, and we look forward to watching Cox Industries continue to find success here for many years to come."

Berkeley Independent: County poised for leadership change as 2014 comes to a close

<http://www.berkeleyind.com/article/20141230/BI01/141239966/1071/BI>

Lindsay Street

The second installment of The Independent's look back at 2014 includes some of the highlights of the final six months of the year.

Note: As Gov. Nikki Haley easily won re-election to a second term in South Carolina's highest office, the race for Berkeley County's highest office became official when Supervisor-elect Bill Peagler captured victory as the lone candidate on the ballot.

Note: GenEarth will continue operating into 2015 despite a months-long saga in 2014 that saw residents complain about the foul odor the bio-energy company produces in Berkeley County. The state's health agency has yet to shut down the plant on Oakley Road. In October, County Council drafted a letter to invite Gov. Nikki Haley to come smell GenEarth.

S.C. General Assembly News:

Greenville News: Bill calls for study of racial profiling by police in state

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2014/12/30/bill-calls-study-racial-profiling-police-state/21048739/>

Ron Barnett

A bill co-sponsored by state Sen. Larry Martin of Pickens calls for the state to conduct a yearlong study of racial profiling by police. Martin said he doesn't believe racial profiling is widespread in South Carolina but wants the state to start keeping statistics on it. Martin, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said he agreed to co-sponsor the bill, authored by Sen. Gerald Malloy, an African American legislator from Darlington, because, "Their grievances need to be aired."

Greenville News: Martin proposes taking gun ownership rights from violators of criminal domestic violence law

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2014/12/30/martin-proposes-taking-gun-ownership-rights-violators-criminal-domestic-violence-law/21053033/>

Ron Barnett

South Carolina's dubious distinction as the worst state in the nation for deaths per capita due to criminal domestic violence calls for stricter laws against repeat offenders and stronger measures to protect victims, state Sen. Larry Martin says. That gun restriction is patterned after a federal law that says those convicted of criminal domestic violence can't own or purchase a weapon again, Martin said.

South Carolina News:

Post and Courier: 75K sign up for Obamacare plans in South Carolina

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20141230/PC16/141239971>

Lauren Sausser

More than 75,000 South Carolinians picked a health insurance plan through the Affordable Care Act marketplace during the first month of open enrollment this year - compared with fewer than 600 during the first month of enrollment in 2013. The new federal data shows that nearly 90 percent of the 75,075 customers qualified for financial assistance to offset the cost of their plan.

Associated Press: Former sheriff Metts pleads guilty in bribery case

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

Meg kinnard

South Carolina's longest-serving sheriff pleaded guilty Tuesday in his second attempt to wrap up a federal bribery conspiracy case. James Metts, 68, paused several times as he entered the plea in federal court in Columbia, saying little except in response to questions from the judge. The longtime lawman was Lexington County's sheriff for 42 years before his June indictment on 10 charges.

The State: Lexington County ex-Sheriff Metts pleads guilty, ends storied career in disgrace

<http://www.thestate.com/2014/12/30/3899827/lexington-county-ex-sheriff-metts.html#storylink=cpy>

John Monk

Lexington County ex-Sheriff James Metts ended his legendary career in disgrace Tuesday, pleading guilty to the federal felony charge of conspiring to harbor illegal immigrants. Metts' guilty plea was taken by U.S. Judge Terry Wooten at the U.S. courthouse in Columbia.

Times and Democrat: Cox Industries announces \$11.2 M Orangeburg County expansion

http://thetandd.com/news/cox-industries-announces-m-orangeburg-county-expansion/article_82595d86-9056-11e4-80c6-c7f8e4a7224c.html

Cox Industries, Inc., a leading manufacturer and distributor of treated outdoor wood products, is expanding its Orangeburg County operations. The company is investing \$11.2 million to expand and upgrade its facilities in Eutawville, Bowman, Orangeburg and Branchville, S.C. The investment is expected to create 60 new jobs over the next five years.

Associated Press: Federal government penalizing 13 SC hospitals

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=085xbTtn

The federal government is penalizing 13 South Carolina hospitals for making too many avoidable mistakes

that harm patients. The Post and Courier of Charleston reports (<http://bit.ly/1HZkGLF>) the hospitals will lose 1 percent of their Medicare reimbursements this fiscal year. They are among more than 700 hospitals nationwide assessed the penalty.

Local News:

Greenville News: St. Francis, AnMed Health latest to limit visitation because of flu

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/health/2014/12/30/st-francis-anmed-health-latest-limit-visitation-flu/21046843/>

Liv Osby

Bon Secours St. Francis Health System is the latest hospital in the region to ask for limited visitation because of a growing number of flu cases. The flu has been widespread throughout the state since Dec. 13, according to the state Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Island Packet: Potholes, road wear wreak havoc near Hilton Head bridges in Bluffton

http://www.islandpacket.com/2014/12/29/3510900_pothole-trench-wreaks-havoc-near.html?sp=/99/100/&rh=1

Dan Burley

Jackie Rose had just crossed the Hilton Head Island bridge into Bluffton on Monday when she felt a teeth-jarring boom. Her two-door Mercedes had plunged into a right-lane pothole on U.S. 278. The impact crushed her front tire. "My car almost fell in," she said. "It was that deep."

National News:

Associated Press: Rick Perry: Jobs juggernaut meets 'Governor Oops'

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Nn0vtLBk

Will Weissert

Texas Gov. Rick Perry would like to run for president in 2016 as a proven job-creator who modeled Texas' strong economy in his own political gunslinger image and says he can do the same for the rest of the country. To do it, he'll have to convince voters to forget about "Oops."

Associated Press: GOP leader regrets talk to white supremacists

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=9h2waawM

Charles Babington

House Republican leaders rallied around one of their own, Whip Steve Scalise, on Tuesday after he said he regrets speaking 12 years ago to a white supremacist organization and condemns the views of such groups. The supportive statements suggest party leaders think the flare-up will fade during the holidays, with a new Congress set to convene next week.

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