

Title: **belton**
 Author:
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BELTON RESIDENT DAVID Jones, second from right, received the state's Silver Crescent award on Saturday during the annual Christmas tree lighting. The presentation came as a surprise to Jones. It was presented to Jones by State Sen. Mike Gambrell, on behalf of Gov. Nikki Haley. Pictured (l-r)

NEWS-CHRONICLE PHOTO - Norma Hughes-Smith

are State Rep. Jay Watt, city councilmen Ricky Campbell and Jim Bright, Sen. Mike Gambrell, David and Debby Jones. Also on hand, behind and between David and Debby Jones, was Mayor Wendell Page.

Title: Jones presented with slate's highest award
 Author:
 Size: 24.95 column inches
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Jones presented with state's highest award

BELTON - One of the state's highest civilian award was presented to a surprised David Jones of Belton on Saturday.

The Order of the Silver Crescent was presented by State Sen. Mike Gambrell, on behalf of Gov. Nikki Haley, during the Christmas tree lighting at the depot.

Gambrell read a letter from Gov. Haley to the recipient and the large audience.

"On behalf of the people of South Carolina, I am pleased to award you the Order of the Silver Crescent in recognition of your exemplary service over the years," she wrote.

"It would be easy to point to a specific accomplishment that merits the Order of the Silver Crescent, but, in fact, your expansive service has been marked by a level of achievement that brings enormous credit to you and your community," Haley said.

Haley said Jones had demonstrated exceptional commitment to the betterment of the state and local area, adding that his many contributions will have lasting impact for years to come.

"South Carolina is blessed by your tremendous work and community service," Gov. Haley said. "Thank you for upholding

the highest level of leadership in all you do and helping to make our state an even better place to live, work, and learn."

Jones humbly accepted the recognition thanking Sen. Gambrell and the audience, with his wife Debby standing by him, along with family, friends and neighbors.

"Needless to say I am humbled and honored. I pledge to the best of my ability to uphold the integrity of the award. I want to thank all of you that have sent your sincere congratulations. Debby and I have worked all of our married life to make Belton and the surrounding area a better place for

everyone," said Jones later.

The owner of Superior Engineering near Belton, Jones has been deeply involved with the community for decades, volunteering countless hours to improving the city.

In addition to his work life, he is a performer with the Combo Kings band.

The Order of the Silver Crescent is the state's highest civilian award for significant contributions, leadership, volunteerism, and lifelong influence within a region or community. It is a once in a lifetime achievement.

Title: **Mistrial declared in Slager trial**
 Author: The Associated Press
 Size: 72.07 column inches
 Florence, SC Circulation: 35092



Mistrial declared in Slager trial

Jury deadlocked in shooting of motorist by former officer

The Associated Press

CHARLESTON—A South Carolina judge declared a mistrial Monday after a jury deadlocked in the murder trial of a white former police officer charged in the shooting death of an unarmed black motorist.

A panel of one black and 11 white jurors — who had seemed close to a verdict

to convict Friday, with apparently only one holdout — said Monday they were unable to reach a unanimous decision after deliberating more than 22 hours over four days.

"We as a jury regret to inform the court that despite the best efforts of all parties we are unable to come to a unanimous decision," said Circuit Judge Clifton New-

man, reading a note from the jury before declaring a mistrial.

Former patrolman Michael Slager was charged with murder in the April 4, 2015, shooting death of 50-year-old Walter Scott. The judge had said the jury could also consider a lesser charge of voluntary manslaughter.

Outside the courtroom,

Scott's mother and brother said justice will eventually prevail.

"I'm not sad, because I know justice will be served," Judy Scott said.

Asked whether he could forgive Slager, Anthony Scott said he could eventually "find the peace" to forgive the ex-officer but not

See **SLAGER**, Page 3A

Slager

From Page 1A

before justice is served.

"He gets to spend Christmas with his family," he said of Slager.

Cellphone video taken by a bystander that showed Scott being shot in the back five times was shown widely in the media and on the internet and shocked the country, inflaming the national debate about how blacks are treated by law enforcement officers.

After the video went public, Slager was fired by the police department and charged with murder. Scott's family called for peace in the North Charleston community. Their calls for calm are believed to have helped prevent the kind of violence that erupted elsewhere when black men were killed in encounters with law enforcement.

It's the second time in recent weeks a jury has deadlocked in an officer-involved shooting. A mistrial was declared Nov. 12 when a jury in Cincinnati couldn't reach a verdict in the case of a former campus police officer who was also charged with shooting a black motorist.

