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To:

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Subject: SC Front Pages – Wednesday, February 17, 2016

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The Post and Courier

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Wednesday, February 17, 2016

POSTANDCOURIER.COM

Charleston, S.C. \$1.00

Haley expands effort to save infants

Nurse-Family Partnership that aids poor moms in rural S.C. to get another \$30M

BY LAUREN SAUSER and DOUG PARDOUE
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Gov. Nikki Haley will tackle rural South Carolina's historically high infant mortality rate by sending nurses

into the homes of thousands more first-time, low-income mothers.

In a press conference Tuesday at the Statehouse, Haley announced a \$30 million expansion of Nurse-Family Partnership, a program that has demonstrated success in several rural South Carolina counties and in

CRADLE OF SHAME

other states across the nation. The Post and Courier highlighted how well this program works in a four-part series last year titled "Cradle of Shame."

The newspaper's investigation re-

vealed that infants in rural South Carolina continue to die before their first birthday at very high rates compared with babies in urban parts of the state.

The state's overall infant mortality rate hit its lowest level ever in 2014, but for some black babies in rural South Carolina, the death toll runs four times higher than the national average, mirroring rates in undeveloped countries.

While Nurse-Family Partnership is

one of several promising programs already up and running in South Carolina, the newspaper found that many of these aren't available in rural pockets that need the most help and receive little or no state investment.

Haley said that the Nurse-Family Partnership expansion will be paid for with private donations and federal money.

Please see **NURSES**, Page A4

Who will Haley pick? Certainly not Trump

Says she's 'embarrassed' by attacks on Bush as primary clock ticks



Gov. Nikki Haley has not endorsed a presidential candidate ahead of Saturday's Republican primary in South Carolina. Political watchers speculate she may choose Jeb Bush, the former Florida governor (left), or U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio (right) of Florida.

BY CYNTHIA ROLDAN
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COLUMBIA — The window of opportunity for Gov. Nikki Haley to endorse a presidential candidate is closing fast, and she may not publicly support anybody ahead of Saturday's primary.

Only three days remain until the Republican presidential vote, and Haley, who told a national news outlet she would endorse by or soon after the New Hampshire primary, has still not said anything publicly other than to confirm it will not be the outspoken, brash GOP front-runner Donald Trump.

"I took my daughter to her first debate on Saturday, and I was embarrassed to see a candidate criticize a president on one of

Inside

Trump dial back attacks on Bush, pushes forward against Cruz. **A8**

Bush woo crowd in Leesville. **A8**

Rubio stumps in Summerville. **A9**

Cruz speaks on Yorktown about bolstering military. **A9**

Online

For more political coverage, go to palmettopolitics.com

the worst days that we've had in American history," Haley said of Trump's attacks on George W. Bush, candidate Jeb Bush's brother, and his handling of 9/11.

Please see **HALEY**, Page A8

Sanders in Charleston touts his 'radical ideas' for change

BY GAVIN JACKSON and DAVID SLADE
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dslade@postandcourier.com

Bernie Sanders received a rockstar reception Tuesday afternoon in Charleston, bringing a crowd of more than 700 to his feet clapping and chanting his name at the Memminger Auditorium.

The 74-year-old U.S. senator from Vermont started and ended his rally with his populist brand of Democratic socialism and his call on voters to declare "enough is enough," saying that throughout history America has been changed by the better for

people who got fed up, risking life and property to secure civil rights, women's rights, workers' rights and more.

"Even in South Carolina, are you ready for a radical idea?" Sanders said rhetorically. "In America, someone who works 40 hours a week should not live in poverty."

Please see **SANDERS**, Page A8

Obama vows to nominate a justice

Constitution is clear, he tells Republicans

BY MARK LANDLER and JENNIFER STEINHAUER
The New York Times

RANCHO MIRAGE, CALIF. — President Barack Obama on Tuesday challenged Republicans to offer any plausible rationale for refusing to consider a Supreme Court candidate to replace Justice Antonin Scalia, who died last weekend, and he pledged to nominate someone with an "outstanding legal mind" who cares about democracy and the rule of law.

"The Constitution is pretty clear about what is supposed to happen now," Obama said during a news conference after a meeting in California with leaders of Southeast Asia.

He said the Constitution demands that a president nominate someone for the court and the Senate either confirms or rejects.

"There's no unwritten law that says that it can only be done on off years," Obama said. "That's not in the Constitutional text."

Obama said he understood the political stakes of a nomination that could change the balance on the court. "I understand the pressure that Republican senators are now under," he said. "This would be a deciding vote."

But the president said the Supreme Court ought to be above political gamesmanship. "This will be a test of whether rules, norms, and fair play can function at all in Washington," he said.

Please see **OBAMA**, Page A13

Inside



FOOD

Area eateries join ramen rush with 10 unique takes. **D1**

NATION

German shorthaired pointer named best in show at Westminster dog show. **A12**

NATION

Heat brings out beachgoers; others clean after storm. **A10**

Short order: Mt. Pleasant weighs new height proposals

Coleman, Ben Sawyer buildings could be restricted to 3 stories

BY DAVID SLADE
dslade@postandcourier.com

MOUNT PLEASANT — The town set out to encourage higher-density growth along Coleman and Ben Sawyer boulevards eight years ago, aiming to create a pedestrian-friendly



Poll

Should there be a three-story limit for buildings in Mount Pleasant? Go to postandcourier.com/polls to vote.

downtown area with multistory buildings, but opposition from residents shocked by the result has officials now looking at chopping down building height rules.

"I don't know what council will do, but I do know the citizens don't

want 75-foot buildings on Coleman Boulevard," said Councilman Gary Santos, who is leading the charge to restrict building height.

