

Title: **Recycling company opens new plant in Graniteville**
 Author: BY DERREK ASBERRY dasberry@aikenstandard.com
 Size: 106.95 square inch
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Recycling company opens new plant in Graniteville

Recleim facility anticipates 200 jobs for 2015

BY DERREK ASBERRY
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GRANITEVILLE — A recycling company invited S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley and several other legislators and community officials to the grand opening of its \$40.6 million de-manufacturing plant in the heart of Graniteville.

Recleim, a next-generation recycling services provider, currently

employs about 70 workers at the plant located at 118 Hard St.

By the end of the year, that number is expected to reach 200 workers.

According to a press release, Recleim de-manufacturers household appliances, HVAC

systems, vending machines and related electronics into commodities such as plastic, aluminum, copper, steel and pelletized foam, which are then sold for reuse.

Haley said the business is not only offering jobs, but helping the environment by reducing landfill waste by recovering 95

percent of the components in appliances.

"Recycling just one freezer is like taking two cars off the road for a year," Haley said. "So this is a company that's going to get lot of attention."

Please see **RECLEIM**, Page 13A

RECLEIM

CONTINUED from 1A

Douglas Huffer, the president and general manager of Recleim, said companies are becoming more aware of their environmental impact and are taking steps to ensure appliances are responsibly recycled.

"We have the best technology to do that. We thank Gov. Haley for her leadership and making South Carolina a hospitable place for companies like Recleim to do business and create jobs," Huffer added.

Before the official ribbon-cutting and tour of the facility, several legislators had an opportunity to

talk about the economic and motivational impacts of Recleim.

S.C. Rep. Chris Corley, R-Graniteville, the newest

member of the Aiken County Legislative Delegation, said seeing Recleim is an incredible moment for him.

The Graniteville Republican said he grew up less than a mile from the facility and that it's reminiscent of the days before the Graniteville train wreck.

"The parking lots were full, smoke was coming out

of the chimneys and even further down, there were the other two mills," Corley said. "To see us coming back and having something like this, it makes me feel very good about what's happening here in Graniteville."

According to Recleim, the facility is the first in North America to feature an entirely closed-loop resource recovery process.

The company already has announced several key agreements with companies to process their equipment, including BSH Home Appliances Corporation, Pepsi Bottling Ventures and the South Carolina Association of Heating and Air Conditioning Contractors. Will Williams, the president

and CEO of the Economic Development Partnership, said the move is important for the area to increase the local employment rate.

"This will be the start of that, which means people will go back to work, make money, and can provide for their families," Williams said. "We've been in discussions with them for a

long time, and so it's a been a very positive relationship."

Derrek Asberry is the SRS beat reporter for the *Aiken Standard* and has been with the paper since June 2013. He is originally from Vidalia, Ga., and a graduate of Georgia Southern University. Follow him on Twitter @DerrekAsberry.

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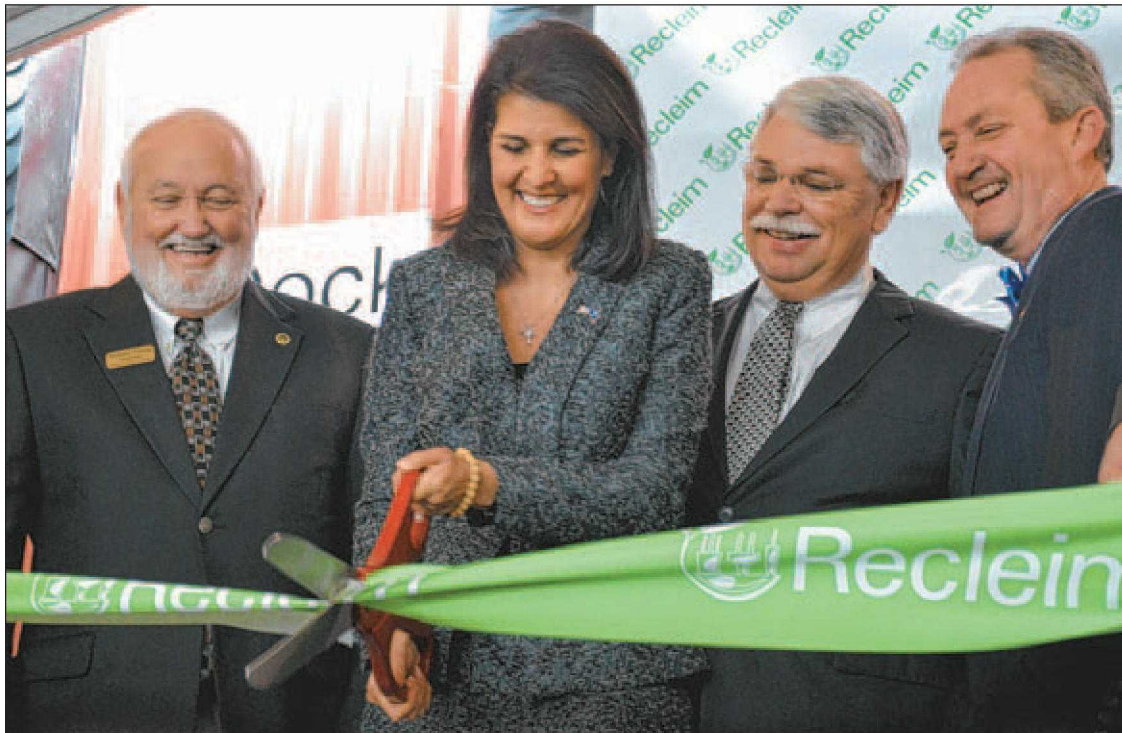


