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To:
Date: 8/3/2016 3:15:45 PM
Subject: Afternoon Clips – Wednesday, August 3, 2016

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Associated Press: Top SC Dem asks Haley, McMaster to withdraw Trump support

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

Meg Kinnard

South Carolina's top state House Democrat is doubling down on his call for top elected Republicans to withdraw their support of GOP nominee Donald Trump. Rep. Todd Rutherford said Wednesday Gov. Nikki Haley and Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster must also tell the state's voters if they still plan to vote for Trump. Republicans nationwide have faced scrutiny this week due to the feud between Trump and the parents of a decorated Muslim Army captain killed in Iraq. At least one has pulled support, saying he'd rather back Hillary Clinton than the GOP pick. Haley has reluctantly said she'd back the party's nominee. On Monday, she expressed support for the soldier's family and made no mention of Trump. McMaster, one of Trump's earliest high-profile endorsements, hasn't responded to multiple requests seeking comment.

Hindustan Times: Indian Americans on a roll in congressional polls

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/indian-americans-on-a-roll-in-congressional-polls/story-Cg1KCKVBieRDX85Xr2Ai2H.html>

Yashwant Raj

Indian American Pramila Jaypal, a candidate for US congress from Washington state, advanced to the general election on Tuesday, making 2016 an unprecedented year for the community. There are five Indian Americans in the race for congress now, who have cleared their primaries: Jaypal, Ami Bera and Ro Khanna in California and Raja Krishnamoorthi in Illinois. The fifth is Kamala Harris. She is running for US senate from California, and is poised to make history as the first Indian American ever elected to the upper chamber if she wins. This is the highest number of Indian Americans ever to have cleared the primaries for US congress, and is a major landmark for a minority community in search of political clout. The previous best was two, in 2014. "Fantastic, incredible and exponential," Shekar Narasimhan, a Democratic strategist of Indian descent, wrote in an email response when asked for comments. "And, they are all Democrats." That's true. Indian Americans tend to lean Democratic — 80% according to a poll published earlier this year. But Republicans are actively in pursuit, progressing slowly but surely.

NOTE: The only two Indian Americans ever elected governors in the US are both Republicans — Louisiana's Bobby Jindal, who also ran for president; and South Carolina's Nikki Haley. Indian Americans, a 3-million strong community, have come a long way politically from 1957, when Dalip Singh Saund became the first one elected to the House of Representatives. Now there are five, closer than ever to making history.

Jasper Sun Times: Senator, representative for a day enjoy Statehouse trip

<http://www.jaspersuntimes.com/news/2016-08-03/senator-representative-day-enjoy-statehouse-trip>

The winners of the ninth annual Senator for a Day contest did a great job at the Statehouse in

Columbia demonstrating the bright minds and future of Jasper County. Both Sen. DeAndre Smith-Brown and Rep. Collin Soucy were given framed resolutions recognizing their achievements and performances. The chairman of the Jasper County legislative delegation, Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, took the Senate floor to recognize Smith-Brown, leading a standing ovation for his proposed legislation for anti-bullying. On the House side, Reps. Bill Bowers, D-Hampton; Bill Herbkersman, R-Beaufort; and Weston Newton, R-Beaufort, introduced Soucy and his speech on reducing litter with a bottle bill. Smith-Brown and Soucy's proposed bills made it into committee and were included in the session for vote. A separate special day for the Senator for a Day (April 20) and the Representative for a Day (April 27) were observed. Private meetings with high-ranking officials included Secretary of State Mark Hammond, Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster and others.

NOTE: Farm Bureau President Harry Ott brought a delegation to the Statehouse to discuss policy and the \$40 million Farm Aid Program as a result of last October's floods. This bill was passed but vetoed by Gov. Nikki Haley. Smith-Brown and Soucy learned about how the process to override a veto works.