When Town Council's Planning Committee meets at 1 p.m. Monday, it will discuss calls for limiting buildings along the boulevards to three stories, no more than 45 feet high.

The proposed limit along the main route through Mount Pleasant from the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge to Sullivan's Island would be the town's most restrictive height limit there

since at least 1982.

Current rules allow for 55-foot buildings in most locations and 75-foot buildings on three properties, one of which is now home to The Boulevard apartments.

The potential redevelopment of two shopping centers where the tallest buildings are currently permitted, Moultrie Plaza and Sea Island Shopping Center, could be reshaped by the proposed 30-foot reduction in allowed height.

Please see **HIGHT**, Page A4



Clear, High 65, Low 38, Complete 5-day forecast. **B10**

Bridge B1
Business B1
Classifieds E1
Comics B8-9
Crossword B16
Editorials A14
Food G1
Movies B7
Obituaries B4
Sports C1
Sudoku B7
Television B6

Charleston Deals today

Crazy Dash
Half off digital adventure.
See A2



SPORTS
**CU WARY OF
WINLESS BC**



LIFESTYLE
**A pair of
Fresh Mex
successes**

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WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 17, 2016
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

USA TODAY EXPERTS SEE LITTLE HOPE THAT OPEC DEAL WILL CUT OUTPUT, RAISE PRICES **PAGE 1B**

Haley endorsement would not be Trump

TIM SMITH
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COLUMBIA - Gov. Nikki Haley hasn't made up her mind yet on which GOP candidate she will support in Saturday's presidential preference primary but she knows it will not be Donald Trump.

The governor said she has talked with all of the candidates and expects to decide "soon" if she will make an endorsement.

"I'm doing what a lot of people in South Carolina are doing," she said. "I'm looking at all the candidates that are there and trying to figure out who that person would be."

What Haley said she is looking for is someone "who is going to keep our country safe," someone who understands the

problems the states face and a "fighter."

"I want someone who is going to hold Republicans accountable, and I want someone who is going to make a difference, not just for our party but for every person they represent in the country," she said.

But that person will not be Donald Trump, she said.

Trump said at a Lowcountry appearance this week that Haley had been weak in her responses to the issues of the possibly transferring prisoners from the federal detention facility at Guantanamo Bay to South Carolina and in opposing the acceptance of Syrian refugees.

Haley has fought consideration of the Naval Brig in Charleston as a site for prisoners if Guantanamo closes and has also opposed bringing Syrian refugees

into South Carolina, saying she does not have enough confidence in the vetting of Syrians.

"When you have a candidate that comes in and goes against a governor, it's everything a governor doesn't want in a president," she said. "Because we don't want a president that's just going to bash and sit there and tell us what we're not doing right. We want a president that is going to help us fight, help us win and help explain why we don't want Syrian refugees and why prisoners at Guantanamo Bay don't need to come to South Carolina."

Haley also said she took her daughter to the GOP debate in Greenville Saturday and was "embarrassed" at the criti-

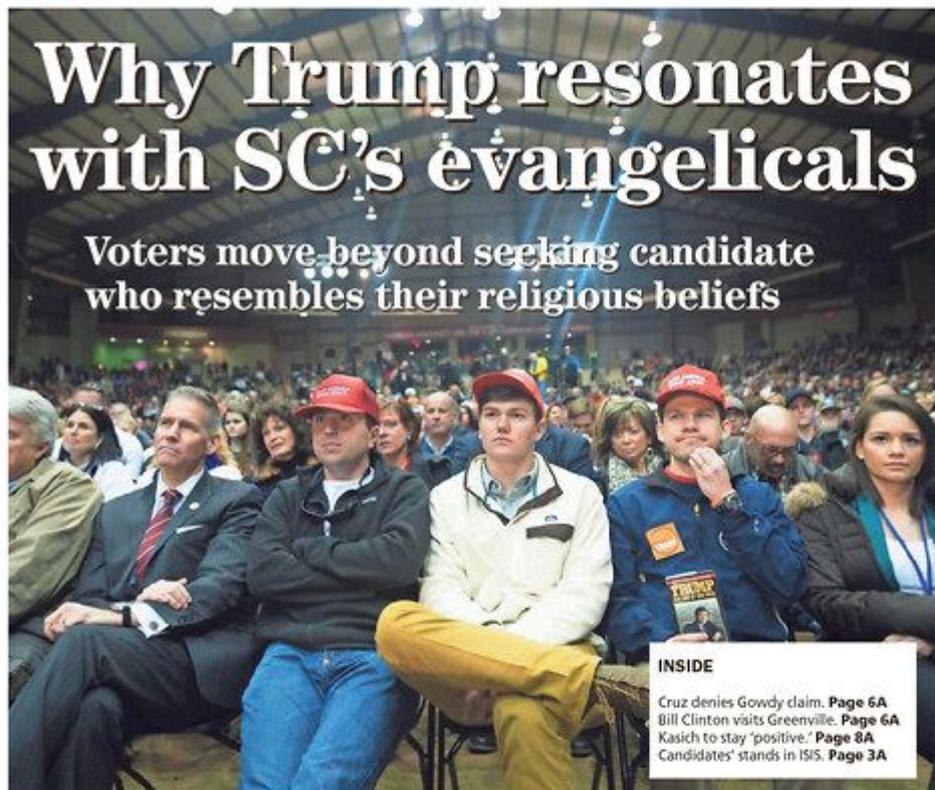
See **HALEY**, Page 4A



LAUREN PETRACCA/STAFF
Gov. Nikki Haley says she is certain only about which candidate she will not endorse.



