

Title: **Wilson: Change culture of abuse**
 Author: BY DOUG PARDUE dpardue@postandcourier.com
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Wilson: Change culture of abuse

Domestic violence deaths in spotlight

BY DOUG PARDUE
 dpardue@postandcourier.com

It's time for South Carolina to focus on changing its culture that tolerates domestic abuse and has led, once again, to the state's rank as the most deadly in the nation for women, Attorney General Alan Wilson says.

Wilson's comment came ahead of Tuesday's annual Silent Wit-

ness ceremony at 11 a.m. on the south steps of the Statehouse in Columbia, where the attorney general will read the names of the dozens of people killed in domestic violence across the state during the previous year.

Wilson wouldn't reveal the number

of those killed until the ceremony, but if it reflects numbers from past years, it will be in excess of 40.

Please see **ABUSE**, Page A6



Online

Read The Post and Courier's

special investigative report at **postandcourier.com/TillDeath**. For more resources and to share your stories, go to **facebook.com/SCTillDeath**.

Wilson: Change culture of abuse

ABUSE, from A1

The ceremony comes less than a month after South Carolina was ranked for the second time in three years as the deadliest in the nation for women at the hands of men. The rate is more than double the national average. The ranking is based on 2013 statistics, the latest complete numbers for all 50 states.

Tuesday's Silent Witness ceremony will be the first since June when the state enacted sweeping reforms to the state's domestic violence laws, stiffening punishment for abusers and banning convicted abusers

from having firearms.

Wilson championed the new laws and said he's very pleased the reforms enabled law enforcement to more effectively deal with abusers. That's a major accomplishment, "but it doesn't prevent the crime from happening." And that should be the state's new focus: "We've got to be proactive about changing the culture," he said in an interview with The Post and Courier.

Wilson credited the newspaper's Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative series "Till death do us part" with prompting the domestic violence reforms. The series, which ran in August

2014, detailed the state's deadly toll from domestic violence and revealed that, for a decade, one woman died about every 12 days in South Carolina at the hands of a present or former husband or lover while lawmakers did next to nothing to prevent it.

The series also revealed that the state has a culture, derived in part from traditional social and religious beliefs, that tolerates domestic violence.

The new laws have been in effect for just four months, too soon to know what, if any, difference they may make on the death toll. But Wilson said he's

hearing good things about the impact of the new laws from law enforcement officers in the field.

Wilson said he agrees that the reforms mark a dramatic change in direction for the state. "It used to be you could get five

years for beating your dog and 30 days for beating your wife. That's ridiculous. Now, we've changed that. That's a powerful message."

However, he said, changing the law was the easy step; the next step to change the culture will require the combined work of all governmental, social, religious and civic parts of the state.

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Becky Callaham, executive director of Safe Harbor, a Greenville-based shelter for women, said, "changing culture in South Carolina will require more than just educating people on how to recognize what domestic violence looks like. Culture change requires us to examine the underlying reasons why we allow the behaviors and thought processes that occur before domestic abuse actually occurs."

Wilson credited Gov. Nikki Haley's ongoing domestic violence task force with focusing on finding ways to do that. And Wilson, a member of that task force, said one key is education. The Legislature already has called for conducting anti-domestic violence education in public schools, and Wilson said he believes it needs to start in the earliest grades.

Studies have shown that domestic violence is partly a

learned behavior for some children who grow up amid domestic abuse, Wilson said. Little boys who witness that "think that is the appropriate way to treat a woman. Little girls, they think that's a normal relationship — boy beats up girl."

"We've got to break that cycle."

"It used to be you could get five years for

beating your dog and 30 days for beating your wife. That's ridiculous. Now, we've changed that. That's a powerful message."

Attorney Gen. Alan Wilson



FILE/GRACE BEAHM/STAFF

During last year's Silent Witness Ceremony, Kim Lucia of Charleston carried a silhouette representing her daughter Tasha Lucia, who was killed in domestic violence.

Title: **Hundreds rescued in flooded Midlands, state**
 Author: SEANNA ADCOX and JEFFREY COLLINS The Associated Press
 Size: 71.3 square inch
 Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289



Hundreds rescued in flooded Midlands, state

SEANNA ADCOX
 and JEFFREY COLLINS
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Hundreds were rescued from fast-moving floodwaters Sunday in South Carolina as days of driving rain hit a dangerous crescent that buckled buildings and roads, closed a major East Coast interstate route and threatened the drinking-water supply for the capital city.

The powerful rainstorm dumped more than a foot of rain overnight on Columbia, swamping hundreds of businesses and homes. Emergency

workers waded into waist-deep water to help people trapped in cars, dozens of boats fanned out to rescue people in flooded neighborhoods and some were plucked from rooftops by helicopters.

Officials said it could take weeks or even months to assess every road and bridge that's been closed around the state. Several interstates around Columbia were closed, and so was a 75-mile stretch of Interstate 95 — a key route connecting Miami to Washington, D.C. and New York.

workers waded into waist-deep water to help people trapped in cars, dozens

Please see **STATE**, Page A5

Hundreds rescued in flooded Midlands

STATE from Page A1

"This is different than a hurricane because it is water, it is slow moving and it is sitting. We can't just move the water out," Gov. Nikki Haley said at a news conference.

One death was reported in the area on Sunday, bringing weather-related deaths to seven since the storm began days earlier.

