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The Post and Courier

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Monday, May 30, 2016

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Charleston, S.C. \$1.00

Memorial to honor Citadel's fallen

Class of 1967 plans \$1M monument with names of those who paid ultimate price

BY PAUL BOWERS
pbowers@postandcourier.com

Three years after Army Sgt. Aaron X. Wittman died in combat in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, his name survives in many ways. A scholarship was established in his honor, a plaque in his hometown recalls his sacrifice, and a handful of relatives and friends have named children in his memory.

In the fall of 2017, Wittman's name will appear on a new monument at The Citadel, the public military college where he graduated in 2007. A plea by 1967 Citadel grad

Inside

- Memorial Day events, A2
- Race to return WWI Purple Hearts, A8

John Warley will set the tone: "Speak softly in the company of heroes."

For Aaron's father and fellow Citadel graduate, retired Maj. Duane Wittman, this memorial feels different from all the others. When Aaron's name appears in black granite beside the names of fallen servicemen dating back to 1846, it will project a sense of

Please see MEMORIAL, Page A4



Citadel graduate Sam Bird (center) carries the casket of President John F. Kennedy out of St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 25, 1963. Bird later died in Vietnam. His name will appear among hundreds on The Citadel War Memorial when it is completed in 2017.

How to give

The Citadel War Memorial's construction and maintenance are fully funded by a \$1 million gift from The Citadel Class of 1967. Currently, donations to the memorial fund will go to support The Citadel Fund, The Citadel LEAD Plan 2018 Fund and the Athletics Enhancement Fund. If you would like to donate in memory of a fallen classmate, family member or friend, visit foundation.citadel.edu/warrememorial.

Shelby surprise



MICHEL DULAC/DPF

Shelby Rogers of Charleston celebrates after winning her fourth-round match against Romania's Irina-Camelia Begu at Roland Garros stadium in Paris on Sunday. The 23-year-old was the last player admitted to the French Open field at the time of the rankings cutoff last month. By beating a seeded player at Roland Garros for the third time in a week, Rogers reached the first major quarterfinal of her career. In the last 30 years, only five women ranked lower than Rogers have made it to the quarterfinals at the French Open. See story on Page C1

Why GOP delegation voted to limit D.C.

Lawmakers from S.C. say constitution calls for federal oversight

BY EMMA DUMAINE
eduma@postandcourier.com

WASHINGTON — Last week in the House of Representatives, South Carolina lawmakers didn't resolve a cross-chamber dispute over funds to combat Zika. They didn't consider legislation to ease Puerto Rico out of bankruptcy. They didn't shore up the votes to pass a bill for federal energy and water programs.

But they did advance a measure to roll back certain privileges of the District of Columbia's city government.

All six Republicans in the seven-member House delegation voted with their GOP colleagues to block Washington, D.C., from enacting its annual budget without Congress's approval.

Republicans who favored the bill said it was Congress's constitutional prerogative to oversee the federal city as if it were any other government agency. Democrats who opposed the legislation said D.C. should be able to spend its locally raised tax dollars how it sees fit, just like any other state.

D.C. gave itself "budgetary autonomy" via a voter referendum in 2013. Republicans were dubious about whether that referendum was even legal but they never — until last week — bothered to spend the time to overturn it.

For the 535 members of Congress,

Please see D.C., Page A4

Survey may erode plans to develop Capt. Sam's

Could hurt Kiawah developer's argument

BY BO PETERSEN
bpetersen@postandcourier.com

KIAWAH ISLAND — The narrow neck to Captain Sam's Spit is disappearing, survey work has indicated. The dunes there aren't tall enough to withstand a tropical cyclone of any real strength.

The findings could put a big hole in Kiawah Partners' contention before regulation that the beach there is growing, and a road to its proposed development should be permitted. That means a bill up for a House vote in the coming week might be decisive in the

near decade-long regulatory and legal wrangling over the proposed road to the development.

The state Senate-passed bill would keep a regulatory setback line — restricting how close to a beach you can build — from being moved inland as of the end of 2017. The line could determine whether there's enough legal space to build the controversial road across the narrow neck access to the spit, where Kiawah Partners plans to build 50 homes.

