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To:
Date: 12/18/2016 10:14:22 AM
Subject: Clips – Sunday, December 18, 2016

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Nikki Haley: UN Ambassador News:

New York Times: Outsiders Selected by Trump Aim to Unnerve Washington

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/17/us/politics/donald-trump-cabinet-picks.html?_r=0

Michael D. Shear

They are President-elect Donald J. Trump's disrupters. Seven men and one woman named by Mr. Trump to run vast government agencies share a common trait: once they are confirmed, their presence is meant to unnerve — and maybe even outright undermine — the bureaucracies they are about to lead. Some of those chosen — 17 picks so far for federal agencies and five for the White House — are among the most radical selections in recent history. Other presidents' nominees, even when controversial, were often veterans of the Washington bureaucracy and generally believed in it. But a number of Mr. Trump's most important selections have no experience in federal government and a great drive to undo it. Scott Pruitt, the Oklahoma state attorney general who was picked to lead the E.P.A., rejects the established science of human-caused climate change and has built his career on fighting environmental regulations. At the Education Department, Betsy DeVos wants to steer government money away from traditional public schools. Rick Perry was picked to head the Energy Department — unless he eliminates it, as he once promised.

NOTE: But Mr. Trump hasn't shunned the establishment as he sets up his government. He has chosen Nikki Haley, the governor of South Carolina, as his envoy to the United Nations; Representative Michael Pompeo of Kansas for C.I.A. director; and Elaine Chao as his secretary of transportation. Ms. Haley, a rising star in the Republican establishment, endorsed Senator Marco Rubio of Florida during the primaries.

Governor Nikki Haley News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Politics: State of the State farewell

http://www.postandcourier.com/politics/palmetto-politics---done-deal-trump-collects-s-c/article_44354586-c2ec-11e6-8a48-234f360685eb.html

Schuyler Kropf

Gov. Nikki Haley will deliver her last State of the State address two days before President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration. Haley, who is Trump's nominee to be United Nations ambassador, will leave after she undergoes what's expected to be a quick Senate confirmation once Trump takes office Jan. 20. She will bid adieu to a Legislature filled with lawmakers she's applauded for passing her legislative priorities but will leave several issues, including a potential gas tax increase to fund roads, in the hands of soon-to-be promoted Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster. Observers expect McMaster to take a more sympathetic approach to the General Assembly than Haley or her predecessor, Mark Sanford.

Palmetto Daily Business: Techtronic to invest \$75 million in South Carolina, creating 250 jobs

<http://palmettobusinessdaily.com/stories/511059040-techtronic-to-invest-75-million-in-south-carolina-creating-250-jobs>

Techtronic Industries (TTI) is expanding its Power Equipment Group's operations in Anderson County with a \$75 million investment that is expected to create 250 new jobs in the upstate over the next several years. To continue its growth in Anderson County, TTI is building a new 300,000-square-foot

Innovation Center. This latest project complements the company's \$85 million expansion project that was completed this year. "Continued investment in our people and product innovation is pivotal to TTI's success," Mike Farrah and Lee Sowell, presidents of TTI Power Equipment, Power Tool and Outdoor Products, said. "This new world-class campus will provide an exceptional environment for fostering the development of talented associates and industry leading products."

NOTE: TTTI's decision to expand in Anderson County further strengthens its position as an important part of South Carolina's manufacturing industry," Gov. Nikki Haley said. "This \$75 million investment, and the 250 new jobs it means for Anderson County, will make a real difference in the lives of South Carolinians, and we look forward to seeing the impact this fantastic company will continue to have on our state for many years to come."

Berkeley Observer: Evonik Corporation Launching Manufacturing Operations In Berkeley County
<http://www.berkeleyobserver.com/2016/12/17/evonik-corporation-launching-manufacturing-operations-berkeley-county/>

Evonik Corporation, a German chemical manufacturing company, is launching new operations in Berkeley County. The project will result in at least \$120 million of new capital investment and the creation of more than 50 jobs. "Berkeley County is truly honored to have Evonik call our community its new home and welcome their investment and the jobs they offer. Evonik's selection of Berkeley County is further proof that Berkeley County is open for business, and Berkeley County means business," stated Berkeley County Supervisor Bill Peagler. "While working with Evonik over the past year, I am confident that they will succeed in Berkeley County and look forward to working with them to see job creation opportunities for our residents for many years to come." Evonik is one of the world's leading specialty chemicals companies and employs more than 33,500 people worldwide. With business activities across more than 100 countries, Evonik produces chemicals for a variety of applications, including adhesives, cleaning products, construction materials and more.