People were told to stay off roads and remain indoors until floodwaters recede, and a curfew was issued for Columbia and across two surrounding counties. The capital city told all 375,000 of its water customers to boil water before drinking because of waterline breaks and the threat of rising water to a treatment plant. Emergency officials said later Sunday that many in Columbia were without potable water and customers may have to go without drinking water for three or four days. Nearly 30,000 customers were without power at one point.

State forecasters said another

2-6 inches could fall around the state, and it could be Tuesday before skies are sunny. The rainstorm around the Southeast has drawn tropical moisture from offshore that's linked up with an area of low pressure and a slow-moving front.

Local officials counted several hundred water rescues by mid-morning before Columbia Fire

Chief Aubry Jenkins said in an interview that there were too many rescues to keep count.

"We're just trying to get to everyone," Jenkins said.

One of the hardest hit-areas in Columbia was near Gills Creek, where a weather station recorded that more than 18 inches of rain fell — more than a third of the city's average yearly rainfall — and nearly all of it in 24 hours. The creek was 10 feet above flood stage, spilling floodwaters that almost reached the stoplights at a four-lane intersection.

Vladimir Gorrin said he led his 57-year-old aunt through floodwaters about 7 feet deep

surrounding her apartment

near Gills Creek. He said his aunt, Wanda Laboy, waited several hours after calling 911, so family came to help.

"She's very distressed right now," said Gorrin, 38. "She lost everything."

His aunt, who didn't appear to be injured, was heading with her nephew to his house in an unflooded area of Columbia, he said.

"I'm trying to find my way back home, and every road that we've taken is blocked or flooded," he said in a phone interview.

Emergency shelters were being opened around the state for displaced residents, and President Barack Obama declared a state of emergency in South Carolina.

At least seven weather-related deaths have been reported since rains began spreading over the Eastern Seaboard, which appeared to dodge the brunt of Hurricane Joaquin as it veered out to sea.

The latest death reported was

a woman killed when her SUV was swept into floodwaters in Columbia. Richland County Coroner Gary Watts said the woman's body was found Sunday afternoon.

Three people died in separate weather-related traffic accidents in South Carolina on Friday and Saturday, the Highway Patrol said. In North Carolina, a driver died on a slick road on Saturday, according to that state's Highway Patrol. On Thursday, a woman drowned in her car in Spartanburg, while a passenger in a vehicle in North Carolina was killed when a tree fell on a highway.

In Florence, about 80 miles east of Columbia, Mary Gainey was told Sunday about an evacuation order for her neighborhood along a rising creek.

"I've been rushing around, making sure I have everything I need," said the 65-year-old Gainey.

She's going to stay at her daughter's house until the water recedes.

"This is the first time we've

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had to be evacuated," she said.
"It's strange leaving everything
behind."



CHUCK BURTON/AP

Floodwaters engulf a home in Columbia on Sunday. The rainstorm drenching the East Coast brought more misery Sunday to the state.



CHUCK BURTON/AP

Flooded cars are parked at an apartment complex Sunday in Columbia.

Title: **MISERY IN S.C.**
 Author: By SEANNA ADCOX and JEFFREY COLLINS The Associated Press
 Size: 158.56 square inch
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MISERY IN S.C.

Obama declares a state of emergency
 Hundreds rescued; roads closed
 Thousands without power
 Columbia hardest hit

By SEANNA ADCOX
 and JEFFREY COLLINS
 The Associated Press

Hundreds were rescued from fast-moving floodwaters Sunday in South Carolina as days of driving rain hit a dangerous crescendo that buckled buildings and roads, closed a major East Coast interstate route and threatened the drinking water supply for the capital city.

The powerful rainstorm dumped more than a foot of rain overnight on Columbia, swamping hundreds of businesses and homes.

Emergency workers waded into waist-deep water to help people trapped in cars, dozens of boats fanned out to rescue people in flooded neighborhoods and some

were plucked from rooftops by helicopters.

Officials said it could take weeks or even months to assess every road and bridge that's been closed around the state.

Several interstates around Columbia were closed, and so was a 75-mile stretch of Interstate 95 that is a key route connecting Miami to Washington, D.C., and New York.

"This is different than a hurricane because it is water, it is slow moving and it is sitting. We can't just move the water out," Gov. Nikki Haley said at a news conference.

Please see MISERY on 7A

MORE INSIDE

• Rescue stories emerge. **7A**

MORE ONLINE

• Stay updated with the weather on our website at bit.ly/bc-weather.

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MISERY

Continued from 1A

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Local officials counted several hundred water rescues by mid-morning before Columbia Fire Chief Aubrey Jenkins said in an interview that there were too many rescues to keep count.

"We're just trying to get to everyone," Jenkins said. "But there are places we just haven't gotten to."

One of the hardest hit areas

in Columbia was near Gills Creek, where a weather station recorded more than 18 inches of rain — or more than a third of the city's average yearly rainfall — nearly all of it in 24 hours. The creek was 10 feet above flood stage, spilling floodwaters that almost reached the stoplights at a four-lane intersection.

Vladimir Gorrin said he led his 57-year-old aunt through floodwaters about 7 feet deep surrounding her apartment near Gills Creek. He said his aunt, Wanda Laboy, waited several hours after calling 911, so family came to help.

