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To:  
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Subject: Morning Clips – Wednesday, December 28, 2016

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## Morning Clips – Wednesday, December 28, 2016

### General Assembly News:

**Associated Press:** Deputies: S. Carolina lawmaker beat wife, pointed gun at her

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=e6jJ5iRI](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=e6jJ5iRI)

Jeffrey Collins

A South Carolina House member who rebuked his colleagues in a Christmas card for lacking morals when they took down the Confederate flag is accused of beating his wife and pointing a gun at her, deputies said. Officers in Aiken County charged Rep. Chris Corley with a pair of felonies that could send him to prison for up to 15 years after he attacked his wife during an argument over his infidelity late Monday night at their home in Graniteville, according to a police report. The couple's young children were there, and the wife took the family to her mother's house across the street after Corley threatened to kill her, then said he would kill himself, the report said.

**Associated Press:** The Latest: \$20,000 bond issued for arrested lawmaker

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=GjxtbJap](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=GjxtbJap)

SC State Wire

A magistrate has set a \$20,000 bond for a South Carolina House member charged with first-degree domestic violence. Multiple media outlets report the judge also ordered Rep. Chris Corley to not contact his wife as he awaits trial after his arrest Tuesday on charges of first-degree domestic violence and pointing a weapon at a person. Aiken County deputies say the 36-year-old Republican lawyer punched his wife, threatened to kill her and pointed a gun at her after a fight over his infidelity at their Graniteville home Monday night. He faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted of the two felony charges. Corley did not talk about the charges in court.

**Aiken Standard:** Conservative lawmaker from Graniteville at center of domestic violence case

[http://www.aikenstandard.com/news/conservative-lawmaker-from-graniteville-at-center-of-domestic-violence-case/article\\_5be4fa98-cc63-11e6-bb55-bbf74828d9a0.html](http://www.aikenstandard.com/news/conservative-lawmaker-from-graniteville-at-center-of-domestic-violence-case/article_5be4fa98-cc63-11e6-bb55-bbf74828d9a0.html)

Maya Prabhu and Maayan Schechter

A young, conservative state lawmaker known for his defense of gun rights and support of the Confederate battle flag was released from jail Tuesday after posting \$20,000 bail on charges that he beat his wife and pointed a handgun at her. As a condition of his release, state Rep. Chris Corley, R-Graniteville, is to have no contact with his wife and cannot be in possession of a firearm, Magistrate Melanie James DuBose said. Corley, 36, is charged with first-degree domestic violence and pointing and presenting a firearm, according to charges filed by the Aiken County Sheriff's Office. The felony allegations were first reported by the Aiken Standard and stem from an incident that occurred Monday at Corley's home. Calls from The Post and Courier to Corley's cellphone went directly to voicemail. Early in his career, Corley shared some of his views on domestic violence. In a December 2014 interview with the Aiken Standard ahead of his first term in office, Corley said he didn't know if the government could completely fix the state's domestic violence issue.

**Aiken Standard:** Judge sets \$20K bond for South Carolina Rep. Corley charged with domestic violence

[http://www.aikenstandard.com/news/judge-sets-k-bond-for-south-carolina-rep-corley-charged/article\\_b9be9ac8-cc47-11e6-9c8c-ff7a707cb5cb.html](http://www.aikenstandard.com/news/judge-sets-k-bond-for-south-carolina-rep-corley-charged/article_b9be9ac8-cc47-11e6-9c8c-ff7a707cb5cb.html)

Maayan Schechter

A judge set a \$20,000 bond on Tuesday for the South Carolina House Representative from Graniteville charged with assaulting his wife and pointing a handgun at her. Wearing a long sleeved T-shirt, blue gym shorts and gray New Balance shoes, Republican Rep. Chris Corley stared straight ahead at Magistrate Judge Melanie James DuBose as she told him he was to have no contact with his wife and couldn't possess any firearms while on bond. Corley will be able to drive to and from Augusta, where he works as an attorney. Corley was arrested by the Aiken County Sheriff's Office early Tuesday morning on felony charges of first-degree domestic violence and pointing and presenting firearms at a person. He was issued a \$10,000 bond on each charge. On domestic violence first degree, if convicted, the charge carries a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, according to the Solicitor's Office. On the gun charge, if convicted, Corley could be sentenced up to five years in prison. He is being represented by a family member.

