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To:

Date: 6/24/2015 10:47:58 AM

Subject: SC Front Pages – Tuesday, June 24, 2015

SC Front Pages – Tuesday, June 24, 2015



SPORTS, 1C
**BOOKER'S
BIG IDEA**



LIFESTYLE, 1D
**Potato
salads win
applause**

The Greenville News

A GANNETT COMPANY

WEDNESDAY,
JUNE 24, 2015
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

CONFEDERATE FLAG DEBATE

FLAG FOES SEE SURGE



RAINIER EHRHARDT/AP

Protesters hold signs as they chant during a rally to take down the Confederate flag at the South Carolina Statehouse, Tuesday, June 23, 2015, in Columbia, S.C.

Opponents brave blistering heat to express disapproval

NATHANIEL CARY
STAFF WRITER
NCARY@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

COLUMBIA — Hundreds supporting removal of the Confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds gathered at the flag Tuesday at a mid-day rally in blistering heat and chanted "Bring it down."

Some held signs that read "Not MY Flag" or "One flag, the American flag." A banner on the Statehouse steps read "Bring us Together: Take It Down."

Church, political and civic leaders from across the state

took turns uttering the rallying cry.

The rally was organized by the National Action Network's Lowcountry chapter and Nelson Rivers III, pastor of North Charleston's Charity Baptist Church.

"No bullet can stop this movement," said Columbia Mayor Steve Benjamin. "No gunshot can tear it apart."

Speakers alternated between calls for the flag's removal and belief that it will come down.

"If you want to support that

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Ebay bans Confederate flag items. **Page 5A**
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"No bullet can stop this movement."

STEVE BENJAMIN
MAYOR, COLUMBIA, S.C.

Legislature votes to begin debate on Confederate flag

TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
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COLUMBIA — Lawmakers will return to Columbia later this summer to debate whether to remove the Confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds.

Both chambers voted overwhelmingly Tuesday for the debate less than a day after Gov. Nikki Haley and the state's two Republican U.S. senators urged lawmakers to remove the flag, capping a political and citizen chorus that echoed nationwide. Tuesday's action came as

hundreds of people braved sweltering heat for an anti-flag rally outside the Statehouse in response to last week's shooting deaths of nine people, including a state senator, at a historic black church in Charleston.

The 21-year-old white Columbia man charged in their deaths sported a Confederate flag license plate and appeared to pose for photos holding the Confederate flag and burning the U.S. flag.

It took a two-thirds vote of each chamber for lawmakers to take up a matter other than the

See **DEBATE**, Page 4A

St. Francis buys four Upstate urgent care centers

LIV OSBY
STAFF WRITER
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Bon Secours St. Francis Health System has signed a letter of intent to buy all four APC Doctors Express Urgent Care

The Greenville News has learned.

The cost of the transaction was not disclosed.

The move is an effort to respond to consumers who want convenient care, said Mark Nantz, executive vice president

for Bon Secours Health System Inc., St. Francis' parent company.

"We believe that patients are more and more wanting to receive care on their timetable," he said. "They want to walk in and get it when they want it."

able."

Urgent care centers provide walk-in medical care on weekends and evenings, as well as during traditional doctors' hours. And they are popping up everywhere.

Nationwide, there are about

their growth doubling in 2011 alone, according to the Urgent Care Association of America. There are at least 109 in South Carolina.

Nantz said St. Francis has had plans to expand its urgent

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Louise Brown of Charleston chants "Take It Down" during a rally Tuesday in Columbia to remove the Confederate flag from the grounds of the Statehouse. A two-thirds majority is needed in both the House and Senate to change the flag's location.

New flag debate unfurls passions

Leaders offer bills to remove Confederate flag from Statehouse grounds

BY CYNTHIA ROLDAN
crolldan@postandcourier.com

COLUMBIA — The S.C. Legislature agreed Tuesday to consider taking down the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds, where it has flown as part of a Civil War memorial for the past 15 years.

The House voted 103-10 while the Senate approved by voice vote broadening the subjects that can be taken up during the current special session.

Soon after the Senate voted, state Sen. Vincent Sheheen, D-Charleston, introduced a bill calling for moving the flag from Statehouse grounds to the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum in Columbia. Debate on it could begin as early as next Tuesday when lawmakers are called back into session.

Across the hall, House members also filed two bills that called for the removal of the flag, but debate will be delayed while they go through committees.

A two-thirds majority was needed to allow discussion, and the same margin will be needed in both the House and Senate to change the flag's location.

The vote came after hundreds of people rallied outside the Capitol chanting "Bring it down, bring it down" to demand that lawmakers remove the flag from the Civil

Please see **FLAG**, Page A7



State Sen. Paul Thurmond pauses Tuesday at his desk, moments before becoming one of the first lawmakers to call for the removal of the Confederate flag.