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His aunt, who didn't appear to be injured, was heading with her nephew to his house in an unflooded area of Columbia, he said.

"I'm trying to find my way back home, and every road that we've taken is blocked or flooded," he said in a phone interview.

Emergency shelters were being opened around the state for displaced residents, and President Barack Obama declared a state of emergency in South Carolina.

Along the coast, rainfall

had exceeded 2 feet since Friday in some areas around Charleston, though conditions had improved enough that residents and business owners were allowed downtown on a limited basis.

Charleston Mayor Joe Riley said he's never seen flooding as bad in his 40 years as mayor.

"This was a record storm," he said. "You know the amount of rainfall that we have experienced is unprecedented. I feel very fortunate that we were able to get through this as well as we have."

At least seven weather-related deaths have been reported since rains began spreading over the Eastern Seaboard, which appeared to dodge the full brunt of Hurricane Joaquin as it veers out to sea.

The latest death reported was a woman killed when her SUV was swept into flood waters in Columbia. Richland County Coroner Gary Watts said the woman's body was found Sunday afternoon, about 12 hours after she disappeared in flood waters near downtown.

Three people died in separate weather-related traffic accidents in South Carolina

on Friday and Saturday, the Highway Patrol said.

In North Carolina, a driver died on a rain-slickened road on Saturday, according to that state's Highway Patrol.

On Thursday, a woman drowned in her car in Spartanburg, while a passenger in a vehicle in North Carolina was killed when a tree fell on a highway.

LINDSEY GRAHAM CANCELS BEAUFORT COUNTY EVENTS

Republican presidential hopeful and U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham canceled three Beaufort County campaign events today in the wake of devastating storms and flooding across South Carolina this weekend.

Graham had been scheduled to speak at Blackstone's Cafe in Beaufort, Aunt Chiladas on Hilton Head Island and Magnolia Hall in Sun City Hilton Head today.

The campaign plans to reschedule the events, according to the Beaufort County Republican Party. New dates have not yet been announced.

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CHUCK BURTON • The Associated Press

Flood waters engulf a home in Columbia on Sunday. The Columbia Fire Department had 140 firefighters are working around the county. Fire chief Aubrey Jenkins said he's lost count of how many rescues have been performed.



CHUCK BURTON • The Associated Press

Floodwaters rush over a dam on Forest Lake in Columbia on Sunday.

Title: **Scott plays role in GOP presidential race through candidate forums**
 Author: MEG KINNARD ASSOCIATED PRESS
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Scott plays role in GOP presidential race through candidate forums

MEG KINNARD

ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA — More than 2,000 voters, from college students to those of retirement age, packed a Columbia theater recently to see for themselves what it's like to experience businessman Donald Trump up close and personal.

The GOP presidential hopeful got an enthusiastic response when he walked on stage, energizing the crowd and cracking jokes about his opponents, the Obama administration and Washington elite.

But the concert hall also erupted when U.S. Sen. Tim Scott addressed the crowd, amping up the voters and sounding more like a fiery preacher than the soft-spoken politician many have come to know.

"I see a whole lot of Trump out there!" Scott yelled to the audience, bending down and turning his ear toward the roaring crowd. "We're going to have a good night tonight!"

The event, one of more than a dozen town hall meetings Scott has orchestrated with GOP candidates vying for the party's presidential nomination, officially serves to help both Scott and South Carolina's voters decide

whom to support. But with South Carolina's other U.S. senator already seeking the nation's highest office, the meetings also serve as a way to elevate Scott's own profile.

The Senate's only black Republican, Scott has commanded attention in his own deliberate, subtle way. He's served in the U.S. Senate since 2013, when, just after his election to a second U.S. House term, he was appointed by Gov. Nikki Haley following the resignation of Jim DeMint.

In a state accustomed to senators like Strom Thurmond and Fritz Hollings serving decades in office, Scott has since been working both to introduce himself to voters and bone up on issues in which he's had little experience, like foreign policy and trade.

He's also been continually running for his own re-election. In 2014, Scott was elected to the remaining two years of DeMint's term, becoming the first black to win a statewide race in South Carolina since the Reconstruction era. Next year, he's on the ballot again, seeking a full, six-year term in a state where around 70

percent of registered voters are white.

Scott announced the candidate forums earlier this year, inviting all the GOP hopefuls for their own hour-long sessions. Even Trump, the GOP front-runner who initially turned down Scott's offer to sit down, ultimately accepted, packing a downtown Columbia theater that seats more than 2,000.

The businessman deferred many times to Scott throughout the session, specifically excluding the senator from his frequent critiques of Washington politicians.

"Other than Tim, we're run by very stupid people," Trump said, the audience erupting in cheers and laughter.

South Carolina GOP Chairman Matt Moore, who previously served as Scott's state director before his election as party leader, said Scott truly wants to help voters learn more about the people vying to be their next president.

"It's not about him," Moore said. "It's a side benefit that his profile is a bit raised, but I don't think he sees it that way at all. He just wants a good, solid Republican to be elected president."

Scott has a high approval rating among South Carolina voters — 83 percent, according to an April recent Winthrop University poll. With his national profile also on the rise since 2012, when the newly minted congressman had a prime-time speaking slot at the Republican National Convention, a political expert says candidates only benefit by being associated with him.

