

From: Moore, Camlin <CamlinMoore@gov.sc.gov>
To:
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Subject: SC Front Pages – Wednesday, November 16, 2016

SC Front Pages – Wednes day, November 16, 2016

Orlando Sentinel

★ FINAL EDITION

Wednesday, November 16, 2016

\$2.00

Weather

8 A.M.: 60°
2 P.M.: 76°
5 P.M.: 73°
CHANCE OF RAIN: 0%
WEATHER REPORT: CA

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News Now

LOCAL & STATE

◆ **A SUSPECT IN THE DEADLY** Glitz nightclub shooting gets hold as new details about the incident are revealed. B1

◆ **A NEW PROGRAM** STRENGTHENS crisis intervention — instead of arrest — for mentally ill people. B1

◆ **PRISON OFFICIALS SAY** the case against an Orlando man accused of threatening the LGBTQ community in South Florida is "weak." B2

NATION & WORLD

◆ **RIGHT-WING LEADERS** in Israel seize on the election of Donald Trump to push forward new legislation to legalize Jewish settlements in the West Bank built on privately owned Palestinian land. A9

◆ **EXPLOSIONS AND** GUNFIRE RATTLE parts of eastern Mosul as Iraqi special forces wage fierce urban combat in the country's second-largest city. A10

◆ **U.S. PRISONERS ARE EXPERIMENTING** with a high-priced monthly injection that could help addicted inmates stay off opioids after they are released, but skeptics question its effectiveness and say the manufacturer has aggressively marketed an unproven drug to corrections officials. A10

BUSINESS

◆ **A LAKE MARY-BASED TECHNOLOGY** COMPANY unveils an electronic wristband that theme parks can use for ticketing and attraction queues. Six Flags already is signed up. A12

SPORTS

◆ **MAGIC CENTER** NIKOLA VUCEDIC is stuck in a rare scoring slump when the team needs him most. C1

◆ **OF SAFETY AND DR. PHILIP'S** ALUM Marcell Harris is back on track and playing up to expectations. C1

TOP STORY

Commissioners reject Lake Pickett project

Orange County board votes 4-3 against mega-development

By STEPHEN HODAK
Staff Writer

Orange County commissioners, peppered with critics from feisty opponents of a controversial residential project, narrowly rejected a mega-development that would have added 1999 homes in rural east Orange.

"Can you believe it?" asked

Kelly Seaward, embracing ally Rev. Russell after the board turned down the project known as Lake Pickett North.

The unexpected vote felled Seaward and other project fans, who doubted commissioners would listen to their appeals.

The board had sided with developers in earlier votes.

"I can't ignore the voices of the

people," said Commissioner Victoria Siplin, who had previously supported the project and was the swing vote in the 4-3 decision.

She said she had prayed about how to vote.

Critics of the project, also known as "Sustang," wanted the commission to put off a decision

Please turn to **PROJECT, A6**



BRANDON MAZE/AP IMAGES FOR WWE

WrestleMania 32 generated \$170.4 million in economic impact from visitors to the Dallas area last April.

WWE event boon for host city

By JAY REEDER
Staff Writer

For Orlando professional wrestling fans, WrestleMania's arrival in April will mean six days of events, nonstop fun.

For Central Florida, though, it will mean a financial windfall.

The WWE's signature annual

WrestleMania 32 raised \$170.4M in Dallas area

event generated \$170.4 million in economic impact from visitors to the Dallas area last April, according to figures released today by the mayors of Dallas and Arlington, Texas.

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer said he was pleased with the

numbers from Dallas and what they might mean for WrestleMania 33, scheduled for April 2 at Camping World Stadium.

"We knew we could expect in excess of \$100 million in impact,"

Please turn to **WRESTLE, A6**

Gov. Scott looking forward to Trump taking charge

By STEVEN LEMONICKO
Staff Writer

Gov. Rick Scott called Tuesday for "disruptive change" in a Donald Trump administration, while conceding that he doesn't know what the president-elect will do about many issues.

The Republican governor also appeared to open the door to a potential U.S. Senate run in 2018 against incumbent Democrat Bill Nelson. But he would not respond to questions about Trump's appointment of Breitbart News editor Stephen Bannon as White House chief strategist.

Scott spoke to reporters at the Waldorf Astoria Orlando on the first full day of the Republican Governors Association conference, a gathering that brought



JOE BURBANK/STAFF PHOTOGRAPH-AP

Florida Gov. Rick Scott, right, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker attend a conference Tuesday in Orlando.

More politics, A3

together GOP governors from across the country. In all, the Republican Party now controls 34 governorships

in the U.S.

Scott, a former health care executive, repeatedly compared Trump's rise as an outsider

Please turn to **SCOTT, A6**

Pulse calls reveal terror inside club

Caller tells dispatcher that 'it's life or death'

By CHARLES MCKINNEY
AND GAIL TRITTMAN LOTAN
Staff Writers

They had been hiding from the shooter in a Pulse nightclub bathroom for about two hours.

"One guy's about to pass away," a man told an emergency dispatcher. "... We gave him a cup of water to drink out of the sink. We have a number of people. No one saw the shooter. We don't know who the shooter is."

