

From: Moore, Camlin <CamlinMoore@gov.sc.gov>

To:

Date: 7/28/2016 8:41:09 AM

Subject: SC Front Pages – Thursday, July 28, 2016

SC Front Pages – Thursday, July 28, 2016

BUSINESS

Take a sneak peek at Columbia's new Costco 6B

**USC FOOTBALL**

New \$50 million football operations building keeps Gamecocks competitive 1B

THURSDAY JULY 28 2016

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FORECAST, BC

The State

Prison minister, family vouch for serial Columbia child molester's freedom

BY JOHN MONK
jmonk@thestate.com

A volunteer prison minister told a Richland County jury Wednesday that convicted Columbia serial child molester Charles "Chuck" Sullivan helped sway convicts to Christianity while he was behind bars.

"I'm a Christian. I believe everybody has the opportunity to do better and come to Christ," testified Gary Janelle, who told the jury he had known Sullivan for six years and that Sullivan's work with Catholic prisoners' groups helped convert inmates.

Under questioning by Sullivan's attorney, James Falk, Janelle told how Sullivan's personal guidance on how to help prisoners, as well as his knowledge of computers to produce Christian texts, "added a lot to the Catholic ministry at Allendale prison."

In prison, with its mix of "Rastafarians and Wiccans and devil worshippers, ... telling the Christian story of God is so important, and Charles was able to do that, and it made a difference," Janelle said.

Assistant S.C. Attorney General Cam Morrow was not persuaded.

"Were you aware that while he was committing crimes, he claimed that he was a devout Christian in order to become involved with children?" Morrow asked during cross examination.

"I'm in prison ministry," Janelle replied. "So I see lots of guys that

SEE MOLESTER, 2A



TRACY GLANTZ glantz@thestate.com

Chuck Sullivan talks with his attorney, James Falk, during his commitment hearing in State court at Richland County Courthouse.

GO COLUMBIA
LIVING IN

THE 2016 DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION



MARK J. TERRILL/Associated Press

President Barack Obama speaks during the third day of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia on Wednesday.

Obama boosts Clinton; Kaine mocks Trump

BY JULIE PACE AND CATHERINE LUCEY
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA

Their political fates now entwined, President Barack Obama is imploring voters to elect Hillary Clinton to the White House, joining a chorus of Democrats vouching Wednesday night for her readiness to be commander in chief at a time of volatility around the world.

"Even in the middle of

crisis, she listens to people, and keeps her cool, and treats everybody with respect," Obama said in excerpts released ahead of his remarks at the Democratic convention. "And no matter how daunting the odds, no matter how much people try to knock her down, she never, ever quits."

Clinton's running mate, Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine, introduced himself to the nation as a formidable foil to Republican nominee Donald

Trump. With folksy charm, he ridiculed Trump's list of promises and imitated one of the GOP candidate's favorite phrases.

"Believe me!" he said mockingly, as the audience boomed back, "No!" For Democrats, the night was steeped in symbolism, the passing of the baton from a barrier-breaking president to a candidate trying to make history herself.

SEE CONVENTION, 7A

MORE INSIDE

Emanuel AME survivors address Democrats. **Page 7A**
Former S.C. Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer back in spotlight at Democratic convention. **Page 7A**
A guide: What to watch on the convention's last day. **Page 7A**

ONLINE

Delegate Betty Frierson blogs about what the S.C. Democrats are doing in Philly. thestate.com

Clinton winning SC? 'More realistic that we'll be invaded by Martians'

BY AVERY G. WILKS
awilks@thestate.com

Asked about the odds of Hillary Clinton winning South Carolina in this fall's presidential election, Clemson



The GOP's S.C. edge

South Carolina last went Democratic in a presidential race in 1976. A look at the S.C. margin of victory for GOP presidential candidates since 1980.

2012: +10.5 percent



CLEMSON FOOTBALL, 1C
**WILLIAMS
LEFT OUT**



CITY PEOPLE, 1D
**Pastor
builds new
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THURSDAY,
JULY 28, 2016
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

USA TODAY EXTRAMARITAL AFFAIR, MISUSE OF RESOURCES COST GENERAL HIS POST **PAGE 1B**

Local black leaders talk police, race

'Trust gap' cited in law enforcement dealings

TIM SMITH
TSMITH@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

COLUMBIA — When U.S. Sen. Tim Scott took to the floor of the Senate recently to talk about his lifetime experiences with police because of his race,

some Greenville County African-American leaders were nodding.

