



Coastal
Observer
Pawleys
Island, SC
Circ. 5136
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Syrian refugees 148

Fear-mongering leads America from core values

To the editor:

Be afraid, very afraid! Nope, you're not there yet. Try harder. If your joy arises from being manipulated by fear-inciting politicians who mastered the art of duping constituents while studying Politics 101 at Bob Jones University, these are the best of times. In case you didn't ace that class, Mike Huckabee sent his wife to Pawleys Island on Nov. 19 to teach an advanced version called Craven Cringing for Carolina Cowards 102. Nikki Haley provided course materials.

It is not out of the realm of conceivability that someone, someday, could be hurt by some Syrian (mostly women and children) fleeing starvation, poison gas and barrel bombs delivered by Hafez Assad, the world's most insane ophthalmologist. But wouldn't your time be better spent searching for ways to stop racist Ameri-

cans with guns galore from terrorizing South Carolina churches? I can personally guarantee that would provide you a higher payback for time spent.

What makes your fear so contemptible is that the politicians who hold the puppet strings you dangle from care not one whit about immigration, or refugees, or the political chaos caused by the Bush-Cheney brain trust in the Middle East. That's right. They don't give an expletive-deleted one way or the other. All they cherish is your obsequious expression as they assure you they will take care of you. Your simple minded sigh of relief is all the payback they ask for. Let me strive for a small degree of political correctness by characterizing your reaction as pathetic.

If fear-mongering politicians have any secondary ambitions, it is to end America as we know it - to

make our country repugnant to the world because *liberté, égalité, fraternité* are liberal ideas and therefore abhorrent to them. They find love, compassion and the teachings of a certain Jewish community organizer equally offensive, but if thumping their unopened Bibles gets them re-elected, so what?

An America without compassion is someplace else. An America cringing in fear is an abomination to those who died on its behalf. An America succumbing to the hypocrisy of politicians who reject starving refugees, as most of their ancestors once were, should be spelled with a "K."

Welcome the Syrian refugees. It is un-American not to.

Terry Munson
Heritage Plantation



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Hemingway, SC
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148 Guest Column 'Giving Tuesday' can continue

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"When government is done, we have to keep going, and so we started a One South Carolina fund ... to allow us to complete the work the government can't do," Haley said. "We're saying if you were blessed and did not have damage with your home, if you were





blessed and you had insurance, if you were blessed and you're able to get back into a safe place, pay it forward."

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Sen. Kent Williams serves Marion and Florence counties. Call him in Columbia at 803-212-6000 or send him an e-mail at kentwilliams@scsenate.gov.

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Hemingway, SC
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Meet the dancers competing for the trophy

From staff reports

Dancing with the Stars of Darlington County will return to the Center Theater stage in Hartsville on Jan. 28 to raise funds for the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault.

"The local community has always been a huge support in this event. The committee hopes to have even more support from the community this year," said Dancing with the Stars Committee member Eliza Truett. "Without the community's help, the coalition wouldn't be able to help as many people as they do."

Thirteen couples have agreed to participate in the fundraiser. The Hartsville Messenger will feature two dance couples each Wednesday until the event.

The theme for the third annual fundraiser is be old Hollywood, with dances from the 1920s through the 1940s. Dance styles include waltz, swing, tango, rumba, Lindy hop, jive, Charleston and boogie woogie.

The dance teams will compete for the coveted trophy and vie for the People's Choice Award. The award will be determined by the dance team that receives the most votes or ballots, which will be sold by the dancers, Pee Dee Coalition members, online and on the evening of the dance. The ballots are \$10 per vote. A panel of judges will determine which dance team will be named the 2016 winner during the competition.

For additional information or to vote for your favorite dance team, visit the website at www.darlingtoncountydancingwiththestars.com.

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Two of the dancing pairs are House Speaker Jay Lucas and his professional partner, Sheila Schmotzer, and Lyles Huntley and her professional partner, Lukas Glenn. Lucas and Schmotzer will be dancing the rumba. Huntley and Glenn are dancing the waltz with swing.

Lucas and Schmotzer

Lucas was born and raised in

Hartsville and has dedicated his life to public service.

He was elected to represent South Carolina District 65 in 1998 after former state Rep. Michael Baxley retired. Given that a Republican had not represented the district since Reconstruction, Lucas' election was an uphill battle, according to the biography he submitted to Dancing with the Stars of Darlington County.

After winning by a mere 32 votes, Lucas earned the nickname "Landslide Lucas" from some of his colleagues. He was selected to serve as House speaker in December 2014.

He played a vital role the passage of a domestic violence bill that was signed by Gov. Nikki Haley in June, according to his biography.

Lucas says he is a proud Gamecock who received a bachelor's degree in political science, a master's degree in public administration and a law degree, all from the University of South Carolina.

Aside from practicing law in Hartsville and serving as speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Lucas is a movie buff and an avid Gamecock fan. He and his wife, Tracy, have been married for 25 years and have a son, Will, who Lucas says they both believe is their biggest accomplishment.