**Aiken Standard:** Aiken County sheriff won't release dashcam of South Carolina lawmaker's arrest

[http://www.aikenstandard.com/news/aiken-county-sheriff-won-t-release-dashcam-of-south-carolina/article\\_a4ff2984-cc71-11e6-8a19-fbac03fa2764.html](http://www.aikenstandard.com/news/aiken-county-sheriff-won-t-release-dashcam-of-south-carolina/article_a4ff2984-cc71-11e6-8a19-fbac03fa2764.html)

Michael Smith

Aiken County law enforcement officials say they won't release dashcam video from the arrest of State Rep. Chris Corley, who's facing criminal domestic violence and weapons charges. Corley, 36, of Graniteville, has been charged with first-degree domestic violence and pointing and presenting firearms at a person, according to arrest warrants obtained by the Aiken Standard. Bond was set at \$20,000 during a hearing Tuesday afternoon. Dashcam footage of the South Carolina lawmaker's early morning arrest, however, is remaining a closely guarded secret even though the courts have held such footage is considered public information. The Aiken Standard requested the footage through the S.C. Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA, earlier in the day. Capt. Eric Abdullah, spokesman for the Sheriff's Office, said Tuesday the video recording wouldn't be released. Abdullah said the sheriff's office doesn't release dashcam footage in domestic cases. A formal statement regarding the Aiken Standard's request was expected, but not available as of press time.

**The State:** Bill would give Richland County control of troubled Rec Commission

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article123186244.html>

Avery G. Wilks

Richland County Council soon could get long-sought oversight over the county's troubled Recreation Commission. A bill, prefiled by state Sen. John Courson, R-Richland, would pave the way for Richland County's State House delegation to give County Council the power to hire and fire the commission's board. State Rep. Beth Bernstein, D-Richland, plans to file a similar bill, plus an alternative that gives the delegation itself hiring and firing power. The proposals come after six of the commission's seven board members either resigned or were fired by S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley following allegations of nepotism, public corruption and sexual harassment at the agency. The months-long debacle highlighted concerns about the commission's public accountability. County Council funds the Recreation Commission but cannot control it. Meanwhile, Richland legislators nominate the commission's members but do not have the power to fire them.

**Independent Mail:** Proposals would streamline S.C. public records process

<http://www.independentmail.com/story/news/local/2016/12/27/proposals-would-streamline-sc-public-records-process/95880702/>

Kirk Brown

Two bills filed this month in the South Carolina General Assembly would lessen the time and cost associated with challenging denials of public records requests. The measures introduced by Sen. Chip Campsen and Reps. Weston Newton and Bill Taylor call for state administrative hearing officers to preside over disputes regarding requests made under South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act. Those who want to challenge the denial of a public records request now must often wait up to a year for a circuit court judge to rule on the matter, said Campsen, a Republican from Charleston. He

said administrative hearing officers would be able to handle these cases more promptly. In October 2015, the Independent Mail, The Greenville News and The Journal of Seneca sued the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division after authorities refused to release a video from a dashboard camera related to the fatal shooting of 19-year-old Zachary Hammond. The video was released about two weeks after the lawsuit was filed and the case was ultimately dismissed, according to court records.

**WCIV:** Lowcountry lawmakers propose gas 'user fees' in upcoming legislative session

<http://abcnews4.com/news/lowcountry-and-state-politics/lowcountry-lawmakers-propose-gas-user-fees-in-upcoming-legislative-session>

Sam Tyson

State lawmakers are looking to a hike in gas taxes in the New Year as a way to fund ongoing road projects and infrastructure spending shortfalls. Sen. Paul Campbell, a Berkeley County Republican, is co-sponsoring two such bills. Both are listed not as tax increases but "motor fuel user fees." One of the bills, co-signed by Summerville Republican Sen. Sean Bennett, calls for increasing that statewide gas fee from its current level of 16 cents to 28 cents in exchange for a drop in income taxes. The bill calls for a three-year graduated increase which would raise the state's gas tax to something much closer to neighboring North Carolina and Georgia, where taxes are over 30 cents. The federal gas tax is 18 cents. Another bill co-sponsored by Campbell and Goose Creek Republican Larry Grooms would let counties set their own fee rates with a local referendum.

**WIS:** Residents caught by surprise after learning Richland Co. offices closed

<http://www.wistv.com/story/34138440/residents-caught-by-surprise-after-learning-richland-co-offices-closed>

Jack Kuenzie

A man who only would refer to himself as an "Independent Feisty Conservative" has a gripe with Richland County and he says he's not alone. He, along with many others, traveled to the Richland County Administration offices on Hampton Street on Tuesday only to find the lights off and the doors locked. "I don't get it," he said. "I don't understand why they need five days." To be fair, Richland County government wasn't the only one shut down on Tuesday. Lexington County offices and those of state government also took the day off. All three put that information on websites and newsletters. At Richland, it was there at the bottom of the sign on the door if you looked really close. However, for some reason, the word failed to reach dozens of people who continued to show up hour after hour at 2020 Hampton Street.

