

From: Symmes, Brian
To:
Date: 12/12/2013 7:59:44 AM
Subject: Morning Clips - Thursday, December 12, 2013

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Gov. Nikki Haley News:

Associated Press: S.C. Guard unit to return with Gov. Haley's husband

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2013/dec/11/sc-guard-unit-return-gov-haleys-husband/>

Susanne M. Schafer

Gov. Nikki Haley's husband Michael is returning to South Carolina from his Afghanistan deployment in time for Christmas, officials announced Wednesday. Haley's unit, comprised of about 48 soldiers, left in January for a month of training in Indiana before being sent to train Afghan farmers in and around Helmand Province. Gov. Haley announced Wednesday that she expected her husband to arrive before the holidays.

The State: Welcome home, Michael Haley

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/12/3154375/the-morning-buzz-welcome-home.html>

Andrew Shain

No wonder Gov. Nikki Haley's public schedule was so light after Tuesday. S.C. First Gentleman Michael Haley's agriculture-training National Guard unit returns to Columbia on Thursday after nearly a year in Afghanistan. The captain's deployment added to a list of firsts for Haley, who is South Carolina's first female and first minority governor. She also is the first sitting governor to have a spouse deployed to a combat zone. Michael Haley's stint overseas changed some perceptions for a sometimes divisive governor. Nikki Haley, the wife and mother, ended up sharing the spotlight with Nikki Haley, the politician, while her husband worked to convince Afghan farmers swap poppy crops for food crops.

Georgetown Times: Harborwalk repair, more river cleanup now underway

<http://www.gtowntimes.com/article/20131211/GTT06/131219984/1001/harborwalk-repair-more-river-cleanup-now-underway>

Scott Harper

Work began this week to repair the portion Harborwalk boardwalk that was damaged when fire swept through a large portion of the 700 block of Front Street Sept. 25. R.L. Morrison Excavating, hired by the city to make the repairs, arrived with a crane and barge and began the work on Tuesday. City Council authorized the spending of \$67,788 for the repair work.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley, in the days following the fire, signed an order authorizing a grant of up to \$1 million to help pay for any city-owned property - such as the Harbrowalk - damaged by the fire.

Opinion Editorial Roundup:

Greenville News: Keep pressure on for SRS cleanup

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2013312120012>

Editorial

There are 37 million gallons of radioactive waste at the Savannah River Site, waste that the federal government has promised would be cleaned up by the mid-2020s, but little progress is being made. Most of the waste sits on the SRS grounds in containers that in some cases are leaking. It is a dangerous situation for South Carolina that represents broken promises from the federal government. Expediting the cleanup is a difficult task. Solving the problem involves an array of interlocking issues that would need to be resolved before things could advance much. Still the state, led by Gov. Nikki Haley, is doing the right thing by talking with the Energy Department and increasing pressure on the federal government.

Post and Courier: The road to gas-tax reality

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20131212/PC1002/131219853/1021/the-road-to-gas-tax-reality>

Editorial

South Carolina road and bridge needs have been well documented, and the need for additional funding to

fix them is generally recognized. While the Legislature provided some relief last year, mainly with a \$500 million bond issue, that hardly begins to cover the infrastructure backlog, estimated as high as \$29 billion. The gas tax is the mainstay of state highway funding, and hiking the gas tax would be the most dependable way to raise more money. Unfortunately, the Legislature has been unwilling to do so for years. Or has it? Note: In a speech to South Carolina mayors meeting in Blythewood on Dec. 4, Gov. Nikki Haley declared that last year legislators "came to me and they said we need to raise the gas tax, we need to raise the gas tax." Moreover, businesses like the state's low gas tax, she said.

Aiken Standard: Develop workforce to continue growth

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20131212/AIK0201/131219867/1018/AIK02/editorial-develop-workforce-to-continue-growth>

Editorial

Companies such as Bridgestone and Tognum have a formula that needs to be copied across the state. The two industries with plants in Aiken County have wisely cultivated workforce development programs aimed at enhancing the region's economic stability. Just this week, Bridgestone announced it had received 4,500 applications for 200 jobs in two days. While manufacturing experience and a high school diploma or GED are preferred, Bridgestone will actually train its workforce for those jobs. South Carolina's economy is obviously in part determined by what's going on at the national level.

The State: More Police Alone Isn't The Answer To Gangs In Columbia

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=etgcu115

Warren Bolton

When Columbia merchants, city leaders and law enforcement recently identified gangs as public enemy No. 1 in Five Points, one of my first thoughts was that the last thing this community needs is to take the simple and all-too frequent route of pumping hundreds of thousands of dollars into building up police gang units without addressing root causes. That declaration was in part what led Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott to direct his department's gang and narcotics units to conduct a surprise operation one weekend in early November, aimed at cracking down on bad actors as well as a club claimed to be a haven for them.