The dispatcher, who said his name was Joe, promised again and again during a 90-minute call with the man that help was on the way, but they needed to make sure everything was safe. So the caller kept waiting.

"I'm serious," the caller said 20 minutes after being promised help, but help still hadn't arrived. "I'm not playing. It's life or death."

The latest batch of 911 calls released Tuesday are some of the most haunting and compelling accounts from witnesses inside the club during the three-hour ordeal.

The June 12 attack left 49 people dead and at least 68 injured. The gunman, Omar Mateen, was

Please turn to **PULSE, A6**

AAA: More will travel during Thanksgiving

Auto club expects 1M more travelers this year

By CAITLIN DINEEN
Staff Writer

This Thanksgiving will be the busiest for nationwide travel since 2007, with 48.7 million Americans expected to travel at least 50 miles this year according to auto club AAA.

The number of travelers is expected to increase by 1 million people compared to last year, AAA said Tuesday.

"This is the most traveled holiday of the year, and as usual, there is an emphasis on road trips," Joseph Richardson Jr., president and CEO of AAA, said in a news release.

Orlando is ranked No. 4 in the nation, according to AAA.com bookings, coming in between San Diego, Calif., and New York City.

"Thanksgiving week is traditionally a busy weekend for travel to Orlando, and this year is no exception," said Visit Orlando's President and CEO George Agard in a statement. "Occupancy is pacing ahead of 2015 and advance bookings are up nearly 4 percent over the same period last year."

Kissimmee tourism leaders are expecting a similarly strong holiday.

"Especially in the vacation

Please turn to **TRAVEL, A6**

The Post and Courier

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Wednesday, November 16, 2016

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Charleston, S.C. \$1.00

Lawsuit: Summery sought kickback

Council chair 'appalled' over investors' claim that he tied old Navy hospital lease to deal

BY DEANE KNICHT
dknicht@postandcourier.com

Investors who own the former Charleston Naval Hospital are claiming Charleston County Council Chairman Elliott Summery asked for a kickback, and when he didn't get it,

he terminated the county's lease for North Charleston's tallest building, according to an amended lawsuit in bankruptcy court.

The Chicora Life Center group purchased the 10-story building from the city of North Charleston and planned to rehabilitate the building as a social



Summery

services hub, with Charleston County agencies occupying three floors. When Charleston County pulled out of the deal early this year, citing repeated delays, a lender foreclosed and Chicora Life Center sought bankruptcy protection.

"I am appalled by the allegations being made in the proposed filings by

Chicora," Summery said in a prepared statement Tuesday. "The allegations are potentially false."

Last week, the Chicora Life Center amended its lawsuit to include Summery individually. According to the document, Utah lawyer Doug Durban, majority owner of the company, said County Council on Nov. 15, 2015, heard a motion to terminate its lease with the company, but it didn't vote on it.

After the vote was delayed, Durban said in the document, Summery sent him a text message telling him council

would have terminated the lease had Summery not poisoned the matter.

Summery, after the meeting, asked Durban to join him in Summery's county office, according to the document. Once there, Summery and county attorney Joe Dawson threatened that if Chicora Life Center should dispute the imminent termination of the lease, catastrophic litigation would result from which Chicora Life Center could not survive.

Please see **SUMMERY**, Page A7

Raging wildfires spark burning bans



SM BARRER/CHATTANOOGA TIMES FREE PRESS

Wildfires near the Georgia-North Carolina line are spewing smoke so thick that an emergency manager is urging residents to wear special masks if they must do outdoor activities. The fires have prompted evacuations in Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee in recent days.

Smoking, fireworks, campfires won't be allowed across wide swaths of South

BY JONATHAN MATTISE
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, TENN.— As drought-stressed forest burn across much of the South—including a blaze scorching a Manhattan-sized area of north Georgia—some traditional outdoor activities are now banned. Starting campfires, lighting fireworks, smoking cigarettes, even parking a car off-

road is prohibited, for fear that a hot tailpipe could ignite dry leaves below.

The Tennessee Valley Authority issued a ban on Tuesday on its public lands across Tennessee and in parts of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and Virginia. The authority said its ban applies to anything that might produce an open flame.

Gov. Bill Haslam, meanwhile, banned outdoor burning in more than half of Tennessee's counties through Dec. 15.

In Alabama, Fire Marshal Scott Pilgreen said state officers are investigating two of nearly 1,000 statewide wildfires as possible arson.

Please see **DROUGHT**, Page A7

Lowcountry under air-quality alert; smoke could pose a risk to health

BY JO PETERSEN
bpetersen@postandcourier.com

A code orange air-quality alert was issued for the Lowcountry until midnight Wednesday as smoke from wildfires in the mountains again lumes the region.

The air-quality alert indicates that fine particles from smoke could approach dangerous levels for sensitive adults, according to the National Weather Service. Individuals with respiratory conditions should limit their time

outdoors through the alert's duration.

"We're seeing (smoke) now," said meteorologist Bob Bright of the National Weather Service in Charleston on Tuesday.