NOTE: "We are excited to welcome Evonik Corporation to the South Carolina family and to congratulate its leadership on the decision to invest in our people and our state," stated Governor Nikki Haley. "This \$120 million investment, and the 50 new jobs it means for Berkeley County, is a real reason to celebrate, and we look forward to seeing the impact that this fantastic company will have in the Lowcountry."

General Assembly News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Politics: \$1.5 million Statehouse scoreboard

http://www.postandcourier.com/politics/palmetto-politics---done-deal-trump-collects-s-c/article_44354586-c2ec-11e6-8a48-234f360685eb.html

Schuyler Kropf

The House of Representatives Chamber has two new fancy vote-tallying scoreboards that come equipped with photo and video sharing capability. Cost: About \$1.5 million. The new boards were needed, House Clerk Charles Reid said, because the nearly 20-year-old previous incarnations were so old that technicians no longer could repair them. They date to 1998 and used 1996 technology. "It's a little bit larger, higher definition, higher resolution, more LED lights attached, clearer and brighter," Reid said. The boards light up to show how the 124 House members vote "yea" or "nay" on legislation. The work included removing old speakers from legislators' desks, wiring the chamber and projectors, and installing the hardware for the voting boards.

Post and Courier: Palmetto Politics: Bathroom bill returns

http://www.postandcourier.com/politics/palmetto-politics---done-deal-trump-collects-s-c/article_44354586-c2ec-11e6-8a48-234f360685eb.html

Schuyler Kropf

Freshman Rep. Steven Long, R-Boiling Springs, is taking up the charge to stop local governments from passing laws to allow people to use the bathroom of their choice in buildings and private clubs. Transgender individuals would be required to use the bathroom of their biological sex, not the gender

they identify. The bill, which was filed Thursday, comes after now former Sen. Lee Bright, R-Roebuck, pioneered a similar bathroom bill after one became law in North Carolina earlier this year. Long's bill, like Bright's, isn't expected to go beyond committee. Fellow Republicans, businesses and others have made it clear they don't want such a bill that they say will create more problems than it will fix.

Herald-Journal: Bill seeks to put porn block on computers sold in SC

<http://www.goupstate.com/news/20161217/bill-seeks-to-put-porn-block-on-computers-sold-in-sc?rssfeed=true>

Daniel J. Gross

An Upstate legislator is hoping to prevent anyone who buys a computer in South Carolina from accessing pornography. State Rep. Bill Chumley, R-Spartanburg, said the Human Trafficking Prevention Act would require manufacturers or sellers to install digital blocking capabilities on computers and other devices that access the internet to prevent the viewing of obscene content. The bill would fine manufacturers or sellers that sell a device without a digital blocking system installed. But any manufacturer or seller that didn't want to install the system could pay a \$20 opt-out fee for each device sold. Any buyers who want the filter lifted after purchasing a computer or device would have to pay a \$20 fee, after verifying they are 18 or older. "If an end user buys an apparatus, a computer, and they want access to that, they would have to pay to have that filter removed," Chumley said.

Post and Courier: Hicks column: Some legislators, as usual, are a few bullets shy of a full clip

http://www.postandcourier.com/columnists/hicks-column-some-legislators-as-usual-are-a-few-bullets/article_f1655c9a-c23e-11e6-96e1-a7d46ca44461.html

Brian Hicks

A state lawmaker has come up with an idea to combat school shootings, and it'll go over like a lead balloon with folks upset about those gun billboards on I-26. You know, the ones featuring an AR-15 with a suppressor and the message "Do you hear what I hear?" Classy. Nothing says Peace on Earth like a military-style rifle. Anyway, state Sen. Kevin Bryant – who has graciously volunteered to take the lieutenant governor's job – pre-filed legislation this week that would allow public school teachers to carry guns into the classroom. Yes, that old chestnut roasting on an open fire. The South Carolina Legislature is nothing if not predictable. Bryant calls this legislation "Jacob Hall's Law" to honor a victim of the Townville Elementary School shooting in September. To recap: A 14-year-old showed up with a gun at the Anderson County school (shortly after killing his father) and shot three people. Two were injured and Hall, who was 6, died.

Post and Courier: Q&A: What the Merrill indictments mean

http://www.postandcourier.com/politics/q-a-what-the-merrill-indictments-mean/article_8472c5fa-c3a6-11e6-81ed-b7484a7fd2f1.html

Andy Shain

The big news at the S.C. Statehouse last week was the indictment of a former House Republican leader in a years-long probe of lawmaker corruption. The probe is continuing and more targets are expected. Here's a rundown of Wednesday's development...

SC Delegation News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Politics: 'You lie' congressman a top talker

http://www.postandcourier.com/politics/palmetto-politics---done-deal-trump-collects-s-c/article_44354586-c2ec-11e6-8a48-234f360685eb.html

Schuyler Kropf

South Carolina Republican U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson of Lexington is Top 5 floor-time talker, according to end-of-year stats on the 114th Congress tracked by C-SPAN. Wilson spoke over the course of 127 days, according to the congressional TV broadcaster. Wilson is perhaps best known nationally for yelling "You lie!" at President Barack Obama in 2009 during a health care speech to Congress.