Sen. Thurmond calls for banner's removal

Segregationist's son decries racist emblems

BY SCHUYLER KROPP
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State Sen. Paul Thurmond on Tuesday became one of the first lawmakers to officially call for removing the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds, denouncing a past that his father,

segregationist Dixiecrat Strom Thurmond, was identified with most of his life.

In a speech timed to shape the debate over calls to take down the flag, Paul Thurmond took to the podium and spoke for more than

Please see **THURMOND**, Page A6

Online

For complete coverage of the shooting at Emanuel AME Church, including victim profiles, videos, photo galleries and more, go to postandcourier.com/church-shooting. Join the conversation on social by using **#CharlestonShooting**.

Inside

Chapel reconsiders Confederate banner. **A6**

Brian Hicks: Free speech a responsibility, not right to change history. **A2**

Protesters banned from victims' funerals. **A5**

Information on funeral services. **A8**

Second Charleston statue vandalized. **A8**

Attorney: Magistrate's sympathy for suspect's family was compassion. **A10**

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Memorial events. **A11**

Local store continues selling Confederate flag. **B1**

NCAA waiting on flag decision before lifting ban. **C1**

NASCAR backs removal of flag. **C2**

Cam Newton visits with family of victim. **C2**

Restaurant community supports Hope Fund. **D1**

Berkeley's Kovach faces more charges

Lawyer says Yes 4 Schools allegations 'unfounded, untrue'

BY BRENDA RINDGE
brindge@postandcourier.com

Three more charges were added Wednesday to the two already faced by Berkeley schools' communications chief for trying to influence the outcome of an election.

Amy Kovach, 44, was indicted Tuesday by a Berkeley County grand jury on charges of perjury, misconduct in office and a second forgery charge in connection with \$198 million building campaign referendum 18, 2012 called Yes 4 Schools, according to court documents.

Kovach "continuously used public resources and time to influence the outcome of a bond referendum ... and covered up her actions with dishonesty," according to the indictments.

Kovach altered a price estimate from a video company to comply with the district's procurement code, according to the indictments.

Forgery is a felony charge that carries a penalty of five years in jail and/or a fine. Perjury, a misdemeanor, is punishable by six months in prison or a fine of \$100 or more, and misconduct in office carries a penalty of up to 10 years in prison, according to the state Attorney General's Office.

School board Chairman Jim Hayes said he had not seen the indictments and could not comment.

Please see **CHARGES**, Page A4

Flaws run deep for U.S. data

Secrets vulnerable to hackers for years

BY KEN DILANIAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Passwords written down on desks. Outdated antivirus software. "Perceived ineptitude" in information technology departments. The federal government, which holds secrets and sensitive information ranging from nuclear blueprints to the tax returns of hundreds of millions of Americans, has for years failed to take basic steps to protect its data from hackers and thieves, records show.

In the latest example, the Office of Personnel Management is under fire for allowing its databases to be plundered by suspected Chinese cyber spies in what is being called one of the worst breaches in U.S. history. OPM repeatedly neglected to implement basic cybersecurity protections, its internal watchdog told Congress.

But the departments of Treasury, Transportation, State and Health and Human Services have significantly worse records, according to the most recent administration report to Congress under the Federal Information Security Management Act. Each of those agencies has been hacked in the last few years.

Please see **HACK**, Page A16

Poll: Momentum is building to fold flag

BY GLENN SMITH
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A Post and Courier poll shows the state Senate is within striking distance of having a majority in favor of removing the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds. Support appears strong in the House, as well.



Online
To see live results of our lawmaker poll, go to postandcourier.com/flag-poll.

The Legislature's 61 Democrats adopted a unified front in support of taking the flag down. A number

of Republicans signed on, as well, including Charleston Sen. Paul Thurmond, son of legendary Dixiecrat Strom Thurmond. Republican Sen. Katrina Shealy of Lexington said Tuesday she has come out in favor of removing the Confederate flag from the

Please see **POLL**, Page A7



Chance of storms.
High 96, Low 78.
Complete 5-day
forecast. **B10**

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Classifieds... D1 Food... D1 Sports... C1
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Historic Charleston Foundation: Pay \$8 for two children's admission to Children's Discovery Tours. See **A2**

USC FOOTBALL: SCHEDULE FOR 2016 IS ALMOST SET. B1



TRACY GLANTZ/STANTONSTATE.COM

STILL
HOT,
HOTThe Midlands heat wave
simply won't stop, A3Make the
most of
your farmers
market visit

Palmetto Food, C1

'JAWS,'
40 YEARS
LATER, STILL
SCARES, C8

The State

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2015 | THESTATE.COM

CHARLESTON SHOOTING AFTERMATH

Lawmakers to debate
flag removal soon

Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, D-Orangeburg, wipes her eyes during a special legislative session Tuesday at the State House.