Rock Hill Herald: Tracking the governor's daily activities

<http://www.heraldonline.com/2013/12/11/5496043/tracking-the-governors-daily-activities.html>

Editorial

The public doesn't need to know if Gov. Nikki Haley goes Christmas shopping for her children. But her constituents are entitled to know if she travels to Washington on state business that also includes a little fundraising on the side. The various out-of-state trips and in-state events listed – or left off – Haley's official weekly schedules have become a point of contention with Common Cause, the government watchdog group. John Crangle, state director for Common Cause, recently criticized the governor for keeping part of her schedule secret and said she should report all her official business to the public.

Federal Delegation News:

McClatchy DC: Graham blasts filibuster change

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/11/3154129/graham-blasts-filibuster-change.html>

James Rosen

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., warned his colleagues Wednesday that last month's change in Senate filibuster rules will produce more radical judges beholden to liberal or conservative ideology instead of the law. Graham sharply criticized Senate Democrats' elimination of the 60-vote threshold to break a filibuster in a bid to confirm judicial and executive nominees of President Barack Obama that Republicans had blocked. "You're going to have more ideologically driven (executive) picks and judicial nominations because the filtering device of having to at least talk to the other side" is minimized, Graham said.

South Carolina News:

The State: SC pension system defends fees it pays

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/11/3154040/sc-pension-system-defends-fees.html#storylink=cpy>

Jamie Self

Comparing management fees paid by South Carolina's \$27 billion retirement fund to those paid by other states is not fair because South Carolina reports its fees more thoroughly than other states, a manager and consultant told legislators Wednesday. A special state Senate panel, investigating the state Retirement

System Investment Commission, heard testimony Wednesday about why the pension system paid \$420 million in fees last year to outside managers to invest retirement money for public workers.

The State: SLED tells SC legislators it needs 65 more agents

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/11/3154008/sled-tells-sc-legislators-it-needs.html#storylink=cpy>

Andrew Shain

The State Law Enforcement Division is asking for 65 additional agents as South Carolina's statewide police force tries to rebuild after years of staffing cuts. If lawmakers grant the agency's request in the state's next budget, SLED would have just more than the 383 agents that it had before the economic downturn struck in 2008, agency director Mark Keel said in a budget presentation Wednesday to a S.C. House subcommittee. SLED officials told lawmakers they want \$15.2 million in new spending next year. That does not include authorization to spend \$3.5 million on a new helicopter with money the agency has in its accounts.

Aiken Standard: Rep. Taylor has first meeting in push for states' convention

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/article/20131212/AIK0101/131219873/1004/rep-taylor-has-first-meeting-in-push-for-states-convention>

Derrek Asberry

More than 100 state legislators from 32 states met on Saturday to begin the groundwork of filing for a Convention of States – an effort that is being pioneered by Rep. Bill Taylor, R-Aiken. “Our goal was to begin writing the rules for an Article V Convention of States so there is a legal and restrained process,” Taylor said. “It was a good first step. Our founders gave us this Article V option just for a time like this when the federal government is in need of course correction.” Titled the Mt. Vernon Assembly, the group met in Washington, D.C., to discuss the process.

The Item: Senator files bill targeting offenders on bond

http://www.theitem.com/news/local_news/senator-files-bill-targeting-offenders-on-bond/article_0ee13fd0-56b9-511b-8f98-7589b0f210c1.html

Bristow Marchant

Criminals who commit new offenses after making bond on their first charge could face extra time behind bars under a bill slated to be considered by the S.C. Senate. State Sen. Thomas McElveen, D-Sumter, has pre-filed a bill for the legislative session beginning in January that would give prosecutors and judges the ability to add time to the sentences of criminals who commit their crimes while on bond. McElveen's proposal would allow 40 percent of the maximum sentence for the crime to be added to their time.

The State: South Carolina moves up a notch in health rankings

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/11/3151843/south-carolina-moves-up-a-notch.html#storylink=cpy>

Joey Holleman

South Carolina's status improved slightly in the 2013 edition of America's Health Rankings, moving from 44th to 43rd in part because of the state's effort to ensure poor children get Medicaid coverage. The annual rankings, released Wednesday by United Health Foundation, tend to reinforce rather than surprise. South Carolina's overall ranking has ranged from 41 to 48 through the years, weighed down by high rates of diabetes (44th in 2013), obesity (44th) and infectious disease (49th) and low rates of high school graduation (47th).

The State: State would keep first-in-the-South GOP primary

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/11/3154064/sc-politics-state-would-keep-first.html#storylink=cpy>

South Carolina would keep its status as an early-primary state under proposals to streamline the 2016 Republican presidential primary. The Republican National Committee is looking at shortening the window for primaries and holding its 2016 convention in June, the earliest since 1948, according to a report by CNN.com. The party wants to end some of chaos from the 2012 primary. The first four early-voting states – Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada – would continue to hold their contests in February.

The State: S.C. application numbers rise on healthcare.gov in November

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/11/3153193/sc-application-numbers-rise-on.html#storylink=cpy>

Joey Holleman

Nearly five times as many people in S.C. selected health insurance policies on healthcare.gov in November than in October, though the two-month total of 2,761 is still well below projections. The federal government released statistics for the Health Insurance Marketplace on Wednesday, backing the contention that the functionality of the balky website has slowly improved. In the 36 states on the federal marketplace, 1.15

million applications have been completed and 137,204 policies selected in two months.

