

From: Symmes, Brian <BrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov>
To:
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Subject: SC Front Pages – Thursday, January 7, 2016

SC Front Pages – Thursday, January 7, 2016



SPORTS USC RIGHT FOR COACH



CITY PEOPLE Adventures just keep on climbing

The Greenville News

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

THURSDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2016
GREENVILLEONLINE.COM



DOW OFF TO ITS WORST 3-DAY NEW YEAR START SINCE 2008 **PAGE 5B**

Graham sets rules on earning endorsement

Any presidential candidate would have to challenge Trump, Cruz

RUDOLPH BELL
DBELL@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said Wednesday that he'll expect any presidential candidate who gets his endorsement to challenge Donald Trump and Ted Cruz, the two candidates currently leading the contest for the Republican nomination.

The Republican Graham said he hasn't decided whether to endorse one of his former competitors for the White House, but it won't be Trump or Cruz because he considers them too extreme to beat Hillary Clinton, the likely Democratic nominee.

Trump, the New York billionaire, "has alienated all the constituencies" that Republicans need to rebuild their party,

such as Hispanics, Graham said.

As for Cruz, the Texas senator has been "on three sides of every issue" and "represents a form of conservatism that won't sell to a larger audience," Graham said.

"I think the Democrats would do a number on him as being an ideologue," Graham said about Cruz.

Graham made the remarks during an

interview at his downtown Greenville office two weeks and two days after ending his own presidential bid, which never took off.

"It's not enough to criticize Obama," Graham said. "All of us do it. But are you willing to criticize Trump? Are you willing to say Ted Cruz' approach to immigration is not practical? Are you willing to say — when Ted Cruz says we're going to eliminate the IRS — it's not going to

See **GRAHAM**, Page 5A

Roll Tigers? Title game splits Swinney's hometown



BRYAN ANDERSON/INAP

M & M Hardware is seen on Wednesday in Alabaster, Ala. The hardware store was once owned by Clemson football head coach Dabo Swinney's father, Cyril Swinney. Clemson will now play Alabama in the NCAA college football championship game on Monday.

Tom Causey answered countless phone calls that day in December 2013 when he was hired as the head football coach at Pelham High School in Alabama.

He will never forget one call. It was from an eager Pelham High alumnus.

Clemson University coach Dabo Swinney.

"He congratulated me on the job," Causey said, "and he told me if there was ever anything he could do for us to let him know."

Causey quickly redialed Swinney's office.

He asked Swinney to send an autograph, not for his personal collection but to display in the Pelham High athletic offices. Merely three days later, a package arrived from Clemson.

Inside, Causey found a white football



Mandrallius Robinson
Mandrallius@pelhamcitynews.com

Commentary

stamped with a bright orange Clemson Tiger paw and Swinney's signature. Causey displays it proudly, to honor Swinney's journey from Pelham to pinnacle.

"Pelham's had a lot of really big-time graduates come out of here, but that guy

has made it," Causey said. "We need to celebrate that. We need to wrap our arms around that."

According to Causey, the city of Pelham has embraced Swinney through his rapid rise as a college coach. Yet, its arms may loosen slightly Monday night, when Swinney leads Clemson in the College Football Playoff National Championship Game against the University of Alabama.

It is Swinney's alma mater. It is Pelham's priority.

"It is mixed emotions," said Jim Faithant, a 1961 Alabama graduate who has lived in Pelham since 1978 and rooted for the Crimson Tide his entire life. "If Dabo wins that's good, because he's one of the city's sons. But if it's just one point difference with Alabama on top, I'll probably

See **HOMETOWN**, Page 4A

Chamber links DOT reform to road funding

TIM SMITH
TSMITH@GREENVILLEONLINE.COM

COLUMBIA — South Carolina's business community is once again telling lawmakers to fix the state's roads.

This time, however, the State Chamber of Commerce has coupled its call for at least \$600 million in annual road funding with a request to reform the state's two major transportation boards.

Specifically, the chamber wants the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank to follow the same rules for setting project priorities that are required for the state Department of Transportation.

