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Subject: Clips - Saturday, March 19, 2016

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Palmetto Business Daily: Fitesa Simpsonville to invest \$52 million in Greenville County location
<http://palmettobusinessdaily.com/stories/510702452-fitesa-simpsonville-to-invest-52-million-in-greenville-county-location>

Officials from Fitesa Simpsonville Inc. recently announced the company was making a \$52 million investment in Greenville County, South Carolina. The company, which has been in operation since 1973 and established operations in Greenville County in 1990, will be adding on to its existing plant in order to meet increased customer demand. Fitesa manufactures non-woven fabric solutions for use in the global hygiene market and serves customers in the hygiene, medical and industrial sectors all over the world from 11 plants in eight nations.

Note: "It's another great day in South Carolina as we celebrate Fitesa and its decision to expand in Greenville County," South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley said. "With global headquarters already established in the Upstate, this \$52 million expansion and the 38 new jobs it will create further show Fitesa's fantastic commitment to our state and our people."

WCIV: Emanuel AME shooting used as example of leading through tragedy at Citadel
<http://abcnews4.com/news/emanuel-ame-shooting/cadets-hear-from-leaders-of-charleston-police-religion-on-leadership-in-the-hours-after>

Sam Tyson

Citadel cadets heard first-hand from leaders in the Charleston community on Friday afternoon how they dealt with the mass shooting at Emanuel AME Church, a tragedy that many had prepared for but always hoped would never happen. The discussion was the final piece of a two-day leadership seminar for the Corps of Cadets at McAllister Field House.

Note: For a second day, McAllister Field House was silent as the Corps of Cadets listened to local and state leaders talk about what it takes to lead in the wake of a horrible tragedy. On Thursday, Gov. Nikki Haley talked about her role.

Note: "The heartbreak cannot be described even then -- a week before he was killed, we stood behind Gov. Haley as she signed the body camera bill. His speech convinced the Senate to do the right thing," Rivers said.

S.C. General Assembly News:

The State: SC tax agency wants money returned to taxpayers
<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article67034447.html>

Cassie Cope

The S.C. Department of Revenue wants lawmakers to return to taxpayers the interest collected on their tax refunds. Over the last three years, that would have amounted to \$14 million. That money now goes to pay for children's programs because of language in the state budget. But S.C. Department of Revenue Director Rick Reames wants that money be put back in the pockets of the taxpayers who are owed the money from the state.

Greenville News: SC lawmakers seek changes with untested rape kits

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/politics/2016/03/18/sc-lawmakers-seek-changes-untested-rape-kits/81959390/>

Tim Smith

Sen. Karl Allen of Greenville says he thinks South Carolina should have a policy guiding law enforcement agencies on whether and when to submit rape kits for testing. Rep. Todd Rutherford, the leader of House Democrats, said he thinks law enforcement agencies should be submitting kits for testing if the case can be prosecuted and even when there is no identified suspect. And Rep. Mandy Powers Norrell of Lancaster says she is not sure what should be done but wants some action to address hundreds of untested rape kits in South Carolina whose numbers were uncovered last year as part of a USA Today Network project looking at why so many used kits have not been submitted to laboratories.

S.C. Politics News:

The State: Mulvaney introduces bill to move nuclear waste

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article66953797.html>

Sammy Fretwell

U.S. Rep. Mick Mulvaney introduced legislation this week that he says could help nuclear power plants get rid of high-level atomic waste that has built up since the government scrapped a plan to ship the material to Nevada. Republican Mulvaney, whose district includes nuclear power plants in York and Fairfield counties, said the bill will allow the government to send highly radioactive spent nuclear fuel to an interim storage site, rather than waiting on a permanent disposal ground to open. The federal government worked for years on a disposal site at Yucca Mountain, Nev., but halted the plan after President Obama took office in 2009.

Associated Press: South Carolina, New York State consider refugee registries

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:5b4e9c1110c64029afc84a2cad97c32>

Jeffrey Collins

Registration bills are being proposed in both New York State and in South Carolina, where if refugees commit an act of terrorism, their sponsors, under the bill, could be held liable. The South Carolina lawmakers say they are less concerned about a possible constitutional challenge than a possible terrorist threat coming to the state. Opponents, however, say the measure is out of character for a state that often espouses the importance of Christian hospitality and loving your neighbor.