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle condemned his outburst. Wilson trailed the most-talkative congressman, Rep. Glenn "G.T." Thompson, R-Pa., who spoke over 208 days, but was just a notch ahead of sixth place Rep. Ted Poe, R-Texas, who spoke during 124 days.

SC Political News:

Post and Courier: Palmetto Politics - Done deal: Trump collects S.C.'s 9 Electoral College votes on Monday

http://www.postandcourier.com/politics/palmetto-politics---done-deal-trump-collects-s-c/article_44354586-c2ec-11e6-8a48-234f360685eb.html

Schuyler Kropf

South Carolina's nine designated Republican members of the Electoral College will meet Monday to formally hand over the Palmetto State's votes to Donald Trump and Mike Pence. The gathering is a perfunctory affair. The individual electors, who were chosen this past summer, will sit at a table inside the S.C. Secretary of State's Office. Each will sign a piece of paper indicating his or her choice of Trump and Pence in keeping with how the state voted in the November presidential election. Each elector will then read his or her choice aloud for all to hear. Normally, that would be that. But this is not a normal year. South Carolina electors are being inundated with phone calls, text messages, emails, letters and appeals on social media to vote for someone else, or at least wait until they receive classified briefings from intelligence officials about the potential scope of the Russian computer hacks aimed at derailing Hillary Clinton's campaign. S.C. Republican Party Chairman Matt Moore says he and the eight other electors aren't going to be swayed.

Associated Press: Trump's pick for budget director has urged big spending cuts

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=SPHWW6N4

Hope Yen

Republican Rep. Mick Mulvaney, President-elect Donald Trump's choice as his budget director, is a fierce deficit hawk with a record of pushing deep spending cuts across the federal government to balance the budget. The 49-year-old from South Carolina, just re-elected to a fourth term, is a co-founder of the hard-right House Freedom Caucus that pushed former Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, from power. As director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, Mulvaney would be responsible for Trump's budget submissions to Congress. Those budgets are likely to address Trump's campaign promises to repeal the Affordable Care Act, cut taxes broadly and boost spending on public works and other projects. If confirmed by the Senate, Mulvaney would lead an office that coordinates federal regulations, putting him in charge of repeals of Obama administration rules. Trump has been critical of several of President Barack Obama's executive orders, from those involving climate change and reining in Wall Street to protecting the children of immigrants who are in the United States illegally.

Herald-Journal: Trump officially nominates Mulvaney for budget chief

<http://www.goupstate.com/news/20161217/trump-officially-nominates-mulvaney-for-budget-chief?rssfeed=true>

Bob Montgomery

President-elect Donald J. Trump made it official Saturday and nominated Republican U.S. Rep. Mick Mulvaney of Indian Land to be director of the Office of Management and Budget. If confirmed by the Senate, a special election would be held to fill Mulvaney's 5th District congressional seat, which represents parts of Spartanburg and Cherokee counties. "We are going to do great things for the American people with Mick Mulvaney leading the Office of Management and Budget," Trump stated. "Right now we are nearly \$20 trillion in debt, but Mick is a very high-energy leader with deep convictions for how to responsibly manage our nation's finances and save our country from drowning in red ink. "With Mick at the head of OMB, my administration is going to make smart choices about America's budget, bring new accountability to our federal government, and renew the American taxpayer's trust in how their money is spent," Trump stated. Mulvaney, 49, has served in Congress

since 2011. In November, he defeated Democratic challenger Fran Person.

The State: Expect to see SC tag team on TV in 2017

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article121513672.html>

Bristow Marchant

The bipartisan S.C. tag team that often sparred in the runup to the presidential election could continue to appear on TV well into the Trump administration, unless either man ends up in public office again first. Former S.C. Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer, a Republican, and ex-state Rep. Bakari Sellers, a Democrat, made regular appearances as commentators during CNN's coverage of the 2016 election. The two often appeared together on panel discussions that called for a supporter of Donald Trump (that would be Bauer) and Hillary Clinton, whom Sellers backed – a strong media showing for the small Palmetto State. Both men say they plan to be back on the air in 2017. Bauer is under contract through Trump's Jan. 20 inauguration and says he has been told the network plans to have him back as a commentator on the new Republican administration.