Post and Courier: Commerce Department, trade group to study ways to grow South Carolina's life sciences industry

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160802/160809847/commerce-department-trade-group-to-study-ways-to-grow-south-carolinas-life-sciences-industry>

Thad Moore

The Department of Commerce would like to grow the medical technology business in South Carolina. To figure out how, it's embarking on a study of the sector with a trade group that represents the state's growing industry. The state's lead economic development agency is partnering with the Greenville-based South Carolina Biotechnology Industry Organization, or SCBIO, to record the extent of the life sciences industry here and look at ways to expand it. Its findings could form a template for the state's efforts to grow the life science industry, which accounts for relatively few jobs in South Carolina but tends to pay well above average. "We know that this is an industry sector that we will definitely want to pursue in the future," Commerce spokeswoman Adrienne Fairwell said. "We're hoping that through this partnership this will be another area of economic development that we're able to explore and push forward."

NOTE: Gov. Nikki Haley announced the arrival of Nephron Pharmaceuticals' manufacturing facility in West Columbia in 2011. The state Department of Commerce is studying the state's life sciences industry with SCBIO, a trade group representing the industry.

SC Political News:

The State: Columbia's Devine selected for national Women in Government program

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article93310287.html>

Sarah Ellis

Columbia City Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine has been selected as one of 25 national members of the Women in Government Leadership Program Class of 2017. The program highlights elected women from across the nation to acknowledge their contributions, provide leadership development and mentor the next generation of women leaders to run for office, according to a news release. Devine, a four-term Columbia council member, was selected from among more than 125 women nominated nationwide. "We are woefully behind other nations in terms of gender equality," Cathilea Robinett, president of the Governing Institute, said in a statement. The Governing Institute started the Women in Government Leadership Program in 2015. "Women at the state and local level in both parties need and deserve our support," Robinett said.

SC Agency News:

Island Packet: Why DHEC isn't saying where South Carolina's Zika patients live

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article93445232.html>

Rebecca Lurye

With 26 confirmed cases of the Zika virus in South Carolina, DHEC is maintaining there is no need to identify the counties where infected residents live. A South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control spokesman said Tuesday that all of the cases are associated with travel abroad. Twenty-five people were travelers infected out of the country and diagnosed after their returns home, and one other case involved a South Carolina resident who had sexual contact with someone who acquired Zika while traveling. No pregnant women in the state have contracted Zika, according to DHEC. The situation is far different from that of Florida, where the CDC has issued a travel alert warning pregnant women and their partners from going to a small community just north of Miami because the virus is actively circulating there. In total, there are 15 confirmed cases of people in Florida who became infected with Zika after being bitten by local mosquitoes. The South Carolina DHEC spokesman, Robert Yanity, added Monday that it could violate federal privacy restrictions to reveal where in South Carolina infected residents live. "Out of an abundance of caution," the agency also will not give the age, sex, location, or condition of any patient, he said.

SC after Police Shootings:

Post and Courier: Charleston police officer charged in fight with bicyclist

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160803/160809796/charleston-police-officer-charged-in-fight-with-bicyclist>

Angie Jackson

A Charleston police officer has been charged with assault and battery after a tussle with a bicyclist while he was off duty. Kevin Michael Medert, 30, was arrested July 6 on a charge of third-degree assault and battery in connection with the April 18 incident that was caught on surveillance video. He is free on personal recognizance bond. Brandon Freeman, the bicyclist, was riding against the flow of traffic on St. Philip Street at George Street when a car driven by Medert approached, forcing Freeman to the curb. Medert rolled down his window and a verbal confrontation ensued, according to an affidavit. A special agent with the State Law Enforcement Division, which handled the investigation, wrote in the affidavit that Medert opened his driver's side door onto Freeman. Freeman was not injured and tried to leave, but Medert got out of his car and followed him. Video captured by a nearby surveillance camera showed Medert grab onto Freeman's backpack and pull him from his bike. Medert allegedly told Freeman he was "not leaving."

South Carolina News:

Associated Press: Bail \$100K for lobbyist charged in United flight shakedown

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

David Porter

A former United Airlines lobbyist charged last month with being the middleman in a shakedown involving the ex-chairman of the agency that controls New York City-area airports didn't enter a plea during an initial court appearance Wednesday. A judge set bail at \$100,000 for former New Jersey transportation commissioner Jamie Fox. The U.S. attorney's office charged Fox with conspiracy to commit bribery, which is punishable by a maximum prison sentence of five years. Fox and attorney

Michael Critchley didn't comment on the case after the hearing. Previously, Critchley said his client would never jeopardize his reputation by engaging in illegal behavior. The U.S. attorney's office must now present the case to a grand jury for possible indictment. Prosecutors didn't comment on how long that might take.