The video in the Scott slaying renewed debate about how blacks are treated by white law officers. There have been similar debates over race and policing in places from New York to Ferguson, Missouri, and from Tulsa, Oklahoma, to North Carolina.

Slager's wife, Jamie, cried after the jurors were dismissed and briefly put her head on the bench in front of her. She said "thank you for everything" to the de-

fense lawyers as they left the courtroom. She did not respond when reporters asked if she wanted to comment.

One female juror wiped away tears with her hands and a tissue as the attorneys addressed them and thanked them for their hours of work.

There were no outbursts in the courtroom. Slager's lawyer, Andy Savage, did not comment.

Scott's family again called for peaceful protests.

"We're not going to tear up this city," Anthony Scott said. "We're not happy. But we're not sad."

Solicitor Scarlett Wilson praised Scott's family for their patience and understanding.

"They have not received the credit they deserve in their calm leadership for

the community," she said in a statement. "The Scotts have been a sterling example of dignity and grace in extraordinary circumstances."

Slager also faces trial next year in federal court on charges of depriving Scott of his civil rights.

Gov. Nikki Haley said that she understood there will be "a new trial where the Scott family and all of South Carolina will hopefully receive the closure that a verdict brings. Justice is not always immediate, but we must all have faith that it will be served. I certainly do."

While Slager is white and Scott was black, the video, not the races of the men, dominated the trial.

Scott was pulled over in North Charleston for hav-

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ing a broken taillight on his 1990 Mercedes and then fled the car, running into a vacant lot. Family members have said he may have run because he was worried about going to jail because he was \$18,000 behind on child support.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Michael Slager (center) walks from the Charleston County Courthouse on Monday under the protection from the Charleston County Sheriff's Department in Charleston.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Rev. Nelson B. Rivers III, with the National Action Network, speaks Monday during a prayer vigil in front of the Charleston County Courthouse in Charleston.

Title: **The State of Columbia on Gov. Nikki Haley and the United Nations**

Author:

Size: 36.27 column inches

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The State of Columbia on Gov. Nikki Haley and the United Nations

On Nov. 22, Gov. Nikki Haley asked us all to pray for South Carolina, which has faced and continues to face significant challenges. Today, we all need to pray for Gov. Haley, as she prepares for a very different and very difficult challenge.

There's a lot of distance between Thanksgiving and Ambassador Haley. And there's no guarantee that the Senate, even a Republican Senate, will confirm someone with no foreign-policy experience, much less diplomatic experience, as ambassador to the United Nations.

Although it isn't our most important foreign-policy position, it is extremely important. And frankly, it's a stretch. For all that President-elect Donald Trump and the governor's supporters say about her deal-making prowess, we've only seen that on display in deals between corporations that wanted to locate in our state and a state that wanted those corporations to locate here.

The challenge she has met, in other words, was coming up with a deal between two parties that wanted to make a deal. That's very different from the challenges facing a U.N. ambassador. We certainly hope that her talents can translate to this new role, but we simply don't know because she is untested.

Gov. Haley said she had not anticipated leaving her current job before it's completed. But she noted that "when the president believes you have a major contribution to make to the welfare of our nation, and to our nation's standing in the world, that is a calling that is important to heed."

She's absolutely right about that. While there are some positions that a sitting governor probably should reject — positions that are more about allowing a loyal supporter to cash in than about serving the nation — this isn't one of them. Anyone has an obligation to seriously

consider a president's request to serve in an important position, regardless of who the president is or how committed that person might be to her current position.

The governor also said she would remain our governor until her confirmation. We still have much to do in South Carolina," she said, "and my commitment to the people of our state will always remain unbreakable."

That is honorable. But while we would not ask her to resign yet, we would urge her to informally turn many of her responsibilities over to Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, sooner rather than later.

We are accustomed to U.N. ambassadors who have extensive foreign-policy experience, and usually diplomatic experience as well. In the absence of either, Gov. Haley owes it to our nation to spend the time between now and her confirmation doing everything she can to make up for that lack of experience — meeting not just with handlers trained to guide her through the confirmation process but also with experts who can help bring her up to speed on all the issues that need to be mastered by the U.N. ambassador of the most important country in the world.

The Senate, too, owes it to our nation to make sure that Gov. Haley is prepared — that she has the appropriate temperament, judgment and knowledge base to serve in this position. Confirmation hearings for someone with her experience should not be particularly easy — and that is why she needs the next two months to prepare for them.