State Rep. Leola Robinson-Simpson said family members have been stopped and made to lay on the ground because of their race.

Greenville County Schools Trustee

Ken Baxter said he watched as a boy when a man identifying himself as an undercover police officer used the N-word with his father and told him to could not cut through a city park. He said he will not drive at night out of fear of being stopped by police and a "mistake" being made.

Scott of Charleston, the Senate's only black Republican, told the Senate that

there is a "trust gap" between law enforcement and the black community after decades of suspect traffic stops and apparent racial profiling.

Scott said he has been stopped seven times by police as an elected official, most for what he described as trivial reasons, and has been repeatedly ques-

See **BLACK LEADERS**, Page 4A

**County:
Museum
funds not
diverted**

SLED probes accusation that money was misused

RON BARNETT
RBARNETT@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

Pickens County said there are no financial irregularities involving the county museum and that money has not been diverted into the county's general fund.

The Greenville News reported on Monday that the State Law Enforcement Division has begun a preliminary inquiry into the allegations that were made by a member of a board appointed to oversee the county museum.

"We were contacted by SLED last month, and we provided them with all information they requested," according to a news release issued by the county. "We also referred them to our external auditing firm for an outside perspective on the county's financial management practices, both generally and as it pertains to the Museum.

"We are informed that this preliminary contact from SLED was only made to determine if sufficient information exists to warrant an actual investigation, and that this is a routine step when a citizen complaint is received."

The complaint, the county said, originated with former museum director Allen Coleman, a 20-year employee who was fired "for inappropriate conduct," according to the county's statement.

SLED spokesman Thom Berry confirmed on Wednesday that the inquiry is ongoing.

During a public session at the June 20 meeting of Pickens County Council, Gilda Hendricks, a member of the Pickens County Cultural Commission complained about "inappropriate use of funding, of which, both the tourism

See **MUSEUM**, Page 5A

★ ELECTION 2016



South Carolina delegates cast their nominating votes for President of the United States during the second day of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia on Tuesday. The delegation has been energized by young adults who got involved in the primary campaigns.

**YOUTH HELPING
DRIVE SC GROUP**

Fifteen of state's 59 convention delegates are under 40

BRIAN TUMULTY
USA TODAY

PHILADELPHIA — The Democratic National Convention here this week proved that the South Carolina state party has been energized by young adults who were involved in the presidential primaries.

Fifteen of the state delegation's 59 members — 25 percent — are under 40,

according to Jaime Harrison, the state party chairman.

"Many state parties struggle with getting young people involved," he said Wednesday.

Democrats in South Carolina, a state that reliably votes Republican in presidential elections, are working to infuse their ranks with young adults.

Harrison said when he took over as state chairman, the average age of a

county chairman was "60 plus."

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders won impressive support from young adults during his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination. But many of the young South Carolina Democrats attending this year's convention don't date their involvement in politics to the movement launched by Sanders.

See **YOUTH**, Page 5A

INSIDE

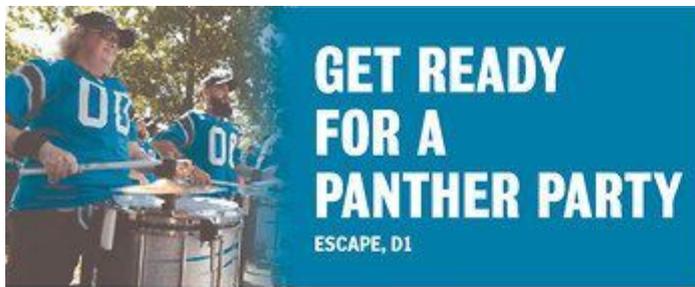
- Abby 4D
- Area news 3A
- Baseball 3C
- Business 9A
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ESCAPE, D1



TERRIERS PICKED SIXTH IN SOGON RACE

SPORTS, B1

Herald-Journal

SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Complete forecast, B8



DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION DAY 3

'Not the America I know'



President Barack Obama speaks at the Democratic National Convention Wednesday in Philadelphia. CAROLYN KASTER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President boosts Clinton by chipping away at Trump's view

By Julie Pace And Catherine Lucey
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — His own legacy on the line, President Barack Obama implored Americans to elect Hillary Clinton to the White House, casting her as a candidate who believes in the optimism that fuels the nation's democracy and warning against the "deeply pessimistic vision" of Republican Donald Trump.

"America is already great. America is already strong," he declared to cheering delegates Wednesday night at the Democratic convention. "And I promise you, our strength, our greatness, does not depend on Donald Trump."