The company has contended it has

Please see SAM'S, Page A8

Inside



SPOLETO
Songsmith Brandi Carlile on an upward trajectory. A10

SPORTS
USC, Clemson secure tourney host sites, await seeds. C1

NATION
Sky high: New York apartment could list for \$250 million. A9

'Porgy' actors pay tribute to Emanuel AME victims

BY LINDSEY O'LAUGHLIN
Special to The Post and Courier

Three members of the cast of Spoleto Festival USA's "Porgy and Bess" joined the large congregation at Emanuel AME Church on Sunday morning for a Memorial Day weekend service that included a special musical tribute to the nine victims of last year's shooting.

Baritone Lester Lynch, who plays Porgy, sang "My Tribute" during the service. Indra Thomas, who portrays Serena, and Lisa Daltirus, who plays Maria, also performed.

The congregation received them warmly, cheering long and loud, especially after Lynch's performance.

Lynch said that when he was watching news coverage of the shooting last



Lester Lynch, who plays Porgy in Spoleto's production of "Porgy and Bess," performed Sunday at Emanuel AME Church.

June, he never would have predicted he would sing at the very same church. He then praised the Rev. Betty Deas Clark, who took over as the historic church's first female pastor in January. She delivered the invocation at Spoleto Festival's opening ceremony on Friday.

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Thunderstorms.
High 83, Low 69.
Complete 5-day
forecast, B8

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Travel B4

Charleston Deals today

Pirates of Charleston
\$38 for two tickets for 1.5-hour
Pirate Adventure Cruise (valued at
\$54). See A2

COLLEGE BASEBALL
Gamecocks,
Tigers selected as
regional hosts **1B**



ACC TOURNAMENT

CHAMPIONS
Clemson overcomes FSU,
weather to claim title **3B**



MONDAY MAY 30 2016

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TODAY: PARTLY SUNNY; STORM CHANCE H3 84° LO 69°
YESTERDAY: H1 78° LO 68° PRECIP. (as of 5 p.m.) 0.44"
FORECAST, 8C

The State

MEMORIAL DAY 2016

Spirit 03's last flight



The body of Capt. Dixon Walters Jr. is buried in Section 60 at Arlington National Cemetery. **Below:** Dixon with his daughter Jessie.

VERA BERGEN/AVENUE, McCarthy Washington Bureau



Photo courtesy of Kim McCarthy

25 years ago, USC grad gave his life in Desert Storm

BY JEFF WILKINSON
jwilkinson@thestate.com

Kim Walters, an English teacher at Choctawhatchee High School in Fort Walton Beach, Fla., was preparing for her school day in February 1991 when she was summoned over the school's public address system to the principal's office.

Her heart dropped.
Her husband, Capt. Dixon Walters Jr., was serving on an AC-130H Spectre gunship in Saudi Arabia during the Persian Gulf War. An AC-130 is a converted Air Force transport plane armed to the teeth

to give close air support to troops fighting on the ground.

"I knew," said Kim.

She was met by an Air Force officer and a minister in the office and given the bad news that Dixon had been killed. Dixon, who attended high school in Barnwell, died along with 13 others crew members of the Spirit 03 aircraft during the battle for the Saudi Arabian town of Khafji, just south of the Kuwaiti border. It was the opening battle of Operation Desert Storm.

"I didn't take it very well," she said.
More than a half million American servicemen and -women took part in oper-

SEE WALTERS, 6A

"I GREW UP WITH HIM AS ONE OF MY HEROES AND WAS VERY PROUD TO BE HIS DAUGHTER."

Jessie Bush, Capt. Dixon Walters Jr.'s daughter

HONORING VETS



PHOTOS BY HEDI HEILBRUNN/STAFF

Deborah Hoopes, Lutheran Hospice Upstate Volunteer manager, and Rick McKeeman, Lutheran Hospice volunteer and Navy veteran, present a certificate to 96-year-old Bill Wood during a ceremony in which Lutheran Hospice Care honored veterans at Rolling Green Village. The veterans received a certificate of appreciation and an American flag pin.