Herald-Journal: Coalition criticizes proposed refugee controls

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20160318/articles/160319670>

A coalition of refugee assistance organizations is urging legislators to stop a bill that would give Congress more control over the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program. Refugee Council USA issued a statement this week opposing the Refugee Program Integrity Restoration Act, which is being co-sponsored by U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-Spartanburg. World Relief, which runs an office in Spartanburg that helps refugees get settled in the area, is one of 20 organizations within Refugee Council USA. The letter says the bill would dismantle the admissions program for refugees and undermine the country's humanitarian efforts. It also states that the bill will would allow state and local governments to prevent refugees from settling in their communities and would put refugees under continual surveillance.

Post and Courier: Members of Congress descend on Charleston for lessons on racial healing after church shooting

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160319/PC1603/160319376>

Emma Dumain

Members of the South Carolina congressional delegation are hosting over a dozen Capitol Hill colleagues and their guests in Charleston this weekend, culminating in a Palm Sunday worship service at Emanuel AME Church. The trip, sponsored through the Washington-based Faith and

Politics Institute, is designed to foster racial reconciliation and healing around the events of June 17, where a self-professed white supremacist opened fire on an evening Bible study, killing nine black parishioners. For those participating House and Senate Democrats with no direct ties to South Carolina, a chance to connect with the people affected by the church shooting is perhaps the focal point. On Saturday, they will gather at Circular Congregational Church to meet directly with the victims' family members, whose message of forgiveness resonated across the world.

Times and Democrat: Stories, tears: Civil rights tour stops here

http://thetandd.com/news/article_be4fe002-b7f1-5453-aa89-990f7456a9be.html

Princess B. Williams

South Carolina Congressmen Jim Clyburn and Joe Wilson, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, Georgia Congressman John Lewis and a number of other lawmakers visited Orangeburg during the Congressional Civil Rights Pilgrimage to South Carolina on Friday. The national leaders are taking part in a journey this weekend to explore the unique role of faith and the civil rights history of South Carolina. They were told of Orangeburg's role in that history.

Opinion/Editorial:

Post and Courier: Confederate flag does not belong in Citadel chapel

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160319/PC1002/160319347>

Opinion

Symbols matter; but more importantly, they speak volumes to what we as the people of God revere and lift up as sacred. This moral contradiction is intolerable. Such an affront to the best expressions of our Christian faith should be an outrage to all and not allowed to persist. We applaud and stand in solidarity with the recent effort by state Sen. Marlon Kimpson, who introduced a bill in the S.C. Senate calling for the removal of the flag from the chapel. The flag must come down. Take it down now!

Post and Courier: USC has 'No Limits' — except on free speech

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160319/PC1002/160319348>

Opinion

The campus of the University of South Carolina is currently festooned with banners proclaiming that the university experience has "No Limits." Unfortunately that's not entirely true, as two student groups found out last November when they put together a poster exhibit about censorship on college campuses, including their own. USC promptly investigated their event, ironically proving the protesters' point about the lack of free speech on campus. Now, with the help of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), where I work, the student groups are defending their free speech rights with a First Amendment lawsuit.

South Carolina News:

The State: Five months after historic flooding, SC residents have a new enemy – mold

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article66974897.html>

Avery G. Wilks

Some residents simply didn't know they needed to clean up water damage right away after the flooding, and others didn't have the means to prevent a possible mold outbreak. Mold from flood waters also has surfaced in crawl spaces in some Midlands homes weeks after residents thought they were in the clear. While FEMA can provide money to help residents get back on their feet and in a livable environment after a disaster, the agency does not give individuals or businesses money specifically for mold remediation. FEMA also won't declare a home unlivable because of mold, a spokesman said.

The State: Next Roof hearing set for April 5 in Charleston church massacre case

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article66984582.html>

John Monk

A federal judge has set April 5 as the next date for lawyers to get together to try to determine a trial date for Dylann Roof, the accused killer in last June's Charleston church slayings. Judge Richard Gergel also has granted a request by Roof that he be allowed the right not to appear at that hearing. Gergel cannot set a trial date until he knows whether federal prosecutors will seek the death penalty. A death penalty trial may take months so requires special scheduling.