Associated Press: Machinists give Boeing 777X proposal for Wash.

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

On the second day of talks between Boeing Commercial Airplanes officials and Machinists union leaders, the union said Wednesday it presented a preliminary proposal for a contract that would mean much of the work on the company's new 777X jet would be done in the Puget Sound region. The proposal would secure wing fabrication and final assembly work for Machinists in Washington state, the union said in a statement. The two sides first renewed talks Tuesday, which was Boeing's deadline for other states to submit proposals for work on the new jet.

Local News:

The State: Survey notes accessibility problems for Richland Co. voters with disabilities

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/11/3154074/survey-notes-accessibility-problems.html#storylink=cpy>

Dawn Hinshaw

When Richland County voter Dori Tempio went to cast her ballot in November's library referendum, a poll worker held the voting machine on her lap. She asked for privacy. He turned his head. "The person could see what I was voting," said Tempio, 43, who uses a wheelchair. "Other people walking by could see what I was voting. ... That makes you somewhat uncomfortable." Tempio said she considers voting to be a sacred right; she has voted in every election since she turned 18.

Times and Democrat: VA 'aggressively' seeking physicians for Orangeburg clinic, officials say

http://thetandd.com/news/local/va-aggressively-seeking-physicians-for-orangeburg-clinic-officials-say/article_d7fa5716-62e6-11e3-abde-001a4bcf887a.html

Gene Zaleski

Veterans Affairs officials say they are "aggressively" recruiting doctors for Orangeburg's clinic after a number of veterans expressed concerns about the lack of a doctor. "We have had a little trouble in finding people who wanted to come to Orangeburg who we thought were quality and who we would want to come to the clinic," said Ruth Mustard, the associate director for patient care and nursing services at the William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center. "We want good people. We don't just want to fill these positions with necessarily what we might say is a warm body. It is our highest priority for the clinic," she said.

Florence Morning News: Georgetown County enacts multiyear millage increases

http://www.snow.com/news/article_31e1f2ec-62ac-11e3-9064-001a4bcf6878.html

Christopher McKagen

A recent, internal study revealed many Georgetown County job positions are paid less than what other counties and municipalities in the state pay the same positions. Georgetown County Council voted unanimously Tuesday to institute progressive, four-year millage increases to bring county pay up to par with what are essentially competing positions. The projected property tax increases are expected to bring in \$2.9 million in revenue during fiscal years of 2015-18 the county said is necessary to reach surveyed wage and salary averages

Greenville News: Paralyzed USC student may be home by Christmas

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2013312120016>

Lillia Callum Penso

The USC student who was paralyzed by a stray bullet in October is making tremendous progress in physical therapy and should be home before Christmas, according to her doctors at the Shepherd Center in Atlanta. "We are especially happy that she and Pam will be home in time for Christmas," said Jim Carpenter, Childress' uncle, who has acted as a spokesperson for the family of the J.L. Mann graduate. "We are all very proud of her because of the way that she has dealt with this adversity. It has been a temporary setback, but only a temporary one." Martha Childress entered the spinal chord rehabilitation program at that Shepherd Center Oct. 21 for therapy following a gunshot wound that left her paralyzed from the waist down.

The State: FBI-SLED report on Columbia police 'Black Ops' allegations forwarded to outside prosecutor

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/12/11/3153732/fbi-sled-report-on-columbia-police.html#storylink=cpy>

John Monk

A joint FBI-SLED report into allegations concerning interim Columbia police chief Ruben Santiago has been forwarded to another solicitor to avoid any conflict of interest, 5th Circuit Solicitor Dan Johnson said

Wednesday. The allegations have been dubbed “Black Ops,” because they supposedly involved a wild plot by some police to frame an assistant Columbia city manager by planting false evidence that would implicate him in a crime. “Obviously I have a close relationship with many of the parties involved and to avoid the appearance of impropriety, I have forwarded it to another solicitor,” Johnson said.

National News:

Associated Press: House Republicans get behind budget agreement

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=fSULrqBp

Andrew Taylor

House Republicans are rallying behind a modest budget pact that promises to bring a temporary halt to budget brinkmanship in Washington and ease automatic budget cuts that would otherwise slam the Pentagon and domestic agencies for a second straight year. At the same time, President Barack Obama and Senate Democrats are praising the measure negotiated with House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wis., who morphed from an uncompromising small-government stalwart into a divided-Washington dealmaker in order to claim a partial victory on the budget.

Associated Press: Gridlock in the Senate, progress in the House

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268798/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=2kS6Y9AU

Laurie Kellman

A budget agreement between key Republicans and Democrats. Even President Barack Obama was on board. All without anyone threatening to repeal this or shut down that. Gridlock, however briefly, took an early holiday in the bitterly polarized, Republican-run House. But across the Capitol, the high-minded Senate remains in the grip of some of the worst partisan warfare in its history after majority Democrats curbed the Republicans' power. A round-the-clock talkathon is the result, putting no one in the mood for cooperation. Majority Harry Reid threatened to shorten the Senate's cherished Christmas vacation if need be.

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