"These no doubt that every presidential candidate sees it as a good thing to be on stage with Tim Scott," said Scott Huffman, a political science professor and Winthrop pollster. "But Tim Scott also has to see that this is a good thing for him to highlight his prominence within the party and on the national stage."

Voter Pat Pope said she planned to attend several of the forums, both to see GOP candidates in action and also to learn more about Scott himself in the process.

"I don't know that much about his platform and what he stands for," said Pope, a white, 83-year-old retiree. "But I do know that he's highly respected. ... The average person can relate to him."

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MICHAEL HOLAHAN/AP

Republican presidential candidate Carly Fiorina flanked by U.S.Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C, left, and Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., speaks at town hall meeting at the University of South Carolina at Aiken Convocation Center on Friday.

Title: **DEVASTATING DELUGE**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 245.21 square inch
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DEVASTATING DELUGE

Columbia flooding spurs rescues and evacuations

TIM SMITH

TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM

COLUMBIA -- Heavy rains wreaked havoc from the coast to Columbia Sunday, breaching dams, collapsing roads, flooding homes and businesses, and spurring countless rescues.

Officials closed portions of interstates surrounding Columbia as well as a 70-mile stretch of I-95 as a result of a storm system that drenched the state with historic rain levels that forecasters said would continue into Monday.

"It's not over," Gov. Nikki Haley said from the state's emergency management offices Sunday afternoon. "We're in the middle of it. We will get through it."

Haley said the rains had produced a 1,000-year flood in the Lowcountry and raised the Congaree River in Columbia to heights not recorded since 1936.

By late Sunday afternoon, the storm system that began dumping water on the state Saturday had left three people dead and one search and rescuer unaccounted for.

"What we continue to go through is unlike anything any of us has ever seen," Columbia Mayor Steve Benaj-

min said. "The rising water was collapsed bridges, overcome dams and destroyed roads. Whole neighborhoods have found themselves underwater and precious lives have been lost across South Carolina to this violent force of nature."

Even with those tragedies, Benjamin said, he has seen "the most remarkable acts of grace and heroism" displayed by first responders and neighbors opening their doors to the displaced.

"Even when fate deals us with its very worst, we

See **DELUGE**, Page 3A

ON THE WEB

Get complete coverage of the storm and its damaging effects in this area and across the state at GreenvilleOnline.com.

Deluge

Continued from Page 1A

have it within ourselves to be our very best," he said.

In Columbia, flood waters closed countless streets, forced the evacuations of homes and apartment complexes and caused dramatic rescues.

On Garner's Ferry Road, a major thoroughfare on the east side of the city, flood waters suddenly turned roads into a torrent at a major intersection, swallowing cars, collapsing a building and flooding area businesses. The waters spread to nearby apartment complexes which were soon evacuated.

With the rushing waters behind him, state Rep. Kirkman Finlay went on live television to express his frustration at the lack of pre-positioned state and federal resources and to plead with Haley

for help.

Finlay told WLTX that he was overcome with emotion at watching the place where he grew up be destroyed.

"These are people's lives," he said motioning behind him. "What's heartbreaking to me is to realize the resources we have that could be deployed that don't seem to be deployed."

Derrec Becker, a spokesman for the South Carolina Emergency Management Division, told The Greenville News that the resources are there but officials are giving priority to saving lives.

"This is still an emergency situation," he said. "Property issues come second to life and safety. Right now we are focused on saving people's lives."

Becker said he believes some people were unprepared for what forecasters had predicted for days.

"I don't think people were truly prepared but we were as ready as we could have been," he said. "This is what forecasters says is a 200-year flood. Areas that are not prone to flooding are seeing high water."

Officials say 255 troopers were deployed, 1,000 state highway workers dispatched to roads and 600 National Guardsmen activated to help in the disaster. Haley said Tennessee was sending swift-water rescue teams and North Carolina was sending four helicopters.

Rescues were everywhere this weekend. Trapped residents were plucked from vehicles and buildings, some by boat, and in two cases by air.

In 12 hours alone, emergency dispatchers received 754 calls for help, 323 of them for wrecks.

The water on stretches of interstates

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caused officials to shut down portions of all the interstates surrounding Columbia as well as a 70-mile stretch of I-95, from Florence to the intersection with I-26 due to flooding on sections of the highway and multiple detours.

The water collapsed roads or opened sinkholes. Photos posted on social media showed vehicles swallowed up by the broken roadways.

State Adjutant General Bob Livingston said even unflooded roads have proved dangerous. He said a high-water vehicle was traveling on one road without any flood waters when it suddenly dissolved.

By Sunday morning, the rains had caused officials to close at least 411 state roads, 43 bridges and countless secondary roads.

Acting DOT Director Christy Hall said two bridges were submerged. She pleaded with the public to stay off the roads.

"The average vehicle can be swept away in as little as 12 inches of moving water and stalled out in as little as two feet of water," she said.

Curfews have been set in several Midlands communities, including Columbia,

Richland County and Lexington. The sheriff of Clarendon County said he wouldn't hesitate to throw those who were out to sight-see in jail because some of the curious end up needing rescue.

"This is an ongoing state of emergency and anyone who doesn't take that seriously not risks their lives but risks the lives of all of our first responders as well," Columbia's mayor said.

Two dams in the Midlands were breached, officials said, including Old Mill Pond in Lexington, and a dam in Arcadia Lakes, near Columbia.