NOTE: The government alleges the 61-year-old Fox helped then-Port Authority of New York and New Jersey chairman David Samson get a regular flight to Samson's vacation home in South Carolina when Fox was a paid consultant and lobbyist for United. Samson pleaded guilty last month to a bribery charge.

NOTE: According to the criminal complaint, Fox began lobbying United to resurrect the direct flight from Newark to Columbia, South Carolina, in early 2011, shortly after Samson was named Port Authority chairman.

Associated Press: South Carolina resident contracts potentially fatal amoeba
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=SBqzJ4N0

SC State Wire

Health officials say a South Carolina resident has contracted a rare, potentially deadly brain-eating amoeba that is naturally present in warm fresh water. State Department of Health and Environmental Control epidemiologist Linda Bell tells news outlets the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed Tuesday that the patient was exposed to *Naegleria fowleri* (nuh-GLEER'-ee-uh FOW'-lur-ee), a one-celled organism that can cause primary amebic meningoencephalitis. Bell says the individual is believed to have been exposed to the amoeba while swimming July 24 near Martin's Landing on the Edisto River in Charleston County. The organism doesn't cause illness if swallowed, but can be deadly if forced up the nose. The CDC said only 10 cases or so are reported each year, nearly all of them fatal.

Post and Courier: S.C. resident contracts brain-eating amoeba in Edisto River
<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160802/160809848/sc-resident-contracts-brain-eating-amoeba-in-edisto-river>

Lauren Sausser

A South Carolina resident contracted a potentially deadly brain-eating amoeba after swimming in the Edisto River in Charleston County last month. Late Tuesday, a spokeswoman for Medical University Hospital would not reveal the status of the patient. A lab test conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed that the individual suffers from an infection brought on by *Naegleria fowleri*, commonly called the "brain-eating" amoeba. The infection is usually fatal. "It is difficult to treat," said Linda Bell, an epidemiologist for the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control. "And it's rapidly progressive."

Post and Courier : South Carolina awarded another \$400K to fight Zika
<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160802/160809855/south-carolina-awarded-another-400k-to-fight-zika>

Derrek Asberry

South Carolina has received another \$400,000 to combat the spread of Zika after being awarded millions of dollars over the past month to fight the virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced Tuesday that the state will use the money to help detect microcephaly — an often-fatal condition linked to Zika that can cause babies to be born with smaller-than-normal heads. Specifically, the money will help infants and families find health and social resources when combatting Zika, and to examine health outcomes of children who are born to women who have tested positive for Zika. "This CDC funding provides real-time data about the Zika epidemic as it

unfolds in the United States and territories and will help those most devastated by this virus," CDC Director Tom Frieden wrote in a press release.

Associated Press: South Carolina receiving another \$400,000 to fight Zika

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=0MYg1vZO

SC State Wire

South Carolina is getting an additional \$400,000 from the federal government to battle the Zika virus. The Centers for Disease Control announced that the money will be used to help detect and treat microcephaly, an often-fatal condition in infants linked to Zika. Last month the federal government announced the state was receiving nearly \$4.5 million to battle Zika. There have been more than 20 reported cases of Zika in the state but none involving pregnant women and none involving people bitten in the state by mosquitoes carrying the virus. The reported cases involve people who acquired the virus outside South Carolina.

Local News:

The State: Update: Richland County deputies arrest man on charges of kidnapping toddler grandson

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article93461582.html>

Cynthia Roldan

A 38-year-old man has been arrested on kidnapping charges after he led Richland County Sheriff's deputies Wednesday on a Interstate 77 car chase with his 3-year-old grandson in the car. Harrison Prince is also facing charges for failing to pull over for law enforcement. He was arrested after he crashed into a Chester County Sheriff's deputy's vehicle. After the crash, Prince took off on foot, but law enforcement caught up with him a short distance away, said Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott in a written statement. Prince is accused of kidnapping the toddler around 9:30 a.m., from Blythewood and left in a 2016 black Toyota Corolla, Lott said. A deputy spotted Prince's car on I-77 north, and attempted to pull him over. Prince kept going and took deputies on a chase from Richland County through Fairfield County into Chester County.

