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Subject: Morning Clips – Tuesday, December 29, 2015

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Associated Press: South Carolina comes through death and destruction with hope
http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=bbANcG4

Jeffrey Collins

The police shooting of an unarmed black man in North Charleston. The killing of nine people during Bible study at a historic African-American church in Charleston. Historic flooding that dropped nearly half their yearly rain fall in less than two days. The Confederate flag flown on the Statehouse grounds coming down after multiple other efforts had failed.

Note: Gov. Nikki Haley had said less than a week after the slayings at Emanuel AME Church that the flag should come down and the state Senate had reached the same conclusion.

Note: But as the sun set on July 8, the people who wanted the flag removed were stunned. Flag supporters in the house suddenly appeared to have enough votes for an amendment to the bill backed by Haley and the Senate that would postpone its passage, keeping the rebel banner flying outside the chambers.

The State: SC's first female governor now a national figure

<http://www.thestate.com/news/special-reports/state-125/article51883645.html>

Andrew Shain

Six years ago, Nikki Haley was young, relatively unknown Lexington County lawmaker who was polling last for the 2010 Republican gubernatorial primary. A visit by former GOP vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin sparked Haley's campaign that led to an upset primary win — and began a two-term stint as South Carolina's first female governor.

The State: Trey Gowdy kicks off SC's presidential endorsement race

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article51911585.html>

Andrew Shain

The major S.C. Republican presidential endorsement race is about to take off. Last week, candidates fought for backers of former GOP White House hopeful Lindsey Graham soon after the U.S. senator from Seneca left the race. And in previous months, Republican candidates have dotted their campaigns with members of the state General Assembly.

Note: The congressman's announcement, along with the shrinking field, should lead to decisions by other powerful S.C. Republicans, including U.S. Sen. Tim Scott of North Charleston and Gov. Nikki Haley, who have been described as the "crown jewels" of GOP presidential endorsers.

Note: The intentions from Haley, perhaps the state's most sought-after endorsement, remain unclear. The governor, whose popularity has grown with her handling of the Charleston mass shooting this summer, has mentioned that she might back a presidential candidate but has not offered a timetable.

S.C. Political News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Sunrise: Jeb Bush campaigning in Lexington Wednesday

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151229/PC1603/151229425>

Maya T. Prabhu

Supporters of former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush can grab some barbecue with the Republican presidential candidate when he comes back to the Palmetto state for a campaign stop Wednesday. Bush is scheduled to appear at Hudson's Smokehouse BBQ, located at 4952 Sunset Blvd. in Lexington. To register and attend the event visit Eventbrite.

Island Packet: Weather trumps venue change for at-capacity Donald Trump campaign stop

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/politics-government/article51905355.html>

Zach Murdock

A venue change for Donald Trump's planned campaign stop on Hilton Head -- and then a reversal of that venue change -- created confusion Monday. Now some people who reserved free tickets Monday may not be able to get into the Wednesday event that organizers said was at capacity last week.

S.C. General Assembly News:

Post and Courier: Margie Bright Matthews to 'chart own course' while serving in Pinckney's former Senate seat

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151228/PC1603/151229444>

Maya T. Prabhu

Sen. Margie Bright Matthews said that while there is no way she can fill Sen. Clementa Pinckney's shoes next month, she believes she shares similar values with the late Emanuel AME Church pastor. "Being a friend of his, and us working side-by-side on a lot of community issues, I think we have a lot of the same goals in mind," she said.

Opinion / Editorial Roundup:

The State: Why we should celebrate the end of the Amazon tax exemption

<http://www.thestate.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/cindi-ross-scoppe/article51890655.html>

Cindi Ross Scoppe

STARTING FRIDAY, nonprofits will no longer have to pay the state's 6 percent sales tax on clothing for poor children or materials to fix up homes for the needy. The items will be officially listed as sales tax exemptions No. 81 and 82 in the S.C. Code of Laws, a list that began with the institution of the state's first 3-cent sales tax in 1951 and is added to nearly every year.

Post and Courier: Supplement graduation rate increase

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151229/PC1002/151229441>

Editorial

The Charleston County School District's 3.5-percentage-point improvement in its overall high school graduation rate — and particularly the 6.2-point rise in the graduation rate of black students — is reason for guarded encouragement. Students who graduate are more likely than non-graduates to be employed, earn more money, and avoid poverty and health problems.