## **SC Delegation News:**

**WIS:** Rep. Wilson announces 2017 priorities under new president

<http://www.wistv.com/story/34138166/rep-wilson-announces-2017-priorities-under-new-president>

Ashleigh Holland

Lawmakers will be back in Washington D.C. in a week and will soon be working under a new Commander-in-Chief. On Tuesday, Congressman Joe Wilson announced his priorities for 2017. Wilson believes President-elect Donald Trump will make Republicans' jobs in the House and Senate easier. Wilson intends to focus on creating more jobs and reducing regulations on businesses he says are harmful to jobs. The representative from the 2nd Congressional District says he will promote the military and veterans while focusing on strengthening the country's response to cyberattacks. "And I'm confident the first thing he does when he gets to the Oval Office, he will sign executive orders deregulating different businesses and industries and overturning executive orders that have been an overreach in our government," said Wilson, "so, he's going to have a busy afternoon before he goes to the Inaugural Ball." Wilson believes tax cuts for businesses promoted by Trump will help jobs in South Carolina. He also praised Trump's tentative staff and cabinet, including Governor Nikki Haley.

## **Dylann Roof Case:**

**Associated Press:** Roof has death penalty case hearing acting as own lawyer

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=9ROBvruj](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=9ROBvruj)

Jeffrey Collins

Dylann Roof may soon show how hard he intends to fight to save his life as prosecutors seek the death penalty for killing nine black worshippers in a hate crime at a Charleston church. A judge scheduled a hearing Wednesday in federal court to hear motions before the penalty phase in Roof's trial starts next week. Roof is now acting as his own lawyer after letting go of his defense attorneys after a jury convicted him of 33 counts of hate crimes and obstruction of justice earlier this month. Roof's lawyers say they think he got rid of them because they wanted to present what Roof thought was embarrassing evidence seeking to get the same jury to spare his life.

**The State:** Dylann Roof expected to speak at hearing in preparation for sentencing phase of trial

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article123191089.html>

Cynthia Roldan and John Monk

The Columbia-area man who killed nine black parishioners at a Charleston church will go before a judge on Wednesday to prepare for the sentencing phase of his hate crimes trial. Dylann Roof, 22, is expected to represent himself when the jury returns on Jan. 3 to decide if he should get the death penalty. Roof has until then to change his mind and have his highly experienced, anti-death penalty lawyer David Bruck take over. But before then, he'll attend a pretrial conference at 10 a.m., at the Charleston federal courthouse. Details on what the hearing will entail were not included in the Dec. 19 order by presiding U.S. District Judge Richard Gergel. Since Roof was found guilty on Dec. 15, few motions have been filed in federal court. On Dec. 16, Roof filed a handwritten note that he would not be offering expert evidence on his mental condition during the sentencing proceedings. A few days later, Gergel filed a sealed order, and lead prosecutor Jay Richardson filed a sealed document Monday.

**WCIV:** Hearing set for Wednesday ahead of sentencing phase of Roof's federal trial

<http://abcnews4.com/news/emanuel-ame-shooting/hearing-set-for-wednesday-ahead-of-sentencing-phase-of-roofs-federal-trial>

Sam Tyson

Dylann Roof will return to court Wednesday to discuss issues surrounding the sentencing phase of his federal hate crimes trial.

Roof, who is serving as his own attorney for the second phase of the trial, faces a possible death sentence for the June 17, 2015 shooting that left nine people dead at Emanuel AME Church. The hearing is set to begin at 10 a.m. Before the holiday break, jurors found Roof guilty on all 33 counts he faced, many of which carry a life sentence up to death. His attorneys David Bruck and Sarah Gannett, two of the country's top death sentence defense attorneys, have been relegated to the sidelines for the sentencing phase of the trial. Bruck and Gannett were dealt several blows to their defense in the closing days of the trial earlier this month when U.S. District Court Judge Richard Gergel would not allow any defense witnesses to testify in the guilt phase, saying their testimony lended itself more to the sentencing phase.

## **Michael Slager Case:**

**Associated Press:** Federal civil rights trial for SC officer set for May 1

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=3sR02K6N](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=3sR02K6N)

SC State Wire

A federal judge has ordered the civil rights trial of a South Carolina police officer charged with murder for killing a black driver running from a traffic stop to start on May 1. Michael Slager stood trial on the murder charge in state court, but a jury couldn't reach a verdict earlier this month. State prosecutors have vowed to try him again, but no trial date has been set. Slager, who is white, is also charged in federal court with violating Walter Scott's civil rights. Authorities say the former North Charleston



police officer shot Walter Scott in the back in April 2015 as Scott tried to run from a traffic stop. Slager says Scott grabbed his Taser as the two wrestled on the ground and he feared for his life.