Pinning ceremony, certificate a way to say thank you

ANGELIA DAVIS
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Kenneth Platte, 96, remembers a lot of things about his military service during World War II.

He remembers his time as an airplane mechanic and a chaplain. He remembers training homing pigeons as couriers and driving military officers all over France to visit gravesites.

One thing that he doesn't recall is ever receiving special recognition for his service after the war ended and his time in the military was complete in 1945.

That changed last week when he was presented a personalized certificate of appreciation and a USA pin during a recognition ceremony by Lutheran Hospice Care.

"It's the first time I've been honored," Platte said as he sat in his wheelchair inside an activity room at



Kenneth Platte receives an American flag pin from Lutheran Hospice Care during a ceremony at Rolling Green Village. He also received a certificate of appreciation.

"It's the first time I've been honored. I appreciate it."

KENNETH PLATTE, AIRPLANE MECHANIC AND CHAPLAIN DURING WORLD WAR II

Eastside housing a growing concern

Development neighbors question traffic, schools

MICHAEL BURNS
MBURNS@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

Orange notices about a proposed subdivision are posted beside a small pasture on Brushy Creek Road a block north from its intersection with Taylors Road and the Eastside YMCA.

The small signs have become a common sight in the area — undeveloped property, less so.

A small painted median dissipates between the two lanes of the road just north of there before the speed limit reaches 40 miles-per-hour approaching a bridge over the Enoree River, near the site of more proposed housing developments.

Several are in final phases of construction as others are just beginning in the increasingly crowded area from Eastside High School in Taylors to Riverside High School in Greer.

Near Eastside, in the first few months of this year, alone, Greenville County officials have approved plans for 156 new homes in four developments from Brushy Creek Road at Taylors Road to Strange Road, Owens Road and Mitchell Road.

Near Riverside, since the economic rebound of 2012, reaching out from Suber and Hammett Bridge roads, alone, plans for more than 1,000 new homes have been approved by the Greer Planning Commission.

This portion of eastern Greenville County is experiencing quite the housing-development surge.

"It seems to be where everybody wants to live," said Greer Planning Commission member Brian Martin, who represents the district surrounding Riverside.

The growth has caused concerns about congested traffic, increased danger on area roads and potential over-crowding at local schools.

Housing development booms

"This place is booming," said Joe Scota, who lives by his Scota Karate Academy on Brushy Creek Road west of Eastside High. "It's unbelievable how much traffic is here right now."

More than a dozen local residents raised concerns with two proposed developments that the Greer Planning Commission was set to consider last week, though a representative of the projects requested their applications for annexation into the city of Greer and for multi-family residential zoning be tabled until a traffic study could be completed.

Those projects on land owned by Grace Christian Church and by Irene Ponder could bring more than 150 townhouses to Brushy Creek Road south of its intersection with Alexander Road. The property owners could not be immediately reached for comment.

The growth's effect on local residents is the concern for Martin.



MEMORIAL DAY

Events across the U.S. 4A

Group races to return
World War I Purple Hearts 6A

MONDAY MAY 30 2016

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HILTON HEAD ISLAND
BLUFFTON



Chance of storms
84°/71° See 2A

THE ISLAND PACKET



Standing water from Tropical Storm Bonnie surrounds this school bus parked on the shoulder of S.C. 170 in Okatie near Beaufort Jasper Hampton Comprehensive Health Services on Sunday. The bus was parked there to advertise openings for bus drivers at the Beaufort County School District.

TROPICAL STORM

Bonnie brings minor flooding

Bonnie downgraded from tropical storm to tropical depression

Made landfall around 8:30 a.m. Sunday near Charleston

Portion of I-95 near Ridgeland flooded, causing large traffic jam

BY LUCAS HIGH
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Despite the steady rain Saturday night into Sunday, Beaufort County was spared the brunt of Tropical Storm Bonnie. The second named storm of the year was downgraded to a tropical depression Sunday morning just before making landfall near Charleston, according to an update from meteorologists at the National Hurricane Center in Miami.



"We just came yesterday for Memorial Day weekend, but it's raining and raining," said Tahiya Ismat, visiting from Virginia, as she scanned the horizon in search of any sign of sunshine as a light rain fell on Hilton Head's Coligny Beach.