ELECTION 2016



Why Trump resonates with SC's evangelicals

Voters move beyond seeking candidate who resembles their religious beliefs

INSIDE

Cruz denies Gowdy claim. **Page 6A**
Bill Clinton visits Greenville. **Page 6A**
Kasich to stay 'positive.' **Page 8A**
Candidates' stands in ISIS. **Page 3A**

Donald Trump supporters listen to him speak at a rally at the T. Ed Garrison Livestock Arena in Clemson last week.

NATHANIEL CARY
NCARY@GREENVILLENWS.COM

Fresh off a month-long missionary trip teaching at a Bible college in the Philippines, David Thomas drove to Clemson last week to listen to real estate tycoon Donald Trump.

Thomas wore a tie and a brown jacket zipped against the cold and sat front-and-center just steps away from the GOP presidential candidate.

He came to hear a man speak who he believes to be the next Theodore Roosevelt — an unorthodox outsider who will shake up Washington at a time it needs someone to break through the federal logjam.

Yet Thomas, a former state senator, is a conservative Christian Sunday school teacher and the exact sort of person who many political pundits say should be turned off by the

Thomas represents a fissure that's opened wide among South Carolina evangelicals in the lead-up to the GOP presidential preference primary on Feb. 20. The cracks began to open in 2012 when a twice-divorced Newt Gingrich won South Carolina, but it's been ripped wide open by a twice-divorced Trump.

As candidates court the roughly 65 percent of GOP voters in the state who count themselves as evangelicals, many of those voters are looking beyond faith to choose their candidate.

Instead, evangelicals are split into two camps and the divide has grown in the 20 years that Michael Lindsay, a sociologist who wrote the Pulitzer-nominated book *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite*, has studied evangelicalism in politics.

Trump, and to a lesser extent Cruz, have tapped into the

Board vote today for Greenville Health

LIV OSBY
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Greenville Health System Trustees will vote Wednesday on potential new members for all three of its boards, including those that are part of its proposed restructuring plan.

Nominations range from bankers and other business executives to members of the clergy, philanthropists, former trustees and even the owner of The Greenville Drive.

GHS wants to change its governance structure so that it can remain a public nonprofit as part of a larger private, nonprofit multi-regional health system. Officials say that will allow the system to respond quickly in a rapidly changing health care environment and expedite partnerships with other health care facilities.

Under that plan, GHS would lease its assets to an affiliated organization run by the multi-regional, and a new board of trustees for the private entity would make strategic and operating decisions.

Trustees of the public entity, who are approved by the Greenville County legislative delegation, have those responsibilities now.

There are six vacancies on the current board that must be filled by residents of state House districts and approved by the delegation. For those seats, trustees have proposed the Rev. Sean D. Dogan, Leah D. Garret and Peter B. Waldschmidt.

The delegation, meanwhile, has nominated Scot L. Baddley, W. Michael Ellison and C. Michael Smith for the available at-large seats.

The board's governance committee also nominated current trustee Lisa Stevens to serve as chair, Dogan as vice chair, and Michelle Seaver as secretary.

The two other boards are for the Upstate Affiliate Organization, which will operate existing GHS hospitals and facilities, and the Strategic Coordinating Organization, which will provide strategic direction and corporate

LAUREN PETRACCA/STAFF

New USC coach **Jeff Dillman** aims to build stronger players, **1B**



USC grad **Ainsley Earhardt** is new co-host of 'Fox & Friends,' **2A**



WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 17 2016

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The State



MUSCHAMP SET FOR LAKE LIVING

\$1.85M house sits on remote private island

TIM DOMINICK | tdominick@thestate.com

USC coach Will Muschamp purchased a \$185 million home on a small island on Lake Murray. It has 9,417 square feet with five bedrooms and seven baths. A causeway connects the island to land.

BY JEFF WILKINSON
jwilkinson@thestate.com

New University of South Carolina football coach Will Muschamp is putting down roots at Lake Murray. The 44-year-old Muschamp has purchased a 9,417-square-foot executive home on a Lake Murray island, connected to the mainland by a short causeway, according to Lexington County records and satellite photographs. Purchase price: \$1.85 million.

The home had been listed at \$2.275 million, records show. It had been on the market "for some time," said Muschamp's Realtor, Terry Bishop, a USC quarterback from 1980 to 1982.

Bishop confirmed the sale of the home, but declined further comment. Muschamp also declined comment.

The house sits on a 1.74-acre island near Irmo, records show. The property also includes a



File photograph/The State

The kitchen looks out on Lake Murray. The home is shown just before the 2013 Lake Murray Association Pontoon Tour of Homes.

2,644-square-foot guest house, a swimming pool and a boat dock.

The home has five bedrooms, five full baths and two half baths, according to listings. It features cathedral ceilings and a soaring foyer with two staircases leading to the second floor. Bonus rooms include a library, media room, office and Florida room.

The main house has wide

balconies and windows offering panoramic views of the widest part of the 47,500-acre, man-made lake, photographs show. It is one of 25 homes in Lexington County that have sold for more than \$1 million since Jan. 1, 2013, the vast majority at the lake, according to Lexington County assessor Rick Dolan.

The home was featured in a 2013 cover story in Lake Murray

Muschamp's island home

Purchase price: \$1.85 million

Main house: 9,417 square feet

Guest house: 2,644 square feet

Built: 2004

Renovated: 2010-2012

Muschamp base salary: \$3 million in 2016

ONLINE

See more photos and video of the house at thestate.com.

Magazine, published by The State newspaper, as part of the Lake Murray Association Pontoon Tour of Homes. Former owner Dan Robbins spent two years extensively renovating the house before the home tour.