PHOTO GALLERY

Graniteville celebrates
the opening of Recleim,
aikenstandard.com



Williams



STAFF PHOTO BY CINDY KUBOVIC

Several legislators and officials gathered Friday to cut the ribbon signaling the opening of Recleim in Graniteville. Pictured, from left, are Aiken County Council Chairman Ronnie Young, S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley, Recleim President Douglas Huffer and S.C. Rep. Don Wells, R-Aiken.

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STAFF PHOTO BY CINDY KUBOVIC

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley took a tour of Graniteville's Recleim facility Friday morning. Leading her in the tour were Recleim President Douglas Huffer, left, and employee Bobby Robinson.



STAFF PHOTO BY CINDY KUBOVIC

Hundreds of City of Aiken and Aiken County officials, legislators and Recleim employees attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony Friday at the new plant in Graniteville.

Title: **Shark both 'airy gets PERMIT WARNING**
 Author: By ERIN MOODY • emood@beaufortgazette.com • 843-706-8184
 Size: 128.65 square inch
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



Shark Tooth Fairy gets PERMIT WARNING

Mike Harris' diving license could be revoked

By ERIN MOODY • emood@beaufortgazette.com • 843-706-8184

Shark Tooth Fairy Mike Harris, who puts on popular fossil hunts that are free for children, says he's in danger of losing the permit that allows him to dive for teeth and other fossils.

"I started doing these events because it was fun, and as it grew, it seems like I have more hoops to jump through to keep it going," Harris said. "I don't understand why anyone would want to get in the way of such a great family educational event."

A petition asking Gov. Nikki Haley to intervene has also gained more than 790 signatures as of 9 p.m. Monday.

Vanessa Collins of Okatie said she has been taking her 6-year-old son, Nathan, to hunts for the past year, and he loves them so much he wants to be a paleontologist and study fossils.

"I really hope that he can keep going and continue to do what he's doing," Collins said.

SHARK TOOTH FAIRY PETITION STARTED

A petition asking Gov. Nikki Haley to intervene has gained more than 790 signatures as of 9 p.m. Monday.

The Change.org petition can be found at <http://bit.ly/sharktoothfairypetition>.

Please see WARNING on 7A

VIDEO ONLINE

For video of Mike Harris talking about fossils included in a past hunt and an aerial view of the crowd at a hunt, click on this story at beaufortgazette.com.

"The (purpose) of the fossil reports is for the museum to learn something new. There is nothing new about shark teeth. Scientists have been studying them for years."

Mike Harris, aka Shark Tooth Fairy

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Size: 128.65 square inch

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WARNING

Continued from 1A

South Carolina officials respond that Harris and 500-plus other hobby divers are required to record and report what they find.

Dave Cicimurri, curator of natural history for the South Carolina State Museum, has informed Harris via email that all his reports have been missing details, or missing entirely.

He said Monday he's worked with other hobby divers who have not submitted reports — in some cases for years — and has generally been able to solve the problems by using photos or other documentation to cobble together approximate reports.

"I don't want anyone to lose their license because of not reporting," Cicimurri said. "I just need something to say, 'Oh, yeah, I did dive, this is what I found.' ... If they go back in and

grab photos off of Facebook, I'd even accept those."

Cicimurri's email and voice-mail have been flooded with messages about Harris since the petition started. In response to comments about "bureaucratic red tape," he said he doesn't make the rules. The reports are necessary for documenting and learning about South Carolina's history, he said.

Nate Fulmer, underwater archaeologist with the S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, said Monday that privacy laws restrict him from discussing specific permits.

However, "I've seen the submissions in question here, and I can say that if any licensee sent us an artifact report that said, 'I collected a lot of artifacts and gave them to kids,' it would be rejected because that doesn't tell us how many, what kind, or when and where the items were collected," Fulmer said in an email to Harris.

Emails between Harris, Fulmer and Cicimurri show an ongoing conversation about reporting requirements and issues.

According to the emails, Harris received a two-year permit Aug. 15, 2013. According to an email from Fulmer, the missing and incomplete reports must be submitted by March 31 and approved by Cicimurri by April 10, or SCIAA will move to revoke the license.