Post and Courier: Offshore drilling opponents staggered just when they thought they had won

http://www.postandcourier.com/news/offshore-drilling-opponents-staggered-just-when-they-thought-they-had/article_dfeea072-c151-11e6-9132-036f20f4f219.html

Bo Petersen and Emma Dumain

After a massive, decade-long, grassroots fight appeared to have stopped oil and natural gas drilling offshore, its proponents are waging a last-minute desperation campaign to keep the victory from being snatched out from under them. The Obama administration is expected to approve this week a permanent ban on both drilling and seismic testing for the resource in the Atlantic, environmental groups say. The groups have mounted an intense lobbying effort, including a petition delivered Wednesday by the Business Alliance for Protecting the Atlantic Coast. The alliance is a coalition that says it represents more than 35,000 businesses and 500,000 commercial fishing families from Maine to Florida. "It just needs to be done. An oil economy is not who we are on the Atlantic coast. Testing and drilling just simply need to be taken off the table forever," said Frank Knapp, S.C. Small Business Chamber of Commerce president who co-founded the alliance.

Dylann Roof Case:

Associated Press: Strain on forgiveness after church massacre, other killings

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=QG0RjpUi

SC State Wire

The victims' families spoke words of forgiveness in Charleston after nine black people were massacred in a historic church by Dylann Roof, a white man who harbored dreams of launching a race war. The relatives were held up as examples of grace amid horror, and the city stayed calm. Now, Roof has been convicted in a federal trial, bringing relief tempered by uncertainty over whether he will get the death penalty for his crimes - and whether wanting to see Roof pay with his life is at odds with the call to forgive. Roof's guilty verdict came less than two weeks after a jury deadlocked in the case of Michael Slager, a white ex-police officer charged with fatally shooting Walter Scott, a black man, as Scott tried to flee an April 2015 traffic stop. The sentencing phase of his trial is scheduled for next month.

Associated Press: Roof won't use mental health experts to try to save his life

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=92Ll4n2l

Jeffrey Collins

Dylann Roof doesn't want jurors to consider his mental health when they decide next month whether he should face the death penalty for killing nine black Charleston church worshippers, according to a handwritten motion he filed. Roof's decision late Friday to not call mental health experts to testify isn't too much of a surprise. In his hate-filled, racist journal read to the jury during his trial, Roof said he doesn't believe in psychology. "It is a Jewish invention and does nothing but invent diseases and tell

people they have problems when they don't," Roof wrote. Roof, 22, is acting as his own lawyer during the penalty phase of his trial, which starts Jan. 3. The same jury that convicted him Thursday on 33 charges including hate crime and obstruction of religion will decide if Roof is sentenced to life in prison without parole or death for the massacre on June 17, 2015, at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal church in Charleston.

The State: Dylann Roof: A bizarre, lonely life – and then a decision to kill

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article121544407.html>

John Monk and Cynthia Roldan

In the weeks and months leading up to the horrific June 2015 Charleston church massacre, Dylann Roof had a bedroom in a log cabin-like house just outside Columbia. The house belonged to his mother's boyfriend. In the backyard of that house, on Garners Ferry Road in Hopkins, Roof shot his Glock .45 at a tree for target practice, scooping up many of the bullet casings into an open container. Others, he left on the grass. He took videos of himself shooting. They show him in a sleeveless muscle shirt wearing reflective sunglasses. Increasingly obsessed with the idea that black people were a danger to whites in America, he stepped up his visits to Charleston, where he was scouting the historic Mother Emanuel AME Church. He planned to do his killing there to inspire other white Americans to launch a race war. No one prompted him to do what he did. In his videotaped confession to the FBI and in handwritten notes to each of his parents, found in his car, he said they did nothing wrong.

Savannah River Site/MOX:

Aiken Standard: Savannah River Nuclear Solutions receives 'very good' review, fuel mishap missing

http://www.aikenstandard.com/news/savannah-river-nuclear-solutions-receives-very-good-review-fuel-mishap/article_31333822-c3cc-11e6-8767-678e6f553921.html

Thomas Gardiner

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions earned more than \$39 million in fiscal year 2016 and garnered a 'very good' review from the federal government. The U.S. Department of Energy released the SRNS performance evaluation report earlier this week, along with the review for Savannah River Site security contractor Centerra. According to the report, SRNS earned 87 percent of the possible money available to it. Contractor work is approved at the beginning of each fiscal year, establishing a cost baseline. The report highlighted a number of SRNS accomplishments during the year that played a large role in its positive reviews from the DOE. H Canyon, the nation's only operational nuclear chemical separations facility, got all units fully operational for the first time since 2011.