Associated Press: South Carolina police officer killed trying to question man

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=S3QAgyG9

Mitch Weiss

A South Carolina police officer was shot and killed Friday as he and a partner were trying to question a self-professed gang member who they had been told was trying to buy a gun, the chief said. Greenville Police Chief Ken Miller told a news conference Friday that Officer Allen Jacobs and a second officer got out of their car and were trying to question Deondea Mackey, 17 when he ran from them. Miller initially said the officers were trying to serve a warrant, but later said police were acting on a report that Mackey, a self-professed gang member with a criminal record, was trying to buy a gun.

Associated Press: Teacher sues district after student spread nude photos

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=MesmwgFE

Seanna Adcox

A South Carolina teacher who resigned after a student spread nude pictures of her through text messages and social media sued her former employer Friday, saying she wants her dignity back after being forced to quit. Attorneys for Leigh Anne Arthur sued the Union County school district in northwestern South Carolina for breach of contract and slander. She is seeking unspecified damages for her lost income, lost opportunities and harm to her reputation.

Post and Courier: 10-point grading scale a boon for student athletes and nonathletes alike

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160318/PC16/160319371>

Deanna Pan

On Monday, State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman told the S.C. Athletic Administrators Association that the state's uniform grading policy is expected to shift from a 7-point grading scale to a 10-point scale beginning with the 2016-17 school year. The change, Spearman said, would "level the playing field" for students seeking NCAA academic eligibility. The shift would also allow as many as 13,000 more students to qualify for lottery-funded scholarships requiring high grade point averages. The details of Spearman's proposal are sparse. Education Department spokesman Dino Teppara would only tell The Post Courier that the plan, still under development, would be presented to the State Board of Education for its review. The news, however, has been welcomed by high school athletic directors and administrators alike.

Aiken Standard: State considering 10-point grading scale for students

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20160318/AIK0101/160319406>

Larry Wood

The S.C. Department of Education is considering adopting a new grading system for public schools, replacing the current seven-point grading scale with a 10-point scale. The policy shift will help "level the playing field" for students competing for scholarships and seeking NCAA academic eligibility, S.C. Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman told a group of coaches and athletic directors at a meeting in Charleston earlier this week. The change would affect the way students' grade-point averages, or GPAs, are calculated for transcripts and class rank.

Local News:

The State: Forest Acres' Kassy Alia reaches out on behalf of slain Greenville officer

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article66996352.html>

Kassy Alia's husband, a Forest Acres police officer, was killed Sept. 30, 2015. On Friday, she urged S.C. residents to give to a GoFundMe page set up by Columbia's Heroes in Blue for the family of slain Greenville officer Allen Jacobs. "Not even six months ago, I lost my husband and the father of my child, Officer Gregory Alia of the Forest Acres Police Department. "Within hours, Greg's fraternity brothers and close friends, led by Patrick Walsh who is the facilitator of this page, initiated a GoFundMe campaign to support myself and my 6-month old son, Sal.

The State: Lexington County adds new Public Information Officer

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article66939802.html#storylink=apmobile>

The County of Lexington announced the addition of a new Public Information Officer. Harrison Cahill will disseminate press releases to the media, administer the County's social media pages, handle Freedom of Information Act requests issued by the media and public and represent the County of Lexington in the media and public. Harrison previously worked for the The State Newspaper, covering crime in Columbia and Richland County.

Independent Mail: Anderson junior firefighters dismissed amid multiple charges of arson

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/anderson-junior-firefighters-dismissed-amid-multiple-charges-of-arson-2e557513-7dec-043f-e053-010000-372611961.html>

Mike Ellis

Two Anderson County Fire Department Junior Firefighter Program members have been dismissed after allegations emerged that they set multiple arson fires. Dylan Cole Matthews, 17, was charged this week with four counts of third-degree arson and one count of willfully burning lands of another. A 16-year-old whose name has not been released because of his age was charged on Thursday with two counts of third-degree arson and one count of willfully burning lands of another. The teens both confessed in writing to setting the fires in Anderson, according to warrants.

Post and Courier: Berkeley County wage dispute transferred from state to federal court

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160319/PC16/160319442>

Christina Elmore

A lawsuit stemming from an ongoing wage dispute in Berkeley Court was transferred recently from state to federal court. The class-action suit, originally filed last month in state court by five former detention officers, alleged that the county violated the S.C. Payment of Wages Act when it failed to compensate the employees for hours worked over their scheduled shifts. The lack of overtime also violated federal wage laws, according to the transferred documents filed March 11 in U.S. District Court.