Becker said SCE&G's giant Saluda Dam behind Lake Murray began releasing water Sunday to keep rains from topping the dam. But he said the dam was in no danger.

Sen. John Courson, a Columbia Republican who has lived in a downtown neighborhood for about 40 years, said one area off Forest Drive affected by waters topping a nearby dam flooded for the first time in his memory.

"I have never seen that area flood at all and the waters almost backed up to the Forest Acres town hall," he said.

Becker said rain is expected into Sunday night.

"The main message is if you are safe

and dry, please remain there unless you are told to evacuate by public safety officials," he said.

He said his agency is responding to requests for aid from local emergency officials.

Federal emergency officials have deployed a team to South Carolina, he said. Department of Natural Resources has sent workers to assist local fire crews and police rescuing those in vehicles and buildings. The Highway Patrol, he said, has been fully deployed.

"We have made several requests from our neighboring states for assistance in terms of swift-water rescue teams and other assets," he said.

Courson said the rescue and cleanup costs could put a "huge drain" on the state's economic resources, which are still recovering from the Great Recession.

"Unless we can receive a good bit of federal disaster aid funding and of course, that 's now in the embryonic stage," he said. "I don't think anyone right now has any idea what the cost of this will be."

Area schools are closed Monday as well as the University of South Carolina's Columbia campus.

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SEAN RAYFORD

Charlene Stennis takes son Christian Hoo-Fong from a firefighter after being stranded in a vehicle by floodwaters Sunday in Columbia. The state is experiencing record rainfall amounts. "What we continue to go through is unlike anything any of us has ever seen," Columbia Mayor Steve Benajmin said.

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CHUCK BURTON/AP

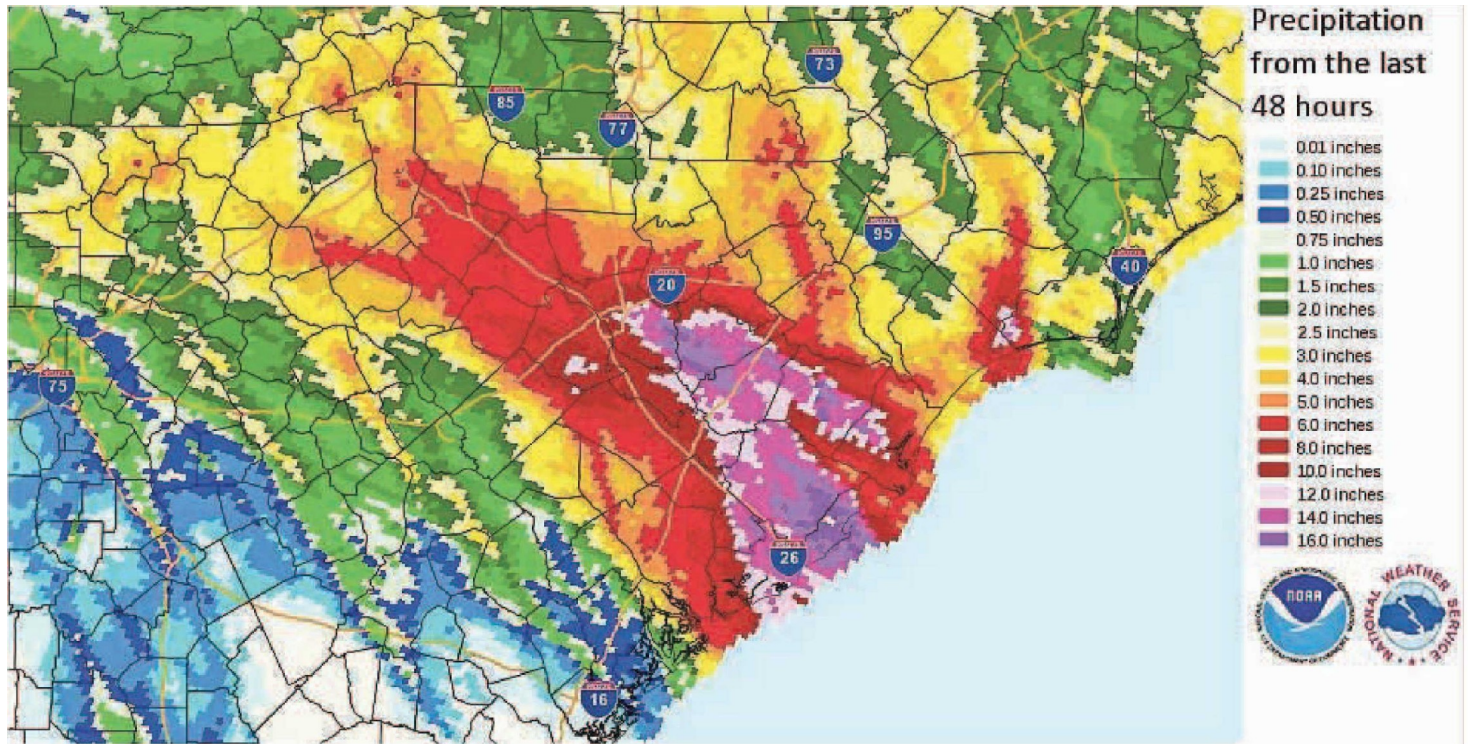
Jordan Bennett of Rock Hill paddles up to a flooded store Sunday in Columbia. The rainstorm drenching the U.S. East Coast brought more misery to South Carolina, cutting power to thousands, forcing hundreds of water rescues and closing many roads because of floodwaters.