**Post and Courier:** Federal judge formalizes May 1 start date for Michael Slager civil rights trial  
[http://www.postandcourier.com/news/federal-judge-formalizes-may-start-date-for-michael-slager-civil/article\\_d6f79da8-cc72-11e6-a407-d7615710cf7c.html](http://www.postandcourier.com/news/federal-judge-formalizes-may-start-date-for-michael-slager-civil/article_d6f79da8-cc72-11e6-a407-d7615710cf7c.html)

Andrew Knapp

A federal judge has set jury selection in former North Charleston policeman Michael Slager's civil rights trial for May 1, formalizing earlier discussions about a schedule for the proceeding. Charged in Walter Scott's shooting death, Slager's trial in state court ended earlier this month with a hung jury after the panel could not unanimously agree on whether the former lawman should be convicted of murder or the lesser manslaughter charge, or be acquitted. State prosecutors have vowed to retry Slager, but the federal case, meanwhile, has resumed. Slager, 35, is charged in U.S. District Court with violating Scott's rights under the color of law, lying to investigators and using a firearm in a violent crime. He would face up to life in prison if convicted on the civil rights count. As a patrol officer, Slager pulled over Scott's car on April 4, 2015, for a broken brake light. Scott, 50, soon ran from the traffic stop, but Slager reported taking him down with a Taser. During an ensuing struggle, Slager said Scott took the stun gun and turned it on him, prompting him to fire in self-defense.

### **Hurricane Matthew Recovery:**

**Jasper Sun Times:** Hurricane Matthew: Recovery continues

<http://www.jaspersuntimes.com/news/2016-12-27/hurricane-matthew-recovery-continues>

Liz Bloom

Hurricane Matthew was the story of the year, and the county continues to recover. After the October Category 2 storm, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, who has since been named UN Ambassador for the Trump Administration, declared Jasper County a disaster area, making it eligible for federal FEMA Public Assistance (PA) and Individual Assistance (IA) funding. Jasper had more than 1,000 people register with FEMA. The effects have been longstanding. The county is still working on cleanup and other recovery efforts. Citizens and the local government have worked hard to help lessen the impact of the storm. Pastor Henry Criss of Faith Ridgeland worked with Voluntary Organizations in Active Disaster (VOAD) and other emergency relief organizations to help individuals recover. "We discovered needs in Jasper County and identified that not all were disaster driven needs - things like food and housing security," Criss said. "We want to build back better, a more resilient recovery, to not just get things back to how they were, but better and more prepared."

### **Opinion/Editorial:**

**Aiken Standard:** Editorial: Aiken County sheriff should release video from Corley's arrest

[http://www.aikenstandard.com/opinion/editorial-aiken-county-sheriff-should-release-video-from-corley-s/article\\_3b02b274-cc9b-11e6-aa9a-03ac95e603f8.html](http://www.aikenstandard.com/opinion/editorial-aiken-county-sheriff-should-release-video-from-corley-s/article_3b02b274-cc9b-11e6-aa9a-03ac95e603f8.html)

Editorial

There's a very good reason why South Carolina lawmakers are pushing for legislation compelling the release of dashcam video. They understand that it's crucial for taxpayers who support law enforcement agencies with their hard-earned dollars to function with complete and total transparency. It's too bad the Aiken County Sheriff's Office doesn't realize this. Not long after the arrest of Rep. Chris Corley, R-Graniteville on felony domestic violence and weapons charges, the sheriff's office informed the Aiken Standard that it wouldn't be releasing dashcam from Corley's arrest. A formal statement regarding the matter is expected soon. The Aiken Standard has always advocated for the release of dashcam in any high-profile incident. Because the Corley footage involves a public official holding an important office, there should be no question that the dashcam deserves to be released. Withholding the tapes will only foster suspicion and creates the impression that Corley is receiving special treatment because of his status as a state lawmaker. True or not, that's the impression that's

given when the footage is kept secret.