All tropical storm warnings for the area were called off Sunday morning. Winds reached 40 mph Saturday evening, but had dropped below 35 mph by Sunday morning,

according to U.S. Air Force data reported to the hurricane center. Despite the weakening storm, there were still local impacts. Bluffton Township Fire Dis-

trict crews responded early Sunday morning to a downed tree blocking the roadway on May River Road near Rose Dhu Drive.

"Anytime we get a large amount of rain, the trees get saturated and fall over, especially if there is sustained wind involved," fire district spokesman Capt. Randy Hunter said. "If you do see a downed tree, be careful because you never know if it has fallen into a power line."

Several roads around Ridgeland, including a portion of I-95 near mile marker 22, were closed late Sunday morning "due to water covering the roadway," Lance Cpl. Matt Southern of the S.C. Highway Patrol said.

The flooding caused a major traffic jam in the southbound lane of I-95, but did not result in any accidents or injuries, he said.

A detour was set up at exit 28, taking drivers off I-95 toward Nuna Rock Road, then onto U.S. 278, and ultimately back to the interstate.

As of late Sunday afternoon, it was unclear when the southbound lane at mile marker 22 would reopen.

"We are at the mercy of mother nature," Southern said. Hunter warned motorists to avoid flooded roadways, even if the water looks shallow enough to drive through.

SEE BONNIE, 9A



LOCAL

OIL FOUND IN BEAUFORT RIVER

Heating fuel oil from a spill May 23 at Beaufort Memorial Hospital is believed to have leaked into Beaufort River. 9A



LOCAL

BOOKMOBILE MIGHT RETURN

Beaufort County library officials are making plans to revive the Bookmobile, which could carry 2,500 books. 3A



SPORTS

ROSSI WINS 100TH INDY 500

Alexander Rossi was the



HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY

Honoring all those for their sacrifice

Aiken Standard

YOUR LOCAL NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1867

MONDAY, May 30, 2016

AIKENSTANDARD.COM

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INSIDE TODAY



Volunteers prepare Aiken High grads for jobs
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Mock interviews help students get career ready
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Report: Germ resistant to last-resort drug in U.S.
Living on the Go, 1C

AREA DEATHS

Jack Robert Maury Furtick Jr., Springfield
Deaths and Funerals, 6A

WWII veteran flies again



Jim Bennie, a World War II veteran who served with the Flying Tigers as an aircraft mechanic, logs some air time (at age 94) near the Georgia/South Carolina border.

94-year-old helps guide flight from Aiken

BY BILL BENGTON
bbenton@aikenstandard.com



World War II veteran Jim Bennie, second from right, is joined for an airport picture by his friend Glynnis Doolittle, right; her stepfather, Wayne Plunkett; and Aerial Photos Elite representative Valerie Comporetta.

Jim Bennie, as a native of Scotland who spent much of his youth in Massachusetts, had seen plenty of the world by the time he went off to serve during World War II in the Army Air Corps, fighting Japan's occupying forces in China as a member of the famed Flying Tigers unit.

Several decades later, he has had some fresh air time over the CSRA, with the help of North Augusta resident Damon Comporetta, a former Marine captain who now makes a living via aerial photography.

Comporetta, to help grant a birthday wish for the 94-year-old veteran, helped guide a two-man flight from Aiken to Lake Thurmond (also known as Clark's

Hill Lake) and back.

"He was so happy," Comporetta recalled. "He was just grinning from ear to ear. He reminded me of a kid again, and ... it was refreshing for me, as a pilot, to see someone at that age, seeing the kid in them again."

Bennie offered some thoughts, in a Saturday interview, on his view of Memorial Day and remembrance in general. "So many memories pop up during this period of time," he said.

"It's very hard to catalog all the things that you've done ... and seen. At 94 years old, I've got a lot of things in my memory bank. All the guys that I know that have died, got killed, or whoever, they all come back," said Bennie, who lives in Modoc, in Edgefield County, near the

Please see VETERAN, Page 12A

Amendments face gun reciprocity bill



BY CHRISTINA CLEVELAND
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A bill that would allow concealed weapons permit holders to carry between South Carolina and Georgia could be in jeopardy due to a proposed amendment that would allow South Carolina to have reciprocity with all states, according to State Rep. Bill Hixon,

Hixon, R-North Augusta.