For Democrats, the night was steeped in symbolism, the passing of the baton from a barrier-breaking president to a candidate trying to make history herself.

Obama urged Americans to summon the hopefulness of his first White House campaign eight years ago, before recession deepened and new terror threats shook voters' sense of security. He robustly vouched for Clinton's readiness to finish the job he started, saying "no matter how

himself to the nation as a formidable foil to Trump in his own right. With folksy charm, he ridiculed Trump's list of promises and imitated one of the GOP candidate's favorite phrases.

"Believe me!" he said mockingly, as the audience boomed back, "No!"

Obama's vigorous support for Clinton is driven in part by deep concern that Republican Trump might win in November and unravel his two terms in office. He warned repeatedly Wednesday that the billionaire businessman is unprepared for the challenges that would await him in the Oval Office.

Trump fueled more controversy Wednesday when he encouraged Russia to meddle in the presidential campaign. On the heels of reports that Russia may have hacked Democratic Party emails, Trump said, "Russia, if you're listening," it would be desirable to see Moscow find and publish the thousands of emails Clinton says she deleted during her years as secretary of state.

Wednesday night's Democratic lineup was aimed at emphasizing Clinton's own national security credentials. It was a



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump points to the crowd after speaking during a campaign rally Wednesday at Lackawanna College in Scranton, Pa. JAKE DANNIA STEVENS/THE TIMES & TRIBUNE VIA AP

Trump to Russia: Uncover, release deleted Clinton emails

By Eric Tucker And Jack Gillum
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump encouraged Russia on Wednesday to find and make public missing emails deleted by his presidential opponent, Hillary Clinton, setting off an instant debate over hacking and his urging of a foreign government to meddle in American politics.

Shortly after Trump's extraordinary remarks, his Republican running mate, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, took a

UPSTATE



Looking for a career in music

Spartanburg High School student Jalen Byrd is practicing hard to turn his passion for music into a career someday. C1

Fire claims Greer man's life

An elderly man was found dead inside his home after firefighters responded to a house fire on West Pointsett Street in Greer on Wednesday morning. C1

NATION & WORLD



Hinckley to go free

For the past decade, the man who shot President Ronald Reagan has quietly spent a growing number of his days living with his 90-year-old mother in a gated community in Williamsburg, Va. On Wednesday, a judge finalized John Hinckley Jr.'s transition to freedom, ordering that Hinckley can permanently leave the psychiatric hospital where he was confined after the 1981 assassination attempt. A7

Prosecutors abandon Freddie Gray case

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Morning News

THURSDAY JULY 28, 2016

TODAY'S WEATHER

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High 101, low 75.
DETAILS 2A

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The Voice of the Pee Dee

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Darlington County

Shelter hopes to rebound after devastation

BY DEBORAH SWEARINGEN
Morning News
dswearingen@florencenews.com

DARLINGTON — After raising approximately \$6,800 for the Darlington County Animal Shelter, a group of volunteers hopes to raise at least \$5,000 more through an online fundraising "chip in" program. A board member inspired the fundraising push by committing to match the \$5,000 once it is raised. The shelter is

just over \$1,500 away from reaching that goal.

The efforts come after two weeks of hardship for the county shelter, which is in desperate need of renovation, according to shelter volunteers and staff.

Volunteers and staff arrived July 12 at the shelter to find two dogs dead after lightning struck the shelter's large dog run during a late-night storm.

"Of course, when they (staff) came in, and they walked out to begin feeding and

cleaning, they saw the animals were dead. And that was the most heart-wrenching thing," said Kathy McDonald, a shelter volunteer and treasurer of the humane society board.

But the shelter's struggles did not stop at this incident. A storm the following week caused two trees to fall, damaging a fence on the property.

Thankfully, McDonald said, no animals or workers were

See **SHELTER**, Page 3A



DEBORAH SWEARINGEN
MORNING NEWS
Kathy McDonald, a shelter volunteer and treasurer of the Darlington County Humane Society board, says she visits the shelter or the bridge location daily.

Fitness and fun



Marquis Mack fills out a worksheet in the conflict resolution class at the Florence Police Department's Educational and Physical Fitness Camp.

Florence police summer camp provides education, play for kids

BY JESSICA IMBIBO
Morning News
jimbibob@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — The Florence Police Department's Education and Physical Fitness Camp is concluding its 13th summer teaching kids how to grow and become better adults through both education and physical activity.