Forecasters say northwest winds pushing the air through the area are expected to move more northward by Thursday bringing some relief, but "there's really no way to predict" how thick the wildfire smoke will remain, Bright said.

Please see **SMOKE**, Page A7

Slager trial held up over witness

Judge: 'Expert' must limit Taser testimony

BY ANDREW KNAIP
and BRENDA RINCKIE
aknaip@postandcourier.com
brinckie@postandcourier.com

Instead of a resounding final presentation to help jurors envision Walter Scott's last moments and to cast further doubt on an officer's reason for shooting him, prosecutors on Tuesday found themselves in an hours-long legal quagmire that threatened to end their case with a whimper.

Their 31st and final witness against Michael Slager, the North Charleston policeman who shot Scott in the back, planned to play an animated timeline and re-creation of the fatal encounter, calling evidence from dispatch recordings, police car video and a bystander's footage.

But the jury never saw him or his presentation.

The witness, Bill Williams of Myrtle Beach, took the stand for more than four hours without the jury in the courtroom. He testified that state agents got key portions of their investigation wrong, but at the same time, he was questioned about his own lack of formal education in the techniques he used to fill in the gaps.

The issue was whether he should be dubbed an expert who could express to jurors his opinions and interpretations of the evidence.

Please see **SLAGER**, Page A8



Slager

Inside





SPORTS, 1C PLAYOFF PARDON



METRO, 3A Carver's family willing to forgive

The Greenville News

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

WEDNESDAY,
NOVEMBER 16, 2016
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

USA TODAY TRUMP URGED TO USE STRICT BLIND TRUST PAGE 1B

New psychiatric hospital planned

GHS announces new facility to be built on Grove Road

LIV OSEBY
LOSEBY@GANNETT.COM

Greenville Health System on Tuesday announced plans for a new psychiatric hospital on Grove Road that it will build in partnership with Aetna Healthcare.

The \$64 million, 80,000-square-foot facility is slated to open in March 2018 and will provide expanded services as well as additional beds for a region hampered by a dearth of mental health care.

The 120-bed hospital will provide 52

more beds than are currently available at the aging Marshall C. Pickens Hospital, said Dr. Kenneth Rogers, chairman of psychiatry at GHS.

It will be built on the site of the old Blood Connection building, he said, and once completed, the old Marshall Pickens hospital will be razed to make way for other hospital needs.

In addition to much-needed psychiatric hospital beds, the facility will also provide other services, such as substance abuse and geriatric mental health programs, he

said.

"As health care providers, we are always called upon to provide best care we can for our patients," Rogers said. "However, in South Carolina, one of the struggles we've had is there are hundreds of thousands of people who don't get the adequate health care they need. By partnering with Aetna, we will be able to make a huge difference in their lives."

While there are services for people with mental illness in Greenville, there aren't enough of them. There are too few

See HOSPITAL, Page 5A



Dr. Ken Rogers, chairman of the department of psychiatry at Greenville Health System, announces the new psychiatric hospital.

WILDFIRES



A helicopter fills up with lake water near Table Rock State Park on Tuesday as firefighters continue to battle wildfires.

PHOTO BY KIRK BALDWIN FOR THE NEWS

PINNACLE FIRE STILL GROWING

It's now second biggest in the Upstate's history

MIKE ELLIS
MELLS@GANNETT.COM

Greenville Water officials are monitoring their water to make sure the Pinnacle Mountain fire doesn't force them to change their supply.

The fire is being directed toward the Table Rock Reservoir, one of three

the North Saluda Reservoir and Lake Keowee, said Olivia Vasscy, communications manager for the water company.

The worst risk will diminish over time and smaller amounts of rain would not pose as much of a risk to the water supply, she said.

As smaller rains fall and leaves start to layer over the fire debris and nature

difference would be slight.

She said the company is monitoring the water with regular lab tests and has treatment processes in place to deal with particulates from the smoke.

The fire is now the second biggest in the Upstate's history, and after covering 2,765 acres by late Monday it is nearing the 1978 fire in Oconee County

Locals killed in Afghanistan bombing

MIKE ELLIS
MELLS@GANNETT.COM

The father of Townville Elementary School teacher Meghan Hollingsworth was killed in a suicide bomb attack on the Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan early Saturday morning.

Teri Hollings, chairman of the Anderson School District 4 Board of Trustees, said he could confirm that another tragedy had hit Hollingsworth's family.

Hollingsworth is the teacher who helped escort students to safety during a shooting at Townville Elementary School on Sept. 28.

School officials did not provide the name of Hollingsworth's father, citing requests for privacy by the family.

Two Fluor Daniel employees were killed along with two soldiers in the attack, the company confirmed in a statement Tuesday.

Fluor Daniel, a Tempe-based construction and engineering company with significant operations in the Upstate, said in a prepared statement that it does not identify employees by name and would not confirm what type of work the employees were doing in Afghanistan.

One of the contractors was Presbyterian College alumnus Jarrod Reeves, according to a statement on the college's

See BOMBING, Page 5A

Greenville Co. revises Land Development Regulations

ANGELA DAVIS
DAVIA@GANNETT.COM

Greenville County officials stressed the ordinance they considered Tuesday is neither a zoning document nor a managed growth plan.