Opinion/Editorial:

The State: Some unethical actions are illegal in SC; lots aren't <http://www.thestate.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/cindi-ross-scope/article121384538.html>

Cindi Ross Scope

IT'S NOT AGAINST the law for legislators to try to pass laws that help their business clients, no matter how much those clients pay them. It ought to be, but it's not. In most cases, it's not even against the law for legislators to keep those payments secret. It ought to be, and beginning Jan. 1 it will be, maybe. But it's not illegal now, and like working to pass laws that will benefit those secret clients, it has not been illegal during any of the 15 years former House Republican Leader Jim Merrill is accused in indictments of doing both. That doesn't mean Mr. Merrill didn't break the law: One of the 30 indictments handed down on Wednesday hints at the sort of evidence that would vault the wrong but legal over into illegality; he could be found guilty on two common-law charges even without convictions on the ethics charges. And it doesn't mean there was anything ethical about the way Mr. Merrill has profited from being a legislator, racking up an impressive list of political consulting clients that stood to benefit, and sometimes did, from official actions he took as a member of the House.

Morning News: ANDY BRACK: Corruption probe should have effect on legislative process

http://www.scnw.com/opinion/columns/article_a743ff60-c403-11e6-ae59-131ec4674001.html

Opinion

The indictment this week of prominent Republican Rep. Jim Merrill has cast another pall on a General Assembly so fraught with challenges that some wonder if anything much will get done in 2017. Real progress, they say, doesn't need another stumbling block from lawmakers constantly looking over their shoulders, perhaps reluctant to do much as a Statehouse corruption probe is sure to widen. First came the 2014 downfall of former House Speaker Bobby Harrell of Charleston. Now comes Merrill's indictment on 30 charges.

South Carolina News:

WIS: Thousands gather to honor fallen veterans

<http://www.wistv.com/story/34080609/thousands-gather-to-honor-fallen-veterans>

Caroline Patrickis

Thousands of people were at Fort Jackson National Cemetery on Saturday to honor veterans who were laid to rest during an annual holiday ceremony. The ceremony was held to honor each of the over 4,500 gravesites at the cemetery. "They have given us so much, they have given us our freedom," Fort Jackson National Cemetery Leader Carol Davis expressed. Fathers, wives, husbands, and loved ones who all were veterans who can no longer be with their loved ones. Barbara Tyler's husband, Harold Louis Tyler, passed away from lung complications early this year. "I knew him from the time I was 14 years old," Barbara said. "There was never a day or moment that went by that he wasn't very goal oriented, extremely disciplined and always put his family and country first." He was one of the 4,265 honored at the Wreaths across America ceremony at the Fort Jackson National Cemetery.

The State: 2013 inspection found holes in Fort Jackson dam that failed two years later

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article121521217.html>

Sammy Fretwell

Federal inspectors found holes, broken equipment and "out-of-control" vegetation on a Fort Jackson dam two years before the earthen structure burst during a massive 2015 flood, according to a government report that provides new details about the dam's condition. The 2013 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers inspection report, obtained by The State newspaper, urged swift action to fix the Semmes Lake dam after federal officials said people could die if the dam failed. Millions of dollars worth of property flooded and two people were killed downstream after the dam broke the morning of Oct. 4, 2015. It remains unknown if Fort Jackson fixed the Semmes Lake dam after the 2013 report because Army officials won't talk about the matter. Fort Jackson officials plan to rebuild the dam, but they declined to say during a public hearing Wednesday why the dam broke in 2015. Base officials cited pending lawsuits as a reason for their silence. Records show the Army made some improvements to the dam before 2009.

The State: Standard business licenses statewide?

<http://www.thestate.com/news/business/article121601942.html>

Clif Leblanc

In what business advocates say would be a giant leap forward, Columbia and other municipalities in South Carolina are eyeing a single, mandated way of issuing business licenses. Businesses large and small complain that nearly each of South Carolina's 270 cities and towns – and a few counties – use differing classifications, due dates, government forms and rates to issue licenses that allow them to operate in municipalities, according to advocates for a statewide, uniform law. "It's one of the most business unfriendly things we do," said Ted Pitts, the director of the S.C. Chamber of Commerce, which backs one business licensing law across the state. The mishmash of local laws cost the state an estimated \$300 million in 2013, said Melissa Carter, lobbyist for the Municipal Association of South Carolina, citing a legislative fiscal impact assessment.

Local News:

Post and Courier: New Human Trafficking Task Force coordinator brings international experience to the job

http://www.postandcourier.com/politics/new-human-trafficking-task-force-coordinator-brings-international-experience-to/article_6222ebcc-c15f-11e6-9e5c-bb11ab61c7cf.html

Maya T. Prabhu

Kathryn Moorehead has seen heinous acts committed against the weak and underprivileged throughout her career combating human trafficking. The new coordinator of South Carolina's Human Trafficking Task Force recently joined the Attorney General's office after spending one-and-a-half-years tackling the issue in Cambodia. As the director of a counter-trafficking organization, she would see girls as young as a year old coming to a shelter after a raid on a trafficking ring. More than 75 percent of Cambodia's 15,000 prostitutes are under age 16. "Seeing a group of 6-year-old children come in, I just had to turn away to make sure I held it together," she said. Moorehead joined the attorney general's office two weeks ago. In addition to leading the task force's quarterly meetings, she will work to increase data collection on occurrences here and educate the public at large about human trafficking.