Children ages 10 to 14 attend the eight-week camp at no charge to their families. The children participate in physical activities such as dodgeball, basketball and softball while also spending time in the classroom learning about a variety of topics.

During classroom time, the campers listen to lectures from officers and guest speakers who provide them with worksheets and games that pertain to their

lesson. This year, Cpl. Gloria Howard said, the kids are learning about conflict resolution and how to handle an argument with either a family member or a classmate at school. Howard, a 30-year veteran with the Florence Police Department, said communication skills are a main part of the lesson about conflict resolution.

See **CAMP**, Page 3A

Law Enforcement Appreciation

First Reliance Bank hosts lunch

BY JESSICA IMBIBO
Morning News
jimbibob@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — First Reliance Bank hosted a Law Enforcement Appreciation lunch at its

place to sit and enjoy the meal. Attendees also had an opportunity to enter a drawing where the prize was a riverboat cruise and a two-night stay in Charleston.

Before the lunch began, officers were thanked by First Reliance



American Legion Baseball

State champs ... again

Florence Post 1 makes case for 'special' dynasty

BY SCOTT CHANCEY
Morning News
schancey@florencenews.com

SUMTER — Anytime there is discussion of a dynasty, a program must be doing something special.

After his Florence Post 1 baseball team won its third state championship during the past five years with a 9-8 victory over Camden at Riley Park on Wednesday, coach Derick Urquhart slightly veered from that kind of talk.

"Some people have thrown it (the word 'dynasty') out already, with three state titles with two state runner-up finishes in between," Urquhart said. "We've had a good group of guys. I'm extremely proud. This might be the most gratifying. We weren't expected to do it this year, but that's a testament to their work ethic, the attitude the guys have on this team. They played their butts off."

After also winning state in 2012 and '14 and posting state runner-up finishes in 2013 and '15, Urquhart doesn't have to make that case.

His players made it for him by going undefeated in this year's state tournament. Post 1's Blake Robinson was chosen the tournament's Most Outstanding Pitcher and teammate Grayson Cottingham was honored with the tournament's Sportsmanship Award.

NATION
**Presidential
 gunman John
 Hinckley to be
 released 6A**



SPORTS
**Area high school
 football teams
 start practice
 today 1B**



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THE ISLAND PACKET

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

Obama vouches for Clinton's leadership

■ As Democrats support Clinton's candidacy, Donald Trump encourages Russia to find and publish emails.

BY JULIE PACE AND
 CATHERINE LUCEY
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA

Their political fates now entwined, President Barack Obama is imploring voters to elect Hillary Clinton to the White House, joining a chorus of Democrats

vouching Wednesday night for her readiness to be commander in chief at time of volatility around the world.

"Even in the middle of crisis, she listens to people, and keeps her cool, and treats everybody with respect," Obama said in excerpts released ahead of his remarks at the Democratic con-

vention. "And no matter how daunting the odds, no matter how much people try to knock her down, she never, ever quits."

For Democrats, Obama's address moment was steeped in symbolism, the passing of the baton from a barrier-breaking president to a candidate trying to make history herself.

His robust support for Clinton, his political foe-turned-

friend, is also driven by deep concern that Republican Donald Trump might win in November and unravel the president's eight years in office.

Trump fueled more controversy Wednesday when he encouraged Russia to meddle in the presidential campaign — even as he dismissed suggestions from Obama and other Democrats that Moscow was already acting on his behalf. On the heels of reports that Russia may have hacked Democratic Party emails, Trump said, "Russia, if you're listening," it would be desirable to see Moscow find and publish the thousands of emails Clinton says she deleted during her years as secretary of state.

To Obama and Clinton,

SEE CONVENTION, 7A

Note to readers

Democratic vice presidential nominee Sen. Tim Kaine and President Barack Obama were scheduled to speak after press time. Please visit islandpacket.com/election for the latest updates.

MORE INSIDE

- Despite hopes from some that she'll run for office, Michelle Obama not interested. **K**
- Wasserman Schultz at risk of losing her seat in Congress. **K**
- Black women at the helm at Democratic National Convention. **2C**



Kathleen Bell, left, shares a moment with her best friend, Lois Hoffman, before saying goodbye Tuesday at Life Care Center of Hilton Head. Hoffman and Bell are both residents of Brookdale Hilton Head Court memory care center and have dementia. When Hoffman was sent to a skilled nursing facility nearby, Bell missed her so much that the Brookdale staff arranged for a reunion.

HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Dementia took their memories, but these friends didn't forget



someone she considered a friend.
 Not a friend like Kathleen Bell, anyway.