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PHOTOS BY MIC SMITH AND CHUCK BURTON /AP

Photos, from left: Barrels stop traffic downtown in Georgetown; Georgetown firefighters Noman Beauregard, left, Kevin Ettenger and Chris Rodgers inspect downtown floodwaters at high tide; a woman looks at a section of a street washed away in Columbia; and Chris Joseph, far left, inspects the flood waters near high tide in downtown Georgetown.

Title: **1,000-YEAR STORM SLAMS S.C.**
 Author: John Bacon USA TODAY
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1,000-YEAR STORM SLAMS S.C.

‘Mind-boggling rain’ forces curfew and evacuations

John Bacon

USA TODAY

South Carolina’s weather disaster intensified Sunday as “historic” rainfall up to 2 feet in some areas combined with high winds to strand motorists and residents and force hundreds of evacuations and rescues.

The rain was forecast to continue deep into Monday in some parts of the state. Gov. Nikki Haley said South Carolina’s first responders were battling flooding from rains that can be expected once in 1,000 years.

“Our goal is all hands on deck,”

Haley said of the emergency response. “We will get through this, but we need everyone to stay strong.” Overnight curfews were in effect beginning at 6 p.m. Sunday across wide areas of South Carolina, including Columbia, Sumter and several counties.

The National Weather Service’s Charleston office reported “mind-boggling rain amounts.” They included 24-plus inches in Mount Pleasant, a suburb of

Charleston, since the storm began Thursday. Columbia recorded more than 10 inches.

Haley said three deaths have been tied to the storm that has hovered over the state. She said first responders received more than 750 rescue calls in a 12-hour period that started before dawn Sunday. Hundreds of road closures were reported, including a section of Interstate 95.

Haley said 600 National Guard personnel have been called out, with hundreds more on alert. President Obama approved federal disaster aid for South Carolina.

AccuWeather senior meteorologist Dan Pydynowski called it the worst overall weather event in the state since Hurricane Hugo, which made landfall near Charleston as a Category 4 storm in 1989, killing 27 people. “Charleston got 11.5 inches of rain on Saturday, which is a one-day record,” Pydynowski said. “Today, Columbia is setting records.”

In Mount Pleasant, Sarah Shinnners said her home was above the waterline, but the only road out of her neighborhood was impassable. “Everything around us is completely flooded,” Shinnners told USA TODAY. “We are just hunkering down.”

Much of the East Coast has been saturated by rains since Thursday. Power was out at about 50,000 residences and businesses in South Carolina and Georgia as of Sunday afternoon.

“Major to localized catastrophic flash flooding along with possible landslides and mudslides in the higher elevations of South Carolina and Georgia remain an ongoing concern,” the National Weather Service warned.

The weather service blamed a low pressure system that has stalled over the state since Thursday, combined with the outer edges of Hurricane Joaquin. The Category 2 hurricane, with sustained top winds of 105 mph, avoided a direct hit to the U.S.

Flash floods kill 16 in French Riviera
IN NEWS

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SEAN RAYFORD, GETTY IMAGES

Charlene Stennis is escorted to safety Sunday after her son was rescued from a vehicle in a flooded roadway in Columbia, S.C.

Title: **Battle of the branches in S.C. government**
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com
 Size: 73.47 square inch
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



Battle of the branches in S.C. government

Constitutional crisis looms between General Assembly, Supreme Court

Politics could play out in legislative election to fill associate justice's post on state's highest court

Drama is a distraction, says attorney for poor, rural schools that sued the state

BY CASSIE COPE
ccope@thestate.com

COLUMBIA

A conflict between the S.C. Supreme Court and leaders of the General Assembly is shaping up into a battle of the branches.

The judicial branch has mandated — in the form of a Supreme Court order — that Gov. **Nikki Haley**, House Speaker **Jay Lucas** and Senate President Pro Tempore **Hugh Leatherman**, all Republicans, develop a plan, including legislation, to improve S.C. schools by Feb. 1.

The deadline gives the court veto power over what the General Assembly does, Leatherman said last week. “You can’t have that,” he added.

Leatherman and Lucas plan to ignore the Supreme Court’s deadline order in the two-decade-old, school-equity lawsuit, which could set up a constitutional crisis.

“Can one branch of government hold another branch of government in contempt when you’re equal branches of government?”

Leatherman asked, rhetorically.

South Carolinians could be about to find out.

What happens next is unclear. But some of the drama could play out in the February race to fill a looming vacancy on the Supreme Court.

Chief Justice **Jean Toal** will step down from the state’s highest court in December because she turned 72 this year, the mandatory retirement age.

Associate Justice **Costa Pliecones** will succeed Toal as chief justice, having been elected unanimously by the General Assembly in May.

But Toal’s retirement will leave a vacancy on the court — the fifth justice’s post. That vacancy will be filled by the General Assembly, the branch of government currently at odds with the Supreme Court.