Harris said he cannot comply with the reporting requirements because he lives on a boat and his only Internet access is his smartphone. Harris invited Cicimurri, via email, to track his findings via photos posted to Facebook.

Fulmer suggested in his emails that Cicimurri could be flexible and work with Harris on the reporting requirements. Officially, reports are expected to be filed for each dive and show what was collected and

where. Hobby divers do not have to give their finds to the state, but the data are used for research, Fulmer said.

"In general, I can say we have over 500 cooperative participants in this program, and they have led to some of the greatest finds in the state in the last several years," Fulmer said.

Harris, however, sees some of the reporting as unnecessary, such as GPS coordinates for dive locations. Fulmer clarified that GPS coordinates are not required, but a description of the area is, and many divers use coordinates because they find them easier.

"The (purpose) of the fossil reports is for the museum to learn something new," Harris said. "There is nothing new about shark teeth. Scientists have been studying them for years."

Follow reporter Erin Moody at twitter.com/IPBG_Erin.



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File • Staff photo

Shark Tooth Fairy Mike Harris and his supporters are circulating a petition to stop the revocation of his hobby diver permit. The state says divers must report what they find and where they find it. The state says Harris has failed to fill out the proper paperwork.

Title: **Senate looks for its own plan for more money for S.C. roads**
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press
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Senate looks for its own plan for more money for S.C. roads

BY JEFFREY COLLINS
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — As the South Carolina House prepares to begin debating how to raise more money to maintain and repair state roads, several other plans are being discussed by a special Senate committee.

While two bills in the House look to raise about \$400 million more for roads a year, the Senate appears to want to direct a larger amount to roads.

The Senate also appears less interested than the House and Gov. Nikki Haley in changing the way the South Carolina Department of Transportation operates.

In a report last year, the DOT estimated it needed more than \$1 billion extra to get the state's roads and bridges to good condition.

A special Senate committee is reviewing six bills with four different plans to increase road revenue. Here are highlights of the plans.

Grooms' funding plan

Sen. Larry Grooms has two bills to increase road funding. Both would involve raising the gas tax by 20 cents over a decade, while incrementally cutting the state's income tax rate 2 percentage points.

He also wants to take 20 percent of any new revenue South Carolina gets each budget year and put it toward roads until 5 percent of the state's general budget is paying for highways and bridges.

Grooms said his plans will raise much more than the \$400 million per year the House and governor seem focused on.

Title: **Senators: Robocalls gave false info**
 Author: BY DERREK ASBERRY dasberry@aikenstandard.com
 Size: 33.94 square inch
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



Senators: Robocalls gave false info

Calls reportedly came from out-of-state gun-rights group

BY DERREK ASBERRY

dasberry@aikenstandard.com

Robocalls were sent out Sunday across Aiken County falsely accusing Sen. Tom Young of pushing an ethics-reform bill for the purpose of requiring gun owners to register their guns, the Aiken Republican wrote in a Monday newsletter.

According to the newsletter – which is routinely sent to Young's constituents – calls were made by an unidentified person to several residents in District 24.

Young said the calls accused him of advocating for Senate Bill No. 1, the 2015 Ethics Reform Act.

The calls were coming in from groups asking residents to contact their legislators to oppose the gun-registration

position, a red-button issue across the state.

Young said he was one of many senators accused of pushing gun registration for owners.

"That is simply not true," Young wrote in the newsletter. "Senate Bill No. 1 as drafted is intended to strengthen our state's ethics laws – it has nothing to do with gun registration."

S.C. Sen. Shane Massey, R-Edgefield, said he heard that the calls were coming from an out-of-state gun-rights group.

Most likely, the group is upset about a provision in the ethics legislation that would require advocacy groups to disclose

their donors if they are attempting to influence an election, Massey said.

"If you've got an independent group sending out mail saying vote for X or don't vote Y, it would require those groups to disclose their donors. And

there are obviously some groups who don't like that, and it seems they're using the gun issues as a catalyst," Massey said.

Young added, "If you received such a phone call, I hope that this information is helpful to you and corrects the misinformation that you may have been provided from the

mysterious person/group," he added.

The Senate killed the ethics bill about two weeks ago, in large part to an issue of whether lawmakers should be involved in the process of investigating themselves when ethics issues come up.

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley took to Facebook on the issue, stating that allowing legislators to investigate themselves is "a slap in the face to every citizen in South Carolina."

"I will veto any bill that does not include true independent investigations of elected officials," Haley wrote.

Massey said there will be an attempt to revive the ethics bill this week.

What do you think?

Comment on this story at www.aikenstandard.com, write to Opinions, *Aiken Standard*, Box 456, Aiken, S.C. 29802 or send an email to editorial@aikenstandard.com.