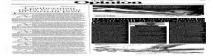
Gov. Haley is a bright and talented politician, and we hope that she will be able to scale the extremely steep learning curve that lies ahead. Assuming she is able to make the Senate comfortable with her ability to serve our nation in this very different sort of job, we wish her all the best in her new position.

Title: **If common sense holds, Scott will stay in Senate**

Author:

Size: 52.7 column inches

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If common sense holds, Scott will stay in Senate

Perhaps the best job in the world for anyone passionate about policy and politics is to be a United States senator.

It pays well. You get to travel. You become part of an exclusive club where you can actually do big, meaningful things. You learn about many different topics. And it can be a special kind of wonky fun, despite long hours, politicking, fundraising and endless meetings.

"I can do more to help more people" by being in the Senate over the long term than by advocating for people in individual cases as a lawyer, former U.S. Sen. Fritz Hollings once told me.

So it comes as a head-scratcher to read that 51-year-old U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, just elected to his first full term, might be considering running for governor in 2018 — especially after news that fellow Republican and Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster will step into Gov. Nikki Haley's shoes when she becomes ambassador to the United Nations for President-elect Donald Trump.

It's all but certain that McMaster, who has wanted to be governor for years, will seek a full gubernatorial term in 2018. And with a Republican now to be in the White House, it defies logic that Scott would want to leave Washington now that the GOP also controls the House and Senate. You'd think that Scott, frequently listed as one of the nation's rising political stars, would prefer the national spotlight over a smaller state one. Besides, he could always

run in 2022 after McMaster, who would be 75 by then, had served a full term.

Yet we read a few stories, confirmed by a Scott spokesman, that Scott is considering but hasn't made any decisions about running for governor. He is "simply just going to pray about" running with U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy, a Spartanburg Republican, as his lieutenant governor running mate. Both men, you might recall, have been named to be part of Trump's transition team — more evidence of their national stature.

Scott's rise to national prominence has been meteoric. He was born in North Charleston in 1965 in working-class poverty, and a conservative mentor "helped instill in Tim the notion that you can think your way out of poverty, and that the golden opportunity is always right around the corner," Scott's bio offers.

In February 1995, Scott won a special election for the Charleston County Council, on which he served until 2009 when he became a member of the S.C. House of Representatives. In 2010, he was considering a bid for lieutenant governor but decided instead to run for U.S. House with news that a coastal seat would be open. He won a runoff against Paul Thurmond, son of legendary U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond. Two years later, he was re-elected.

But a month and a half later in December 2012, Haley appoint-

ed Scott to the U.S. Senate seat vacated by the surprise retirement of Jim DeMint, making Scott the first black U.S. senator since Reconstruction. In 2014, Scott won his first statewide election to finish DeMint's expired term. This past November, he won a six-year term to the Senate by nabbing about 1.2 million votes in the Palmetto State — more than Trump did.

So after five big elections in the past eight years, it seems Scott might want to coast for a bit — to get away from as much fundraising and glad-handing — to enjoy being a senator, not mixing it up over another seat.

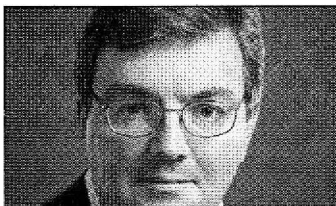
News of Haley's imminent departure to the United Nations and its impact in the political calculations for the ambitious are surely unwelcome holiday gifts to several Republicans who have been eyeing the governor's mansion, including Yancey McGill of Williamsburg. The former lieutenant governor has been raising money for months. Also on the list: S.C. House Speaker Pro Tem Tommy Pope of York County, former agency head Catherine Templeton of Mount Pleasant and incumbent Attorney General Alan Wilson.

The only person whose political math hasn't changed is S.C. Senate Pro Tem Hugh K. Leatherman, the Florence Republican who is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. While one scenario shows him as the next lieutenant governor, he squelched that notion by saying he'd just stick to the

Title: **If common sense holds, Scott will stay in Senate**
Author:
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state Senate. And that makes complete sense, because that's where he might have more power and influence than any governor.

Andy Brack is editor and publisher of Statehouse Report. Have a comment? Send to: feedback@statehousereport.com.