But the amended Land Development Regulations (LDRs) they approved does set standards and gives guidelines for developing land in Greenville County, said Councilman

TIGERS SLIP

Clemson fell to No. 4 in the College Football Playoff rankings released Tuesday. 1B

Independent Mail

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2016

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

INDEPENDENTMAIL.COM

CARVER'S FAMILY WILLING TO FORGIVE

'Being a Christian, you've got to,' says grieving stepfather of slain 32-year-old

NIKIE MAYO
NIKIE.MAYO@INDEPENDENTMAIL.COM

The mother and stepfather of Charles David Carver say they plan to forgive whomever is responsible for their son's death.

"It's hard, but I know I am going to have to forgive," said Jaye Shiftlet, Carver's stepfather. "Being a Christian,

you've got to. It's what the Bible says."

Carver's mother, Joanne Shiftlet, agrees with her husband. The Shiftlets believe in forgiveness.

But they aren't yet ready to give it.

Since they have learned the fate of the young man they call David, the Shiftlets have their feet in two worlds. In one, they

See **FORGIVE**, Page 8A



LAUREN RETRACCA/
USA TODAY NETWORK

Joanne and Jaye Shiftlet, mother and stepfather of Charles David Carver, hold his senior picture on Monday. Joanne held the picture in her lap as she made the trip with her husband to file a missing person's report with detectives.

Online

Visit independentmail.com for video and ongoing coverage



Laney Borow, 3, watches a Chinook fill up with lake water near Table Rock State Park on Tuesday, as firefighters continue to battle wildfires.

PHOTOS BY HEIDI HERRBRUN/USA TODAY NETWORK

Pinnacle Mountain Fire keeps growing

MIKE ELLIS
MIKE.ELLIS@INDEPENDENTMAIL.COM

Greenville Water officials are monitoring their water to make sure the Pinnacle Mountain Fire doesn't force them to change their supply.

The fire is being directed toward the Table Rock Reservoir, one of three sources for the water company.

One of the risks is that an exceptionally heavy rain could send piles of silt into the water, which would require either extra treatment methods or a switch to

to layer over the fire debris and nature takes over, any risk of silt in the water system will likely go away, Vasscy said.

There may be some differences in the taste of the water as decades worth of filtering layers in the ground near the reservoir get burned up, but Vasscy said the difference would be slight.

She said the company is monitoring the water with regular lab tests and has treatment processes in place to deal with particulates from the smoke.

The fire is now the second biggest in the Elmore's history, and after covering



Contractor, city clash over park delays

KIRK BROWN
KIRK.BROWN@INDEPENDENTMAIL.COM

A construction company and Anderson city officials are at odds over delays in the costly first phase of a park honoring the downtown's black business pioneers.

Russell Moats, owner of Anderson-based Moats Construction, says city officials owe his company \$310,000 for its work on the Church Street Heritage Project.

Meanwhile, the city is threatening to impose thousands of dollars in delay-related penalties for delays on the project.

The heritage project's brick walkways, ornate lighting and landscaping were recently placed in the parking lot between the Mellow Mushroom and the Blackley Inn. The "pocket park" is meant to commemorate a black business district that existed on Church Street for 70 years. The next phase of work will involve installing interactive "story boxes" and public art in 2017.

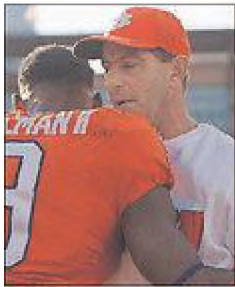
City Council members approved a \$460,000 contract with Moats Construction in February for the initial phase of improvements. City officials announced that the construction was completed on Oct. 20, more than three months behind schedule.

The delays tied up parking spaces that nearby businesses depend on and

See **DELAYS**, Page 8A

"I am sorry that it happened, but I am sure that it can be worked out."

CITY COUNCILWOMAN
BEATRICE THOMPSON
ON THE DISPUTE BETWEEN MOATS
CONSTRUCTION AND CITY OFFICIALS



SWINNEY, TIGERS STILL OPTIMISTIC

SPORTS, B1



DOWNTOWN DISPLAY UNDERGOES REPAIRS

UPSTATE, C1

Herald-Journal

SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

Wednesday, November 16, 2016



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TODAY **THU** **FRI**

70°/41° 70°/41° 74°/44°

Complete forecast, B6

NEWS DIGEST

State agency suspends changes to abortion rules

COLUMBIA — South Carolina's public health agency is holding off on recommending any changes to abortion clinic regulations after being inundated with responses to its drafted proposal.

The state Department of Health and Environmental Control confirmed Tuesday the process is delayed indefinitely. It received nearly 460 comments on proposed changes put out in September for public review.

Officials had expected to hold a hearing in December and send recommendations to legislators.

"Because of the volume and scope of the comments received during the public commenting period, the agency has decided to take additional time to work through the comments before proceeding further," said spokeswoman Cassie Harris.

There is no new timeline.

Abortion rights advocates praised the department's move.