The renovated house was

SEE MUSCHAMP, 9A



COUNTDOWN TO SC

3

Days until S.C. GOP primary

10

Days until S.C. Democratic primary

SATURDAY

S.C. GOP primary

Nevada Democratic caucuses

74%

Probability that Donald Trump wins the S.C. GOP primary, according to the FiveThirtyEight website's "polls-plus" forecast. Trump has an 85 percent chance of winning, according to the polls-only forecast by the site, headed by statistician Nate Silver.

FEB. 23

Nevada GOP caucuses

FEB. 27

S.C. Democratic primary

99%+

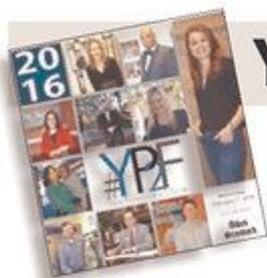
Probability that Hillary Clinton wins the S.C. Democratic primary, according to the FiveThirtyEight "polls-plus" and polls-only forecasts.

MORE INSIDE

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● **SC Gov. Nikki Haley** has not made up her mind on endorsing a 2016 GOP candidate. **7A**

● **This time, the SC**



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Aiken Standard

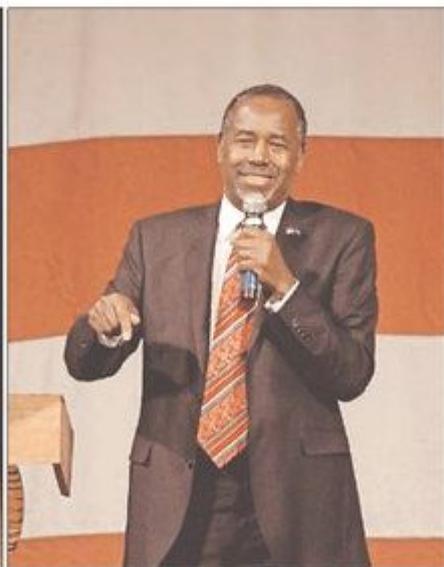
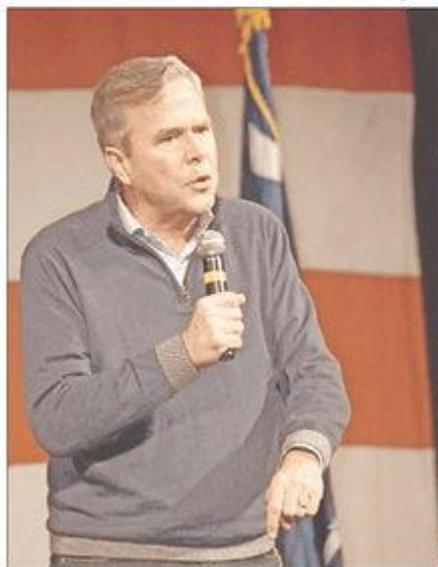
YOUR LOCAL NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1867

WEDNESDAY, February 17, 2016

AIKENSTANDARD.COM

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White House hopefuls talk MOX, local issues



STAFF PHOTOS BY CINDY WILSON

Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson participated in the "Last Word in the South" forum Tuesday.

BY DERREK ASBERRY
dashberry@aikenstandard.com

Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush said the Savannah River Site's MOX facility should not be shut down unless there's a proven alternative, but said he'd defer to the "experts" on the subject — South Carolina Republicans U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham and U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson.

The possible termination of work at the SRS Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility was the first question asked by Wilson, who served on a panel at Tuesday night's "Last Word in the South" presidential forum at the USC Aiken Convocation Center, sponsored by the Aiken GOP.

Bush and retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson were the only two GOP candidates to take the stage at the forum. Both answered Wilson's question by denouncing President Barack Obama's budget proposal which seeks to terminate the MOX project in lieu of a downblending alternative that the Department of Energy deemed as cheaper and more efficient.

The project is designed to meet an agreement with Russia that states each nation must dispose of 34 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium. The U.S. selected the MOX method, which would convert the material into commercial nuclear fuel, but is now looking to switch to downblending, which



INSIDE

Presidential candidate Ben Carson visits with voters at Jimmy John's, 3A

would dilute the material and ship it to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico.

Bush said the MOX cost overruns, which are projected by the Energy Department to be nearly triple that of the original cost, are due to lack of oversight by Congress. At the same time, Bush said Obama's attempt to shutter the facility is ill-advised.

"(Stopping MOX) would be a violation of the agreement with Russia. Of course we should continue unless there's an alternative that is seriously

Please see FORUM, Page 12A



STAFF PHOTO BY T.J. LUNDEEN

Donald Trump held a campaign rally at Riverview Park Activities Center on Tuesday, laying out his plan to "Make America Great Again."

Trump stops in N.A. for rally ahead of primary

BY SCOTT RODGERS
editorial@aikenstandard.com

NORTH AUGUSTA — Ahead of the South Carolina Republican primary on Saturday, Donald Trump is looking to maintain his position at the top of the polls.

Trump took to Riverview Park Activities Center for a campaign rally on Tuesday afternoon, speaking to roughly 1,200 supporters in Gyms 3 and 4 and an additional 500 in

Gym 2. The GOP front-runner roughly doubles his closest rivals Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and Florida Sen. Marco Rubio 35 percent to 18 each, according to Public Policy Polling.