Sen. Danny Verdin, R-Laurens, tears up remembering Sen. Clementa Pinckney. Verdin is 1 of 3 senators to vote 'no' to debating the flag.

Some dissenters
said they still need
time to grieve
before taking actionBy JAMIE SELF
jsell@thestate.com

South Carolina legislators Tuesday made debating whether to remove the Confederate flag from the State House grounds an urgent matter.

Grieving the lives lost in last week's racially motivated shooting at a Charleston church, the S.C. House voted 103-10 to debate the flag this summer. The now 45-member state Senate voted by voice to join the debate — with only three Upstate senators dissenting. That debate could begin as early as next Tuesday; the first day lawmakers could return to Columbia to accept or reject Gov. Nikki Haley's veto to the state budget. Haley has until midnight Monday to issue vetoes.

But House and Senate leaders also could wait until after the July 4 holiday weekend to call members back, giving lawmakers time to decide where they stand on the flag's location.

A survey by The State found a majority of state senators, 26, saying they would vote to remove the flag. Among House members surveyed, 27 said they would vote to remove the flag.

While many legislators declined to state a position, only two representatives and three senators indicated they would vote against moving the flag.

Calls for removing the flag — seen as a sign of Southern heritage by some,

SEE SESSION PAGE A6

In new fight
over flag,
supporters
mostly silentBy JEFF WILKINSON
jwilkinson@thestate.com

Mark Garmon of Eastover was one of a handful of Confederate flag supporters to show up Tuesday at the State House, the day after Gov. Nikki Haley called for the banner to be removed from the Capitol grounds.

While his friend John Miller argued with a host of flag opponents, Garmon held back from the fray, holding a sign supporting the flag and opposing any gun control laws. Both wore the colors of the Midlands-based Beethovens. Former mo-

INSIDE

Funeral arrangements set for Charleston church slaying victims, plus other developments. A7

Major retailers, flag manufacturer back away from Confederate flag. B6

NASCAR backs Gov. Nikki Haley's call to remove the flag from the State House grounds. B1

Flag opponents — and some supporters — rally Tuesday at the State House. A3

Time for action on the flag issue. Opinion, C2

THESTATE.COM

Pinckney's
casket will be
at State House
for viewing

From Staff Reports

The tears were flowing freely Tuesday at the State House in Columbia, and they likely will start again about noon Wednesday, as a horse-drawn caisson approaches.

That caisson is expected to deliver the body of the late state Sen. Clementa Pinckney to the north side of the State House about 12:30 p.m.

The casket of the Jasper County Dem-



NASCAR backs flag removal

Stock-car racing's top sanctioning body issues statement Tuesday supporting S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley's position

SPORTS, 1B



Below the fold: S.C. lawmakers agree to debate removing Confederate flag

Aiken Standard

YOUR LOCAL NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1867

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Board names
superintendent
finalists | 3A

WEDNESDAY, June 24, 2015

AIKENSTANDARD.COM

Vol. 149, No. 175 Aiken, S.C. ★★ 75¢

County avoids property tax increase Council adopts 2015-16 budget after unanimous vote

BY MAAYAN SCHECHTER
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The Aiken County \$62.7 million 2015-16 budget will go into effect July 1 after a unanimous County Council vote.

Council held one of their shorter budget meetings on Tuesday, discussing beforehand whether to

include several funding requests before finalizing the budget. Earlier this month, Council agreed to cut roughly \$1 million from the budget's general fund, hoping to avoid raising the millage rate, or property taxes.

Council members also sought more revenue to help cushion their reserves.

With the cuts, a portion of the \$1 million will cover the difference of what a property tax increase could have brought the County in revenue, leaving what was initially about \$542,000 in additional revenue.

Council member Camille Furguele asked officials whether the addition of several new budget requests would "jeopardize" the position Council took last week against

raising County property taxes. County Administrator Clay Killian stated the County would still have sufficient revenue, despite the budget additions.

Council voted to amend the 2015-16 budget with several requests that included nearly \$22,000 for a new position in the Treasurer's Office.

Council members Chuck Smith, Sandy Haskell, Andrew Sidors, Camille Furguele and Kathy Rawls approved the request. Council Chairman Ronnie Young and Council members LaWana McKenzie, Willard Hightower and Phil Napier did not.

Please see BUDGET, Page 10A

Business builds in Barnwell

BY DERREK ASBERRY
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BARNWELL — Barnwell soon will welcome nearly 140 more jobs to the area and, according to Jeff Schoen, they are not minimum-wage jobs — they're technical jobs that will pay well and boost the local economy, he said.

Schoen, president & CEO of Orchids Paper Products Co., attended the groundbreaking for the company's upcoming facility in Barnwell, located in Airport Industrial Park off Joey Zorn Boulevard. Construction already started with plans to start up in the first quarter of 2016.

According to Orchids, the company will build an integrated tissue paper facility in Barnwell with a paper-making capacity of between 35,000 and 40,000 tons per year and converting capacity between 30,000 and 32,000 tons per year.