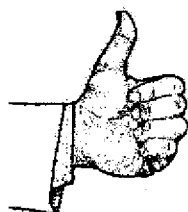
Andy Brack
Statehouse Report

Title: **Leatherman right to remain in current post**
 Author:
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Leatherman right to remain in current post

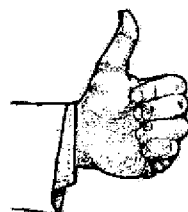
Thumbs up to S.C. Sen. Hugh K. Leatherman for passing on a chance to ascend to a statewide office as lieutenant governor so he can continue to represent the people of Florence County who have elected him again and again (and again and again and again. ...). He said this week that he wants to stay where



he is, which means he will remain as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. In that role, Leatherman holds as much power as anyone in the state. Depending on how a new law passed in 2014 is interpreted, Leatherman may or may not be able to continue as president pro tempore of the Senate. South Carolina voters decided two years ago to stop electing a lieutenant governor. Rather, the governor will get to appoint a

lieutenant governor. But that law is not supposed to go into effect until 2018. It could be a court has to decide who will replace Henry McMaster, who will replace departing Gov. Nikki Haley (if the U.S. Senate approves her appointment as the United States' ambassador to the United Nations). We aren't surprised by Leatherman's decision. The lieutenant governor's position is fairly powerless. Our lawmakers should fix that so we don't end up in this situation again where nobody wants the job.

Thumbs up to the powers that be who persuaded Patheon to come to Florence. It was jarring news a little more than a year ago when Roche Carolina Inc. announced that its days in Florence were



numbered. County leaders had until 2018 to find another pharmaceutical or chemical manufacturer, but it thankfully didn't take that long. In fact, we heard hints early this year that Patheon was close to making a decision to coming here. We're still sorry to see Roche go. Florence is losing a good community partner. We hope we're gaining a good community partner. We're not sure who gets the credit for making this deal. We just know many people played a role. We do know that Joe King played a big part. As the director of Florence County Economic Development Partnership/Florence County Progress Inc., King works hard to turn problems into opportunities. We're eager to see what he and others can do next.

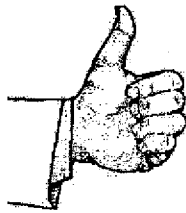
Thumbs up to the South Carolina Department of Transportation. It held a public hearing Thursday night at South Florence High School to explain an upcoming road project — the widening of Alligator

Title: **Leatherman right to remain in current post**

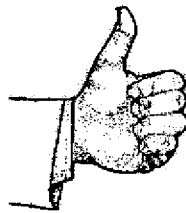
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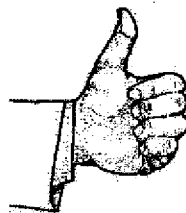
Florence, SC Circulation: 35092



Road — and to answer questions. Approximately 100 people attended. They had a chance to look at maps and ask questions of the many SCDOT officials who were there. By the time a formal program ended, few people made comments. One resident raised concerns about drainage. Another person spoke on behalf of bicyclists. He urged state officials to provide a lane for cyclists. This is something that should have been done when Freedom Boulevard was constructed. It's something that should be included in future road projects, such as S.C. 51 (Pamplico Highway). Dedicated lanes on these kind of roadways would make life safer for cyclists and motorists. This might keep cyclists off more dangerous two-lane roads. Riding bicycles is good recreation, and it is growing as transportation for commutes to and from work. We support cyclists' rights to our roadways.



Thumbs up to volunteers who are helping Nichols recover from Hurricane Matthew damage. The South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church organized a two-day work blitz that started Friday. More than 200 volunteers from across the state and nation are participating. They are working on as many as 17 homes in the hard-hit town in Marion County. More than 90 percent of the town's residential and commercial properties were damaged by the hurricane and flooding that followed.



Thumbs up to holiday home tours. People who enjoy this have two choices on Sunday. From 2 to 5 p.m. in Florence, they can see five homes in Florence as part of a fundraiser that will support the Florence Symphony Orchestra. The homes on the tour are at 405 S. Coit St., 1200 McIntosh Woods Road, 1616 Hillside Ave., 1410 Dorchester Road and 1817 Pineland Ave. Each participating home will have a sign in the front yard identifying it as one of the tour's stops. For \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door, tickets can be purchased at Chico's, Fisher Jewelers, Goosie Ganders, Talbots, Taylor's Garden Shoppe and First Reliance Bank. The second tour is in Lake City. From 2 to 7 p.m., people can visit the four homes and the guest house at Moore Farms Botanical Garden. The tour is presented by the Lake City Junior Sorosis Club. Tickets are on sale at the Chamber of Commerce for \$25, and are \$30 the day of the tour.