—The Associated Press

SPORTS



First things first

Wofford football is back in the national rankings and back in the playoff projections. But back up, the Terriers say. They don't want to get ahead of themselves. B1

BUSINESS



\$2.1M OPERATION

Wildfire's growth slows, but it won't last

Derek Lacey
and Andrew Mundhenk
Halifax Media Group

LAKE LURE, N.C. — The cost of fighting the Party Rock wildfire over its first nine days has hit more than \$2.1 million, N.C. Forest Service officials said Tuesday, with containment of the fire not expected until Dec. 1. More evacuations were ordered for today, as the nearly 4,500-acre fire spreads further into the county with no sign of

rain on the horizon.

The fire's growth rate has slowed over the past couple of days, but is expected to ramp back up later this week due to high winds.

As of Tuesday evening, the fire was at 4,480 acres and containment had increased to 19 percent, according to the N.C. Forest Service. Low temperatures and a jump in relative humidity Monday night and into



The Party Rock fire near Lake Lure Tuesday afternoon. PATRICK SULLIVAN/HALIFAX MEDIA GROUP

SEE WILDFIRE, A4

BOILING SPRINGS

Man confesses to killing parents



Stephen Linwood Belcher is led into his bond hearing at the Spartanburg County jail Tuesday. Belcher has been charged in the fatal shooting of his parents. ALEX HICKS 19/SPARTANBURG HERALD-JOURNAL

By Allison M. Roberts
allison.roberts@shj.com

A Boiling Springs man has been arrested after authorities said he confessed to fatally shooting his parents.



CONGRESS

Ryan back as speaker

By Erica Werner
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Speaker Paul Ryan unanimously won his GOP colleagues' votes on Tuesday for another term at the helm of the House. He told fellow Republicans he had President-elect Donald Trump's support, and heralded "the dawn of a new, unified Republican government."

"It feels really good to say that actually," Ryan told reporters. "This will be a government focused on turning President-elect Trump's victory into real progress for the American people."

While victory was the GOP unifier, Democrats were verging on disarray. House Democrats abruptly announced Tuesday that they were delaying their own leadership elections set for Thursday until Nov. 30 to give lawmakers more time to process disastrous election results.

It's not clear whether the election delay might morph into a real challenge to Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. She has led House Democrats for more than 12 years and has consolidated support with strong fundraising and an ability to deliver votes, but there's long been crumbling from Dem-

Aiken Standard

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Local woman given
new car anonymously
Local News, 3A



Kettle Kick-Off
set for Saturday
Local News, 5A



Giving thanks at Story Time:
Gallery at aikenstandard.com
Local News, 9A

Area deaths

Robert Bonnett Jr., Aiken
Jevy Beck, Greenville
Roy Cooper Jr., Rich-
Megan Aiken, New Blenden
Bernie Perry, Aiken
Jenelle Sullivan, Aiken
Deaths and Funerals, 6A

Weather

Aiken readies for the holidays

Brian Martin stretches for the
top section of the Christmas
tree going up on Laurens
Street and Richland Avenue
in downtown Aiken. The
tree will be lit on Dec. 2.



STAFF PHOTO BY CHAD KUBSON

Code red air quality alert issued for the area

BY TRIPP GIRARDEAU
trippgirardeau@aikenstandard.com

As most of Aiken County and surrounding counties made it through another long day Tuesday, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control issued a code red air quality alert for the area for today.

A code red alert, or unhealthy, has been issued for the Abbeville, Aiken, Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Cherokee, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, Lexington, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Oconee, Pickens, Richland, Saluda, Spartanburg, Union and York counties.

A code orange alert, or unhealthy for sensitive groups, has been issued for Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Clarendon, Colleton, Dorchester, Georgetown, Hampton, Jasper, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Sumter and Williamsburg counties.

Mike Rosier, communications director with the Aiken County Public School District, said all outdoor activities were postponed Tuesday and will most likely be postponed today as well. This will apply to today's school recess activities and all athletic practices, Rosier said.

"Our district leadership is monitoring air quality reports," Superintendent Dr. Sean Allford said. "We plan to play safe by playing indoors until our community's air quality improves."

The South Carolina Forestry Commission reports the smoke has gotten worse as the nearby wildfire in Pickens County continues to grow.

The agency reported Tuesday the Pinnacle Mountain Fire at Table Rock State Park grew from 2,312 acres on Sunday to 2,765 acres by late Monday.

This growth is due to burnout operations on the west side of the fire as well as fire backing down slopes in the Panther Gap area between Pinnacle Mountain and Table Rock, the Forestry Commission reported.

The agency said Tuesday's plan included patrolling the burnout area on the west side of the fire and evaluating possible firing operations in the northwest corner of the fire near the South Saluda River. Helicopters also will continue to be used to cool hot spots, especially in the Panther Gap area, and on the east side of the fire crews will improve firelines, as well as scout possible locations for additional firebreaks.

The wild fire and light winds in Aiken County are causing the smoke to linger in the area.

Chief Daryl Davis, with Aiken County Emergency Management Services, suggests residents with respiratory problems take necessary precautions.