And the Chamber also wants DOT to be held accountable solely to the governor, instead of the current system in which the governor appoints the leader of the agency but lawmakers appoint members of the highway commission.

"If we don't fix that model, we're not going to fix DOT," said Mike Johnson, CEO of Cox Industries and a former chairman of the Chamber.

Senate Transportation Chairman Larry Groves said he has proposed the same reform ideas now pushed by the Chamber. He said he agrees those reforms must be part of any solution on road funding but wasn't overly optimistic on the chances of a bill passing this year.

"Today I'm giving it 50-50 odds," he said.

The Chamber on Wednesday named infrastructure as one of the business group's three legislative priorities for this year, just as it had last year, when the House passed a road-funding bill but the Senate failed to act on it.

John Upprichard, chairman of the Chamber and the president of Pind Forest People of Greenville, said repairing the state's roads is not a new issue. Improving the state's roads and bridges, he says, is an opportunity that has been around for years.

"I think moving forward, the question is what are we going to do differ-

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Thursday, January 7, 2016

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Final-exam policy angers high school seniors

Board to meet after many students who planned to skip tests find out they can't, after all

BY PAUL KATWELLS
pkatwells@postandcourier.com

High school students across Charleston County issued a collective groan Wednesday as the school district announced that many of them were no longer eligible for final exams.

Under a pilot program in the 2014-15 school year, high school seniors could exempt themselves from taking final exams if they earned a grade of B or higher in a course. But in a memorandum to high school administrators, district officials announced that since the school board had not approved the pilot program for the current school year, all schools would have to revert to

the old policy, which allows exam exemptions for students in all high school classes earning a 93 or higher with no unexcused or unexcused absences.

After hearing an uproar from students and parents, the Charleston County School District Board of Trustees will hold a special meeting via telephone on Feb. 3, Thursday to

discuss the exam policy. The first semester of the school year ends Jan. 13. Wando High senior Sarah Barnard said many seniors at her school were angered by the abrupt change after being told all school year that they only needed an 85 to skip exams. Some

Please see **EXAMS**, Page A5



Poll

Do you think it was fair in the Charleston County School District to re-visit its 85 or better final exam exemption policy with little prior notice? Go to postandcourier.com/polls to vote.

Students falling behind can catch up with ACE

Intensive program at Northwoods Middle gives kids shot at success



Northwoods Middle School student Harry Brunson works on his "Reflections Project" during class Dec. 27. The school's intensive alternative program, ACE, gives overage students a fresh start and a chance to catch up.

BY DEANNA PAN
dpansa@postandcourier.com

In the back of the classroom, Tyquan Cooper worked quietly on all the items of his algebra worksheet much to his relief.

"Dang! Dang! Dang!" he mut-

tered, "Oh my god!"

His first, Joe Gaskley, paced around, roars holding a black whistle against his lips.

"Relax, Relax," he said, "You're not even halfway through."

On the last Tuesday before winter break, Gaskley's students

look at their final "CRM," or "curriculum-based measurement," a student, brooklyn-style that assesses their progress in math. Tyquan's best friend, Harry Brunson, was determined to beat Tyquan's previous high score. He worked quickly at another table, solving

the problems in his notebook before writing the answers on his test. His lips moved soundlessly as he worked.

"You still have two minutes left," Gaskley said. "Plenty of time."

Please see **PROGRAM**, Page A1

Will town uproot its rules for buffers?

Replacing Mt. P. trees disturbed by sewer project would be costly

BY ROBERT BEEBE
rbbebe@postandcourier.com

MOUNT PLEASANT — This town is rethinking its roadside buffers — landscaped areas along busy roads — because of an unexpected twist: It must apply its own rules to itself. Eventually, Town Council and Mount Pleasant Waterworks have to decide if residents should pay up to \$3 million more to protect or replace trees along a half-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 17 near The Market at Oakland shopping center.

That's where the utility plans to install a 24-inch sewer main, one necessary to serve the town's growing northern end.

Waterworks' General Manager Jay Duffie recently asked the town to ease its requirements for replacing trees removed during the line's installation.