Thumbs down to the Morning News and more. That comes from reader Johnny August of Darlington. "Too many thumbs up, which is great, but how about thumbs down?" he wrote. "Thumbs down to people who are demonstrating and rioting over President-elect (Donald) Trump being elected the 45th president. Give him a chance. We owe that to him. I bet those people protesting didn't even vote. Thumbs down to all the killings of police officers across the country. Where are all the protesters demonstrating against these senseless killings?"

Thumbs up, thumbs down is a regular feature of the Morning News and appears each Sat-

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urday on our Opinion page. We seek nominations for both good and bad deeds from our readers. Send nominations to us by email at letters@florencenews.com. Be sure use the word "thumb" in the subject and include a contact number. Thumbs can also be mailed to us c/o The Morning News, 310 S. Dargan St., Florence, S.C., 29506.

Title: **McMaster predicts a smooth transition**
Author: The Associated Press
Size: 13.48 column inches
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McMaster predicts a smooth transition

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — As he prepares to take over South Carolina's top job, Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster said Friday there is "much work to be done" on the state's crumbling roads, struggling schools and challenged water supplies, but he shied away from offering any concrete solutions.

"We will make progress, great progress," McMaster predicted in his first public comments since Gov. Nikki Haley was tapped last week to become President-elect Donald Trump's U.N. ambassador. She must be confirmed to the post by the U.S. Senate.

McMaster will assume the governor's role upon Haley's formal resignation. He would serve out the remaining two years of Haley's current term in office.

The lieutenant governor said he and Gov. Haley have staff members meeting in order to plan for the change.

"When she becomes Ambassador Haley, we will have a very smooth transition," he said. He declined to answer queries about whom he would like to see serve as his lieutenant governor, and avoided answering a question about whether he'd support an increase in the gas tax to help rebuild the state's roads.

Title: **Ambassador Gov. Haley's statement on UN appointment**
 Author:
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Gov. Haley's statement on UN Ambassador appointment

November 23, 2016 by Staff Reports @carolinaledger @thecarolinaledger

President-elect Trump has nominated Haley as UN Ambassador.

"Six years ago, South Carolinians bestowed upon me the greatest honor of my life. They took a chance on a little-known, 38-year old, minority, female governor – something our state had never done before. I will be forever grateful, and I expect I will never again receive a higher honor.

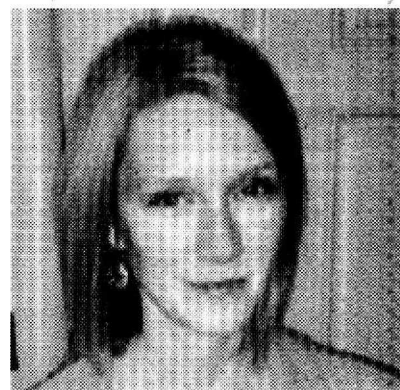
"In the six years that followed, our state has reached incredible heights. We made South Carolina's economic development the envy of the nation and brought new jobs to every county. We cut our unemployment rate by more than half, employing more South Carolinians than ever before. We reformed how we fund education, moving more resources to communities in greatest need. We passed landmark ethics reforms that make state government more accountable to our people.

"Our state has also persevered through some of the most difficult times. Nature damaged many of us with the thousand-year flood and Hurricane Matthew.

Our hearts were broken for those we lost when tragedy struck Walter Scott's family, Mother Emanuel, and Townville Elementary School. Yet through it all, the greatness of our people overcame those tragedies, even coming together to heal the old wounds represented by the Confederate Flag on the Statehouse grounds.

"This month's elections have brought exciting changes to America. Our country faces enormous challenges here at home and internationally. Last week, President-elect Trump asked if I would meet with him to discuss those challenges, which I was happy to do. He has asked that I serve our country as our next Ambassador to the United Nations. Pending confirmation by the U.S. Senate, I have agreed.

"I always expected to finish the remaining two years of my second term as governor. Not doing so is difficult because I love serving South Carolina more than anything. I was moved to accept this new assignment for two reasons. The first is a sense of duty. When the President believes you have a major contribution to make to the welfare of our nation, and to our nation's standing in the world,



Jessica Cross, Carolina Ledger

that is a calling that is important to heed. The second is a satisfaction with all that we have achieved in our state in the last six years and the knowledge that we are on a very strong footing.