The project is expected to cost anywhere from \$110 million to \$125 million and will bring an estimated 134 jobs to the area.

"People will be trained and receive ongoing training, both technical as well as working in a high-performance environment."

Please see JOBS, Page 10A

AREA DEATHS

Carson Devine Culbreath, Johnston
Douglas E. Treadway, Belvedere
Douglas MacArthur "Mac" Mundy, Crawfordville, Fla.
Gloria Myers, Graniteville
Lt. Col. Richard A. Charles, Columbia

Deaths and Funerals, 6A

Blaze destroys Aiken home



Fire crews put out a blaze at an Aiken home Tuesday evening.

PHOTO BY AIKEN PUBLIC SAFETY

STAFF REPORTS

Aiken Public Safety firefighters responded to a blaze at an Aiken home Tuesday evening.

The call came in at 6:42 p.m. regarding a house fire on Hammonds Road. According to officers on scene, no injuries were reported and everyone made it out of the house safely.

It's unknown at this time if the house is a complete loss.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

One dead in truck wreck on Tuesday

STAFF REPORTS

A two-vehicle crash in Wagener resulted in the death of an Elgin man Tuesday night.

The deceased has been "presumptively" identified as Terry A. Pogue, 39, of Elgin, according to Aiken

Please see FATAL, Page 14A

S.C. lawmakers agree to debate removing rebel flag

BY SEANNA ADCOX,
JEFFREY COLLINS AND
JONATHAN DREW
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Chanting "bring it down, bring it down," hundreds gathered in Tuesday's sweltering heat to demand the removal of the Confederate battle flag from outside South Carolina's Statehouse, while lawmakers inside took their first step toward removing the historic but divisive symbol.

Within minutes of convening a special session on the budget Tuesday, legislators agreed to debate the flag



AP PHOTO/RAINER ERHARDT

S.C. Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, D-Orangeburg, reacts during a special session of the legislature Tuesday.

Gov. Nikki Haley's unexpected call for the flag to come down also resonated.

Haley's reversal was prompted by last week's massacre of nine black people inside the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal church in Charleston in what authorities describe as a racial hate crime. Her move suddenly eroded the position many southern lawmakers have held onto throughout their careers: that debating the status of the Confederate flag would be too racially divisive today.

"The hate-filled murderer who massacred our brothers and sisters in Charleston has a sick and twisted view of the flag. In no way does he reflect the people in our state who respect, and in many ways, revere it," Haley

INSIDE

Local residents chime in on flag | 3A
Growing up under the flag | 13A

Survey question for Aiken County Legislative Delegation: Should the Confederate flag come down?

• S.C. Rep. Bill Clyburn, D Yes
• S.C. Rep. Chris Corley, R No
• S.C. Rep. Bill Hiron, R Undecided
• S.C. Sen. Shane Massey, R Yes
• S.C. Sen. Nikki Setzer, D Yes
• S.C. Sen. Bill Taylor, R Undecided

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Screen on the Green bringing "The Boxtrolls" on Saturday



The city of Hartsville's Screen on the Green series will continue Saturday with a showing of "The Boxtrolls."

From local reports

The 2014 stop motion animation movie "The Boxtrolls" will be shown Saturday as part of the city of Hartsville's Screen on the Green free movie series, sponsored by Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center. The movie will be shown at dusk, around 8:40 p.m., at Burry Park, located at 131 Cargill Way.

Based on the children's novel "Here There Be Monsters!" by Alan Snow, the film tells the story of the inventive and troublesome Boxtrolls, who live in caves beneath the Victorian city of Cheesebridge and

who raised an orphaned boy named Eggs (Isaac Hempstead Wright).

The Boxtrolls scavenge for trash in the city above for materials to build their inventions. When they become threatened by the town's sinister exterminator, Archibald Snatcher (Ben Kingsley), Eggs must venture above ground and team up with his new human friend Winnie (Elle Fanning) in a plan to save the Boxtrolls.

Moviegoers are invited to bring chairs and blankets to Burry Park. In the event of rain, the showing will be moved to Byerly Park's Coach T.B. Thomas Sports Center, located at 701 W. Washington St.

Screen on the Green will continue with the following movies:

» July 11 - "Paddington," sponsored by North Industrial Machine.

» July 25 - "Big Hero 6," sponsored by The Children's Group.

» Aug. 8 - "Planes: Fire and Rescue," sponsored by the Hartsville fire and police departments.

WANT TO GO?

WHAT: Screen on the Green showing of "The Boxtrolls"
WHERE: Burry Park, 131 Cargill Way
WHEN: Saturday at dusk

Darlington County

Budget receives final OK

BY JIM FAILE

jfaile@hartsvillemessenger.com

DARLINGTON — Darlington County Council gave final approval to the county budget Monday for fiscal year 2015 - 2016. The \$33.21 million budget encompasses eight individual budgets and was approved on third reading by a vote of 6-2.