Young



Massey

Title: **Recleim sparks hope**

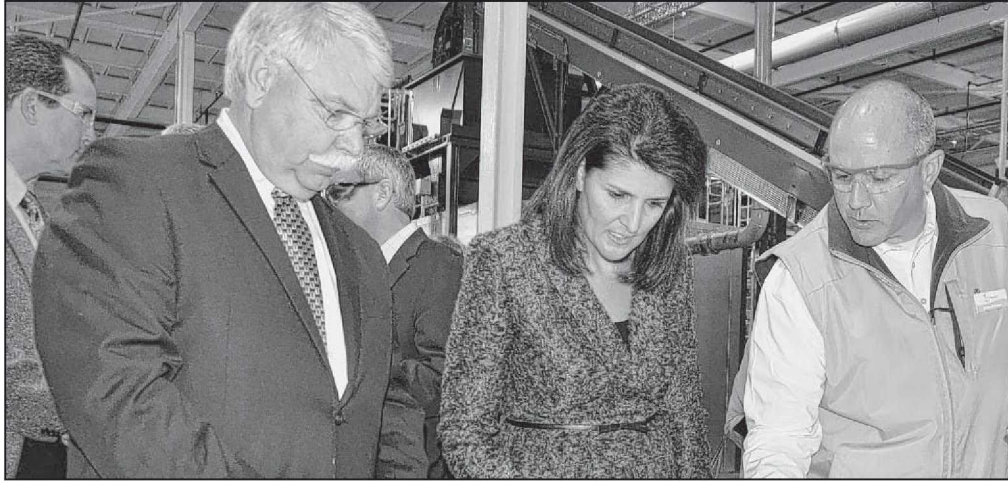
Author:

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EDITORIAL



STAFF PHOTO BY CINDY KUBOVIC

S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley took a tour of Graniteville's Recleim facility on Friday. Leading her in the tour were the company's president Douglas Huffer, left, and Bobby Robinson.

Recleim sparks hope

The old Hickman Mill plant in Graniteville – once part of the heartbeat of the small town – has life again.

The old mill has been transformed into a state-of-the-art facility with the opening on Friday of a new plant by Recleim, an e-waste recycling company.

This is clearly a win for the town of Graniteville and Aiken County because of the economic benefits it generates. The company has invested \$40.6 million into the facility and is expected to eventually bring 200 jobs to the area.

This economic recruitment, however, is even more monumental because of its location. Graniteville was once the headquarters to the sprawling former Graniteville Co. mill system, but was essentially crippled decades ago because of the U.S. textile industry's collapse. Also, the town is still recuperating from a horrific freight train derailment in 2005 that spilled thousands of gallons of chlorine into the air.

Building a facility in an area once soaked in toxic chemicals took a bold vision on the part of Recleim, and thankfully, Aiken County and, in particular, Graniteville, will reap the benefits. Months of construction – both inside the old mill and outside it – are now culminating into not just the opening of a new business, but a brighter outlook for the

community. The company made investments into new loading and receiving docks at the building, as well as new offices and a refurbished parking lot. Having a high-tech, one-of-a-kind facility in the heart of Graniteville shines a positive light on a town that wasn't necessarily guaranteed success after facing so much adversity.

The ribbon-cutting on Friday was a reminder of both the resiliency of Graniteville, as well the collaboration that went into recruiting Recleim to our community. Aiken County Council approved \$675,000 in local incentives for the company in April 2013 as part of a pool of grant money distributed by the S.C. Department of Commerce. Additional money from those grants also went toward helping Bridgestone, also located in Graniteville, with its latest expansion at its existing plant located at the Sage Mill Industrial Park.

These two companies – Recleim and Bridgestone – as well as MTU America with its state-of-the-art diesel production facility in Graniteville, have created a cluster of manufacturing in the area that offers hope for future economic growth.

Replenishing what Graniteville lost years ago should be an ongoing mission of local leaders as the town continues its efforts to rebuild and recover.

Title: **When more can be less in the state's tax system**
 Author: BY CINDI ROSS SCOPPE Columnist
 Size: 54.25 square inch
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COLUMN

When more can be less in the state's tax system

BY CINDI ROSS SCOPPE

Columnist

Most people would rather pay a 5 percent state income tax than a 7 percent tax. And that's the very simple logic behind S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley's tax plan. But what if the 5 percent tax was on 75 percent of your income, and the 7 percent tax was on just 50 percent of your income?

If you like numbers, you've already recognized that the 7 percent tax would cost you less, and no matter how you feel about numbers, you're probably wondering why I would raise such a bizarre, left-field question. Well, that's the dirty little secret about comparing state income tax rates: Every state taxes a different amount of your income.

This isn't simply – or even mostly – because different states allow you to deduct different expenses, or offer different tax credits. It's because they give more or less credit for being a taxpayer, for having a child, and so on. They even use different starting points for calculating your taxable income.

The result is that even though South Carolina's 7 percent top income tax rate is indeed the highest in the

region and 12th highest in the nation, the percent of our income that South Carolinians actually pay in income taxes is nowhere near the top.