The State: Lexington County prosecutor Myers wants jury to decide DUI charge

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article66914717.html>

Tim Flach

Long-time Lexington County prosecutor Donnie Myers will let a magistrate court jury determine the outcome of his latest arrest for drunken driving. When the trial will occur is undetermined, county spokesman Harrison Cahill said Friday. The request for a jury trial effectively serves as Myers' initial legal appearance scheduled for Monday, Cahill said after conferring with court officials. Each of the nine Lexington County magistrates excused themselves from legal proceedings involving Myers to avoid any conflicts-of-interest. Their decision means a judge from elsewhere will be assigned to preside.

WIS: Richland election official: \$80,000 likely needed to fill empty council seat

<http://www.wistv.com/story/31515579/richland-election-official-80000-likely-needed-to-fill-empty-council-seat>

Chad Mills

An empty seat on Richland County Council could land the county's Voter Registration & Elections Department in a deeper deficit. Just days ago, Governor Nikki Haley declared Kelvin Washington's seat, district ten, vacant after he pleaded guilty to several tax crimes. According to state law, the seat will have to be filled in a special election, since the seat became vacant more than 180 days before the next regularly scheduled municipal election. That means the county elections department will likely be responsible for holding and staffing a primary election, a possible run-off election, and a special election to fill the seat for that council district, which includes a large portion of Lower Richland County. The only problem – the Richland County Elections Department is cash-strapped right now. Now, Johnson anticipates the department will need more funds, possibly upwards of \$80,000 to fill the empty seat.

Greenville News: Filing for partisan offices gets off to a strong start in Pickens County

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2016/03/18/filing-partisan-offices-gets-off-strong-start-pickens-county/81992934/>

Filing for partisan offices in Pickens County got off to a strong start, with Republican candidates signing on the dotted line in most of the races, according to the county elections office. No Democrats had filed by the end of the day Friday. Filing started Wednesday and runs until noon March 30. Four of six County Council seats are up for grabs, as well as the sheriff's office, two state Senate seats and four seats in the House, along with several county offices.

Times and Democrat: Candidates file for local offices

http://thetandd.com/news/article_8400e024-351f-5b49-a729-c1eb1d6ce8bd.html

Princess B. Williams

A number of candidates have filed for local office in Orangeburg, Calhoun and Bamberg counties. Filing for the offices opened at noon Wednesday and will end at noon on March 30. Candidates must file with the appropriate county board of voter registration and elections or the South Carolina Election Commission. The party primaries will be held June 14.

Post and Courier: Reckoning on quakes: Software model will help build safe, cheaper buildings

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20160319/PC16/160319379>

Bo Petersen

Quakes in the Lowcountry aren't like quakes in the West. In the softer underground sediment here, the shakes are stronger, last longer and come more frequently. They literally reverberate. That's what Gadsden experienced in the devastating quake that killed 100 people, leveled nine of every 10 brick buildings in Charleston and damaged nine of every 10 in Summerville. But the seismic standards in building codes are based on Western quakes. That's just not good enough. So College of Charleston geologists are developing a computer model to better estimate the impact of a quake across the area, and the specific impact they will have on structures.

Times and Democrat: New safety features coming to OCSD 4 schools

http://thetandd.com/news/article_727ee610-29a7-5286-921d-bd72236ce978.html

Dale Linder-Altman

Five schools in Orangeburg Consolidated School District Four are expected to implement new safety features by the beginning of the 2016-17 school year as part of the district's four-year, \$4.4 million technology and safety update. Larry Wolfe, head of operations, recently presented trustees with a plan to put new double doors in place at Hunter-Kinard-Tyler, Edisto Primary, Edisto Elementary and Carver-Edisto schools. He later reported that the new doors, like those already in place at Branchville, will be installed in the main lobby of each school and will require visitors to go through the office to get to classrooms. The doors will act like those in an emergency room where visitors are buzzed in and the door locks behind them, Wolfe said. Once the visitor goes through a security check, he will be buzzed into the school and the doors will be locked behind him.

The Herald: Clover school board to talk about cameras in special ed classrooms

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/education/article66964202.html>

Jennifer Becknell

School leaders in Clover will discuss the need for cameras in special education classrooms Monday at the request of parents concerned about the care of severely disabled children. Attorney Meredith Siebert with Duff, White and Turner in Columbia will present the findings of a study on cameras in special education classrooms during a 7 p.m. school board meeting. About a dozen parents addressed the school board in February, voicing concerns about the handling of allegations involving the treatment of autistic children at Larne Elementary School.