"I will remain as governor until the U.S. Senate acts affirmatively on my nomination. We still have much to do in South Carolina, and my commitment to the people of our state will always remain unbreakable, both while I continue to hold this office, and thereafter.

"In this holiday season, we all have much to be thankful for. Michael and I wish every South Carolinian a joyous Thanksgiving."

Title: **Governor's Mansion Christmas Open House Scheduled For December 5**
Author:
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Wagener, SC Circulation: 0



Governor's Mansion Christmas Open House Scheduled For December 5 **First Family Welcomes South Carolinians For Holiday Celebration**

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Governor Nikki Haley, First Gentleman Michael Haley and their children, Rena and Nalin, invite South Carolinians and their families to join them for a Christmas Open House on Monday, December 5, from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at the Governor's Mansion. The event is free of charge, open to the public, and no reservations are required.

The First Family asks that open house guests consider bringing canned goods to be donated to the Harvest Hope Food Bank. The donations will be accepted at the entrance to the Governor's Mansion.

The Columbia Garden Club, which has decorated the Governor's Mansion for Christmas every year since 1981, began decorating last week when the Governor's Mansion received three live Christmas trees from the South Carolina Christmas Tree Growers Association and poinsettias grown by the Future Farmers of America from Lexington Technology Center — all of which will be on display during the open house.

Governor's Mansion Executive Chef, Steven Jankowski, and Chef Jared Hudson will build a classic gingerbread house, and wreaths within the Mansion Complex will be made and hung by the Horticulture Division of the South Carolina Department of Corrections. Additionally, the Carillon Carolers of Columbia, S.C. and the Heart of Columbia Chorus will perform for guests.

Regular guided Christmas tours will also be available December 6-8 and 13-15 at 10:00 AM, 10:30 AM and 11:00 AM. They are also free of charge, but are by reservation only. Anyone interested in scheduling a tour should call Nancy Bunch at (803) 737-1710.

Title: **Leatherman to stay in SC Senate**
 Author: BY JOSHUA LLOYD Morning News jlloyd@florencenews.com
 Size: 46.19 column inches
 Florence, SC Circulation: 35092



Leatherman to stay in SC Senate

BY JOSHUA LLOYD
 Morning News
 jlloyd@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — Florence Sen. Hugh K. Leatherman Sr. has said he will not become South Carolina's next lieutenant governor.

Leatherman, the Senate president pro tempore in 2014-2015 and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, among other titles, is widely considered the most powerful person in state government.

He intends to remain so.

"I have no intentions of becoming the lieutenant governor," Leatherman told the Morning News on Monday. "The people of Florence County elected me to represent them in the Senate and I owe them that. There's no question I can be much more effective for our area and for our state in the Senate."

Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster will replace Nikki Haley as governor if the U.S. Senate confirms President-elect Donald Trump's pick for the U.S. ambassador to the

United Nations.

In Leatherman's opinion, McMaster will be able to choose a lieutenant governor after taking the top spot in state government — in accordance with a law passed in 2014 outlining procedure for the 2018 gubernatorial election.

That interpretation would mean Leatherman could retain his spot atop the state Senate, if chosen by his colleagues, rather than stepping down to avoid becoming lieutenant governor.

On Dec. 6, officials will convene to choose committee members and elect officers, including Senate president pro tempore. Senior committee members will act as chairpersons, according to legislature rules.

Speculation continues on whether the law took effect in 2014 or will take effect in 2018, which is likely to lead to contentions and a decision that will come from a state court.

"There are a lot of

See **LEATHERMAN**, Page 3A

Leatherman

From Page 1A

moving parts to this issue," Leatherman said. "People of this area have sent me to Columbia long enough that we're in a position to get things done for District 31, for the Pee Dee and for the whole state."

Leatherman said he hasn't spoken to McMaster — who endorsed the

10-term senator before June's primary elections — about the "biggest issues in this state," i.e. infrastructure funding, education problems and the state's failing pension system.

Leatherman said he's **confident** McMaster will be a natural **fit** for the

job.

"I think Henry will make a good governor," Leatherman said. "He's been in the system a long time. He understands how it works, and he knows what it takes to get things done."

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MORNING NEWS FILE PHOTO

S.C. Sen. Sen. Hugh K. Leatherman Sr. of Florence (left) greets a constituent during a community forum in March in Florence.