On utility tree trimming, particularly around power lines, has been a sore spot for many residents. Town Administrator Erik DeMoura said,

"One of the biggest things we get calls on trees," he said. "Take it through."

Putting a price tag on trees

Duffie said the utility is sensitive to trees, adding, "We don't want negative public opinion re appearance."

That's why it's bidding on the sewer line project two ways: by digging a long open trench for the line and by doing a directional drill, which would disturb fewer trees but would cost about \$1 million more.

He'll say the open trench method, while about \$1 million cheaper to begin with, would cost more because the town's roadside buffer requirements would force it to replace all removed trees larger than 6 inches in diameter.

Please see **BUFFER**, Page A1

North Korea tests nuclear bomb, relations with China

Strain in ties will be setback for allies

BY JAVIER C. HERNÁNDEZ
New York Times News Service

BEIJING — North Korea's test of a nuclear bomb Wednesday seemed to come straight from its playbook on how to confront U.S. power. The army spoke of the need to ward off "imperialist aggression," and a television comment warned that foreigners were intent on destroying the country's way of life.

The North Korea's decision also seemed aimed at rattling another global power, China. Its neighbor and chief ally for decades, which had recently sought to forge closer ties with its erstwhile neighbor,

about 40 miles from the Chinese border. North Korea took a gamble that China, its largest trading partner and economic lifeline, would not react with sanctions, which, as many countries have done.

Ending its decades-long setback to President Xi Jinping, who had hoped a charm offensive over the past six months would bring stability to the North.

"North Korea is just blundering its nose at China," said Douglas H. Paul, director of the Asia program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington. "I had to go to produce a reaction."

Please see **CRISIS**, Page A12

Inside



CHARLESTON SCENE
Preview of Charleston Restaurant Week. **E16-17**

LOCAL

Sullivan's makes list of top 10 "happiest seaside towns." **A3**

BUSINESS

Chamber of Commerce announces 2016 agenda. **B1**

Understanding Obama's executive action on guns

A look at new controls, what prompted them

BY JOSH LUTHEMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama's plan to strengthen controls on guns in the U.S. is meeting with resistance from gun rights groups. Republican and some Democratic lawmakers in Congress to enact new policies on firearms. Yet the overall effort to control guns could prove to be relatively small.

Some questions and answers about Obama's presidential action on gun control.



It's unclear whether the president's steps will significantly curb unregulated gun sales.

What are the Obama talking?

Obama announced a 10-point plan to try to keep guns from people who shouldn't have them. The centerpiece

Please see **CRISIS**, Page A12



Cloudy.
High: 56, Low: 47.
Complete 5-day forecast. **B10**

Bridge	25	Concord	22.5	Marion	21.1
Boston	11	Oneida	19	Shelton	14
Cambridge	10	Portland	19.5	Yale	11
Concord	25.5	Local	22	Winnipeg	19

Charleston Deals Today

Football Players
\$35 for two tickets to a Seacoast Armed Forces. **See A2**

Mac Lain
is the
leader
of the
**Clemson
Beard
Gang.**
See video
theState.com



Clemson tackle Mitch Hyatt has done
the near impossible, 1B

PREP BASKETBALL

After 835 wins, Spring
Valley's Anne Long still
going strong, 1B



Hammond ranked
No. 13 in nation, 3B

THURSDAY JANUARY 7, 2016

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Today: Partly cloudy 45-52 10-48
Yesterday: 41-50 26-38 (as of 5 pm) 0-00
FORECAST: B

The State

LET'S EAT: IT'S RESTAURANT WEEK



Miyo's co-founder Michelle Wang talks with customers at M Kitchen.

Only like to eat out when you can find a good deal? It's your week. Restaurant Week across South Carolina opens Thursday and runs through Jan. 17. More than 50 Columbia restaurants are participating — among them M Kitchen, the newest addition in the Miyo's chain co-founded by Michelle Wang, shown here. Check out our best of list of places and discounts in today's Go Columbia section inside.