Greenville News: Historic black school torn down in affordable-housing land swap

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/03/18/historic-black-school-torn-down-affordable-housing-land-swap/81969928/>

Eric Connor

The building where countless black schoolchildren were educated during Greenville's long history of segregation sat empty for the better part of four decades, tucked off East Stone Avenue in the shadow of the Church Street bridge. After years of speculation and curiosity, the Allen School's future is no longer in doubt — it is now a pile of brick rubble. A development of 31 townhomes will take its place. However, city leaders hope the school's fate can be tied, if only loosely, with another legacy: affordable housing.

Independent Mail: Anderson Adult Education Center pilots 8-week GED program

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/anderson-adult-education-center-pilots-8-week-ged-program-2e2d3804-7cbc-7800-e053-0100007f0c92-372605031.html>

Frances Parrish

The Anderson Adult Education Center, which serves Anderson school districts 3, 4 and 5, is piloting a new program allowing students to earn GED certification quickly. Modeled after a program in Beaufort, the camp includes one week of orientation and pretesting, one week of reasoning through language arts, one week of social studies, two weeks of science, and three weeks of math. Students attend the class Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. until noon each day.

Greenville News: Goodwill celebrates YouthBuild Greenville

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/2016/03/18/goodwill-celebrates-youthbuild-greenville/81909002/>

Angelia Davis

Jaquan McGee believes that the happenings inside a more than 100-year-old building are key to his second chance at a better life. What the 18-year-old Greenville man is getting inside the former Woodside Cotton Mill office building at 45 E. Main St. is job training, instruction to earn a GED diploma and more. Those offerings McGee and others are receiving are all part of YouthBuild Greenville, a new, federal-funded program launched by Goodwill Industries of Upstate/Midlands South Carolina.

WMBF: Boat manufacturer company expanding Marion facility

<http://www.wmbfnews.com/story/31514392/boat-manufacturer-company-expanding-marion-facility>

Audrey Biesk

The Beneteau boat manufacturer is expanding its Marion facility in the hope of bringing more jobs to the area. To help, it will host the first job fair on site in the last 30 years. Group Beneteau Marion is expanding its product line and to do so, they need to expand their current team of 164 employees and add a number of brand new positions. Jennifer Reinman, human resources director for Beneteau Group Marion the past 16 years, said the areas of trade range from finish carpenters, mechanics, hardware people, laminators, patchers and all those specific positions to the boat building industry.

Independent Mail: Mechanical problems plaguing Electric City Transit buses

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/mechanical-problems-plaguing-electric-city-transit-buses->

2e59aa7e-9998-48f8-e053-0100007f9180-372626161.html

Kirk Brown

A series of mechanical problems have beset Electric City Transit's fleet of buses, prompting officials to deploy a van on one route. Anderson resident Deborah Blake isn't happy that she and other passengers on the Gold Route have been forced to ride in the van. The Gold Route covers the south side of Anderson. "It is terrible," Blake said. Electric City Transit Director Keith Scott said the Gold Route has fewer passengers than the city's three other bus routes. He said system officials also have been sending a Suburban sport utility vehicle on the Gold Route when the 15-passenger van is full.

Island Packet: Hilton Head Island cost of living tops in the state; wages don't keep up

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article66902092.html>

Lucas High

Hilton Head's cost of living is the highest in state, according to the annual cost-of-living index developed by the Council for Community and Economic Research and compiled by the S.C. Department of Commerce. The index factors in the cost of housing, transportation, grocery items, utilities, health care and miscellaneous goods and services. Seven South Carolina cities are included in the index: Hilton Head Island, Beaufort, Myrtle Beach, Greenville, Anderson and Charleston. Bluffton is not.

Sun News: Myrtle Beach area beaches test safe for swimming; social media buzz false

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/business/tourism/article66933347.html>

Audrey Hudson

State health officials did not issue a "no swim advisory" along Grand Strand area beaches this year and say that recent test samples show there are no elevated levels of bacteria in the surf that would warrant such a call. The water testing that typically starts in May came earlier this season in response to what officials say are erroneous reports that exploded across social media, prompting hundreds of calls and emails from tourists and locals worried that the ocean along Myrtle Beach was not safe for swimming. Jim Beasley, spokesman for the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), said ocean water samples were collected from 44 locations along Myrtle Beach on March 14 as a proactive measure to test for the E. coli bacteria. "All samples were below the standard for enterococcus bacteria," Beasley said.