Not a person with whom she

"Me?" Bell said. "I don't think."

An aide came to Hoffman's side and flipped down the foot-

“ DEMENTIA STRIPS YOU OF YOUR MEMORY. IT DOES NOT STRIP YOU OF YOUR HUMANITY. ... THAT CONNECTION WITH ANOTHER HUMAN BEING WHO



LOWCOUNTRY LIFE

MATT DAMON IS 'BOURNE' AGAIN

After a 10-year absence, the actor returns as the troubled covert operative Jason Bourne in a new film that opens Friday. **3C**



LOCAL

OLD TOWN ROAD STILL CLOSED

The water is on and a gas leak is repaired, but Bluffton's Thomas Heyward Street remains closed to traffic. **3A**





THE CLARENDON SUN

STEAM camp

Summerton school features integrative 6-week program that adds art to STEM **A6**

Trump to Russia: release emails

GOP candidate calls on Putin to turn over hacked Clinton files

BY ERIC TUCKER
AND JACK GILLUM
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump encouraged Russia on Wednesday to find and make public missing emails deleted by his presidential opponent, Hillary Clinton, setting off an instant debate about hacking and his urging of a foreign government to meddle in American politics.

Shortly after Trump's extraordinary remarks, his Republican running mate, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, took a different tack and warned of "serious consequences" if Russia interfered in the election.



TRUMP

Democrats — and some Republicans — quickly condemned the remarks by the Republican presidential standard-bearer.

They came as the Democrats met on the third day of their national convention in Philadelphia, where Clinton will accept the presidential nomination tonight to face Republican Trump in November.

Trump's comments raised the question of whether he was condoning foreign government hacking of U.S. computers and the public release of information stolen from political adversaries — actions that are at least publicly frowned upon across the globe. His brief remarks managed to divert attention from an embarrassing leak of other hacked emails that exposed sensitive internal political communications that

SEE TRUMP, PAGE A9

Compass Restaurant burns



PHOTOS BY KEITH GEDAMKE / THE SUMTER ITEM

A burned wooden statue stands among the charred remains of Compass Restaurant near Turbeville after it was destroyed late Tuesday.

Landmark Turbeville seafood destination destroyed



Cliff Cantey, co-owner of Compass Restaurant, talks about the total loss of the business he has owned for the last five years.

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@theitem.com

Investigators are trying to determine the cause of a fire which destroyed the Compass Restaurant, 7885 Myrtle Beach Highway in Gable, on Tuesday night.

Sumter Fire Department spokesman Joey Duggan said the initial call came in at about 10:45 p.m., and when the first engine arrived at the scene, the building was already involved with "heavy smoke and fire."

Duggan said firefighters remained at the scene until 4:30 a.m. Wednesday. He said Clarendon County Fire Department firefighters were among the 40 firefighters involved in fighting the blaze.

Damage to the seafood restaurant, just east of Interstate 95, was estimated at \$300,000 to the building and

\$150,000 to the contents, Duggan said.

Duggan said apparently no one was in the building when the fire started. The restaurant was reportedly open Thursday through Sunday only.

"It's so sad to know that people who have been eating at this restaurant for many years will no longer do so," wrote Catina Gainey, whose mother is co-owner of Compass Restaurant, in a Facebook post on Wednesday morning.

Gainey also wrote that she is deeply saddened that the Compass' employees, some of whom she said had been with the restaurant since the beginning, will now be without jobs.

"Thank God no one was physically hurt," she wrote.

According to Gainey's social media post, the restaurant was constructed

SEE COMPASS, PAGE A9

Delegate gets encouragement from Rep. Clyburn

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@theitem.com

A Sumter delegate to the Democratic National Convention said despite a heat wave in Philadelphia, Tuesday was a good day at the convention.

vote," she said. "A lot of attention was paid to the South Carolina delegation."

Bowman said she was moved by hearing the Mothers of the Movement, a group of mothers who have lost children to violence.

She said if you have any kind of

even when faced with setbacks.

President Bill Clinton's speech about his wife, Hillary, was good but a little long, she said.

"All of this helps me to realize that coming back to South Carolina and being the second vice chair of the Sumter Democratic Party



INDEX-JOURNAL

VOL. 98, NO. 127

 indexjournal.com

2 SECTIONS, 16 PAGES

THURSDAY, JULY 28, 2016

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Two more fires in Laurens County

Lakelands business closed after sawdust fire

Man wanted on arson charge in house fire



By DAMIAN DOMINGUEZ
ddominguez@indexjournal.com

It took firefighters from multiple fire departments five hours Wednesday to douse the hot spots after a blaze started inside Quality Wood Fibers in Clinton.