Associated Press: Teen in SC prison charged with killing and raping NC woman

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=gV410aVg

SC State Wire

A teen already in prison in South Carolina has been charged with murder and rape in the death of a 66-year-old woman in her Robeson County home. Sheriff Kenneth Sealey told media outlets that his deputies brought 19-year-old Zabiane Williams back from Trenton Correctional Institute in South Carolina on Thursday to face the charges. Authorities say 66-year-old Patricia Hill was beaten to death and suffered extensive burns on nearly three-quarters of her body when she was attacked in her home in August 2015. Sealey didn't say how Williams ended up in Hill's home or if they knew each other before the attack. A judge denied bond for Williams. He wasn't known if he had a lawyer. Williams was in the South Carolina prison on an assault and battery charge.

Associated Press: Deputies: Roommate killed Edgefield couple, set home on fire

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=N2ZrNfqB

SC State Wire

Authorities say they have charged a 36-year-old man who lived with an Edgefield couple with killing them, then burning their home. Edgefield County deputies told media outlets that they suspected Dameion Thomas immediately after the Oct. 9 fire, but had to gather enough evidence to charge him with two counts of murder. Investigators say Andrea and Charles Deas were found shot to death after firefighters put out the blaze at their home. Deputies say Thomas had been living with the couple for several months. They did not say exactly what led to the shootings.

Associated Press: Deputies: Homeowner shot man trying to steal his guns

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=X4wPHa6s

SC State Wire

Pickens County deputies say a man killed this week in an Easley house was a burglar who was caught by the homeowner stealing several guns. Chief Deputy Creed Hashe said in a news release that the homeowner fought with 27-year-old Justin Smith and managed to get a rifle from him and fired several shots at the intruder. Deputies say Smith tried to leave, but collapsed and died on a deck. Hashe says evidence collected agrees with the homeowner's story. Prosecutors are reviewing the investigation to see if the homeowner should be charged or can legally claim self-defense. Deputies did not release the homeowner's name.

Associated Press: Deputies: 3 officers attacked by suspect who kidnapped woman

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=YrUgcK7n

SC State Wire

Authorities say a man who kidnapped a woman who gave him a ride, then pointed a gun at several people in Williston also attacked three police officers. Aiken County deputies said in a news release that Goldie Bellinger was arrested after assaulting two Aiken County deputies and the Williston police chief. The deputies were released from the hospital. The release did not detail the injuries to the police chief. Authorities say Bellinger also beat the woman who was giving him a ride with a pistol Friday afternoon and pointed the gun at people as he drove around Williston. Bellinger lost control of the car and crashed when the victim tried to jump from the vehicle. It was not known if Bellinger had a lawyer.

Associated Press: Hyman's Seafood in Charleston settles \$1M lawsuit over tips

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=idl10VIX

SC State Wire

A federal judge has approved a \$1 million settlement with nearly 200 employees at a popular Charleston seafood restaurant who said the business shorted their tips. Officials said Hyman's Seafood violated the Fair Labor Standards Act by taking money from tips for broken dishes and having tips pooled together and shared by workers. The settlement obtained by The Post and Courier of Charleston (<http://bit.ly/2ht8ct0>) says 179 employees affected by the violations will be given between \$100 and \$39,000. The largest amounts will go to two employees who said they were fired in retaliation for reporting the violations. Attorney Alice Paylor says the restaurant owner didn't know the details of the law and meant no harm. She says Hyman's Seafood will continue to operate in downtown Charleston.

Sun News: How Horry County Schools lost \$73 million in eight years

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article121536227.html>

Christian Boschult

The Horry County School District has lost over \$73 million in property taxes between 2008 and 2015, even as population growth and unfunded state mandates increase operating costs. Act 388, passed by the state legislature in 2006, grants owner-occupied homes an exemption from paying property taxes used for the school district's operations budget, which is funded separately from the capital projects budget used for new schools and construction. The act increased the state sales tax from 5 percent to 6 percent in an effort to provide funds to school districts to make up for lost revenue, but the funds haven't kept up with fast-growing school districts such as Horry County.

The State: Ambitious annexation plan means the city of Columbia might be headed your way

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article121558272.html>

Cliff Leblanc

If you live on the outer edges of Columbia along Garners Ferry Road, North Main Street/Killian Road or south of Olympia around USC's football stadium, the city of Columbia might be coming your way. The pieces are in place for Columbia to start an aggressive annexation campaign early next year that would take in the "gateways" to the city and widen the city's tax base. Not everyone wants to live in a city, so in some areas, it will be a careful conversation on a sensitive topic. In some ways, it might be just in time. Charleston, which has been aggressively annexing, next year is set to surpass Columbia as the most populous city in South Carolina. Columbia took a first big step in November. The city hired an annexation coordinator to be the face of a door-to-door effort to attract residential and commercial property owners.