Trump blasted Cruz at the rally. "Did you see (the) senator from Oklahoma just came out with a statement, one of the most incredible statements. Here's a guy who came out with such an unbelievably strong statement that Ted Cruz is the most dishonest person in the Senate," Trump said, with boos being elicited from the mention of Cruz. "Like the most incredible statement. He's a Republican that just came out. What I'm telling you is true — I've never seen a human being lie so much. He lies about everything. He'll take your record, like I talk about Obamacare. He'll say Trump loves Obamacare, that I love Obamacare, how do you fight that? I hate Obamacare, it's going to be terminated."

As it comes to international trade, Trump said China devalues its currency and that it is the "greatest money manipulators ever." Specifically he cautioned about Boeing's plant in China and what that could mean for South Carolina.

"Be careful because China, in order to get an order of planes, is making Boeing build this massive plant in China," he said. "Won't happen if I'm president, by the way, all of a sudden you'll come up and say 'You know, Boeing wants to move all of their production to China and they're going to be closing up.' This is the way it works folks, and you're sitting there saying 'Oh, that couldn't happen,' it can

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ELECTION 2016

• Marco Rubio to speak in Aiken on Wednesday at H. Odell Weeks Activities Center, 2A

• Friday is final day for absentee voting for GOP primary in South Carolina, 3A

• Editorial: Let your voice be heard this election year, get out and vote, 13A



See more photos from The Last Word in the South Forum at aikenstandard.com

AREA DEATHS

Catherine Gartrell, Aiken
Essie Garrett Hall, Beech Island
Thomas Lyle Stilt, Aiken
Willie Robinson, Aiken
Deaths and Funerals, 6A

WEATHER



Local newscasts see shake-up with acquisition

BY LARRY WOOD
lwwood@aikenstandard.com

The sale of a local television station means changes for several morning and evening news broadcasts.

WRDW News 12, owned and operated by Gray Television, acquired WAGT NBC 26 on Tuesday, according to WRDW.com.

WAGT is one of seven television



reached by both broadcast companies in

Because of the acquisition, anchors

played by WJBF's parent company, Media General, and may appear at times on WJBF's broadcast, according to Bill Stewart, general manager of WJBF.

Those employees are under contract to WJBF, which chose to enforce its non-competition clause, according to Sarah Lusk, assistant news director and executive producer for WRDW-TV.

They include morning weatherman Lou Jeffries and anchor Barbara Bishop.

Other on-air personalities include Ashley Campbell and Rich Rogers.

"The only change for WAGT 26's viewers are the local newscasts," Lusk said in a news release. "We notified WJBF of the impending sale and likely FCC conditions in the middle of September 2015. Then, and countless times thereafter, we continually reached out to WJBF and its corporate owners to begin a discussion on how we could

SC primaries approaching

Republicans vote Saturday, Dems vote week later

By COLIN RIDDLE
criddle@indexjournal.com

Republicans and Democrats in South Carolina will hit the polls in the coming Saturdays to make their choice on who will represent each party for the presidential election.

The Republicans will cast their votes Saturday, and Democrats will

cast their ballots one week later.

The two state parties have historically selected their own primary dates with the two picking the weekend this year, which Connie Moody, director of voter registration and elections for Greenwood County, speculates is to draw more voter turnout.

"I think the theory behind that is

the voter turnout may be higher," she said.

Registered voters are allowed to vote in one of the primaries, and the state does not require registration of party, which means voters can vote in either primary, regardless of party affiliation.

However, voters can only vote in one primary. Voters have the same

option in June primaries. The only exception would be if a voter casts a ballot in one party's primary in June, and the other party's primary resulted in a runoff. They cannot switch party's and vote in the runoff.

Each precinct will offer curbside voting for voters who are not able to make it into the precinct.

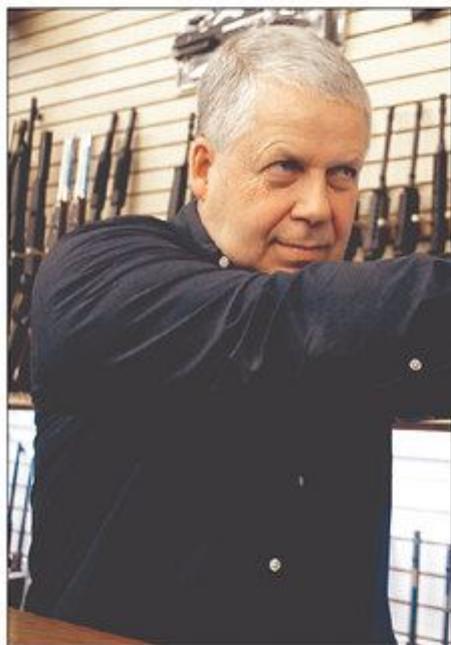
Candidates who have withdrawn

their campaigns might still be on the ballot. Each precinct and voting terminal will have a list of the candidates with marks through those who have withdrawn, as directed by the State Election Commission.

"If a voter wants to vote for a candidate who has dropped out, you can. You can even cast a blank ballot," Moody said.

The deadline to receive absentee requests for the Republican primary

See **PRIMARIES**, page 3A



STAY AWARE

MARY KATE MCGOWAN | INDEX JOURNAL

Ed Strickland, state certified and State Law Enforcement Division-approved concealed weapons permit instructor, demonstrates the features of a gun at Hunter's Headquarters Tuesday.

Watching surroundings, self defense can help ward off attacks

By MARY KATE MCGOWAN
mmcgowan@indexjournal.com

Fifteen to 20 percent of the general population are not affected by pepper spray. Meg's House Executive Director Alice Hodges said during a Business and Professional Women of Greenwood meeting Tuesday morning.

Reactions range from nothing to some-

thing similar to face peeling, she said.

Although there are pros and cons to pepper spray, it could help someone get away from an assailant — if it is easily accessible and not on the bottom of someone's purse.