Associated Press: Cops: Woman didn't report deputy's daughter jumping from van

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=zagvl89p

SC State Wire

Authorities investigating the death of the daughter of a Richland County deputy who may have been pushed out of a van on Interstate 26 in Orangeburg County have charged a woman with failing to report the incident. An arrest warrant says 31-year-old Ebony Roddick told Orangeburg County deputies she saw the victim jump from the van and didn't notify police. Authorities say 21-year-old Dominique Davis was hit by a truck after falling from the van near the Bowman exit on I-26 west. Sheriff Leroy Ravenell says deputies are still talking to people and examining evidence and more charges are possible. Roddick is charged with failing to provide information and render aid. It wasn't known if she had a lawyer. Davis was the daughter of Richland County Sheriff's Sgt. Latavish Ulmer.

The State: Columbia woman charged with failing to help in death of Richland County deputy's daughter

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article93478007.html>

Cynthia Roldan

A Columbia woman was arrested Tuesday in connection with an incident in which a 21-year-old daughter of a Richland County deputy was struck and killed by several vehicles on Interstate 26. Ebony Nicole Roddick, 31, is charged with failing to help the victim, Dominique Davis, or provide

information about the incident, according to the arrest warrant. A judge ordered Roddick held on \$5,000 bond, according to Richard Walker, spokesman for the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Department. Roddick was traveling Monday with Davis, of Columbia, when she was killed near exit 159 on I-26 near Bowman around 9:41 p.m., according to the Orangeburg sheriff's incident report. Roddick, of Columbia, told investigators that Davis jumped from the van, according to the warrant. But a witness, who was not identified in the report, told investigators Davis might have been pushed out of the van she was traveling in. The witness said Davis' leg could first be seen coming out of a partially opened door of a silver-colored van. Seconds later, the door reopened, and that's when Davis might have been pushed. The victim has been identified as the daughter of Richland County Sheriff's Sgt. Latavis Ulmer. Roddick was named a suspect in the report, along with a second unknown person. An autopsy for Davis was scheduled for Wednesday to determine her cause of death.

Associated Press: Coroner: Horry County hit-and-run victim dead for a day or 2

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=lpzrYWM5

The Horry County Coroner's Office says a man who was killed in a hit-and-run in the county had been on the side of the road for a day or two. Deputy Coroner Horry County Tony Hendrick told local media outlets that the man's body was found along U.S. 701 near Bucksport late Tuesday afternoon. Troopers say it appears he was hit by a car. A passerby discovered the body of the 61-year-old man from Texas who authorities said had lived several places in Horry County. No arrests have been made and the identity of the man is not being released until relatives are notified.

Post and Courier: Ousted biology professor suing College of Charleston after syllabus fight

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160803/160809805/ousted-biology-professor-suing-college-of-charleston-after-syllabus-fight>

Paul Bowers

Piece by piece, Associate Professor of Biology Robert Dillon has been moving the contents of his lab at the College of Charleston into his West Ashley home — much to his wife's chagrin, he said, as his research focuses on freshwater snails. Dillon will not return to his lab or the classroom this fall after he locked horns with college leaders in the spring in an obscure battle over a course syllabus. Dillon said he intends to retire on Aug. 15. He is also suing the college and Provost Brian McGee, saying that the college defamed him and denied him due process. "The Defendants had no right to require Plaintiff to add trivial banalities to the wording of his syllabus," Dillon wrote in the lawsuit, filed July 21 in Charleston County. A college spokesman declined to comment on the lawsuit. College leaders wanted Dillon to include a list of "student learning outcomes" on the syllabus for his Biology 305 genetics lab, in keeping with the latest accreditation standards. Dillon refused, and instead inserted a lengthy Woodrow Wilson quote that read, in part, "It is the business of a University to impart to the rank and file of the men whom it trains the right thought of the world."