"We do not have the votes in the Senate to pass that," Hixon said. "We have the votes to pass my bill clean."

Hixon's constituents frequently cross the Georgia and South Carolina border, a reason why he has been championing the bill, H. 3799, which would grant reciprocity between the two states. He said lawmakers in

For support, Hixon said he's reached out to his constituents, U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan, R-S.C., and the National Wild Turkey Federation, a national nonprofit conservation and hunting organization, according to its website.

If the bill fails, Hixon said "he's laying at the feet of the NRA." The General Assembly's final day for action on bills is



2 SECTIONS, 18 PAGES

MONDAY, MAY 30, 2016

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REMEMBER THE COST



PHOTOS BY ARIEL GILREATH | INDEX-JOURNAL

TOP: More than 4,000 flags were set up at the graves of veterans in the Lakelands this year for Memorial Day. **ABOVE:** Four members of the Greenwood High School's JROTC team, from left, Gabby Rogers, Kevin Moon, J.J. Lubang and Jenna Johnson presented the colors Sunday afternoon at the Greenwood County Veterans Center for a Memorial Day ceremony. **BELOW:** A veteran of the United States Navy salutes while the National Anthem is sung by Sandra Johnson at the Greenwood County Veterans Center Sunday afternoon for a Memorial Day ceremony.



"You truly never feel the heartbreak, the waiting — like the blue star mothers or the gold star mothers — you just never know until you're just in that boat."

— CAREY BOLT
on losing a loved one in service

Memorial Day ceremony honors veterans

By ARIEL GILREATH
agilreath@indexjournal.com

Members and volunteers with the Greenwood County Veterans Center honored veterans and those still serving in armed forces Sunday afternoon with a Memorial Day ceremony.

More than 7,000 American flags are set atop the graves of veterans in the Lakelands every year by volunteers in collaboration with the Greenwood County Veterans Center.

This year, only about 4,300 flags were put out for Memorial Day because of a decrease in volunteers.

Carey Bolt, veterans affairs officer, said many people have forgotten what Memorial Day is about because they don't see the sacrifices veterans and armed forces officers make.

"There's not great strife in this country," Bolt said. "We have problems, but not like the rest of the world has."

Because of this, Bolt said many people forget about those who protect the country.

"People really, truly don't understand unless you've had some skin in this game — whether it be a mother, father, brother, sister," Bolt said. "You truly never feel the heartbreak, the waiting — like the blue star mothers or the gold star mothers — you just never know until you're just in that boat."

Bolt said it's easy to forget what the holiday stands for unless you've experienced the heartache from losing a loved one in service. "Those people have to wake up with that every day," Bolt said.

Sgt. First Class Ret. James Richardson led the annual Memorial Day ceremony this year at the veterans center.

"We just want to pay a special tribute, a salute, to all of those warriors, soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, that died defending this country," Richardson said.

Sens. Mike Gambrell and Floyd Nicholson, Rep. Anne Parks and Greenwood County Councilman Chuck Moates were at the ceremony where Theo Lane, who is running for county council, was the guest speaker.

See **HONORS**, page 4A

YEARS OF SERVICE

Local centenarian takes a look back

By KATIE PEARSON
kpearson@indexjournal.com



Topiaries a year-long project, with hundreds of hands involved

By DAMIAN DOMINGUEZ
ddominguez@indexjournal.com

Fiery oranges, sanguine garnets and verdant greens paint the canvas of Uptown Greenwood, but the artists responsible work more in dirt than in paint.

Ann Barklow, 63, is the city's horticultural crew chief, and heads the team of six responsible for caring for the topiaries that decorate Uptown during the summers. The crew spends all day tending to the topiaries, ensuring they're trimmed, well-watered and



ANN BARKLOW
Horticultural Crew Chief

lot of fun."