According to the latest version of a study done every few years by South Carolina's chief economist, the tax that South Carolinians actually pay is on average just 3.1 percent of their income, or less than half of that top rate. That's lower than what people pay in 32 states. Among those who pay a higher effective tax rate are neighboring Georgians, at 3.7 percent.

Unfortunately, I can't give you North Carolina numbers, because our neighbor to the north lowered its top rate to 5 percent since the last study was done. What I can tell you, though, is that 19 of the 27 states that have lower top rates than South Carolina actually collect a larger percentage of residents' income than South Carolina does.

What's even more instructive, if we want to make our state more attractive to tax-shoppers without crippling our ability to provide the quality of life that newcomers expect, is why there's such a huge difference between our tax rates on paper and our tax rates in practice.

Before we go any further, let's make sure we understand the numbers. First, our effective tax rate is not low because of the 1.1 million

South Carolinians who make too little money to pay state income taxes, and therefore would derive absolutely no benefit from lowering the top income tax rate.

S.C. Chief Economist Frank Rainwater didn't include those people in his study. Instead, he compared the total state income taxes collected in each state to the total federal adjusted gross income that each state's residents reported to the IRS – that is, how much of everyone's federal adjusted gross income got taxed by their states. Federal adjusted gross income is total income minus a few selected deductions, including medical expenses and 401(K) contributions.

Next, federal adjusted gross income is not what you make; it's your income minus a few selected deductions, including medical insurance and 401(K) contributions. Depending on how much you make and how you spend it, this can be significantly less than what you make.

For example, my adjusted gross income for 2013 was only about three-quarters of my total income; and my federal taxable income, which we'll get to in a moment, was

barely more than half of my total income.

Now, getting back to

why the amount that South Carolinians pay in taxes is so much less than our tax rate. What Rainwater discovered was that South Carolina is an outlier on three measures: The super-sized personal exemptions and the super-sized standard deductions that we offer on top of the federal exemptions, and the fact that South Carolina does not tax the first \$2,760 in federal adjusted gross income. Add that \$2,760 to an \$11,600 standard deduction and personal exemptions of \$3,700 per person, and a family of four pays no S.C. taxes on the first \$29,160 of their federal adjusted gross income. That's a larger exemption than any other state allows, and nearly double the national average.

What that means is that we could lower our rates significantly and still collect the same amount of money by, say, cutting our personal exemptions in half, or eliminating our standard deduction, as some states have done.

Or we could simply change the starting point, and let South Carolinians write down their federal adjusted gross income on the first line of their state tax return, like many states do, instead of their lower "taxable income." That would allow us to lower our rates, and still generate the same amount



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of revenue, from the same people.

That's not going to satisfy people who are convinced that South Carolinians are overtaxed. But the fact is that all sorts of studies by organizations that don't care where

South Carolina ranks have demonstrated that we are taxed less than people in most states, and specifically that we pay less of our income in income taxes than people in most states.

So if we're looking for a

way to address the perception problem that very well might make it more difficult for us to attract desirable new residents and businesses, there's a pretty simple way to do that – without further diminishing the government services that

those new residents and businesses expect.

Cindi Ross Scoppe is an associate editor with *The State* newspaper in Columbia.



Scoppe



Haley

Title: **Haley's nominee to lead Cabinet agency advances**
 Author: Associated Press
 Size: 11.31 square inch
 Georgetown, SC Circulation: 11000



Haley's nominee to lead Cabinet agency advances

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — A Senate committee has advanced Gov. Nikki Haley's choice to be South Carolina's first Department of Administration secretary.

Tuesday's vote by the Senate Finance Committee sent Marcia Adams' nomination to the chamber floor.

Adams currently leads the Budget and Control Board, the agency that handles much of state government's bureaucracy.

But it won't exist after June 30. A long-sought government restructuring law Haley signed last year divides its wide-ranging divisions among several new and existing agencies.

Most workers will transfer to the new Department of Administration. As South Carolina's 17th Cabinet agency, it gives the governor oversight of bureaucratic functions such as fleet and property management, mail, and technology services.

Adams will remain in her current role until July 1. She makes nearly \$193,000 as Budget and Control Board director.

Title: **Recycler gives life to old mill**
 Author: By RODDIE BURRIS rburris@thestate.com
 Size: 81.53 square inch
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Recycler gives new life to old mill

High-tech startup opens appliance recovery plant in Graniteville

By RODDIE BURRIS
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GRANITEVILLE — A 2-year-old startup company here is joining the state's expanding recycling industry and simultaneously helping to rebuild a former mill town belted by a dying business and a staggering railroad accident a decade ago.

The company, Recleim, has invested \$40.6 million to convert a once-vacant cotton mill to a first-of-its-kind recovery facility in North America. The recycling plant that opened Friday is expected eventually to provide about 200 jobs to the Graniteville area.