Independent Mail: Clemson takes second place in new social media rankings

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/clemson-takes-second-place-in-new-social-media-rankings-392d3baf-2856-205c-e053-0100007ff1ee-389069071.html>

A new report recently recognized Clemson University's social media efforts. Clemson is second overall among NCAA Division 1 schools in its use of social media, according to industry analysts Rival IQ and Up & Up, a Greenville-based marketing firm. The university ranked No. 3 on Instagram, No. 7 on Facebook and No. 11 on Twitter. "Clemson's social media success is a result of collaboration across campus with students, faculty and staff, and with members of the Clemson Family beyond our campus who connect with us and share content that helps make our story even richer," said Kesha

Williams, Clemson's director of social media. Driving factors included the just completed Will to Lead campaign and the football team's title run last year. "They were able to leverage significant stories ... by consistently sharing these across each other's social channels," said Matt McFadden of Up & Up. Marketing Coordinator Robbie Fitzwater said Clemson related traffic across Facebook, Twitter and other social media has increased 500 percent over the last year.

The State: West Columbia seeks to lure Pokemon Go players

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article93458602.html>

Tim Flach

West Columbia next week will bolster its trendy entertainment hub when it launches a Pokemon Go site along the Congaree riverfront. City police are setting up lures for the virtual reality game at the Riverwalk amphitheater starting Monday. The site will remain open from dawn until 10 p.m. each Monday for players focused on scoring around waterways at night for extra points. Police officers will be there to oversee the action that has popped up informally in a park normally closed at sunset, police Chief Dennis Tyndall said. "We wanted to create a more conducive environment for people to play," he said. The setup will last as long as the craze surrounding the game continues, officials said. It also may bring more attention to nearby restaurants, bars and shops as part of City Hall's effort to promote commerce on the riverfront. Sections of the Riverwalk are closed a few blocks north and south of the amphitheater because of flood damage and won't be open for the game, officials said.

Island Packet: Senior housing, elder care a booming business in Beaufort County

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article92682522.html>

Rebecca Lurye

In the next two years, Beaufort County can expect to see a 34 percent increase in its capacity of senior housing. Most of the construction is happening in Bluffton, Okatie and on Hilton Head Island — adding about 502 new beds in all — but the growth will be just as noticeable in northern Beaufort County. Port Royal and Beaufort will see 301 new beds, a 58 percent increase from its current capacity for independent and assisted living, skilled nursing and memory care, compared with 27 percent south of the Broad River. In all, the growth is coming from the recent and planned expansions of three existing senior-living homes — Benton House of Bluffton, Cypress of Hilton Head, and The Palmettos at NHC Bluffton — and the planned addition of 11 new facilities.

The Herald: TE Connectivity to close Rock Hill plant, 350 workers affected

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/article93499077.html>

David Thackham

More than 350 workers will be affected when the Rock Hill TE Connectivity plant closes its doors by next August. Employees were told Wednesday morning that the company would be phasing out operations at the Rock Hill facility on Interconnect Drive. The plant, which makes electronic connectors for the data communications industry, has been active for more than 15 years, according to a spokesperson. B.J. Talley, senior director for communications with TE Connectivity, said the company appreciates the employees' hard work. Talley said the company will provide transition support for the affected workers, including outplacement services, severance and helping to identify other potential positions within TE. Talley said the closure was "part of a broader effort" to consolidate the company's manufacturing facilities, which he said would improve efficiency and increase competitiveness in the market. The closure will affect a total of 352 employees and take place in phases between now and August 2017.

The Herald: Web portal would aim to lure tech workers to Rock Hill

<http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/article93386027.html>

David Thackham

For years, cities like Rock Hill, Gastonia, N.C., and Concord, N.C., have marketed themselves as cities near Charlotte in order to attract businesses. Now, local officials are seeking to change the narrative. The Rock Hill Economic Development Corp. is hoping to unveil a new job portal website this fall that will try to attract high-tech businesses to the city – and keep white-collar workers from commuting to Charlotte for work. "It's a chicken and the egg thing," said Stephen Turner, RHEDC executive director. "You can't have tech businesses to relocate here unless they can have talent, and you can't get talent to be here if companies aren't here. So we're trying to build up the credible argument that the talent is available here, but they're going elsewhere to work." To that end, Turner said he has had positive communications with about 50 businesses who said they would be likely to post their job needs on the portal. Prospective employees would also be able to post their resume and information on the website.