FALLOUT FROM PENNY TAX PROBE

Newman steps down as lawyer for tax program

Brian DeQuincy Newman voluntarily removed himself from his role Monday before pleading guilty of failure to file taxes

SLED, DOR investigations into penny tax program are "ongoing," "quite active"

BY SARAH ZELIN
AND JOHN MCDONNELL
wilmington@theState.com,
jmc@theState.com

Former Columbia City Councilman Brian DeQuincy Newman voluntarily stepped down as a contracted attorney for Richland County's transportation penny program the day before pleading guilty of failure to file state income taxes.

In so doing, Newman gave up a job that was estimated to provide him a

total of \$398,000 over five years.

Newman informed the county's penny program development team Monday evening that he was immediately removing himself, at least temporarily, from his role of producing and updating property title opinions related to county transportation projects, according to an transportation penny program manager David Bealy.

SEE PENNY TAX, 6A

SC schools chief says teachers' pay scale 'out of whack,' too low

BY JAMIE SEITZ
seitz@theState.com

Helping rural school districts replace aging facilities, access technology and pay teachers higher salaries are top priorities for South Carolina's schools chief, she told state senators Wednesday.

Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman, R-Saluda, said she will

urge lawmakers to rethink the state's "out of whack" pay scale for teachers next year, after a review of salaries is complete.

"I'm particularly stressed by the low starting salary," Spearman told a panel of senators tasked with coming up with ways to improve the state's K-12 public schools in response to a state Supreme Court ruling. First-year teachers

SEE SCHOOLS, 6A



Griffey Jr. to be inducted into MLB Hall of Fame **1B**

The Beaufort Gazette

THURSDAY, January 7, 2016

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DREAMING OF MILLIONS

Local Powerball players share what they would do if they won jackpot



JOSH MUELMAN • Staff photo
Sakitha Williams, an employee at Parker's gas station at Jenniler and Buck Island roads in Bluffton, sells a Powerball ticket on Wednesday to a customer who declined to give his full name.

By **MATT McNAB**
mmcnab@islandpacket.com • 843-706-8125

Pointing to the yellow school bus driving past the Parker's along Buckwalter Parkway on Wednesday, Tayda Muhammad-Leak was sure of the first thing she would change if she hit the Powerball that night: her job.

"I'll stop driving that," she said with a laugh.

Muhammad-Leak joined her two co-workers with the bus company for their routine trip to Parker's on Wednesday for their daily lottery play, ready to purchase a Powerball ticket that could reach up to \$600 million before the numbers were drawn late Wednesday night.

As of noon Wednesday, the lottery had reached \$500 million, but late sales could

push the jackpot even higher. Wednesday's drawing would be the largest winner since the \$564.1 million hit in February, according to The Associated Press.

If no one wins Wednesday, numbers will be drawn again Saturday — likely giving lottery players a chance at a record Powerball prize.

The largest Powerball jackpot was a \$590.5 million prize won by a Florida woman in May 2013, according to The Associated Press.

Please see
JACKPOT
on 7A



DID YOU WIN?

NKorea claims it tested H-bomb

Declaration met with skepticism, condemnation

By **FOSTER KLUG**
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea's declaration that it had tested a hydrogen bomb for the first time was greeted with widespread condemnation — but also skepticism — as world powers vowed Wednesday to punish the impoverished and defiant nation with new international sanctions.

The isolated country's fourth nuclear test since 2006 was a "reckless challenge to international norms of behavior and the authority of the U.N. Security Council," British Ambassador Matthew Rycroft said.

The council met in an emergency session and called the test "a clear violation" of its

resolutions. It agreed to start work immediately on a resolution for new sanctions.

The international community must respond with "steadily increasing pressure" and rigorous enforcement of existing measures, U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power said.

Four rounds of U.N. sanctions have aimed at reining in the North's nuclear and missile development, but Pyongyang has ignored them and moved ahead with programs to modernize its ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons.

The last sanctions resolution in 2013 was co-sponsored by the U.S. and China, and both countries will be key to an agreement on a new one. Whether any new sanctions can slow North Korea's nuclear program, however, remains to be seen.

There was a burst of jubilation and pride in North Korea's capital of Pyongyang, where a TV anchor said Wednesday's test of a "miniaturized" hydrogen bomb had been a "perfect success" that elevated the country's "nuclear might to the next level."