**The State:** The (real) assault on the (real) Christmas

<http://www.thestate.com/opinion/op-ed/article123105119.html>

Cindi Ross Scoppe

ON THE SECOND day of Christmas, my neighbors dragged their naked tree out to the curb, to be hauled away with Monday's garbage. I reluctantly disassembled my own tree, because I wanted to bring my kitties back home from their Christmas visit with relatives and knew they would disassemble it themselves — along with my own peace on earth — if I did not. The rest of the decorations remain through today. On the third day of Christmas, I awoke to the sound of a "Morning Edition" host ridiculing the grocery stores that were still — still — playing Christmas music. On the fourth day of Christmas, the first three installments of Rick Noble's 12 creches of Christmas arrived in my in-box, along with a couple of messages that concluded with "Merry Christmas." Maybe I was overstating this American rush to sweep the celebration of the Incarnation out into the bleak midwinter, I thought, as I selected a Christmas column to run on the next day's Commentary page. Mr. Noble, who runs First Steps in Richland County, told me people seem to like the extended celebration offered by the pictures from his collection of creches. Then he took the opportunity of our conversation to pitch a column he was working on.

### South Carolina News:

**Associated Press:** Duke starts removing coal ash from Anderson County site

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=RN0E4e8k](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=RN0E4e8k)

SC State Wire

An environmental group says Duke Energy has started to remove more than three tons of coal ash from a site near the Saluda River in Anderson County. The Southern Environmental Law Center said in a news release that Duke reported in December it has removed more than 650,000 tons of the 3.6 million tons of ash at the W.S. Lee facility near Williamston. The utility has nine more years to removing the remaining 85 percent of the ash from the site as part of a settlement with the environmental group. Conservationists say the ash pits at the Anderson County site were especially dangerous because they did not have a liner and were so close to the Saluda River. Duke Energy will also remove coal ash from a plant in Darlington.

**Post and Courier:** Engineering firm: Charleston ports agency banned work to gain leverage in lawsuit

[http://www.postandcourier.com/business/engineering-firm-charleston-ports-agency-banned-work-to-gain-leverage/article\\_3635e99a-cc51-11e6-b06a-e3578002a127.html](http://www.postandcourier.com/business/engineering-firm-charleston-ports-agency-banned-work-to-gain-leverage/article_3635e99a-cc51-11e6-b06a-e3578002a127.html)

David Wren

A Raleigh-based engineering firm says the State Ports Authority banned it from doing work at a new container terminal in North Charleston, forcing the cancellation of a six-figure contract, in an attempt to gain a "strategic advantage" against the firm in a lawsuit. S&ME Inc. claims in court documents filed last week that the SPA "adopted a new policy" in October that prevents S.J. Hamill Construction, the main contractor at the Leatherman Terminal, from hiring S&ME "as a contractor or vendor on any project" associated with the maritime agency. Hamill had already hired S&ME as a subcontractor to do soil testing and other work at the terminal before the policy was adopted, according to court documents. Hamill fired S&ME this month after the SPA sent a letter to Hamill announcing the new policy.

**The State:** SC in top half of states for public health preparedness <http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article123093179.html>

South Carolina scored a 7 on a report by the Trust for America's Health titled "Ready or Not? Protecting the Public from Diseases, Disasters and Bioterrorism," placing it into the top half of states according to 10 indicators of public health preparedness. The authors found "the nation is often

caught off guard when a new threat arises, such as Zika or the Ebola outbreak or bioterrorist threat, which then requires diverting attention and resources away from other priorities."In the report, Alaska and Idaho scored lowest at 3 out of 10, and Massachusetts scored the highest at 10 out of 10. North Carolina and Washington state scored 9s."Health emergencies can quickly disrupt, derail and divert resources from other ongoing priorities and efforts from across the government," said Rich Hamburg, Trust for America's Health interim president and chief executive.

**The State:** Sam Elkins, Columbia businessman, philanthropist, dies at 70

<http://www.thestate.com/news/business/article123190199.html>

Jeff Wilkinson

Samuel Michael Elkins, a philanthropist and businessman who started out in the insurance business in 1969, founded one of Columbia's leading insurance firms and became a national leader in sales production, died at home on Monday after a battle with cancer. He was 70. His companies, Coverage Unlimited and KeenanSuggs BowersElkins, had recently been sold to Hub International. Sam Tenenbaum, a friend for four decades, called Elkins "a very astute businessman who ran a very successful agency. He was involved in the community, a good citizen and raised a great family. He was a good guy and we're going to miss him." Elkins was born in Hazelhurst, Ga., to Ruth and Isadore Elkins, Jewish immigrants from Poland and Russia who came to the United States to escape the Holocaust. "They opened a merchandise store in Alma, Ga.," said his son, Eric, "and that is where my father learned his work ethic and to care for the less fortunate."