Hodges, a former Greenwood police officer, said pepper spray can come in handy even if the assailant does not react to the spray by hitting the assailant in the face with the canister.

When someone is assaulted, Hodges

said people should first use the element of surprise to hit their attacker in the eyes, and then hit them in the groin.

"You have a moral and sometimes legal obligation to defend yourself," Hodges said.

She said being aware of one's surroundings is the first line of defense. For example, Hodges said people should research and be aware of high crime areas when

See **AWARE**, page 2A



AT THE STATEHOUSE

So it begins

Which SC senator should be watched during roads debate?

By JEFFREY COLLINS
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina's Senate promises an extensive debate, starting today, on how to get more money to the state's roads and highways.

On Tuesday, Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman told members of the chamber to get to the Statehouse two hours early today for a session that could go well into the evening.

The proposal getting the most attention in the Senate would raise the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon over three years and increase or add some other fees. In five years, an estimated \$723 million extra would be put into roads yearly to repave pothole filled interstates and roads, repair aging bridges and expand some highways. But plenty of amendments changing those figures are likely from Republicans who don't want to raise a lot of taxes and Democrats leery about widespread tax cuts.

Another big issue: Who gets to run the South Carolina Department of Transportation? Some conservatives oppose a plan to have the directors of 10 regional government councils each pick three candidates for the DOT board to send to the governor to make the final choice. Gov. Nikki Haley wants more power over who is appointed to the board at the roads agency. Legislators currently pick seven members, with the governor choosing the eighth.

Committee floats implementation of lake master plan

By COLIN RIDDLE
criddle@indexjournal.com

as chairman of the committee, along with Councilmen Gonza Bryant and Bob Fisher, to identify how the county

was commissioned by the S.C. National Heritage Corridor.

The committee recommended using



INSIDE: Sumter dog wins Best of Breed at Westminster A2



PANORAMA

2 for the show

Gallery opens exhibitions by Mike Williams, Mario Marzan on Thursday c1

City looking for best outcome with FEMA funds

Final presentation on traffic study also given at meeting

BY ADRIENNE SARVIS
adrienne@theitem.com

During Sumter City Council's regular meeting Tuesday, Sumter City Manager Deron McCormick

announced that City of Sumter is still looking to receive the best results possible from Federal Emergency Management Agency.

McCormick said the city has received residential and commercial permits regarding flood damage adding up to almost \$3.6 million since the flood in October.

He said the city will need to meet

a 25 percent match for the cost of its flood mitigation projects in order to receive 75 percent reimbursement.

The city can put costs expended by local volunteer groups such as Sumter United Ministries toward the 25 percent to help cover the amount the city will need to pay to receive reimbursement, he said.

Also, McCormick said he and other city officials spoke before the South Carolina House of Representatives' Ways and Means Committee to ask if FEMA could fund research of the city's stormwater system.

He said the research could find issues that otherwise may not be noticed

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE A6

Trial begins in 2013 killing of grandparents

BY ADRIENNE SARVIS
adrienne@theitem.com

The trial for Joseph M. Manners, accused of murder and arson in the 2013 death of his grandparents, James and Joann Topper, began Tuesday afternoon.



MANNERS

The prosecution and defense made opening arguments and two witnesses gave testimony during the start of the trial Tuesday after the jury had been selected earlier that day, according to Third Circuit Solicitor Ernest "Chip" Finney III.

The trial will continue today at Sumter County Judicial Center with testimony from witnesses.

On June 1, 2013, first responders discovered the Toppers' house on Barnwell Drive fully involved in flames with the homeowners unaccounted for.

It was later determined that James Topper, 68, who was found in the basement, died of blunt force trauma to the head, and Joann Topper, 79, found upstairs, died of smoke inhalation from the fire, based on information provided by Sumter County Sheriff's Office in 2013.

Law enforcement theorized James Topper was killed during an argument with Manners about returning to Kentucky before the fire started, according to a 2013 statement from Sumter County Sheriff Anthony Dennis.

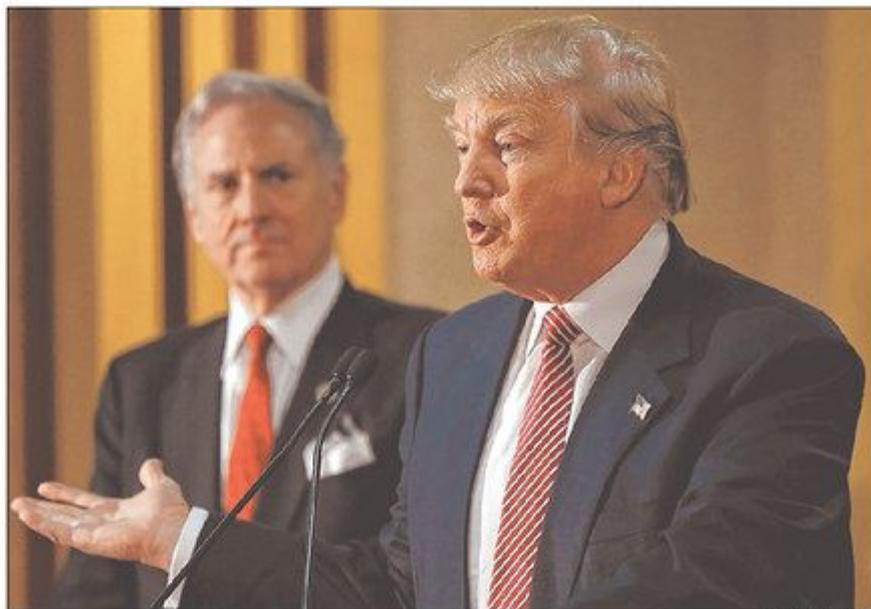
Manners, who was 20 years old at the time, was on parole for crimes related to drug abuse and was staying with his grandparents to get away from negative influences in his home state of Kentucky, Dennis said in 2013.