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

For an analysis on the consequences of the alleged H-bomb test, go to 7A.



GRIFFEY JR.: RECORD HALL OF FAME VOTE

SPORTS, B1



UNKNOWN HINSON GAINING FANS

ESCAPE, D1

Herald-Journal

SPARTANBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

Thursday, January 7, 2016



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TODAY FRI SAT



54°/39° 49°/41° 50°/45°

Complete forecast, B8

NEWS IN BRIEF

WOMAN DEAD IN JAIL

Trooper in Sandra Bland traffic stop indicted, fired

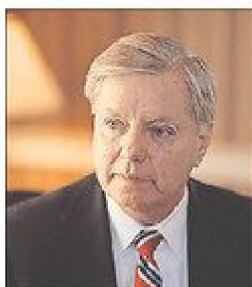
HEMPSTEAD, Texas — A Texas state trooper who arrested Sandra Bland after a contentious traffic stop last summer was fired Wednesday after being charged with perjury for allegedly lying about his confrontation with the black woman who died three days later in jail.

Trooper Brian Encinia claimed in an affidavit that Bland was "combative and uncooperative" after he pulled her over and ordered her out of her car. The grand jury identified that affidavit in charging Encinia with perjury, special prosecutor Shawn McDonald said Wednesday night.

Hours after the indictment, the Texas Department of Public Safety said it would "begin termination proceedings" against Encinia, who has been on paid desk duty since Bland was found dead in her cell.

— The Associated Press

UPSTATE



Graham looks at GOP candidates

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, speaking in Spartanburg on Wednesday, said he may decide this month which Republican presidential candidate to support. **C1**

NORTH KOREA | BOMB ANNOUNCEMENT

World powers condemn, doubt test

By Foster Klug
and Edith M. Lederer
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea's declaration that it had tested a hydrogen bomb for the first time was greeted with widespread condemnation — but also skepticism — as world powers vowed Wednesday to punish the impoverished and defiant nation with new international sanctions.

"I'm pretty skeptical. The seismic data indicates it would be very small for a hydrogen test."

— Melissa Hanham, senior researcher at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute for International Studies in Monterey, California

The isolated country's fourth nuclear test since 2006 was a "reckless challenge to international norms of behavior and the authority of the U.N. Security Council," said British

Ambassador Matthew Kyroft. The council met in an emergency session and called the test "a clear violation" of its resolutions. It agreed to start work immediately on a resolution for

new sanctions.

The international community must respond with "steadily increasing pressure" and rigorous enforcement of existing measures, said U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power.

Four rounds of U.N. sanctions have aimed at reining in the North's nuclear and missile development, but Pyongyang has ignored them and moved

SEE N. KOREA, A6

FOURTH STREET IN BOILING SPRINGS

Deadly crash prompts talk of road changes



Memorials remain at a tree on Fourth Street in Boiling Springs where a car crash claimed the lives of four USC Upstate students in October. JOHN BYRUM/JOHN.BYRUM@SHJ.COM

4 USC Upstate students killed in October crash

"We know at least every other day we're going to have a wreck around Fourth Street," said Scott Aullen, chief

said he began asking other people if they also saw problems with Fourth Street. Such proposals the weekend would start



Morning News

THURSDAY JANUARY 7, 2016

TODAY'S WEATHER
Mostly cloudy, breezy and warmer.
High 52, low 41.
DETAILS 2A

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The Voice of the Pee Dee

75 CENTS

Spearman on schools: Grants, not loans

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina should give grants to poor, rural school districts to help them maintain buildings and encourage consolidation, state Superintendent Molly Spearman said Wednesday.

Spearman told a Senate panel

that a school infrastructure bank and a fund to encourage collaboration should be part of the Legislature's plan for improving public schools.

Lawmakers are under court order to come up with a plan by the summer. The state Supreme Court's revised November order followed justices' ruling a year

earlier that the state doesn't provide educational opportunities in poor districts that initially sued over funding in 1993.