The call came in at about 1 p.m., and the fire started inside a machine at the wood-based manufacturing plant at 143 Shady Gove Church Road, according to Robin Morse, Clinton's director of public safety. Flames quickly spread to a pile of sawdust, he said.

"That stuff is just like gasoline," he said.

Spreading to other piles, the fire extended to piles of wood products outside the

See **SAWDUST**, page 4A

By DAMIAN DOMINGUEZ
ddominguez@indexjournal.com

Officials suspect arson as the cause of a Clinton house fire Tuesday that put two people out of a home.

The North Bell Street home was ablaze when Clinton firefighters got the call at 10 a.m., and the flames were out by noon, said Director of Public Safety Robin Morse. No one was home when the fire started, he said.

"Where it started, how it

Our opinion

■ Read the Index-Journal's take on these recent fires on **Viewpoints**, 6A

spread — it just didn't look like a normal fire," he said.

The State Law Enforcement Division was called to help investigate, and after interviewing a woman who lived there, officials called the

See **HOUSE**, page 4A

Quality Wood Fibers in Clinton will be closed for several weeks after a fire started at its 143 Shady Gove Church Road locations. COURTESY WSPA

HOMES FOR EVERY PET

Humane Society seeking foster families as shelter hits capacity

By ADAM BENSON
abenson@indexjournal.com

On a busy day at the Greenwood County Animal Shelter, veterinarian Paula Watkins and technician Lacey Miller moved from one large cage to another, distributing rabies shots to a group of meowing cats.

A short distance away, more than a dozen dogs jumped and barked as Humane Society volunteers moved through a kennel.

It's a typical scene at the always busy facility, but with a significant difference: The shelter is over capacity, and has been for much of July, housing around 200 animals daily, said Karen Pettay, executive director of the Humane Society of Greenwood.

Part of the problem is officials are seeing an unusually high rate of people giving up their pets.

"It's summer time. Puppy and kitten season. People are going on vacation, and moving as well," said Angela Hall, who manages the shelter.

As of last week, the Humane Society was sheltering 235 animals: 112 dogs and 91 cats at the county's Wilbanks Circle site, four cats at PetSmart, and another 28 in foster care — 20 cats and 8 dogs.

"I guess the number is 235 with more coming in every day," Pettay said.

The good news, she says, is many of Greenwood's animals find permanent homes thanks to rescue groups. Between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 715 dogs and 39 cats went to rescue organizations. Just 239 dogs were adopted locally.

About 1,800 were put down in that span for reasons

See **FOSTER**, page 4A



ADAM BENSON | INDEX JOURNAL

TOP: A kitten meows from his cage at the Greenwood County Animal Shelter. The Humane Society of Greenwood, which manages the facility, is calling for foster families as it grapples with a backlog. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Dogs relax in their cages at the Greenwood County Animal Shelter. The local humane society, which manages the facility, is looking for foster families as it deals with space constraints at the Wilbanks Circle site. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Paula Watkins, a veterinarian at Chiquapin Animal Hospital in Greenwood, grooms a kitten on Thursday at the county animal shelter, as technician Lacey Miller assists.



■ ABBEVILLE

Board members receive MECA report on aging high schools

By ARIEL GILREATH
agilreath@indexjournal.com

ABBEVILLE — Abbeville County School District's board members will face difficult decisions in the coming months as they work to find a solution to problems with their aging facilities.

MECA, an engineering firm based out of Columbia, South Carolina, studied Abbeville and Dixie high schools in the spring and presented a report at the board meeting Tuesday night outlining all of the problems the schools have, including how much it will cost to fix them.

The focus areas in the report are architectural, mechanical, plumbing, fire protection and electrical issues.

Kevin Stanley, vice president of MECA, and Dickson O'Brien, president of GWA Inc. Electrical Engineers, presented the report, which ranged from areas of the schools lacking heating and air conditioning to collapsed drain pipes and backed up sanitary lines to no fire protection system.

Both schools are the oldest K-12 facilities in the district at 60 years old, with minor renovations and additions over the years.

"Part of that is just a function of age, no different than if you have a 200-year-old house — it costs a lot more to air condition than a brand new one," Stanley said.

The cost to renovate Abbeville High School so all of the problems are fixed and code-compliant would cost the district about \$10 million.

Camlin Moore

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