Aiken Standard: Aiken City Council should vote on options

http://www.aikenstandard.com/opinion/aiken-city-council-should-vote-on-options/article_96ffa86e-c39c-11e6-9c7b-ef48d624c836.html

In order for the Aiken Renaissance to proceed, the City of Aiken will likely have to renew option agreements integral to the three-step redevelopment effort, largely due to timelines associated with

the procurement process. But before that happens, we have a recommendation to make. Aiken City Council should ratify the decision to seek option agreements in the first place. We don't believe Aiken leaders intended to do anything wrong. But some questions have arisen as to whether the process of pursuing option agreements fully complied with the state's Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA.

NOTE: Gov. Nikki Haley rejoices virtually every time the S.C. Department of Commerce rolls out a new job deal, which typically involve tens of millions of dollars in tax breaks and incentives. Aiken's public subsidy is notably less.

President-elect Trump News:

Associated Press: GOP electors cite rural voice in Electoral College

<http://bigstory.ap.org/6e5abe6acf0249b1a63a4e541b7c8f81>

As members of the Electoral College prepare to choose Donald Trump as the 45th president of the United States, some Republican electors say they are defending rural and small-town America against big-state liberalism and its support for national popular vote leader Hillary Clinton. But the picture is more complicated. "Our Founding Fathers established the Electoral College because those larger states, those larger areas, don't necessarily need to be the ones that rule," said Mary Sue McClurkin, a Republican elector from Alabama. In Trump's hometown of New York City, which Clinton won easily, Democratic elector Stuart Appelbaum countered that "we're electing the president of the entire country," so "the will of the entire country should be reflected in the results."

Associated Press: Election questions leave US distrustful, like other nations

<http://bigstory.ap.org/dd19b89d1efe4207876fe101795b08b8>

Americans' enduring confidence that their elections are unimpeachably fair is teetering. Welcome to what much of the world calls reality, especially Russia's neighbors. While the United States cites its popular votes and peaceful transitions of power as examples of its democratic vigor, elections results elsewhere can entail a hint or heavy dose of suspicion. Ballots are rigged regularly, level playing fields are rare and bigger powers often meddle in the sovereign political processes of smaller nations. Russia, accused by the CIA of helping Donald Trump in last month's presidential election, is no stranger to accusations of interference with other countries' elections. Nor is the United States. Whether the full extent of the accusations of Russian interference turns out to be true, they already are damaging the legitimacy of the U.S. democratic process. When many citizens distrust their government, the media and other institutions of American life, doubts about the freeness and fairness of the elections cause consternation.

Associated Press: Trump action on health care could cost Planned Parenthood

<http://bigstory.ap.org/0a09f53e51f2401b91834db7cabe1d88>

One of President-elect Donald Trump's first, and defining, acts next year could come on Republican legislation to cut off taxpayer money from Planned Parenthood. Trump sent mixed signals during the campaign about the 100-year-old organization, which provides birth control, abortions and various women's health services. He said "millions of women are helped by Planned Parenthood," but he also endorsed efforts to defund it. Trump once described himself as "very pro-choice." Now he's in the anti-abortion camp. Still, the Republican has been steadfast in calling for repeal of President Barack Obama's health care law, and the GOP-led Congress is eager to comply. One of the first pieces of legislation will be a repeal measure that's paired with cutting off money for Planned Parenthood. While the GOP may delay the impact of scuttling the law for almost four years, denying Planned Parenthood roughly \$400 million in Medicaid funds would take effect immediately.

Associated Press: Trump says Michelle Obama's 'no hope' comment about the past

<http://bigstory.ap.org/ee549fa8e0124d2a8def514e5e6f2bf1>

President-elect Donald Trump said first lady Michelle Obama "must have been talking about the past" when she said there's no sense of hope after his election. Trump, speaking Saturday at the final rally of his postelection "thank you" tour, then resisted escalating the spat further, suggesting "she made

that statement not meaning it the way it came out."But as Trump praised the Obamas for treating him so nicely when he visited the White House shortly after the election, many in the Mobile, Alabama, crowd booed the first family. Michelle Obama, in an interview with Oprah Winfrey set to air Monday on CBS, said she was now certain that her husband's victory had inspired people because "now we're feeling what not having hope feels like." "What do you give your kids if you can't give them hope?" she added.