Council members Wilhelmina Johnson of Darlington and Mozella "Pennie" Nicholson of Hartsville cast the two negative votes. All other members voted in favor of the budget.

Johnson said she would not vote for the budget because it eliminates seven janitorial positions. Council voted earlier in June to hire a private firm to handle janitorial services. That move was aimed at saving more than \$89,000 in annual costs, officials said.

Johnson also renewed her call to fund the Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority services in Darlington County. And she repeated a desire to use money from the county's fund balance, projected at about \$13 million.

"There's plenty of money out there," she said, later adding, "I don't care if we use the whole \$13 million."

Nicholson objected, as she had previously, to putting more than \$48,000 back in the budget to restore most of a proposed funding cut for the Darlington County Humane Society to operate the county's animal shelter. She said the county is not funding human services at adequate levels.

"I'm not happy with our budget," Nicholson said. "I just think human needs come first before

BYERLY FOUNDATION



Dick Puffer, center, executive director of the Byerly Foundation, hosts the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours on Thursday evening in celebration of the foundation's 20th anniversary.

Organization celebrates 20th anniversary

BY ARDIE ARVIDSON

aarvidson@hartsvillemessenger.com

The Byerly Foundation hosted the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours event Thursday in celebration of the foundation's 20th anniversary.

Executive Director Dick Puffer called the foundation a blessing to the community. He said the foundation has \$22 million invested and every year grants about \$1 million to make positive changes in the area.

"Our main focus is education, economic development and quality of life," Puffer said.

The foundation is required to give away 5 percent of its assets each year. The foundation has been making grants for the Hartsville area since 1998. For the current grant cycle, Puffer said applications have requested a total of \$1.6 million.

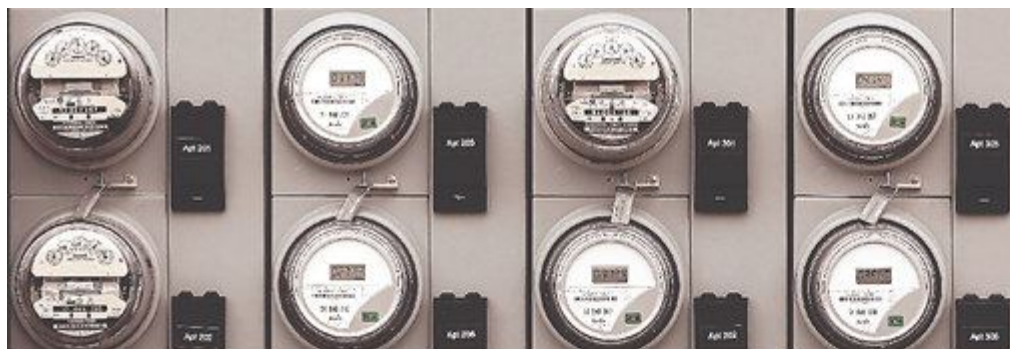
Established in 1995, The Byerly Foundation was created with the sale of The



Dick Puffer (right), executive director of the Byerly Foundation, welcomes Martin S. Driggers Jr. to the June Business After Hours last week. (At left) Mary Catherine Farrell and Natalie Zeigler chat.

sale were put into a private foundation managed by a volunteer board of directors. The foundation's main mission is

The organization considers applications from "responsible organizations that seek to provide significant benefits



Energy efficient?

Study says home upgrades might not be worth it C4

Herald-Journal

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IN A HURRY

5 Things to read today



Legos camp

More than 100 Spartanburg District 7 students are attending a Legos camp this week at Mary H. Wright Elementary School. Camp Legotastic was funded by a \$15,000 grant and is providing students with summer enrichment. **PAGE C1**

Van Patten dies

Dick Van Patten, the genial, round-faced comic actor who premiered on Broadway as a child, starred on television in his infancy and then, in middle age, found lasting fame as the patriarch on TV's "Eight is Enough," has died. He was 86. **PAGE A3**

Step forward

President Barack Obama's long-pursued trade agenda took a giant step toward becoming law on Tuesday, and opponents grudgingly conceded they now must fight on less-favorable terrain. **PAGE A5**

Dog abuse case

A Spartanburg man is accused of animal torture after an officer saw a dog chained in the extreme heat with no water or shelter. **PAGE A8**

Sting operation

The Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office announced Tuesday that a six-month-long sting operation — Operation Dragnet — has netted 36 arrests for various crimes. **PAGE C1**

Confederate flag up for debate

SC lawmakers vote by wide margin to consider removing banner from Statehouse grounds

By SEANNA ADCOX, JEFFREY COLLINS and JONATHAN DREW
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina lawmakers voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to consider removing the Confederate flag from their Statehouse grounds and other politicians took aim at Civil War-era symbols across the South, saying change is imperative after police said nine black churchgoers were slain in a hate crime.