Post and Courier: Build on victory over ISIS

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151229/PC1002/151229442>

Editorial

Give the Iraqi army a medal for seizing the center of a key Iraqi city, Ramadi, from the control of the Islamic State on Monday after a week-long campaign supported by U.S. air strikes. The symbolism of Iraq's victory in Ramadi is important. But the army will soon face new challenges testing how far it has come since collapsing last May under ISIS attack.

The State: Legislators' jobs do not include committing crimes

<http://www.thestate.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article51889265.html>

John Crangle

Convicted former House Speaker Bobby Harrell says it was legal for him to use \$134,000 from his campaign funds to pay his attorneys to plead him guilty on six criminal counts. His argument is based on 8-13-1348(A), which says the ban on using campaign funds to defray personal expenses does not prohibit "an expenditure used to defray any ordinary expenses incurred in connection with an individual's duties as a holder of elective office."

South Carolina News:

Post and Courier: Santee Cooper board to take up Mount Holly proposal

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151228/PC05/151229455>

David Wren

Santee Cooper's board of directors is expected Tuesday to approve a deal that will keep Century Aluminum's Mount Holly smelter operating, giving state legislators time to write a new law that would let the facility buy its electricity on the open market.

The State: Cheap gas and balmy weather fuel a spike in S.C. traffic deaths

<http://www.thestate.com/news/nation-world/national/article51941665.html#storylink=cpy>

Vera Bergengruen

After years of near-historic lows, 2015 saw an abrupt spike in traffic fatalities on South Carolina's roads – partly due to an unlikely cause. "We can't ignore the fact that as gas prices have decreased we have seen more people on the roads," said South Carolina Highway Patrol Sgt. Bob Beres.

Seneca Journal: Attorneys make case for amended Hammond lawsuit

<https://upstatetoday.com/2015/12/attorneys-make-case-for-amended-hammond-lawsuit/>

Carlos Galarza-Veve

The amended complaint in federal court against the Seneca Police Department over the shooting death of Zachary Hammond is seven pages longer than the original lawsuit, but attorneys representing the Hammond family are telling the court that the amendment "adds no new parties or claims."

Greenville News: Pickens County Council to consider resolution on proposed coal ash dump

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/pickens-county/2015/12/28/pickens-county-council-consider-resolution-proposed-coal-ash-dump/77970592/>

Ron Barnett

Readers of The Greenville News reacted angrily to news that a company hopes to dump thousands of tons of coal ash in Pickens County, and the County Council put a resolution on the issue on the agenda for its meeting next Monday.

Post and Courier: State, some local employees get five-day weekend

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151228/PC16/151229456>

Brenda Rindge

The holidays are a good time to be a government employee for anyone looking for paid days off. With Christmas and New Year's falling on Fridays this year, many government employees are working just three of five weekdays in each of the last two weeks of the year.

Post and Courier: S.C. gasoline price down to \$1.75/gallon; Missouri lowest in nation

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151228/PC05/151229477>

Warren L. Wise

Gasoline prices across South Carolina will head into the new year at about \$1.75 a gallon, some 37 cents lower than this time last year and 25 cents less than the national average. The price of gasoline across the Palmetto State fell about 2 cents during the past week, according to gas price service GasBuddy and AAA's Daily Fuel Gauge Report.

Local News:

Post and Courier: Charleston hotel manager apologizes for photo request in Mother Emanuel AME tweet

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151228/PC05/151229463>

Allison Prang

The manager of a downtown Charleston hotel apologized Monday for asking a Twitter user not to include the property in photographs of the nearby Mother Emanuel AME Church, the site of a shooting rampage that killed nine people in June. Interstate Hotels said in a written statement that the staff at the Courtyard Charleston Historic District "mishandled the situation."

Greenville News: Fountain Inn businesses grow as second Bojangles' opens

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/golden-strip/2015/12/28/fountain-inn-businesses-grow-second-bojangles-opens/77976004/>

Scott Keeler

When it comes to national chain businesses, there was a time not long ago that Fountain Inn barely offered one of anything. Now the city can claim two of something. Fountain Inn's second Bojangles' restaurant opened for business at 5:30 a.m. Monday morning.

National News:

Associated Press: Health law reporting extension issued for employers

<http://www.postandcourier.com/article/20151228/PC05/151229452>

Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar

The Treasury Department on Monday gave employers an extension of critical reporting requirements, as it seeks to manage some of the most complicated parts of the federal health care law. Employers had previously faced deadlines in February and March to report 2015 health insurance information to their employees, and to the IRS.

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