Please see SMOKE, Page 12A

Aiken County's graduation rate near 90 percent

BY STAFF REPORTS
allfort@aikenstandard.com

Aiken County's student graduation rate on time at an all-time, unprecedented percentage rate of 88.6 percent, according to report card data released by the State Department of

Education and earning a diploma tops the state average of 82.6 percent and continues our school system's upward trend in this area.

"Aiken County's focus on positive individual student outcomes is evident," Superintendent Dr. Sean Allford said of the report.

District Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate has climbed steadily, with 82.7 percent graduating on time in 2014 and 85.2 percent in 2015.

"This year's increase, 3.4 points over last year, is especially impressive," Executive Director of High Schools Dr. Tim Varborough said. "We're track-

ing a way that we've never before."

Also, 100 percent of seniors completed college applications, and more than 75 percent enrolled in a two- or four-year college or technical college pursuing an associate's degree, certificate or diploma.

The school district implemented its

LOCAL

Salvation Army
to open Rock Hill
warming center 3A



SPORTS

Winthrop wins
morning contest
at Manhattan
94-81 1B



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The Herald

CHESTER

Church: Bus crash carrying football team was 'unavoidable'

BY ANDREW RUS
andrew.rus@heraldonline.com

CHESTER

The Chester church that owned a bus carrying a Rock Hill football team that crashed in North Carolina in September, killing four people, has denied wrongdoing, claiming the accident was unavoidable and a sudden emergency.

However, the lawyer for 21 people injured in the wreck said evidence is "overwhelming" that Sandy River Baptist Church was renting out its bus without regard to safety rules, and has shown neither sympathy or accountability.

The church, owner of the bus carrying the Roper JUCO football team from Rock Hill, wants a lawsuit filed last month in Chester thrown out. The suit

was filed by 21 players and coaches who alleged the church failed to properly maintain, service and inspect the bus and its tires.

A blown tire led to the bus hitting a guardrail and a bridge near Hamlet, N.C., police said. The crash killed four people, including the driver, who was a church member, and injured 30

SEE BUS, 6A



The Chester church that owned the bus involved in a fatal crash in North Carolina in September has denied wrongdoing, claiming the accident was unavoidable.



A horse grazes in a haze of smoke in Athens, Ga., on Tuesday. Smoke from wildfires across the Southeast has been affecting regional air quality, including York, Chester and Lancaster counties and other Upstate counties in South Carolina.

WILDFIRES

Smoke poses risk in York, Lancaster, Chester counties

BY DAVID TRIAMORHAM
dtriamorham@heraldonline.com

ROCK HILL

Officials on Tuesday urged people with health issues in York, Chester and Lancaster counties to stay inside because wildfires across the Southeast have caused clouds of smoke to descend on the area.

The National Weather Service



THE SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTRY COMMISSION REPORTED EARLY TUESDAY THAT THE PINNACLE MOUNTAIN FIRE NEAR PICKENS HAD GROWN TO 2,765 ACRES.

high sensitivities to air quality issues can be kept safely inside if parents request that, according to Kelly McKinnery, a spokeswoman for the district. The York school district will leave all decisions with the individual schools, according to district spokesman Tim Cooper. The district will be monitoring the situation on an hour-by-hour basis, Cooper said. Lancaster County schools had



SPORTS

AREA COACHES HONOR TOP PLAYERS

South Pointe's Derion Kendrick, Lancaster's Markees Watts, Clover's Chad Smith and Chester's Malik Williams were named Tri-County players of the year. 1B



NATION

PENCE HUDDLES WITH TRUMP

Vice President-elect Mike Pence meets with Donald Trump over picks for Cabinet posts. 2A





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Morning News

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 16, 2016

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WEATHER**

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DETAILS 2A

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The Voice of the Pee Dee

75 cents

State report card

Graduation rates show gains in Pee Dee

BY MELISSA POLLENS
Morning News
mpollens@10news.com

FLORENCE — For the second year in a row, South Carolina school districts received a report card from the state department of education with no grade. In accordance with Act 200, signed into law in 2014, school districts and their schools will not receive a graded report card again until 2017.

The report card made public Tuesday focused instead on areas such as graduation rates, discipline and student scores on SC-PASS, SAT and end-of-course exams.

Graduation

Darlington County School District had the highest graduation rate in the state with 94.5 percent, increasing more than 2 percent from the previous year. One school in the district, Mayn High School for Math, Science and Technology, once again had a graduation rate of 100 percent.

Florence School District One also had gains in its four-year graduation rates.

In 2015, the rate was 81.6 percent; in 2016, it increased to 84.4 percent. Both districts' rates are higher than the state rate of 82.6 percent.

College and career readiness

Fifty-six percent of Florence One students are getting career ready while still in school by taking part in work-based experiences. The number jumped from the previously recorded seven percent.

Though the number of students filling out college financial aid (FAFSA) forms has dropped slightly, down from 611 to 552, the number of students enrolling in dual-enrollment courses has all but tripled from 158 to 471.

Among those dual-enrolled students, there is a 98.5 percent success rate.

Twenty-seven percent of Darlington County School District students took part in work-based experiences, a strong jump from 7.7 percent. Financial aid completers dropped from 399 to 385 and dual-enrollment also dipped, going from 215 to 191.