Recleim has had a growing influence in the Palmetto State. An economic impact study released last year by the College of Charleston showed significant gains in recycling-linked jobs and business since 2006.

Between 2006 and 2014, recycling doubled its annual economic impact in South

Carolina to \$13 billion, up from \$6.5 billion in 2006, or a 5 percent annual growth, according to the study.

More than 520 recycling-related companies were located in South Carolina last year, breeding 22,500 attributable jobs, which paid an average salary of \$40,203, the study found.

In addition, state and local governments reaped \$329 million in taxes from recycling businesses in each of those years, the report stated.

Graniteville — headquarters to the sprawling former Graniteville Co. mill system — was socked decades ago by the U.S. textile industry's collapse. The town is still recovering from a 2005 freight train derailment that spilled 11,500 gallons of chlorine into the air. Choking fumes killed nine people and brought Graniteville to a

standstill.

"Graniteville, you deserve this," Gov. Nikki Haley told a crowd gathered for the recycling plant's formal opening. "This is a good quality company. Yet, while this is a big deal for Aiken County, and this is a big deal for South Carolina — this is a big deal for our country."

Rep. Chris Corley, R-Aiken, a lifelong resident, said the plant opening reminded him of the Graniteville of his youth. "I can remember when this was hustling and bustling, and it hasn't been like that much lately," Corley said.

Reclim is a high-tech company operating an 110,000-square-foot plant that disassembles household appliances into components and recycles the metals. Plant officials said they can recover 95 percent of the components while the na-

tional standard is about 70 percent.

Reclim's plant also recycles vending machines and heating-and-cooling systems — turning them into reusable plastic, aluminum, copper, steel and pellet foam.

That keeps waste away from landfills and other forms of environmental degradation, officials said. Recycling one refrigerator or freezer has the same environmental effect of taking two automobiles off the road for a year, officials said.

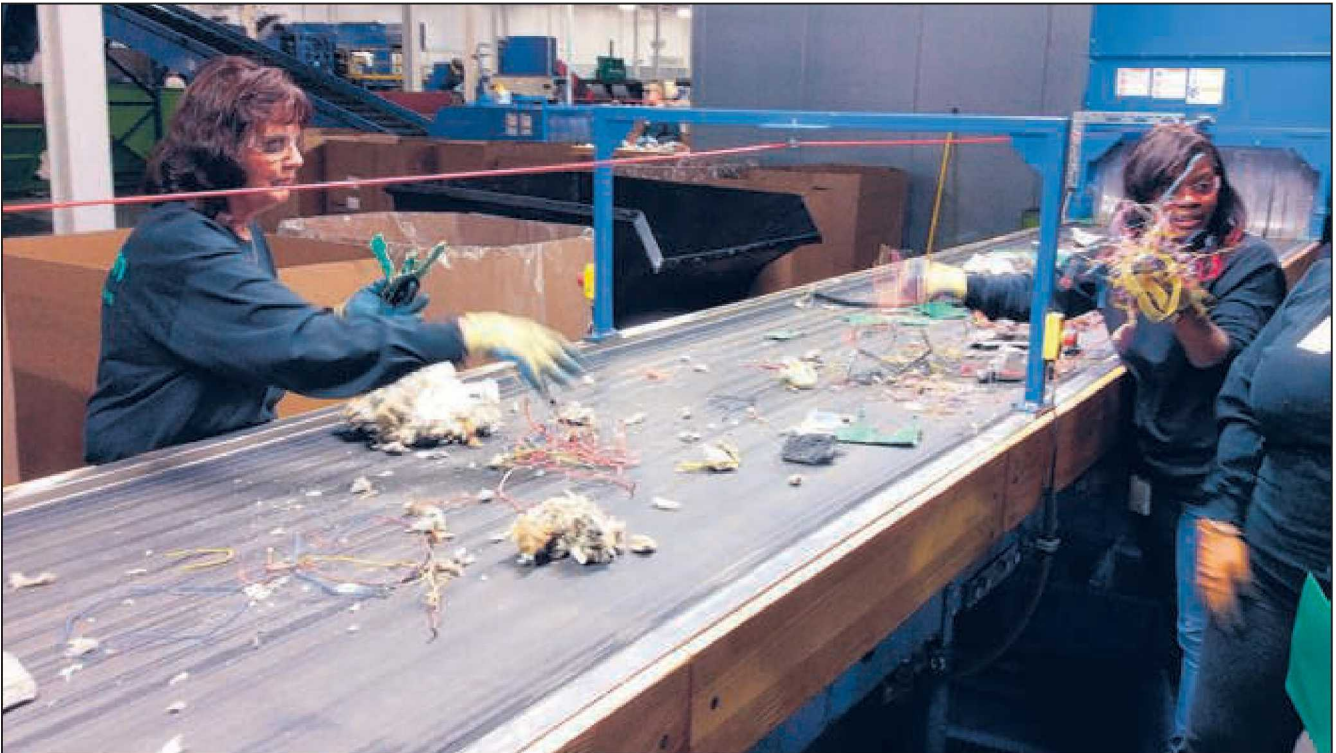
Reclim draws appliances from a 350-mile radius, as recycling becomes an expected norm locally and nationally, especially among millennials, said Douglas Huffer, president and general manager.