The Greenwood Area Chamber of Commerce started the topiaries project nine years ago after training with horticulturalists at Walt Disney World





TRUEX JR. DOMINATES COCA-COLA 600

SPORTS, B1



CLEMSON TOPS FSU, WINS ACC TOURNEY

SPORTS, B1

Herald-Journal

SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

Monday, May 30, 2016



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TODAY **TUE** **WED**

85°/63° 86°/64° 84°/64°

Complete forecast, A20

TROPICAL DEPRESSION

Bonnie drenches SC coast

Heavy rain could
linger, forecasters say

The Associated Press

CHARLESTON — Tropical Depression Bonnie reached the South Carolina coast early Sunday before stalling just inland, bringing heavy rain and

rough tides to an area packed with tourists for the Memorial Day weekend.

The National Hurricane Center said the center of the storm made landfall just east of Charleston, on the Isle of Palms around 8:30 a.m.

By the afternoon, it had stalled just northwest of Charleston, with heavy rains wrapping

around north and west of the storm's center, forecasters said.

Up to 8 inches of rain have fallen in parts of southern South Carolina, according to the National Weather Service.

A flash flood warning was issued for Jasper County, where the southbound lanes of busy Interstate 95 were closed for at least 10 hours because of high

water.

Several other roads in the area were closed too because of high water.

The heavy rain could continue for a few days. The Hurricane Center said Bonnie's center will meander up the coast through Tuesday, bringing the heavy

SEE BONNIE, A4

NEWS DIGEST

Driver dies after chase, crash

COLUMBIA — South Carolina troopers say a driver speeding away from an officer who was trying to pull the car over has died in a fiery crash.

The Highway Patrol said a Forest Acres office attempted a traffic stop Sunday morning.

Troopers say the driver sped off, then lost control of the Nissan Altima and crashed into utility poles and a fence on U.S. Highway 1 about 5 miles northeast of downtown Columbia.

Authorities say the driver was trapped in the car and it caught fire. The coroner has not released the driver's name.

Forest Acres Police have not said why the officer was trying to pull over the car.

Sheriff: Yearlong argument ends in slaying

CAMDEN — Kershaw County deputies say a 48-year-old man convicted several times of criminal domestic violence has shot and killed his girlfriend.

Sheriff Jim Matthews said in a news release that deputies checking on a call about gunshots at a Camden motel around 4:30 a.m. Sunday saw Therine McKeever leaving a room.

Matthews says deputies found a gun in McKeever's pants and he told them he might have shot his girlfriend.

Authorities say Presis Prescott was found dead in the room from a gunshot to the face.

Matthews says McKeever told deputies he had been arguing with Prescott for over a year.

McKeever is charged with murder. It wasn't known if he had an attorney. The sheriff says McKeever has a criminal record going back to 1984, including several assault charges.

—From wire reports

TIP SHEET

TODAY

City and county offices will

MEMORIAL DAY



Ted Hemenway, part of the Honor Guard of Post 28 Spartanburg, takes part in the Memorial Day service Sunday at Spartanburg's Duncan Park. PHOTOS BY ALEX HICKS JR./ALEX.HICKS@SHJ.COM

'These people died for us'

Duncan Park
ceremony honors
fallen troops

By Chris Lavender
chris.lavender@shj.com

For Vietnam War veteran Jim Ryan, the names listed on the wall at Veterans Point Memorial Park in Spartanburg's Duncan Park aren't faceless.

recognition of Memorial Day.

"These people died for us," said Ryan, of Boiling Springs. "I just came to honor them. I felt it was my duty."

During the ceremony, Ed Hall with American Legion Post 28 read the names listed on the wall. Hall said he's working to create bricks with the fallen's service records on them that will be placed on an honor wall at Post 28.



Charlotte Gillespie, a past state commander of the DAV and current commander of Chapter 3, takes a moment to remember veterans during a Memorial Day service on Sunday at Duncan Park.

CAMPAIGN 2016

Trump's push likely to turn on fine margins

By Bill Barrow
and Sergio Bustos
The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Donald Trump calls his presidential campaign a mass movement, but he must show he can coax enough support from voters who twice delivered the White House to Barack Obama.

The billionaire businessman depended almost exclusively on conservative and GOP-leaning whites — a majority of them men — to secure the Republican nomination. Now he must look ahead to a wider, more diverse voting population in his likely general election matchup with Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton.