Manners was apprehended on June 2, 2013, in Ohio after crashing a white Honda Accord he had allegedly taken from the Topper residence into the Ohio River.

Shortly after his arrest, Dennis said he

SEE TRIAL, PAGE A6

Trump in town



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, right, accompanied by South Carolina Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, speaks with members of the media during a news conference on Monday in Hanahan.

Overflow crowd expected at today's 7 p.m. campaign rally

BY JIM HILLEY
jh@theitem.com

Whether you're a true believer or just wanting to see a spectacle, anyone wishing to attend Republican presidential candidate and billionaire Donald Trump's 7 p.m. campaign rally at the Sumter County Civic Center this evening may want to arrive early.

Trump, a real estate developer, hotelier, casino mogul and reality TV star, has been attracting large crowds at his campaign

events, which have been described by observers as more like rock concerts than campaign rallies.

Civic center Director Pat Wheeler said Tuesday she was told 8,000 people have registered for the Republican front runner's campaign rally at the center. She said Trump is expected to speak for about an hour.

That number of registered participants far exceeds the building's capacity, according to building codes.

"I can only let 3,200 in,"

Wheeler said.

People will be admitted on a first-come, first-served basis, she said.

Reports of overflowing crowds at Trump's campaign events have been common.

Wheeler said she has not been told if the campaign will provide any way for people outside the building to see or hear the event.

Outdoor temperatures of 60 degrees or higher are expected when the doors open at 5 p.m.

SEE TRUMP, PAGE A6

UN: Stopping Zika may require genetically modified insects

GENEVA (AP) — It may be necessary to use controversial methods such as genetically modified mosqui-

said on Tuesday.

In a statement, WHO said its advisory group has recommended fur-

tees that spread Zika — as well as other diseases including dengue and yellow fever — as an "aggressive"

the countryside," said Jimmy Whitworth, an infectious diseases expert at the London School of Hygiene and

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The Voice of the Pee Dee

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New hotel coming to Hospitality Boulevard

BY JOE PERRY
Morning News
jperry@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Sometime toward the end of the year, a new hotel will join an already robust hospitality landscape on the road so named for what it offers to interstate travelers.

Raines Hospitality Inc. and SpringBridg Development LLC announced Tuesday that an 86-room Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott will take its place alongside four other Marriott properties on Hospitality Boulevard with a main entrance off Woody Jones Boulevard.

"It's our opportunity to get the royal flush," said Ron Glancy, senior vice president of operations for Raines Hospitality, referring to completing a portfolio of all five Marriott select service brands.

The new Fairfield Inn & Suites is under construction behind the Towne Place Suites and adjacent to a Residence Inn and Spring Hill Suites; a Courtyard Marriott is across the street. Glancy said the former Fairfield Inn & Suites that's now a Days Inn was built in 1989 and had reached the end of its tenure in the Marriott stable. As Raines Hospitality built a solid Marriott line-up in

See **HOTEL**, Page 3A

Bush, Carson to campaign in Florence

From staff reports

FLORENCE — Republican presidential candidates Jeb Bush and Ben Carson are expected to visit Florence this week.

Bush will be back in Florence for the third time during his campaign on Thursday at 8:30 a.m. at the Pee Dee's Farmers Market on W. Lucas St.

Carson is scheduled to have a meeting at Wholly Smokin' BBQ on Friday.

Bush visited Florence first in November when he stopped at Wholly Smokin' BBQ. His second visit was last Thursday, when he held an informal meet-and-greet at Venus Restaurant. Bush has also made stops in Hilton Head, Mount Pleasant, Murrells Inlet, Sumter, Anderson, Greenville and Columbia.

This week has been a busy one for politicians in Florence as Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz made their campaign appearances on Monday. The South Carolina primaries begin Saturday.

The doors to the event will open at 7:30

FACES OF FEBRUARY

A series honoring young African-Americans in the Pee Dee

Ezekiel Robinson

Passion for music helps student turn around education

BY MEGAN MAY
Morning News
mmay@florencenews.com



Ezekiel Robinson can play the saxophone but the snare drum is his main focus.

MEGAN MAY/MORNING NEWS

FLORENCE — Last year, Ezekiel Robinson was having a hard time in school. He says peer pressure and fighting were causing problems.

The 15-year-old with a gentle handshake and a quiet voice is sure to use "ma'am" when answering questions. It's hard to imagine him making any sort of trouble.

Last year Ezekiel transferred from Wilson High School to an alternative school, followed by home schooling before he began at Timmonsville High School in October.

Since focusing more on his musical talent, Ezekiel has been able to turn around his educational path. He says music has given him more focus on school, and he loves being a part of the drum line in Timmonsville's marching band. For two years now he has been playing the snare drum and just two weeks ago picked up the saxophone as well.

"I wanted to try something new," he said. "I was already good with the snare drum so I wanted to do something different."

Clearly having musical talent, Ezekiel says the saxophone hasn't been difficult for him to learn. The snare drum is his main focus, though. He hopes to receive a scholarship to play in college. He is currently looking at schools with strong marching band programs such as Virginia State and Northern State University.

District One pushes early education program



BY MELISSA ROLLINS
Morning News
mrollins@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Florence School District One is continuing its intense focus on early childhood

education, said site manager Lisa Riley. "Each class has 20 students."