Haley

103-10 in the House and a voice vote in the Senate.

The House vote brought a standing ovation and rounds of applause after Democratic and Republican leaders jointly sponsored the measure in a show of uncharacteristic unity. Very few lawmakers rose to say the flag should stay; some said they were saving speeches for what promises to be an emotional debate later this summer.

Lawmakers then prayed for state Sen. Clementa Pinckney, who joined

INSIDE

◆ Retailers remove Confederate merchandise, sales skyrocketing. **A3**
◆ NASCAR backs Haley's call to remove flag from Statehouse. **B1**

the legislature in 1997 and who, as pastor of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal church in Charleston, was among the dead.

"I ask that in the memory of Mr. Pinckney that we are generous in spirit, gracious in our conversation and please — even if we disagree, let's agree to disagree agreeably," Democratic Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter urged her colleagues. "Those nine families have shown us how to do it. I would strongly suggest we take a cue from them."

Dylann Storm Roof, who faces murder and gun charges in the church attack, had posed in photos displaying Confederate flags and burning or desecrating U.S. flags, and told a friend that he was planning to do something "for the white race."

Haley's call to put the Confederate flag in a museum was quickly seconded by leading Republicans including U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Caro-

◆ SEE FLAG PAGE A4



RAINIER ENHARDT/AP

Christian Mergner of Columbia holds a sign during a rally for taking down the Confederate flag Tuesday at the Statehouse

'I'M NOT GOING TO LET THIS CONSUME ME'





Little Theatre revives revue

Cabaret Night musical
program returns for 2015 c1

County council passes budget

BY ADRIENNE SARVIS
adrienne@theitem.com

Members of Sumter County Council and county administration gave thanks to one another for working hard and working together to create a 2016 budget which received unanimous final approval during council's meeting on Tuesday.

The \$49.3 million budget with a two mill increase will go into effect July 1.

Councilman Eugene Baten said this budget process has been one of the easiest he's experienced while being on council.

County Administrator Gary Mixon then thanked County Finance Director Pamela Craven for her work on the 2016 budget, her last budget cycle before she begins her retirement in October.

Thanks was also given to the Lakewood High School Choir for "putting Sumter of the map" after being named a 2015 Grammy Signature School by the Grammy Foundation, according to Vice Chairwoman Vivian Fleming-McGhaney.

The choir is one of 13 high school music programs selected for the honor this year.

"Thank you all for representing us in such a wonderful way," Fleming-McGhaney said.

The vice chairwoman also said it means a lot to the community when young people give back positively to the community.

Later during the meeting, council approved a resolution authorizing an inducement agreement and memorandum of understanding and an

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE A6

Flag movement builds



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Protesters hold a sign during a rally to take down the Confederate flag at the South Carolina Statehouse on Tuesday in Columbia. For years, South Carolina lawmakers refused to revisit the Confederate flag on Statehouse grounds, saying the law that took it off the dome was a bipartisan compromise, and renewing the debate would unnecessarily expose divisive wounds. The shooting deaths of nine people at a black church in Charleston have reignited calls for the Confederate flag flying on the grounds of the Statehouse in Columbia to come down.

Leaders join chorus to remove flag

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@theitem.com

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Sumter Item
readers weigh in
with their own
opinions on the
flag issue on A7.

Local and state leaders have responded to calls for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the ground of the South Carolina Statehouse in Columbia. Here are some of their words:

In the worst of tragedies, we have seen the best of South Carolina. Today, I am urging that the Confederate battle flag be removed from statehouse grounds to an appropriate location. After the tragic, hate-filled shooting in Charleston, it is only appropriate that we deal once and for all with the issue of the flag. The love and forgiveness displayed by victims of this horrific, racially motivated shooting along with all the people of Charleston, is an example to us all. The victims families and the parishioners of the Mother Emanuel AME Church reflect everything good about the Christian religion and the people of South Carolina. I hope that, by removing the flag, we can take another step towards healing and recognition - and a sign that South Carolina is moving forward.

— U.S. SEN. LINDSEY GRAHAM

SEE LEADERS, PAGE A5

Legislature will debate the issue

COLUMBIA (AP)— South Carolina lawmakers voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to consider removing the Confederate battle flag from their Statehouse grounds as politicians took aim at Civil War-era symbols in other states, saying

SEE DEBATE, PAGE A5

State declares incipient drought

BY JIM HILLEY
jim@theitem.com

Extremely hot temperatures and sparse rainfall have prompted the South Carolina Drought Response Committee to declare incipient drought in Sumter, Clarendon, Lee and 28 other counties in the Pal-



Fire destroys mobile home, 2 airlifted to burn center

BY COLLYN TAYLOR
intern@theitem.com

Two people were airlifted to a burn center after a fire completely engulfed the house they were staying in.

and a puppy out of the house when he opened the front door and flames "flashed over on him," according to his brother Chris Houston. When he was hit by the flames, he

**Celebrating
a tasty nut**
Taste 7A



Celebrity deaths
Obituaries 4A

INDEX-JOURNAL

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TAKING AIM

Lawmakers overwhelmingly vote to debate flag's fate

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina lawmakers voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to consider removing the Confederate flag from their Statehouse grounds and other politicians took aim at Civil War-era symbols across the South, say-

ing change is imperative after police said nine black churchgoers were slain in a hate crime.