## Local News:

**Independent Mail:** Woman on life support after range shooting in Anderson County

<http://www.independentmail.com/story/news/crime/2016/12/27/woman-remains-critical-after-range-shooting-anderson-county/95867098/>

Mike Ellis

A 24-year-old woman was on life support Tuesday night after being shot Monday at an Anderson County shooting range. The woman, whose name is not available from authorities, was at AnMed Health Medical Center after being shot at the Skip J Range on Murphy Road. Greg Shore, of Medshore Ambulance Service, said the woman was taken to the hospital Monday afternoon with a head wound and is on life support. The woman was visiting from out of town and was with family members at the range, where she had gone before to shoot, Shore said. Skip J Range owner Jerry James said Tuesday morning that he didn't yet know who was injured or what exactly happened. However, he called the shooting an accident.

**Associated Press:** Authorities: Trooper shoots driver reversing into him

[http://m.apnews.com/ap/db\\_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Pz4vnMHt](http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Pz4vnMHt)

SC State Wire

Authorities say a North Carolina trooper shot into a car, hitting the driver who was reversing into the officer. Gaston County District Attorney Locke Bell told WSOC-TV that 31-year-old Jeremy Lewis was airlifted to a Charlotte hospital and is expected to recover. Reports say Trooper Christopher Wade also was taken to a hospital with minor injuries. Col. Bill Grey says he's thankful the trooper wasn't seriously hurt. The Department of Public Safety says the trooper stopped Lewis for a traffic violation Tuesday afternoon in Gastonia. A release says Wade tried to arrest Lewis after a license plate check showed he was wanted for probation violations, and that's when Lewis tried to flee, going up an embankment and then reversing. The State Bureau of Investigation is investigating. The races of the two weren't immediately known.

**Post and Courier:** Many police in South Carolina not enforcing texting-while-driving law

[http://www.postandcourier.com/news/many-police-in-south-carolina-not-enforcing-texting-while-driving/article\\_aab9fba0-c236-11e6-b866-dbc106265812.html](http://www.postandcourier.com/news/many-police-in-south-carolina-not-enforcing-texting-while-driving/article_aab9fba0-c236-11e6-b866-dbc106265812.html)

David Slade

A two-year-old South Carolina law prohibiting texting while driving has been enforced lightly — and sometimes not at all — while safety advocates say the behavior can be more dangerous than driving drunk. North Charleston, the state's third-largest city, has not ticketed a single driver. Charleston, despite pledging tough enforcement at the end of 2013 when the city had its own anti-texting ordinance, has ticketed fewer than three dozen drivers since that time. Mount Pleasant, the state's fourth-largest city, has ticketed more than twice as many drivers as Charleston but has averaged fewer than five citations per month since the state law took effect two years ago. "Even if it's just one a week, maybe that's one accident that's been avoided," said Mount Pleasant Mayor Linda Page. "The bigger story for me is, really just being more mindful while driving ... just focus on what you are doing."

**Associated Press:** Charleston attorney, ex-Congress candidate Curtis Bostic arrested in 'horse-rescue effort'

[http://www.postandcourier.com/news/charleston-attorney-ex-congress-candidate-curtis-bostic-arrested-in-horse/article\\_a65d2180-cc82-11e6-bcdd-ef6b04a50e2c.html](http://www.postandcourier.com/news/charleston-attorney-ex-congress-candidate-curtis-bostic-arrested-in-horse/article_a65d2180-cc82-11e6-bcdd-ef6b04a50e2c.html)

Andrew Knapp

Charleston attorney and former congressional candidate Curtis Bostic was arrested earlier this month during what he called a horse-rescue operation in rural Kentucky. Bostic, along with another local man, were booked Dec. 18 at the Three Forks Regional Jail on a felony charge of theft by unlawful taking of livestock, jail records showed. He was released on \$2,500 bail the next day after a 13-hour stay behind bars. "There is an issue there," Bostic said Tuesday about the once-thriving coal-producing region in the Appalachian foothills where he was arrested, "and my actions were part of a humanitarian horse-rescue effort." Bostic, 55, a Republican and former county councilman, lost a 2013 primary campaign against Mark Sanford for an open seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. He has dedicated free time to humanitarian efforts, and his family runs a farm in Ravenel where they ride horses.

**Post and Courier:** New federal rule loosens industry restrictions to protect eagles

[http://www.postandcourier.com/news/new-federal-rule-loosens-industry-restrictions-to-protect-eagles/article\\_f82b6dfe-cc5b-11e6-9a57-ab7ac58f09b3.html](http://www.postandcourier.com/news/new-federal-rule-loosens-industry-restrictions-to-protect-eagles/article_f82b6dfe-cc5b-11e6-9a57-ab7ac58f09b3.html)

Bo Petersen

The once-endangered bald eagle has run smack into human progress. Federal regulators have approved a controversial proposal to allow the take, or unintended killing, of the protected birds without penalty, under a single permit issued for as long as 30 years. In contrast, a hunter killing an eagle without a permit could be fined \$15,000 and jailed for six months. In other "take" cases, a permit is required for each kill. The loosening of permit restrictions is designed, like the permits themselves, not to unfairly penalize industries using equipment such as wind turbines or power lines. The permit requires the take to be monitored and periodically reviewed, and for the permittee to show measures have been taken to reduce the number of birds killed. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe said the rule used the best science to promote conservation of the bird. "The service has a long history of working cooperatively with multiple industry sectors through the permitting process to reduce impacts to eagles and other federally protected wildlife species," he said.