See **GRADUATE**, Page 3A

FUN WHILE LEARNING



Hampton Pusser, Addison Pusser, Linda Bartlett, Megan Pugh and Katie Pugh make dough during Delmar's STEAM Carnival on Tuesday.

Amy Florio, a Delmar Elementary School teacher, helps Kingston Williams make a paper airplane during Delmar's STEAM Carnival on Tuesday.



Delmar Elementary School hosted a STEAM Carnival on Tuesday, providing activities for students linked to science, technology, engineering, arts and math. Children enjoyed a variety of tasks such as creating skyscrapers, bridges, paper airplanes and foil boats.

City of Florence

Councilman Hill made mark through annexation

BY JOSHUA LLOYD
Morning News
jlloyd@10news.com

FLORENCE — Though he only served one term before forgoing a re-election bid this year, Florence City Council-

man Robby Hill left a definable mark on the city.

At his final council meeting on Monday, council members remarked on Hill's tenacity in expanding the city limits and making sure annexation was always included in the con-

versation.

Hill leaves the city council to pursue more private-sector endeavors through his information technology solutions firm, HillSmith. He said his passion for helping the residents of Florence will not stop

when he leaves office.

"Even though I will no longer be serving on this council, my love for this city will never go away," Hill said. "Serving on this council has absolutely

See **HILL**, Page 3A

Pastors of 'Helping Florence Flourish' move forward with unity initiative



BY JOSHUA LLOYD
Morning News
jlloyd@10news.com

FLORENCE — Several pastors involved in the "Helping Florence Flourish" initiative met Tuesday

then.

Helping Florence Flourish is a grassroots movement that started in 2014 in an attempt to tackle four social problems facing the area — education, homelessness, racial div-

As clergy persons, we are suggesting that what happens next, in terms of oneness and healthy relationships in Florence, might best be served from a spiritual dimension," he said. "We will study a series

several appearances by Martin Luther King Jr. in February.

Cancy said tentative plans are for Evans to be in Florence on Feb. 16, 17 and 18 for a series of public events. Locations and time have yet to be de-

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Darlington County Board of Education

Student performance data troubles board members

BY JIM FAIRLE
(jfairle@hartsvillemessenger.com)

DARLINGTON — Some Darlington County Board of Education members voiced some dismay over a report on student performance data from the 2015-2016 academic year.

The data, presented during Monday's regular monthly meeting, shows instances of county school district students trailing students state wide in academic performance on standardized tests from that year in some subject areas such as English language arts and math. It also

shows the district trailing in some cases when compared to several surrounding districts.

On one English language arts test, for example, 29.4 percent of third-graders met or exceeded state standards compared to 43.7 percent of third-graders state-wide. Among fourth-graders,

33.4 percent of district students met or exceeded state standards compared to 43.4 percent state-wide.

"This is very troubling," said Hartsville board member James Memphis. "What are we teaching? I'm pretty upset about it."

"What has happened to learn-

ing?" asked Hartsville board member Wanda Hassler. Hassler said even if the numbers were better, it is not enough to compare favorably with the state or against other districts. "We're competing

See SCHOOLS, Page 2A

Last day to register for disaster aid is Dec. 13

From Staff Reports

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) survivor assistance teams are currently registering survivors who suffered damage from Hurricane Matthew at Registration Intake Centers (RIC) at four locations in Darlington County.

The centers and hours of operation are:

Wesley United Methodist Church

145 E. College Ave.
Hartsville, SC 29550
Wednesday (Nov. 16) - 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Thursday (Nov. 17) - 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday (Nov. 18) - 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Darlington Library

204 N. Main St., Darlington, SC 29532
Wednesday (Nov. 16) - 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday (Nov. 17) - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Friday (Nov. 18) - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Saturday (Nov. 19) - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Society Hill Library

124 Hampton St.
Society Hill, South Carolina 29593
Wednesday (Nov. 16) - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday (Nov. 17) - 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Friday (Nov. 18) - 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Lamar Library

103 E. Main St.
Lamar, South Carolina 29069
Tuesday (Nov. 15) - 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturday (Nov. 19) - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The last day to register for federal disaster assistance from FEMA is Dec. 13.

After a survivor registers with FEMA, they may receive a disaster

See FEMA, Page 3A



Veterans salute as they pledge of allegiance to the American flag at the Veterans Day Celebration on Friday in Burry Park, hosted by the Pilot Club and city of Hartsville.

Local veterans honored



The Hartsville High School Chorus, under the direction of Jim Beaudier, sang 'We Will Stand' during the Veterans Day Celebration at Burry Park on Friday.

BY ARDIE ARNDSON

arndson@hartsvillemessenger.com

The Pilot Club of Hartsville and the city of Hartsville hosted the annual Veterans Day Celebration at Burry Park on Friday.

Participants gathered near the Memorial Wall to honor those who have served our country in the armed forces.

Desert Storm veteran and Darlington County Sheriff-elect Tony Charvis was the guest speaker. He gave thanks for all who have served and

See VETERANS, Page 5A



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Tickets go on sale for 'The Nutcracker'

From Staff Reports

In its third season as a "one time opportunity," the Columbia City Ballet will perform "The Nutcracker" on Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Center Theater.