Times and Democrat: Photographer hopes exhibit helps keep alive story of equality struggle

http://thetandd.com/news/article_da78492e-ad9d-5453-a23a-9b8409a9a6a8.html

Dionne Gleaton

Orangeburg photographer Cecil Williams, whose photos have helped to preserve the African-American experience of the second half of the 20th century, is giving the community another glimpse into his treasure trove of images with an exhibit and a new publication. Forty selected images from the collection of the famed photographer, who is also a publisher, author and artist, are currently on display in the Arthur Rose Museum at Claflin University. The photographs are a part of a new exhibit titled, "Unforgettable: Celebrating a Time of Life, Hope and Bravery." The images in the exhibit, which ends April 1, are a prelude to Williams' newest publication, "Unforgettable," which debuts in August 2016.

National News:

Associated Press: Dubai airliner crashes in Russia killing all 62 on board

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:b8dc0810e30843e8a77e5b934e4fecb3>

Vladimir Isachenkov and Adam Schreck

A Dubai airliner with 62 people on board nosedived and exploded in a giant fireball early Saturday while trying to land in strong winds in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don, killing all aboard, officials said. Russia's Emergencies Ministry said the Boeing 737-800 operated by FlyDubai was carrying 55 passengers, most of them Russians, and seven crew members of various nationalities.

FlyDubai confirmed that there were no survivors and said four children were among those killed. The powerful explosion pulverized the plane but investigators quickly recovered both flight recorders. The cause of the crash wasn't immediately known, but officials and experts pointed at a sudden gust of wind as a possible reason.

Associated Press: Next step for Paris attacks suspect: extradition effort

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:334e162290ba4ae1a9028059bd9743b0>

John-Thor-Dahlburg and Philippe Sotto

Salah Abdeslam, the top suspect in last year's deadly Paris attacks, was discharged Saturday from a Brussels hospital along with a suspected accomplice and will now face official questioning and a fast-track effort to extradite him to France. France's interior minister called Abdeslam's arrest a "major blow" to the Islamic State group in Europe, but also warned the threat of new attacks remains "extremely high."

Associated Press: Al-Qaida claims attack on foreign-linked Algerian gas plant

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:52e2ef28193440288e4093a4b0799ecb>

Al-Qaida's North Africa arm has claimed responsibility for a mortar attack on a gas plant in the Sahara jointly operated by Britain's BP and Norway's Statoil, calling it a protest over shale gas extraction. No one was injured in the attack Friday and Algerian troops fanned out to hunt the perpetrators. The Defense Ministry said two homemade rocket shells fell near the Krechba production site near In Salah, which is overseen by Algerian state company Sonatrach.

Associated Press: Many at Guantanamo apparently not 'too dangerous' after all

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:1e47fd89b56a462d9f438be858a832e7>

Ben Fox

In the last comprehensive review of prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay, the U.S. government decided nearly 50 were "too dangerous to transfer but not feasible for prosecution," leaving them in an open-ended legal limbo. Now it seems many may not be so dangerous after all. A review board that includes military and intelligence officials has been taking a hard look at these men and helping to steadily chip away at the list of indefinite detainees, who are a significant obstacle to President Barack Obama's push to shut down the detention center at the U.S. military base in Cuba.

Associated Press: GOP candidates taking aim at Common Core academic standards

<http://bigstory.ap.org/urn:publicid:ap.org:98fe5303fcf343e9955c5132bbecae87>

Jennifer C. Kerr and Carole Feldman

What they fail to mention is that Common Core began as a state-driven campaign to raise learning standards for the nation's schoolchildren. Launched in 2009, the idea was to embrace learning goals by grade across all 50 states to make sure kids in Iowa were on track and receiving a quality education along with students in California, Maine and elsewhere — and to ensure that all students were prepared for life after high school, for college or a job. It was a project of governors and state school chiefs. Much of the backlash against Common Core began when the federal government, through its Race to the Top program, started giving education grants to states that adopted higher academic standards. That grant money has run its course, and the new education law bars future use of incentives for embracing Common Core or any standards.

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