Five candidates for associate justice now are being screened by the S.C. Judicial Merit Selection Commission. They are:

- **Ralph King Anderson III** of Columbia
- **David Craig Brown** of Florence

● **John Cannon Few** of Greenville

● **Aphrodite Konduros** of Greenville

● **Harris Bruce Williams** of Columbia

Anderson is chief judge of the state’s Administrative Law Court. Brown is a Circuit Court judge. Few, Konduros and Williams are members of the state’s Court of Appeals, where Few is chief justice.

The five candidates will be narrowed down to three before legislators elect a new associate justice at noon on Feb. 3.

That is two days after the Buzz is a look back at the week in politics compiled by reporters at The State.

Feb. 1 deadline for the House, Senate and governor to present their plan to fix the state’s poor, rural schools to a three-member panel that the Supreme Court ordered created.

Legislative election of South Carolina’s judges is controversial.

Critics say the current system allows legislators to control the judiciary. Some of those critics favor the voters electing judges; others favor allowing the governor to nominate judges and the Senate to confirm nominees.

However, the General Assembly’s Feb. 3 vote sets the stage for legislators to elect the associate justice who could decide the Legislature-Supreme Court rift. (Toal, who is retiring, was part of the 3-2 majority that decided the school-equity lawsuit and, by the same 3-2 vote, gave the Legislature and governor a deadline last month to resolve the issue.)

Candidates for the associate justice’s position will be “asked very pointedly what their view is on the separation of powers,” said state Sen. **Larry Martin**, R-Pickens, chairman of the Judicial Merit Section Commission.

But, Martin added, it would be inappropriate for legislators to ask the candidates about the school-equity case, specifically,

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since it is an issue before the court.

Still, candidates can expect to be asked if they view the state Constitution as literal or elastic, allowing a broader interpretation of South Carolina's obligation to public school students, Martin said.

(Critics, including some justices, say the court's school-equity ruling exceeded the state Constitution's educational guarantee.)

Carl Epps, attorney for the school districts that sued

the state in 1993 for more money, says the battle of the branches is a distraction.

Epps said he has had discussions with representatives of the House and Senate about resolving the dispute between legislators and the court, and agreeing on a process to fix the state's funding of schools.

But, he added, the General Assembly is refusing to allow the Supreme Court to interpret the state Constitution and enforce it.

"If possible, we'd like to get rid of the constitutional crisis, eliminate that, and move on," Epps said.

2016 IN SC

Where the presidential candidates will be:

● **Ben Carson**, the retired neurosurgeon from Maryland who is one of the front-runners for the GOP nomination for president, is scheduled to be at the Barnes & Noble at Richland Mall from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday. Carson will

be signing copies of his book, "A More Perfect Union: What We the People Can Do to Reclaim Our Constitutional Liberties."

● **Lindsey Graham**, the U.S. senator from Seneca, will speak Monday at Hilton Head's 1st Monday Club lunch at Aunt Chiladas Mexican Restaurant, 69 Pope Ave. He will also attend a town-hall meeting hosted by the Sun City Republican Club at 2:30 p.m. at Magnolia Hall, 114 Sun City Lane, in Bluffton.



GERRY MELENDEZ gmelendez@thestate.com

S.C. Supreme Court chief justice Jean Toal during her State of the Judiciary speech in February.

Title: **Battlebrews over Supreme Court's order**
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THE BUZZ

Battle brews over Supreme Court's order

BY CASSIE COPE

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Cassie Cope: 803-771-8657



Toal



Carson

Title: **Countdown to crisis? Lawmakers' defiant letter to Toal puts state just one step away**

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CINDI ROSS SCOPPE
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Countdown to crisis? Lawmakers' defiant letter to Toal puts state just one step away

WHEN AN individual refuses to comply with a court order, it's called contempt of court, and the court can jail the contemptuous party. When a legislature does it, it's called a constitutional crisis, because there is no clear way to resolve the standoff.

Haul the legislators to jail? Besides being unseemly and insanely provocative — particularly in a state such as South Carolina, where the Legislature elects the judges for fixed terms, writes the judges' budget and even has veto power over their operating rules — there's the question of whose police force the court would appropriate.

The term "constitutional crisis" is usually invoked inappropriately, in an embarrassment of hyperbole that has become *de rigueur* in the era of hyperpartisan 24/7 cable TV and social media. An actual crisis — where two branches of government are in dispute over which has authority and the third branch lacks the authority to resolve the impasse — is a rare thing.

But we're headed for one in South Carolina since House

Speaker Jay Lucas and Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leathern sent an extraordinary letter to S.C. Chief Justice Jean Toal on Tuesday, informing her that they would not obey the court's order to submit a plan by Feb. 1 for making sure children throughout South Carolina get a decent education.

Our constitutional crisis could resolve itself before a preliminary court deadline on Oct. 15, and Mr. Lucas has expressed what might not be entirely unrealistic confidence that it will. But the last time South Carolina had an impasse that even approached this magnitude was in the 1970s, and it took years for the Legislature and Supreme Court to come to a negotiated settlement. That standoff was of an entirely different flavor: Instead of ordering the Legislature to act, the court was trying to claim authority the Legislature held.

When I asked one constitutional expert if he could recall any other impasses over the court's efforts to make the Legislature do something, he had to leave the state and travel back

across two centuries for an example: "Andrew Jackson after the decision by the Supreme Court concerning the Cherokee Indians. Said to the Court 'now you have made your decision. Enforce it.'"