**Island Packet:** Beaufort County seeks \$2M a year over 10 years for sidewalks

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/community/beaufort-news/article122633539.html>

Lucas High

In many parts of Beaufort County, particularly the more rural areas north of the Broad River, the lack of sidewalks forces pedestrians to make a decision: risk walking in the street or in the grass that often grows tall and wild on the side of the road. Neither choice is a good one, some county leaders say. A sales tax increase referendum rejected by voters in November would have raised more than \$7 million for sidewalk improvements and installation. With that money off the table, county officials are left searching for a Plan B. Adding sidewalks is a "really important safety need," Beaufort County



Councilman Brian Flewelling said earlier this week. "Everyday I see people walking at night in the road because there is no sidewalk," he said. "... It gets to be very dangerous."

### **President-elect Trump News:**

**Associated Press:** For Trump White House, diplomatic security challenges remain

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/c7f15ae3ecf049458686be156be5c93a/trump-white-house-diplomatic-security-challenges-remain>

Donald Trump hammered rival Hillary Clinton during the presidential campaign for failing to prevent the attack on the U.S. mission in Benghazi, Libya, when she was secretary of state. Soon he'll be the one responsible for protecting America's diplomats, but he's offered virtually no insight into how he'll do that. After the 2012 Benghazi attack, Congress boosted spending on security to protect the tens of thousands of Americans and foreign staff that make up the U.S. diplomatic service. Security experts and career diplomats say there have been improvements, but that significant shortfalls remain. Last week's assassination of Russia's ambassador to Turkey, Andrei Karlov, was a chilling reminder that diplomats are increasingly exposed to threats, even in countries that are typically not regarded as hardship posts. The assassin shouted, "Don't forget Aleppo," apparently referring to Russia's military engagement in Syria.

### **National News:**

**Associated Press:** 'Star Wars' actress and author Carrie Fisher dies at 60

<https://www.apnews.com/743b0fa49dd742568fa2ac397647dc45/Daughter:-Actress-and-author-Carrie-Fisher-dies-at-age-60>

Carrie Fisher, a daughter of Hollywood royalty who gained pop-culture fame as Princess Leia in the original "Star Wars" and turned her struggles with addiction and mental illness into wickedly funny books, a hit film and a one-woman stage show, died Tuesday after falling ill aboard a flight last week. She was 60. "Carrie was one of a kind ... brilliant, original. Funny and emotionally fearless. She lived her life, bravely," "Star Wars" co-star Harrison Ford said in a statement. Fisher, the daughter of actress Debbie Reynolds and singer Eddie Fisher, had been hospitalized since Friday, when paramedics responded to a report of a patient in distress at Los Angeles airport. Her family gave no details on the emergency, but media reports said she had suffered a heart attack.

**Associated Press:** Growing number of Americans are retiring outside the US

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/481092d42ef549c7bdd3fbcab8c919cf/growing-number-americans-are-retiring-outside-us>

Newly widowed, Kay McCowen quit her job, sold her house, applied for Social Security and retired to Mexico. It was a move she and her husband, Mel, had discussed before he passed away in 2012. "I wanted to find a place where I could afford to live off my Social Security," she said. "The weather here is so perfect, and it's a beautiful place." She is among a growing number of Americans who are retiring outside the United States. The number grew 17 percent between 2010 and 2015 and is expected to increase over the next 10 years as more baby boomers retire. Just under 400,000 American retirees are now living abroad, according to the Social Security Administration. The countries they have chosen most often: Canada, Japan, Mexico, Germany and the United Kingdom.

### **United Nations News:**

**Associated Press:** The Latest: East Jerusalem housing vote delayed

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/e59a74097184494f8277a0263f5fbe55/latest-israeli-minister-slams-kerrys-upcoming-speech>

A Jerusalem city councilman says a municipal committee has delayed a vote on roughly 500 new homes in Jewish areas of east Jerusalem following a request from Israel's prime minister. Council member Hanan Rubin told The Associated Press that Benjamin Netanyahu asked to delay

Wednesday's vote so as not to antagonize relations with the U.S. Rubin says the council did not want U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to mention the building in his anticipated policy speech on Wednesday, turning it into a "political issue." Israel captured east Jerusalem and the West Bank in 1967. The Palestinians claim east Jerusalem as their future capital. Israel is angry the U.S. allowed a resolution to pass in the U.N. Security Council calling settlements in east Jerusalem and the West Bank a "flagrant violation" of international law.