Prodded by Gov. Nikki Haley's call the day before to move the flag to a museum, lawmakers approved a measure enabling a flag debate by a vote of 103-10 in the House and a voice vote in the Senate.

The House vote brought a standing ovation and rounds of applause after Democratic and Republican leaders jointly sponsored the measure in a show of uncharacteristic unity. Very few lawmakers rose to say the flag should stay; some said they were saving speeches for what promises to be an emo-

tional debate later this summer. Lawmakers then prayed for state Sen. Clementa Pinckney, who joined the legislature in 1997 and who, as pastor of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal church in Charleston, was among the dead.

See AIM, page 3A

Protesters hold a sign during a rally Tuesday to take down the Confederate flag at the South Carolina Statehouse in Columbia.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

More coverage inside

- South rethinking its Confederate symbols, 3A
- Confederate banner one of many worldwide that causes division, 10A
- NASCAR supports push to remove flag, 1B
- Businesses deal with backlash from flag, 6B

GREENWOOD COUNTY

Budget issue comes with 3-mil hike

Contentious 5-2 vote increases funding to county career center

By COLIN RIDDLE
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Despite impassioned resistance from Chairman Steve Brown, Greenwood County Council approved a millage increase, putting an end to budget season.

During a special-called meeting Tuesday to allow the county's three school districts time to consider a millage increase for the career center, the G. Frank Russell Technology Center, council discussed implementing the increase without the consent of Ninety Six School District 52.

Greenwood School District 50 and Ware Shoals School District 51

See BUDGET, page 5A



STEVEN BROWN

ABBEVILLE COUNTY

Leaders unite on strategic plan

By COLIN RIDDLE
criddle@indexjournal.com

ABBEVILLE — All for a united Abbeville.

The rural county nestled on the state's border offered a unique set of contributions to the Lakelands over the years, along with some hardships in losing industry and seeing younger generations move out.

Those focuses are all part of the See PLAN, page 5A



STEPHEN TAYLOR

Fire claims 2

From staff reports

ABBEVILLE — Two men died in a trailer fire in Abbeville County tonight, Coroner Ronnie Ashley said.

Samuel A. Freeman and John Moore, of 117 Island Ford Bridge Road, died after their trailer caught fire just before 11:30 p.m. Monday, Ashley said.



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Morning News

WEDNESDAY JUNE 24, 2015

TODAY'S
WEATHER

Mostly cloudy, a
thunderstorm, warm.
High 101, low 74.
DETAILS 2A

www.scnw.com

The Voice of the Pee Dee

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Flag removal to be considered

Wukela weighs in on race issues in light of Charleston

BY GAVIN JACKSON
Morning News
gjackson@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — The city of Florence recognizes its past and current race-related issues as it moves forward in changing downtown and neighborhoods, Mayor Stephen J. Wukela said Tuesday on a local radio show.

"When I came to office back in 2008, I talked a lot about what is a racial division that exists in our city," Wukela told the show's

host, Ken Ard. "If you stand on the City-County Complex and you look north, you see a different community than you if you stand on the City-County Complex and look south."

"There had been a lack of investment in the north side of town, a lack of infrastructure and private investment and the perception that the black community wasn't getting a fair shake."

Wukela echoed a lot of

See RACE, Page 4A



Kirt Moody, of Columbia, holds a sign Tuesday during a rally to take down the Confederate flag at the South Carolina Statehouse in Columbia. The shooting deaths of nine people at a black church in Charleston have reignited calls for the Confederate flag flying on the grounds of the Statehouse to come down.

SC lawmakers voted overwhelmingly Tuesday

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina lawmakers voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to consider removing the Confederate flag from their Statehouse grounds and other politicians took aim at Civil War-era symbols across the South, saying change is imperative after police said nine black churchgoers were slain in a hate crime.

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to move the flag to a museum, lawmakers approved a measure enabling a flag debate by a vote of 103-10 in the House and a voice vote in the Senate.

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See FLAG, Page 4A

WORLD TRAVELERS



Mark Desser, left, walks Tuesday with his son and athlete Joseph Desser as the city of Florence's International Children's Games delegation departs the Barnes Street Activity Center on its way to The Netherlands.