National News:

Associated Press: After icy storm raked Midwest, East, warmer weather comes

<http://bigstory.ap.org/4f0f852fb4274205a10dceeeb88665c5>

Temperatures in the nation's midsection and on the East Coast warmed up on Sunday after a bitterly cold few days. A warm front passing through the region pushed temperatures into the mid- to upper 40s in New York, the National Weather Service said. "Temperatures have soared into the 40s," meteorologist Jay Engle said. "Milder air is with us today but today only." The temperature will take a slight dip Sunday night into Monday, but it won't be as cold as it has been across much of the country, Engle said. The last few days have been more than 10 degrees below normal in many areas for this time of year, he said. With Christmas shopping underway and holiday travel gearing up, the nation's midsection and East Coast were hammered by a winter storm bearing snow, freezing rain and often bone-chilling temperatures.

Untied Nations News:

Associated Press: Syrian media say Aleppo evacuations to resume

<http://bigstory.ap.org/629875394a4645fcb6ff8d8116167893>

Dozens of buses and ambulances were poised to enter east Aleppo to resume evacuating rebel fighters and civilians from the opposition's remaining districts in the city, pro-Syrian government media said Sunday. As part of a wider deal, convoys were also preparing to evacuate more than 2,000 wounded and sick residents from two villages that have been besieged by rebels, the reports said. The opposition's Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said buses had begun entering the villages, Foua and Kfarya. Evacuations from Aleppo had been halted amid mutual recriminations Friday, after several thousand trapped civilians had already been moved from the city. The suspension of the evacuations had thrown an Aleppo deal brokered by Russia and Turkey last week into disarray.

Associated Press: Idlib likely to be Syria's next bloody theater after Aleppo

<http://bigstory.ap.org/c63fad42370342dea17b1ea3cd6ec254>

The battle for Aleppo has gripped the world, but it is hardly the only active front across war-torn Syria. One of the next targets for the forces of Syrian President Bashar Assad will probably be the heartland of rebel territory, the neighboring province of Idlib. The province west of Aleppo is a stronghold of al-Qaida's Syria affiliate and is now also packed with tens of thousands of rebels, many of them evacuated from other parts of the country, making it likely to be an even more bloody theater than Aleppo. Idlib has direct links to the Turkish border, and is located only a few kilometers north of Hama, a central province and key point for defending Assad's coastal strongholds and nearby Russian military bases. Asked where he will turn to next, Assad has suggested his first priority, after fortifying the area around Aleppo city, would be Idlib.

Associated Press: The Latest: Syrian activists say evacuation buses burned

<http://bigstory.ap.org/9c631c9c43534c67b9060cbdb37c7f74>

Activists say militants have burned at least five buses assigned to evacuate wounded and sick people from two villages in northern Syria. The incident could scuttle a wider deal that encompasses the evacuation of thousands of trapped rebel fighters and civilians from the last opposition foothold in east Aleppo. The opposition's Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Sunday that

the al-Qaida affiliated Fatah al-Sham Front burned buses assigned to evacuate people from the rebel-besieged villages of Foua and Kfarya. Hezbollah, the Lebanese militant group fighting alongside Syria's government, says the buses were burned during fighting between the al-Qaida-affiliated Fatah al-Sham Front and a rebel group that supported the evacuations. The Observatory says six buses were burned while Hezbollah's media outlet put the number at five.

Associated Press: Head of UN nuclear watchdog visits Iran

<http://bigstory.ap.org/dd155b6f9d36448eb0e91514916d83a5>

The head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog is visiting Iran for the second time since a landmark nuclear agreement with world powers went into effect at the start of this year. Yukiya Amano, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, on Sunday urged all sides to adhere to the agreement. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said Iran would abide by the deal if other nations do, and said IAEA reports should be "technical and impartial." The IAEA said last month that Iran exceeded its heavy water limit by 100 kilograms (220 pounds) over the 130 metric tons allowed under the agreement. Heavy water is used to cool reactors that produce plutonium, which can be used in atomic bombs. Iran later said it transferred 11 tons of heavy water to Oman.

World News:

Associated Press: S. Korea to begin trial of impeached president's confidante

<http://bigstory.ap.org/dd90b713addb48aeb530b870c32c1e0e>

The jailed confidante of disgraced South Korean President Park Geun-hye begins a trial Monday that will explore a scandal that led to Park's impeachment after millions took to the streets in protest. The trial of Choi Soon-sil, Park's friend of 40 years, is the biggest since the 2014 trial of the crew of a ferry that sank and killed more than 300 people, mostly teenagers. Ten others swept up in the scandal also face trial. Speculation about Choi dominated local news every day for months, but she is still a mystery. She last appeared in public on Oct. 31, when, after losing a Prada shoe in a crush of media and protesters, she told reporters at the Seoul prosecutors' office that she had "committed a sin that deserves death."

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