Reach Burris
 at (803) 771-8398.
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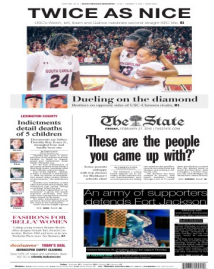
Recleim's plant disassembles household appliances into components and recycles the metals.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RODDIE BURRIS/RBURRIS@THESTATE.COM

Recleim employees sort components of household appliances for recycling at the new Graniteville plant. The high-tech facility adds to the growing recycling industry in South Carolina.

Title: **An army of supporters defends Fort Jackson**
 Author: By JEFF WILKINSON jwilkinson@thestate.com
 Size: 114.39 square inch
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An army of supporters defends Fort Jackson

Military will announce decisions on cuts this summer

By JEFF WILKINSON
 jwilkinson@thestate.com

Army leaders at a listening session Thursday on potential cuts at Fort Jackson said a decision would be made in late spring, announced in early summer and the outcome would be enforced Oct. 1.

But Brig. Gen. Roger Cloutier Jr., who is conducting 30 listening sessions at bases across the nation, said no decision has yet been made. "Your voice matters," said

Cloutier, who coincidentally will take command of Fort

SEE FORT PAGE A7

AT THESTATE.COM: Watch a video of Fort Jackson's Drill Sergeant Academy, one of the fort's many missions.

FORT

FROM PAGE A1

Jackson in May.

A crowd approaching 2,000 gathered Thursday at Shandon Baptist Church along Forest Drive to show support for Fort Jackson before a panel of U.S. Army officers in town to hear about the effect of potentially deep cuts at the nation's largest training bases.

Gov. Nikki Haley was joined by the leadership of the General Assembly and more than a dozen state lawmakers to proclaim South Carolina as the most military-friendly state in the nation. Members of the congressional delegation supplied recorded remarks.

She urged Army brass to consider not just the economic impact of Fort Jackson on the community when contemplating potential cuts, but also the state's efforts to support and sustain troops stationed here.

"It's not just about the money," Haley said. "It's not just about the jobs. Those things are important. But it's about the soldiers."

The governor rattled off several pieces of legislation the state has adopted to support troops, from allowing the transfer of professional licenses for service members and their spouses, to keeping property taxes lower on their homes when they are deployed.

"We consider the military to be part of our family," she said.

Many city and county officials as well as business and education leaders highlighted the fort's importance to the community's economy.

"Fort Jackson is a marquee asset for Columbia and a marquee asset for South Carolina," said Boyd Jones, chairman of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, which hosted the event.

Fort Jackson is the military's largest training base, churning out 45,000 new soldiers each year from basic training and it provides advanced training for another 25,000, from chaplains to drill sergeants to polygraph technicians.

It generates about \$2 billion for the local economy annually, according to a study by the University of South Carolina Moore School of Business.

The Army last year asked 30 of the nation's largest bases to assess the impacts of deep cuts to their local economies. It directed Maj. Gen. Bradley Becker, Fort Jackson's commander, to assess the impact of losing about half the workforce at the fort, about 3,100 jobs.

The cuts are because of reductions in the military after 13 years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and deeper cuts to both the military and domes-

tic spending mandated by Congress as a result of the 2011 debt ceiling fight, called "the sequester."

U.S. Sens. Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott, and U.S. Reps. Jim Clyburn and Joe Wilson, who addressed the gathering with taped remarks, all said the sequester should be modified or repealed. "I'm trying my best to get a better budget," Graham said. "But now is the time, above all others, (for the Army and lawmakers) to make good decisions."

The dignitaries spoke for about an hour and a half. Afterward, dozens of members of the public took the microphone, including Iraq War veteran Ramon Guitard, who lost both legs in a roadside bomb attack.

"Fort Jackson stood up for me and my family when we needed it," said Guitard, who now walks on high-tech graphite prosthetic legs. "Now I want to stand up for the fort."

"Fort Jackson benefits the whole community," Wanda Taylor said. "We would have a lot to replace without it. Columbia has developed around it."

No one is certain what will happen at Fort Jackson, Becker has said. And that uncertainty could continue for another year, until Congress decides whether to let \$1.2 trillion in sequester cuts – half to the military, half to domestic spending – kick in.

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 Author: By JEFF WILKINSON jwilkinson@thestate.com
 Size: 114.39 square inch
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564

THE NUMBERS**\$2 billion**

Annual economic impact in the Midlands

70,000

Soldiers and sailors trained in 2014

42,000

Soldiers who received basic combat training in 2014

26,000

Soldiers who received advanced training in 2014

3,500

Active-duty military employees

3,500

Civilian employees

200,000

Family members of new soldiers who visit each year for graduation ceremonies

WHAT FOLKS WERE SAYING

"I'm here because of the fort. My dad was stationed here. I fell in love with Columbia and decided to stay."