"It is always a treat to see," said Brenda Cranford, owner of the Brenda Cranford School of Dance.

#DCSDTransforms initiative earns prestigious TIPs Award

From Staff Reports



MYRTLE BEACH — The Darlington County School District's "DCSDTransforms" initiative received a District Technology Innovative Programs (TIPs)



PANORAMA

Just another day
Local band Second Nature breezes into the Carolinas' beach music hall of fame C1

School board trustee calls out test scores

Canty says district must have more top-down accountability in teaching

BY BRUCE MILLS
bruce@thetimes.com

Student test results sparked a lengthy school board discussion Monday night at Sumter School District's regularly scheduled board meeting held at High Hills Elementary School on Shaw Air Force Base.

When presenting district test results to the board of trustees Monday, Superintendent Frank Baker initially discussed various changes to standards and assessments at the state level in recent years that have negatively affected scores locally and statewide. Baker then discussed measures being taken — or soon to be undertaken — to improve district achievement relative to the state scores. Regarding comparisons, Baker then advised board members that it was better to compare Sum-



BAKER

ter's district scores and South Carolina Department of Education Report Cards, which contain full summary test results, with districts of similar demographics and poverty levels, instead of state averages.

"Regarding trends and analysis of the district, Sumter continues to perform below the state average, but look more closely at districts with similar poverty indexes as a main base of comparison," Baker said. "We mirror their scores and trends, and we are right there like districts like ours."

To these various points, one board member — the Rev. Ralph Canty — took exception.



CANTY

"First, I'm frustrated by these test scores," Canty said. "Dr. Baker, you spoke for 35 minutes on changing standards."

Canty and Baker then discussed how assessment standards have increased nationwide because of the global economy we live in.

Canty said the district's performance shows it's not making adjustments to meet the new standards.

"While standards have declined, our scores are declining annually," Canty said. "We can't be apologetic and make excuses. The first 35 minutes of your discussion, Dr. Baker, seemed like an apology. Our mission as a district is to equip our students to be successful in a global society."

Baker then defended his comments and work, including various professional development opportunities that are available to teachers at all district schools.

"We can never be satisfied with our performance," Baker said. "For improvement, it will be painful, yes — but we cannot be satisfied. We must have our students career- and college-ready."

Next, Canty wanted to know how the district's performance compared to neighboring counties, such as Kershaw and Florence, and not particularly Lee and Clarendon counties.

Sumter getting refresh

North Main Street and Manning Avenue projects move forward

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@thetimes.com

Construction on the \$16.5 million streetscaping project for Manning Avenue and North Main Street could begin in mid-2018 Sumter Planning Director George McGregor told city council at Tuesday's regular meeting at Sumter Opera House.

McGregor said the project was approved by Sumter Urban Area Transportation Study board and will go before the State Transportation Improvement Program board in the coming weeks. He said approval of these boards is re-

quired because 75 percent of the cost is being paid with federal funds. The remainder of the money will come from the city's Penny For Progress sales tax.

After that process is complete, the city will work with the Department of Transportation to select an engineering and design firm, McGregor said. Designing the project should begin in 2017 and take nine to 12 months, he added.

The planning director also told council the Manning Avenue bridge rehabilitation program should reach the construction stage by the fall of 2017.

That project is being paid for with penny sales tax money, McGregor said. The DOT is currently reviewing the rehabilitation plan before the six- to nine-month design process begins, he said.

"Both of these projects are now moving," McGregor said.

City Manager David McDermick said the Manning Avenue-Main Street project has been planned for a long time.

"This is long overdue," he said. "It's going to be exciting, not just for those two areas but for the whole city."

SEE CITY, PAGE A9

Millwood Elementary revisits Colonial Days



Millwood Elementary fourth graders learn about making hoe cakes from Frank Baker during Colonial Days on Thursday at the school. The students learned about how children ate, made clothing and played during Colonial times.

Local foresters fight Pinnacle fire

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@thetimes.com

Firefighters continue to fight a fire on Pinnacle Mountain in Pickens County that has grown to more than 2,500 acres. However, the South Carolina Forestry Commission said the growth was mostly due to burnout operations on the west side of the fire as well as fire backing down slopes in the Panther Gap area between Pinnacle Mountain and Table Rock.

Among the Forestry Commis-

sion personnel fighting the fire are four employees from Manchester State Forest in Sumter County, including Director James Douglas, who said Tuesday he is working as a geographic information systems (GIS) specialist to help map the fire and develop plans to control the blaze.

"We are getting most of it under control, but there is one part that is in really rough terrain and it is hard to get the people and equipment in to cut it off," Douglas said. He said the fire is being fought

mainly with Forestry Commission personnel from across the state.

"We have some Pickens County Fire Department and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources has some representatives on the fire," he said.

Partly due to many Forestry Commission personnel working the fire, a State Forester's Burning Ban has been in effect for all of Piedmont counties since Thursday. The counties covered by the ban

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Camlin Moore

Cell: 803-206-8236

Office: 803-734-8044