His ability to seize on marginal shifts in the electorate may determine whether he can pull off a victory once unthinkable. Trump's task is critical to flipping back into the GOP column some of the most contested states that Obama won twice.

This challenge is perhaps best evident in Florida, a culturally, racially and ideologically diverse state.

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Morning News

MONDAY MAY 30, 2016

**TODAY'S
WEATHER**

Locally heavy rain
from thunderstorms.
High 81, low 66.
DETAILS 2A

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The Voice of the Pee Dee

75 cents

'Mics off. Battle on.'

Florence Area Literacy Council to host lip-sync battle for this year's 'Novel Event'

BY DEBORAH SWEARINGEN
Morning News
dswearingen@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Contestants in the Florence Area Literacy Council's June 9 "Novel Event"

fundraiser will battle it out in a lip syncing competition, a la LL Cool J and Chrissy Teigen's "Lip Sync Battle" television show on Spike.

Though the "Novel Event" has been around for years, this

year it has been completely revamped.

"We've done the event the same way for a very long time. ... We just felt like it was time to make a change, just to do something different," said Christina

Lawson, executive director of the Florence Area Literacy Council.

She approached various community members with some hesitation.

"One of our biggest fears was, will we be able to get anybody to

do this?" Lawson said. "...We're asking them to go on stage and almost purposely embarrass themselves."

But Lawson said she was

See **NOVEL**, Page 3A

Gov. Haley coming to Florence to formally endorse Skipper

From staff reports

FLORENCE — S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley will make her endorsement of Richard Skipper official during a Wednesday visit in Florence.

Skipper is bidding for the District 31 seat in the S.C. Senate in a Republican primary-election challenge to 36-year incumbent Hugh K. Leatherman Sr., the president pro tempore of the Senate.

Haley will appear at noon at Wholly Smokin, a downtown restaurant at 150 S. Dargan St.

"Florence deserves new leadership that fixes our roads and delivers tax relief. Instead of funding legislative pay raises and pet projects, and that's the kind of leadership they'll get with conservative businessman Richard Skipper in the Senate," Haley said in a news release.

Skipper said he is honored to have Haley's support.

"With Gov. Haley's endorsement and visit here ... I'm confident that we'll take a great stride in continuing to build the kind of successful campaign it's going to take to win against such an entrenched politician like Hugh Leatherman," Skipper said in the news release.

Dean Fowler, who is retiring as the Florence County treasurer, also is running for the District 31 seat.

The event is open to the public.

IF YOU GO

WHO: S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley



Multiple roles



MORNING NEWS FILE PHOTO

Cliff Jones (from left), Kevin Carter and Larry Falck perform during a rehearsal of "Monty Python's Spamalot" in April 2015 at the Florence Little Theatre. "Monty Python's Spamalot" was Jones' first production.

Cliff Jones wins Debut Award for work at Florence Little Theatre

BY MEGAN MAY
Morning News
mmay@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Cliff Jones has made an impact during his first year at Florence Little Theatre, and he has proof. He won the organization's Debut Award.

Jones' involvement in Florence Little Theatre began last

spring with the production of "Monty Python's Spamalot." Being a huge Monty Python fan, Jones became interested after seeing promotions for the show. He asked a friend from Florence Little Theatre about the production, and the friend persuaded Jones to audition. Since Jones had never been in a big show, he didn't really know what to expect.

The first part of auditions consisted of participants singing as a group, followed by solo singing auditions. Jones was a little nervous but said overall that part went fine. Then came the dancing.

"Have you ever seen 'The Jerk' with Steve Martin? It's probably the most

See **JONES**, Page 3A



Each Monday, the Morning News features a good news story on a person, place or organization in the Pee Dee. If you have a suggestion for someone or something to profile, send it to news@scnow.com.

Biggest Loser's True Grit winner gets Belk spree, goods

BY JOE PERRY
Morning News
jperry@florencenews.com

new clothes, thanks to sponsorship by Belk of Florence for the award, which comes with a \$200 shopping spree and \$100



Biggest Loser contestant Marcy Emanuel checks out

Camlin Moore

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