Aiken Standard : Proposed SCE&G rate increases support solar, nuclear projects

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160802/160809850/proposed-sceg-rate-increases-support-solar-nuclear-projects>

Thomas Gardiner

Possible electricity rate hikes loom for SCE&G customers amid advancements in solar and nuclear electricity production and infrastructure. However, even with these developments, the balance between solar power and nuclear energy isn't an either-or decision for the South Carolina utility provider. In late May, South Carolina Electric & Gas, or SCE&G, filed an updated cost petition with the Public Service Commission of South Carolina. The petition, which will be considered in a hearing scheduled Oct. 5-7, requests to update overall construction costs by approximately \$852 million at its Virgil C. Summer nuclear power plant under construction near Jenkinsville. That update could play a role in rate hikes, if approved. According to previous reporting by the Aiken Standard, SCE&G spokesman Eric Boomhower said, "Rates include everything involving SCE&G customers – construction, meters, putting up poles; everything is a part of the rates."

Herald-Journal: Spartanburg residents seek help with utility bills during heat wave

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20160802/articles/160809920>

Alyssa Mulliger

As summer temperatures continue to scorch the Upstate, residents like Angelica Littlejohn are facing difficult choices. Littlejohn lives at Crescent Hill Apartments in Spartanburg with her three children, who range in age from 4 months to 3 years old. She said she has seen an increase in her utility usage because of the heat, and accordingly, has fallen behind on paying her electric bill. Littlejohn isn't alone. When hot summer days arrive, many low-income residents find themselves forced to decide between paying higher electric bills to stay cool and buying necessities such as food and medications. That often brings an influx of clients to community groups that offer assistance with utility bills. Last week Littlejohn's friend Daniela Tucker drove her to Total Ministries on Union Street to apply for utility aid. Tucker said it was one of a few places he was taking Littlejohn to find help.

Presidential Election 2016:

Associated Press : GOP frustrations with Trump mount as allies weigh options

<http://bigstory.ap.org/630fc978fff74cd0b5e04a9e22777b83>

Julie Pace and Steve Peoples

Their party in crisis, Republicans' frustration with Donald Trump reached new heights on Wednesday

as GOP leaders inside and outside the presidential nominee's campaign contemplated new ways to persuade him to moderate his divisive tactics with the election just 96 days away. Party chairman Reince Priebus and a handful of other high-profile Republicans were considering whether to directly confront the billionaire businessman following a series of startling stances and statements. Those included Trump's refusal to endorse GOP House Speaker Paul Ryan's re-election and his continued criticism of the family of a slain U.S. soldier. An official with direct knowledge of Priebus' thinking was granted anonymity to discuss internal strategy after one of the most tumultuous weeks of Trump's presidential campaign. Priebus, a close friend of Ryan, is deeply irritated by Trump's recent actions and his unwillingness to accept guidance from senior advisers. The party chairman has already been speaking with campaign chairman Paul Manafort and the candidate's grown children, who are said to agree that he needs to stop picking fights within his own party.

National News:

Associated Press: FBI: 1st US law enforcement officer charged in terror sting

<http://bigstory.ap.org/309e8c4d8b964c89a81a33f642ff0b52>

Matthew Barakat

Prosecutors brought the first-ever federal terrorism charges against a law enforcement officer in the U.S., alleging Wednesday that a patrol officer with the D.C. region's Metro Transit Police was caught in sting buying about \$250 worth of gift cards for the Islamic State group. Nicholas Young, 36, of Fairfax, was arrested Wednesday at Metro's headquarters in Washington and charged with a single count of attempting to provide material support to a terrorist group. His initial court appearance is set for Wednesday afternoon. According to an FBI affidavit, Young bought the gift cards last month that he intended for the Islamic State to use to purchase mobile messaging apps, but Young actually gave the codes for the gift cards to an undercover FBI officer. Young had been under surveillance since 2010, and he traveled to Libya twice in 2011, where he said he joined rebel forces seeking to oust dictator Moammar Gadhafi. On one trip, he traveled with body armor, a Kevlar helmet and other military-style items, the affidavit said. Young was deeply paranoid about law enforcement spying on him, often taking out the battery of his cellphone when he wanted to go somewhere and talk, the document said.