The city of Florence's delegation departed Tuesday for The Netherlands, where a group of athletes will compete next week in the International Children's Games. The competition will be held today through Monday. Several athletes and families were already in The Netherlands when the group of five athletes, three coaches, the



SOUTHERN 500

Grand Funk Railroad will perform prerace concert

From staff reports

DARLINGTON — Darlington Raceway's annual pre-Bojangles' Southern 500 concert will feature 1970s rock band Grand Funk Railroad as its main entertainment.

The band, known for its No. 1 hits "We're An American Band" and "The Loco-Motion," will hit the stage on Sunday, Sept. 6 to kick off the Bojangles' Southern 500 festivities before the race starts at 7 p.m.

"What better way to celebrate the 1970s and our return to Labor Day weekend than by having rock legends Grand Funk Railroad perform our Bojangles' Southern 500 Pre-Race Concert Presented by Coca-Cola," Darlington Raceway President Chip Wile said Tuesday in a news release. "Grand Funk Railroad's hit songs were some of the most memorable from the early '70s. They are an iconic name in rock music and a tremendous fit for our celebration."

The band's 1973 album, "We're An American Band," topped out at No. 2 on the U.S. Billboard music charts. Grand Funk Railroad drummer, Don Brewer is looking forward to the event.

"NASCAR and GRAND FUNK on Labor Day Weekend!" Brewer said in the news release. "God Bless America!"

Fans will have the opportunity to see the band in concert by pur-



Burton firefighters save choking infant 3A

THE ISLAND PACKET

WEDNESDAY, June 24, 2015



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IRONMAN 70.3 TRIATHLON

Sheriff's concerns won't stop race plans

By ZACH MURDOCK
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843-706-8147

Local leaders say they will move forward with plans to host an Ironman 70.3 triathlon on Hilton Head Island and in greater Bluffton despite Sheriff P.J. Tanner's concerns about public safety and emergency access during the event.

The current proposal would bring an Ironman 70.3 triathlon — half a full Ironman event — to Hilton Head each fall for five years, beginning in late October 2016. The race would be on a Sunday from about 7:30 a.m. to early afternoon.

On Tuesday morning, Tanner voiced his concerns once more to elected leaders from the county, Bluffton and Hilton Head and officials from the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce.

"If I had the ability to veto this, I would do so," Tanner said. "Because I know what the impact is going to be on this route, or quite frankly, any route for this type of competition dealing with (U.S.) 278."

"It's almost as if Ironman can't have it their way, then they don't want it all," he continued.

Tanner has repeatedly challenged leaders to consider "the worst-case scenario" about public safety and inconvenience during the race, but his concerns have not changed other leaders' minds.

Elected officials are still unanimously in favor of the event, and they defended its estimated infusion into the local economy again Tuesday.

"It's too important for our community not to embrace something like this," said Hilton Head Island Town Councilman Lee Edwards, who is also a triathlete. "Not only is it a big economic driver, but these are the type of people you want visiting. It's a big PR bonanza for our area. I just think it's a really fantastic event."

Please see RACE on 7A

IN THEIR WORDS

• **Sheriff P.J. Tanner:** "If I had the ability to veto this, I would do so. Because I know what the impact is going to be on this route, or quite frankly, any route for this

'HATE ... WILL NOT DIVIDE US'

SC lawmakers overwhelmingly vote to debate Confederate flag



RAINIER EHRHARDT • The Associated Press

Protesters hold signs as they chant during a rally to take down the Confederate flag at the South Carolina Statehouse on Tuesday.

By SEANNA ADCOX, JEFFREY COLLINS and JONATHAN DREW
The Associated Press

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Lawmakers then prayed in memory of state Sen. Clementa Pinckney, who joined the legislature in

Please see FLAG on 7A

IN BEAUFORT COUNTY

Lawmakers weigh in on controversy

By REBECCA LURYE
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843-706-8155

While six local legislators have come out in support of removing the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds, two others have remained quiet on the issue. State Reps. Jeff Bradley and

Shannon Erickson have not commented on calls to remove the flag — a debate sparked by the deadly Charleston church shooting last week — despite repeated calls and emails by The Island Packet and The Beaufort Gazette.

Nine people, including state Sen. Clementa Pinckney of Jasper

County, were slain in the massacre at Emanuel AME Church late June 17.

State Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, and Rep. Kenneth Hodges, D-Green Pond, called for the removal of the flag Monday

Please see WEIGH IN on 7A

TODAY



• The body of state Sen. Clementa Pinckney will lie in repose in the Rotunda of the Statehouse from 1 to 5 p.m. No photographs or videotaping will be allowed.

MORE INSIDE

• David Lauderdale visits Pinckney's hometown church, 3A

• See where Legislators stand on the flag issue, 6A

• Editorial: Now is the time to move flag, 6A

• National retailers pull Confederate flags from shelves and websites but manufacturers say sales are now surging, 8A

• NASCAR says it will continue to disallow use of the Confederate flag in any official capacity, 1B

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