It's common for the Legislature to ignore court orders to *stop* doing something; it routinely passes single-county laws, for instance, even though judges have grown hoarse reminding it that such laws are unconstitutional. But there's a clear remedy for those conflicts: Someone files a lawsuit, and the court strikes down the offending law.

There is no such remedy when the court tells the Legislature to *do* something, and it refuses. That's one reason our court doesn't do such things; it suggests, sometimes strongly, but looking back a half century, I haven't seen a case of it actually ordering lawmakers to act. Until now.

A 60-something constitutional authority told me that "in my lifetime, I don't remember a legal confrontation like this" and worried that "both sides are really, really treading on thin ice

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in terms of painting themselves into a corner.”

The conflict is fraught with political and constitutional problems. Politically, far too many legislators don't recognize that they *need* to provide a decent education to all children, much less that the constitution requires it. Constitutionally, Mr. Lucas and Mr. Leatherman make an extremely compelling case that the Supreme Court overstepped its authority when it ordered the creation of an expert panel to help it judge the state's plan.

The superintendent of education is to serve on the panel, along with one person named by the plaintiffs and one named by the state; the court set the Oct. 15 deadline for those appointments, so that's when we will officially be in crisis if Mr. Lucas and Mr. Leatherman stick to their refusal to participate.

James Underwood, a retired USC law professor who wrote a highly respected series of books on the S.C. Constitution, told me that beyond their general objection that the court is violating

the separation of powers doctrine, legislators could point to Article 3 of the constitution, which allows the House and Senate to establish their own procedures. By creating the expert panel, he said, the court seems to “impose a superstructure on top of the procedure provided by the branches themselves, and forces the Legislature to channel its work through this superstructure.”

So let's assume the court did in fact overreach: What's a Legislature to do in such a case? “I don't know; I don't know,” one of the state's leading legal minds said, noting that the court's order was “unorthodox” and the legislative leaders' response “really is incredible.”

Actually, while there's no clear follow-up if it doesn't work, there is an obvious first response: File a motion for reconsideration. It's what Sen. Leatherman and Rep. Lucas should have done instead of writing that letter; it's what they, along with Gov. Nikki Haley, need to do now. That keeps the dispute in the proper venue, and it gives the court a vehicle to moderate

its position. That in turn gives legislative leaders the opportunity to do likewise.

Both elements are essential to averting a constitutional crisis, because, as Dr. Underwood warned, “The Legislature and the court have put their prestige on the line, and in a sense kind of thrown down the gauntlet.”

Ms. Scoppe can be reached at cscoppe@thestate.com or at (803) 771-8571.

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THE LAST TIME WE HAD AN IMPASSE THAT EVEN APPROACHED THIS MAGNITUDE WAS IN 1970S, AND IT TOOK YEARS TO RESOLVE.



Title: **Crazyabouttheir team**
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ESPN COLLEGE GAMEDAY

Crazy about their team

BY MATT CONNOLLY
 mconnolly@thestate.com

CLEMSON

Heavy rain, wind and a state of emergency declaration by Gov. Nikki Haley did not keep Clemson fans from coming out in full force for Saturday's showdown with No. 6 Notre Dame.

Students lined up hours before kickoff to get into the stadium, and a packed house was on hand for the top-15 matchup. Weather did not cause major delays or issues prior to Saturday's game.

Tigers athletics director Dan Radakovich said he wasn't concerned about weather keeping fans away.

"The magnitude of the game, how much it means, and the fact that Notre Dame hasn't been here since 1977, all entered into it," he said. "I think our fans thought, 'Hey, we'll go buy a poncho, maybe a little more rain gear, and we'll

go have some fun tonight.' "

The fun started Saturday morning for many Clemson students and fans as ESPN's College GameDay broadcasted live from campus beginning at 9 a.m. Thousands of Tigers supporters braved the tough conditions to attend the show.

"I thought we might have five people out here. We've got thousands of people out here," ESPN's Kirk Herbstreit said during the show. "It speaks volumes about the Clemson Tigers fan base and how crazy they are about their team. We love coming here. They're the best. We love bringing the show here."

Radakovich said the spotlight gives Clemson a great opportunity to showcase the university.

"This morning, our students on GameDay, and then some of our fans who

were there as well, they just did a phenomenal job of coming out in the inclement weather and being so enthusiastic, and just really enjoyed themselves," he said.

Radakovich added that much of Friday was spent meeting with local officials about whether or not to change the game time, but ultimately it was decided there was not a window for the game to be played earlier in the day that would have made much of a difference.

"There's a lot of logistics in moving times like this," he said. "In the end, we just said, 'You know what, let's just keep it where it is, let's talk to people and ask them to make smart choices.' Getting here early would be a positive, and you have to have patience leaving here on a night game anyway. But maybe have a little extra patience for tonight."

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Courtesy of The Greenville News

Above: Clemson fans braved the elements to watch ESPN College GameDay on Bowman Field prior to their matchup against Notre Dame on Saturday.

Left: ESPN GameDay hosts, Kirk Herbstreit and Lee Corso dance a jig with the Notre Dame mascot. Clemson fans booed when Corso donned The Irish garb, picking Notre Dame to win the game.

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Clemson coach Dabo Swinney talks with ESPN's Samantha Ponder during College GameDay on Bowman Field prior to Saturday's game against Notre Dame.