Riley said working as the site manager has allowed her to see just how valuable the 4K program is to students and their



Free throw helps push Beaufort High to win 1B

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 17 2016

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Offices could become living spaces

Atlanta-based group planning renovations to Courtyard Building

Proposal call for 30 two- and three-bedroom units

Apartments expected to be 'middle of the road' market rate

BY ASHLEY FAHEY
afahey@islandpacket.com

An Atlanta-based investment-management group wants to add 30 residential units in an office building on Hilton Head Island.

Cygnus Capital Real Estate Advisors plans to convert 35 office condos into apartments on the second and third floors of the Courtyard Building, at 32 Office Park Road, according to Matthew Sherman, vice president of investments at Cygnus.

Plans are preliminary, Sherman said, but pre-application materials submitted to the Town of Hilton Head indicate the group plans to add 30, two- and three-bedroom units that total 35,500 square feet. The anticipated cost to renovate the building's interior is \$1.5 million.

"We typically look for distressed opportunities and clean up any litigation and legal situations that need attention," Sherman said. "We reposition the asset as needed."

The proposed Courtyard Building project matches the company's model of refitting properties and their uses for the local market.

"Our thought is that there is an oversupply of office units,"

SEE OFFICES, 7A



ASHLEY FAHEY/ISLAND PACKET



JOHN MITCHELL/ISLAND PACKET

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump spoke to a crowd on Tuesday at Beaufort High School.

TRUMP AT BEAUFORT HIGH

Overhaul VA; win IS fight

Republican presidential hopeful vows overhaul of Veterans Affairs

Says US has ability to defeat ISIS but is blocked by politics

Boasts of record crowd at Beaufort High School

BY STEPHEN FASTENAU
sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com

Donald Trump talked tough on military matters during his campaign stop in Beaufort on Tuesday, to the loudest cheers of the night.

Boasting that record crowds had packed the Beaufort High School performing arts center and spilled into overflow areas, the New York billionaire and Republican presidential candidate promised to overhaul the Department of Veterans Affairs and defeat the Islamic State so fast "your head would spin."

Trump's fellow hopeful for the Republican nomination,

following last week's GOP debate in Greenville shows Trump still leads U.S. Sens. Rubio and Ted Cruz ahead of Saturday's S.C. Republican primary.

Sitting on stage in a club chair, Trump fielded questions from former S.C. Republican Party chairman Van Hipp for about an hour.

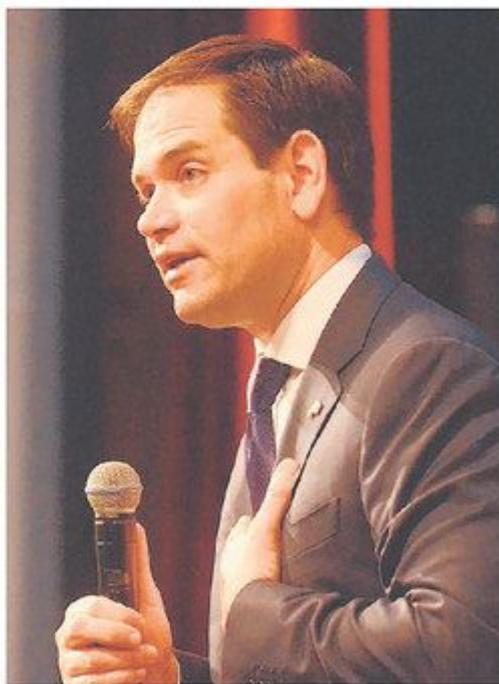
"You're going to be so happy," Trump told the crowd in urging them to vote. "I'm a conservative, but I'm also a common-sense person."

On Tuesday at Beaufort High, Trump:

PROMISED BETTER TREATMENT FOR VETERANS AND TO DESTROY ISIS

Referencing the high rate of veteran suicide and the long waits for treatments, Trump promised to overhaul the Department of Veterans Affairs and allow veterans to go wherever needed to receive care.

To great applause, Trump said no one has received less respect than veterans and accused President Barack Obama of doing nothing.



JAY KARR/ISLAND PACKET

Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio makes a campaign appearance on Tuesday in Beaufort at the USCB Center for the Arts.

RUBIO ON USCB CAMPUS

Grow military, help veterans

US senator from Florida held town hall at the USCB Center for the Arts

Talked about military, faith in short event

Sen. Tim Scott voices support for Rubio

BY MATT MCNAB
mcmnab@islandpacket.com

Marco Rubio's second appearance in Beaufort County in under a week was smoother than his first.

The Florida senator avoided any teeth-related mishaps Tuesday after a late arrival to Sun City Hilton Head last week caused by an impromptu dentist visit to repair a broken tooth.

More than 400 people — a mix of veterans, senior citizens and college-age students — packed the University of South Carolina Beaufort's Center for the Arts in Beaufort on Tuesday morning to hear the Florida

cramped into the two small hallways on either side of the auditorium hoping for a glimpse of the candidate.

"This is an incredible turnout," he joked. "I know the fire marshal isn't exactly happy with it, so please no smoking."

Here are five takeaways from Rubio's appearance:

SEES 2016 AS A "PIVOTAL" ELECTION

Rubio opened with one of his main talking points throughout the primary cycle — how he believes the 2016 election is a major turning point in American history. He talked about the radical changes affecting the U.S. already, saying the nation's economy had gone through an Industrial Revolution-level change every few years over the past decade and the military was shrinking to sizes not seen since World War II.

In short, Rubio said, the 2016 election was a "choice about the identity of the country."

"There's a sense across the political spectrum that something is wrong with the coun-

Brian Symmes

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