Lucas' partner, Sheila Schmotzer, is owner and director of Dizzy Dancin Dance Studio. She says she is proud to say her studio has worked with and contributed to the Pee Dee Coalition's wonderful parent/child services at the Durant Children's Center of Hartsville in her years as director.

Schmotzer is a former captain of the NCAA Dance Team and TCU "Showgirls."

She earned Associate of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Arts degrees in dancing.

She is on the South Carolina Arts Commission's Approved Artist Roster.

Her dance studio has won seven national titles. Members of the studio appeared on Season 4 of Lifetime's hit TV show,

"Dance Moms."

Schmotzer is a member of the IMDb, having worked on shows "Army Wives," "Under the Dome," HBO's "Vice Principals" and the movie "Magic Mike XXL."

Most recently, she was cast and danced in a scene with Adam Sandler for an upcoming movie due out in 2016, "The Do Over."

Huntley and Glenn

Celebrity dancer Lyles Huntley was born and raised in Darlington County. Huntley says she is proud to work among the community and her family as a managing partner at Fastrack Stores: Home of Hunt Bonz' Deli. She is the daughter of Tim and Nancy Huntley. She has a brother, Roddy Huntley, and a "perfect" dog she adores named June Carter Cash. She is a member of Swift Creek Baptist Church in Hartsville.

After graduating from Mayo High School for Math, Science, & Technology, she attended Clemson University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in elementary education. Lyles taught second grade for two years at Washington Street Elementary in Hartsville before she joined her family's business, where she says she enjoys striving to provide the local community with "Southern food, expediency and quality service."

She says she is honored to participate in this year's event to support the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault. According to her biography for Dancing with the Stars of Darlington County, she says helping others in need is her passion, and the organization reaches out to victims in the community who need help.

Her partner is Lukas Glenn. He moved from Newport, Tennessee, to Hartsville with his family in May 2012. Glenn works at Sonoco Products as a lab technician. He enjoys "all things music, running outdoors and binge-watching shows on Netflix."

"I chose to participate in this great event to help spread





awareness with the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault,” he said. “It’s very heartbreaking that South Carolina is ranked No. 1 in such an awful category. I hope this event helps educate people on how to assist those in need and prevent these crimes from happening.”

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PHOTOS BY STEVE ROOS

Lyles Huntley and her dance partner, Lukas Glenn (left), and Jay Lucas and his dance partner, Sheila Schmotzer, pose for their official Dancing with the Stars portraits.



North Myrtle
 Beach Times
 N. Myrtle
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SCDOT¹⁴⁸ reviews flood damage costs

Interim SCDOT Secretary Christy A. Hall reported the damage costs to South Carolina's Highway System as a result of the 1,000 year flood stands at \$137 million.

Of that \$137 million figure, the federal share amounts to \$88 million. FEMA funds amount to \$25 million of the federal funds. The state share of the costs totals \$49 million.

Approximately \$20 million of the state share will be used for latent flood damage that could occur in the next 12 to 18 months. The secretary presented this information as part of a review of the October flood to the SCDOT Commission at its Dec. 3 meeting in Columbia.

The cost figures are the result of SCDOT's pre-storm plan to contain costs and maximize reimbursements. That plan included:

Using SCDOT's Maintenance forces for emergency response and recovery operations.

Pre-positioning contracts for faster response and higher reimbursements, par-

ticularly in the area of debris collection and removal.

The goal was to repair highway facilities as much as possible and replace only when the damage was beyond repair.

Secretary Hall said the goal was to reopen roads as quickly as possible. "Our mission was to restore the roads and bridges to their previous condition before the flood and ensure they were safe for the public to use once more," said Hall. A summary of SCDOT's recovery operations completed (as of 12/3/15) include:

Peak closures reached 541 on one day (Oct. 5).

Current closures as of 12/3 total only 58 in less than 60 days after the flood event.

Of the 58 remaining closures, 32 active projects are in place to reopen those facilities.

And 26 of the remaining closures involve dams which SCDOT does not own.

Secretary Hall recounted SCDOT's "work list" during the recovery:

Work was performed on 900 sites on the state highway system.

And 221 of those sites involved bridges.

And 105 of those bridges have been repaired and placed back in service following two inspections for safety.

Three of the bridges being replaced were scheduled for replacement prior to the flood.

An additional 18 bridges are beyond repair and will be replaced.

Secretary Hall said the ability to accomplish the recovery work so far and return the state system to its pre-storm condition in the past 60 days was due to the efforts of the SCDOT Team, contractors, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Team, FEMA, Team South Carolina partners and Gov. Nikki Haley. "We also appreciate the patience of the public as we and our partners work to restore the state's highway system," said Hall.

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148 Consider giving during the holiday

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Kent Williams
Senate Update

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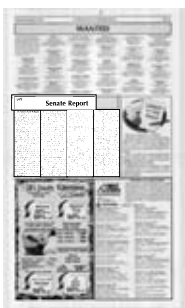
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Senate Report

By Senator Kent Williams

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It is an honor to serve you in Columbia, and I am grateful for your continued support. As with all matters concerning state government, I want to hear your opinions and suggestions concerning these issues. Please contact me in my Columbia office located at 608 Gressette Office Building. You can reach me, or a member of my staff in Columbia at (803) 212-6000 or by fax at (803) 212-6011. My district office is located at 1305 North Main Street, Marion, SC 29571, the phone number is (843) 423-8237 and the fax number is (843) 431-6049. You may also email me at kentwilliams@scsenate.gov.