Associated Press: Obama shortens terms for 214 prisoners; 67 had life sentence

<http://bigstory.ap.org/00730a0d5d974b288eef9b7d61b8a625>

Josh Lederman

President Barack Obama on Wednesday cut short the sentences of 214 federal inmates, including 67 life sentences, in what the White House called the largest batch of commutations on a single day in more than a century. Almost all the prisoners were serving time for nonviolent drug crimes, reflecting Obama's long-stated view that the U.S. needs to remedy the consequences of decades of sentencing requirements that put tens of thousands of Americans behind bars for far too long. Obama has pushed for a broader fix to criminal justice laws and has used the aggressive pace of his commutations in an effort to pressure Congress and call more attention to the issue. All told, Obama has commuted 562 sentences during his presidency — more than the past nine presidents combined, the White House said. Almost 200 of those who have benefited were serving life sentences. "All of the individuals receiving commutation today — incarcerated under outdated and unduly harsh sentencing laws — embody the president's belief that 'America is a nation of second chances,'" White House counsel Neil Eggleston wrote in a blog post. Eggleston said Obama examines each clemency application on its specific merits to identify the appropriate relief, including whether the prisoner would be helped by additional drug treatment, educational programming or counseling. He called on

Congress to finally pass a criminal justice overhaul to bring about "lasting change to the federal system."Most of those receiving commutations Wednesday will be released December 1.

World News:

Associated Press: Emirates airliner with 300 onboard crash lands in Dubai

<http://bigstory.ap.org/6cadd4b8358d47ed81c5b8157a9d4fc3>

Adam Schreck

An Emirates flight from India with 300 people on board crash landed at Dubai's main airport Wednesday, sending black smoke billowing into the air and halting all flights at the Middle East's busiest airport. A firefighter died while responding to the blaze, but none of the passengers or crew on board were killed. The accident was the most serious ever for Emirates, which has grown at a breakneck pace over the last three decades and turned its hometown of Dubai into a major long-haul international air hub. It was the second major air disaster for a Dubai government-backed airline in less than five months. Speaking to reporters in Dubai, Emirates Group CEO and chairman Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum said 10 people were hospitalized after the incident, but stressed that all passengers were safely evacuated before the plane was engulfed in a fireball. He said one firefighter died trying to put out the fire. Emirates said the accident happened around 12:45 p.m. local time as Flight EK521 was arriving from the southern Indian city of Thiruvananthapuram. It confirmed that "all passengers and crew are accounted for and safe," but gave no details of what went wrong.

Associated Press: Battle for Aleppo a pivotal moment for besieged residents

<http://bigstory.ap.org/e67d71419fcd48e89e4881f0378523f7>

Sarah El Deeb

The 28-year-old Syrian attorney turned down a scholarship to study economics in Germany in order to remain in his native Aleppo after rebels took it over in 2012, promising a new administration and life free of the rule of President Bashar Assad. Four years later, besieged in the ruins of Syria's largest city and once its commercial heart, Mohammed Khandakani's dream is in serious jeopardy after Syrian troops, aided by Russian air power, closed the lifeline of the rebel-held area after weeks of fighting. The siege and neglect from international and regional powers who claim to support the rebels collided to deprive him of "brief feelings of independence and freedom," Khandakani said in a telephone interview from inside Aleppo. A resident of the Maadi neighborhood, close to the city's old quarter, he now fears for his two children, wife, mother and other relatives. Khandakani, who volunteers with the city's medical council and documents casualties of war, is among tens of thousands of Syrians trapped in the rebel-controlled part of Aleppo, struggling to survive the crippling encirclement of their once-thriving city. Bread and medicine are being rationed, and as fuel runs out, many are relying on bicycles to run errands past skeletons of buildings and rubble that litter the city's narrow alleys and streets.

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