— *Bob Hubble***Hubble**

"We consider the military to be part of our family."

— *Gov. Nikki Haley*

"The fort is a very good neighbor and very good for the economy."

— *Ed Murray***Murray****Taylor**

"Fort Jackson benefits the whole community. We would have a lot to replace without it. Columbia has developed around it."

— *Wanda Taylor*

"We have a great relationship with Fort Jackson. We're all about relationships with the community. And the fort is a big part of this community."

— *Madison McCartney***McCartney**

"Fort Jackson stood up for me and my family when we needed it. Now I want to stand up for the fort."

— *Ramon Guitard, veteran***Guitard**

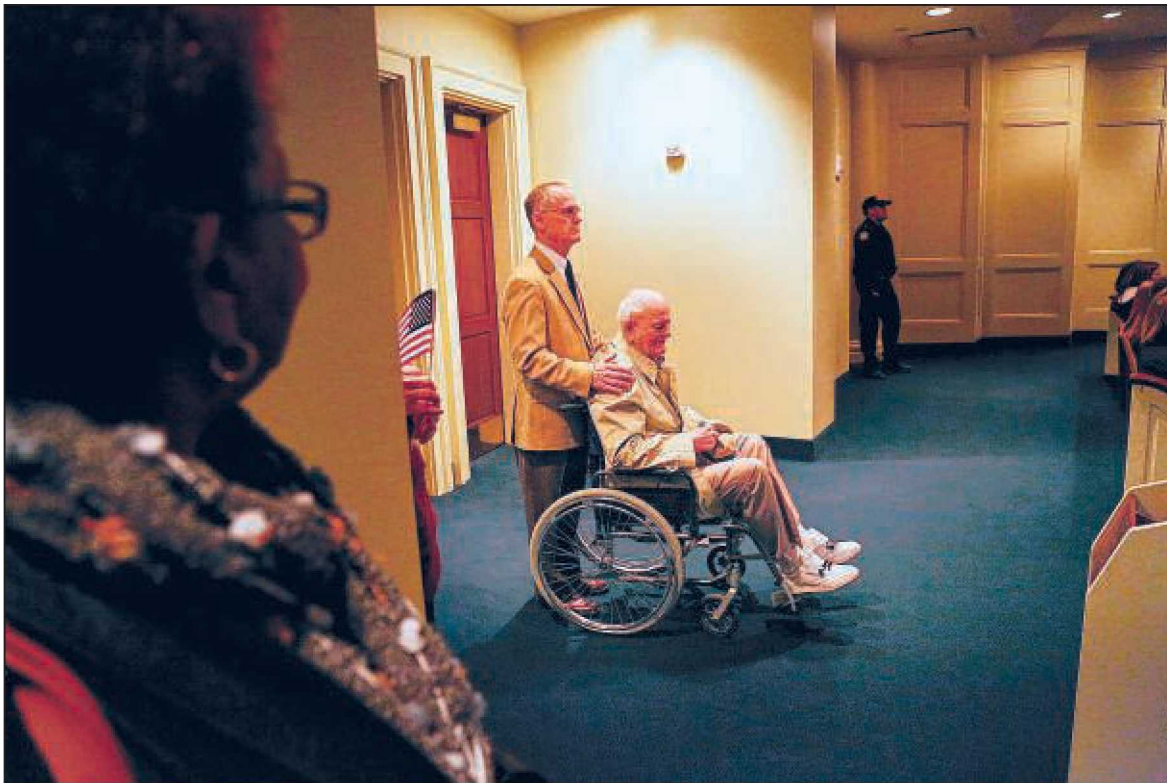
Title: **An army of supporters defends Fort Jackson**
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GERRY MELENDEZ/GMELENDEZ@THESTATE.COM

**Carmen McSwain, 10, of Gaffney, shows her support Thursday
for Fort Jackson.**

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Ted Chalgren comforts his father, Gus, 101, as they listen to speakers at Shandon Baptist Church. The elder Chalgren was in training at Fort Jackson in 1939.



Title: **Coastal Montessori singers open annual conference**

Author:

Size: 25.73 square inch

Georgetown, SC Circulation: 11000

Coastal Montessori singers open annual conference



CLAYTON STAIRS/SOUTH STRAND
NEWS

Coastal Montessori Charter School students performed three songs about peace and love to open the 20th annual Montessori Educational Programs International conference titled "Hands for Peace" held Feb. 20 at the Litchfield Beach and Golf Resort's Tara Theater. Feb. 22 marked the beginning of Montessori Education Week throughout the state of South Carolina, as proclaimed by Gov. Nikki Haley.