As always, I also want to supply you with my business phone number so that you will be able to reach me easily at any time. My business phone is (843) 423-3904. Please use this information to write, call or email me with your suggestions and concerns regarding issues before the Senate and in our community.

148 **Officials Comment On Solar Project Coming To County**

Dillon Herald
Dillon, SC
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As reported in The Dillon Herald recently, Cypress Creek Renewables, a company that specializes in the ownership and development of long-term solar energy projects, has taken first steps toward investing \$10 million in a solar energy project in Dillon County.

With offices in Arizona, Missouri, New York and North Carolina, as well as Los Angeles and San Francisco, Calif., Cypress Creek Renewables strives to make solar power economically attractive to utilities and consumers. Primarily focused on two to 10 megawatt utility scale projects, Cypress is working with regulators, utilities and business development groups throughout the United States to build more than one gigawatt of new solar projects between now and the end of 2016.

The company is working in partnership with Southern Current, which is the newly-merged entity comprised of long time development partners Sustainable Energy Solutions and Solbridge Energy. Southern Current oversees local development activities including site identification and acquisition, obtaining necessary permits and coordinating with the utilities amongst other due diligence activities. Together, they have received economic development approvals for a facility in Dillon County, which is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2016.

The Dillon County solar facility will be located off of Wix Road in Dillon, S.C. and will produce 10 megawatts of energy at full capacity. Ten megawatts of solar energy is enough to provide inexpensive,

secure, clean energy to approximately 2,000 South Carolina homes.

"Cypress Creek is thrilled to be making an important investment in the local economy of Dillon County by generating clean energy that will help lead South Carolina and our country toward energy independence," said CEO Matthew McGovern. "We greatly appreciate the cooperation of our partnering utilities and the local leaders who helped make this project possible," said Cypress Creek Renewables CEO Matthew McGovern.

"Southern Current is thankful to be part of the team developing this project. It's another example of how South Carolina is furthering its commitment to support a vibrant clean energy economy in the state," said Southern Current, LLC Principal and Chief Development Officer Paul Fleury.

"We're excited to see Cypress Creek continue to invest in our state and our people. We have worked extremely hard to build a business environment in South Carolina that is open to all kinds of companies, and we look forward to seeing both Cypress Creek and the renewable energy industry grow here in the future," said Gov. Nikki Haley.

"This investment by Cypress Creek Renewables will further strengthen South Carolina's growing reputation in the area of renewable energy. Providing both positive economic and environmental impacts, I'm proud to welcome Cypress Creek to our state and look forward to growing this terrific partnership in the years ahead," said Secretary of Commerce

Bobby Hitt.

"Cypress Creek Renewables has proven itself to be a steadfast supporter of our region. This announcement demonstrates we are creating a more diverse economy throughout our region and state. Cypress Creek Renewables is helping our region create a more clean and sustainable economic growth," said President Pro Tempore of the S.C. Senate and North Eastern Strategic Alliance Executive Committee Chairman Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr.

"Today we celebrate another great announcement in Dillon County, and we look forward to a long and prosperous relationship with Cypress Creek

Renewables. Today's announcement is a good fit for our community and 'Just Right' for Team South Carolina," said Dillon County Economic Development Executive Director Tonny McNeil

About Cypress Creek Renewables:

Cypress Creek Renewables is pursuing opportunities across the United States. Our business model is primarily focused on utility-scale ground mount projects from 2-10MW AC in capacity. Cypress brings extensive development experience and very aggressive financing to create new opportunities in emerging solar markets. Our goal is to make solar an economically attractive option without additional state incentives. For more information, visit www.cypresscreekrenewables.com.





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FIVE FAST FACTS

- **Cypress Creek Renewables is establishing solar power operations in Dillon County.**
 - **40-60 jobs created during construction.**
 - **\$10 million investment in Dillon County operations.**
- **The company currently manages a development pipeline of more than 200 projects.**
- **Cypress Creek's Dillon County operations are expected to be fully operational by the end of 2016.**



Horry
Independent
Conway, SC
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ONGOING

ONGOING-Governor Nikki Haley's request for a 30-day extension of the registration period for Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) Individual Assistance has been granted.

South Carolinians affected by October's heavy rains and historic flooding now have until January 4, 2016, to apply for disaster assistance with FEMA and the Small Business Administration.

Horry and Georgetown residents who sustained flood losses can apply for assistance by registering online at DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling 800-621-FEMA (3362). Disaster assistance applicants who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY may call 800-462-7585. Those who use 711 or Video Relay Service may call 800-621-FEMA (3362). The toll-free telephone numbers will operate 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week until further notice.

Assistance can include money for temporary rental

assistance and essential home repairs for primary homes, low-interest loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration to cover uninsured property losses and other programs to help survivors recover from the effects of the disaster.