**Associated Press:** Turkey, Russia discussing Syria cease-fire plan

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/f0e61722ecce47a18fff905b9da81745/report-turkey-russia-agree-syria-cease-fire-plan>

Turkish and Russian officials are discussing the contours of a cease-fire for Syria, Syrian opposition factions said, building on cooperation between the two countries following a deal they brokered for the evacuation of opposition fighters from the northern city of Aleppo earlier this month. Several rebel groups said, however, that they are withholding their approval of any agreement until they receive details about its terms. An official with one of the factions told The Associated Press that Russian and Turkish officials were debating a cease-fire proposal that would encompass the whole of Syria. He spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks were ongoing. Rebels have spoken up in the past against proposals that would allow the government to continue its offensives around the outskirts of the capital, Damascus. Turkey's Anadolu Agency said Wednesday morning that Ankara and Moscow had reached an agreement, but there was no confirmation from state officials.

**NOTE:** In the U.N., a top Russian diplomat said a draft U.N. Security Council resolution that would impose sanctions on Syria for chemical weapons use is unacceptable to Moscow, which has veto power on the council.

**NOTE:** Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov was quoted by the state news agency Tass on Wednesday as saying the resolution "is categorically unacceptable to us. We warn them against attempts to fan tensions in the U.N. Security Council."

**CBS News:** Why are people so upset over the latest U.N. resolution about Israel?

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/why-are-people-so-upset-over-the-latest-united-nations-resolution-about-israel/>

The Obama administration's decision to not veto a United Nations resolution sharply critical of Israeli settlements continues to stir debate. But was it really all that different than prior U.N. resolutions that criticized Israel that the U.S. let pass? The U.N. resolution condemning Israeli settlement activity passed the Security Council last week after the U.S. declined to use its veto power to stop it. Samantha Power, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., instead cast the sole abstaining vote. All other nations on the Security Council voted in favor. The resolution called for Israel to "immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem." East Jerusalem, which contains some of the holiest sites in Judaism, was seized by Israel in the Six-Day War of 1967. In a speech before the chamber, Power insisted that her vote did "not in any way diminish the United States' steadfast and unparalleled commitment to the security of Israel." Conservatives and pro-Israel advocates say the resolution signals a major and damaging reversal of U.S. policy in the region. "The White House has abandoned any pretense that the actual parties to the conflict must resolve their differences," John Bolton, the former U.S. ambassador to the U.N., wrote in the Wall Street Journal on Monday.

**World News:**

**Associated Press:** Obama, Japan's Abe decry 'horrors of war' at Pearl Harbor

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/5fb9525df791439ea061f7b8718a6025/obama-japans-abe-decry-horrors-war-pearl-harbor>

The leaders of Japan and the United States sought to remind the world that even the most bitter enemies can become allies, during a historic pilgrimage to the hallowed waters of Pearl Harbor. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe did not apologize, but conceded Japan "must never repeat the horrors of war

again."Seventy-five years after Japan's surprise attack, Abe and President Barack Obama peered down Tuesday at the rusting wreckage of the USS Arizona, clearly visible in the tranquil, teal water. In a show of respect for the war dead, Obama and Abe dropped purple petals into the water and stood in silence. More than 1,000 U.S. war dead remain entombed in the submerged ship, which Japan struck as part of the devastating attack that killed more than 2,300 Americans and sent America marching into World War II.

**Associated Press:** Venezuela military trafficking food as country goes hungry

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/64794f2594de47328b910dc29dd7c996/venezuela-military-trafficking-food-country-goes-hungry>

When hunger drew tens of thousands of Venezuelans to the streets in protest last summer, President Nicolas Maduro turned to the military to manage the country's diminished food supply, putting generals in charge of everything from butter to rice. But instead of fighting hunger, the military is making money from it, an Associated Press investigation shows. That's what grocer Jose Campos found when he ran out of pantry staples this year. In the middle of the night, he would travel to an illegal market run by the military to buy pallets of corn flour — at 100 times the government-set price. "The military would be watching over whole bags of money," Campos said. "They always had what I needed." With much of the country on the verge of starvation and billions of dollars at stake, food trafficking has become one of the biggest businesses in Venezuela, the AP found. And from generals to foot soldiers, the military is at the heart of the graft, according to documents and interviews with more than 60 officials, business owners and workers, including five former generals.

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