A House committee's recommendations, issued last month, include creating a low-to-no-interest loan program for facilities. But poor districts can't afford to pay back such loans, Spear-

man said.

The Legislature should first fund an evaluation of plaintiff districts' infrastructure needs, she said. That could be done as part of a larger "efficiency study" that also reviews transportation, staffing and curriculum, expected to cost roughly \$2 million, Spearman said.

Senate Minority Leader Nikki Seitzler, D-West Columbia, questioned the timeline.

"Aren't you talking about something 'way down the road'?" he asked. "Once it's built, we're talking years, and we can't wait years."

See **SCHOOLS**, Page 3A

Confederate flag

Activists condemn memorial funding

BY JOSHUA LYONS
Morning News
jlyons@southcarolina.com

FLORENCE — A Florence community activist and several state representatives say they condemn any type of state funding for a new Confederate flag exhibit in Columbia, while others have said funding would be permissible but not at costs anywhere close to proposed figures.

Pat Gillson Hye-Moore, an activist and Florence School District 1 board member, held a news conference Wednesday morning at the South Carolina Department of Revenues to denounce the proposal to create a \$3.6 million exhibit for the flag in the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.

The flag was removed from Statehouse grounds following a contentious nationwide debate after nine black parishioners were gunned down at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston.

The Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission proposed \$5.3 million exhibit, and has since lowered that proposal to \$3.6 million.

Moore's decision to hold the conference at the Department of Revenues was deliberate. She said the taxpayers should not be responsible for the cost of the exhibit at any amount.

"They want some of the same people that were enslaved by the racist perpetration of this Confederate flag to pay millions of dollars to give it a new home," Moore said. "We paid to put it on top of the Statehouse, we paid to take it down, we paid to put it on the Statehouse grounds, we paid to take it down again. Now they want us to pay even more to place it in a Confederate museum that's already paid for by taxpayers."

At least one state representative in Florence and others across the state held the same thought.

"I don't think there should be any state funding to display that flag when there are failing schools, roads that need repaving, and the list goes on and on," said Rep. Terry

That's 'Just Peachy'



PHOTO BY JOE PERRY FOR MORNING NEWS

Shalandra Douglas leads the first dance class Tuesday night at newly opened Just Peachy Dance Studio off Pamplico Highway.

New dance studio offers lessons for little ones up to high schoolers

BY JOE PERRY
Morning News
jperry@southcarolina.com



Dancers (left to right) Terrish Polite, 4; Jamarla Holliday, 3; Trinity Gee, 4; and Ava Thomas, 4, work on their ballet moves Tuesday at Just Peachy Dance Studio.

FLORENCE — A parade of tiny dancers took to the floor Tuesday night at Just Peachy Dance Studio, and for that, Shalandra Douglas is thankful.

The 34-year-old Lynchburg native realized her dream of opening her own studio, a project in the works for a long time.

"I'm very excited, the girls were really excited, and they can't wait until next week," she said on Wednesday, reflecting on her first ballet and tap class of 3- and 4-year-old girls.

Her family moved to Timmons-ville while she was in her teens, and after graduating from high school, she pursued a degree in performing arts from Winthrop University.

"I've been dancing pretty much all my life and thought it would be a

See **PEACHY**, Page 3A

Florence One

Wednesday night at the Francis Marion Performing Arts Center, 36 Florence School



Teacher-leaders named

BY MELISSA ROLLINS
Morning News
mrollins@southcarolina.com

teachers' meeting.

During a January event and short reception, the 36 teacher-leaders from Flor-

INDEX-JOURNAL

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2 SECTIONS, 18 PAGES

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2016

DAILY 75¢, SUNDAY \$1.50

Analysis: Law won't curb mass shooters Obama measures could stem the number of gun suicides

By MICHAEL R. SISAK
Associated Press

The gun control measures a bearded President Barack Obama announced Tuesday would not have prevented the slaughter of 20 first-graders at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, or 14 county workers at a holiday party in San Bernardino, California.

Obama's executive action expands mandatory background checks to gun shows, flea markets and online sales, adds more than 230 examiners and staff to help process them and calls on states to submit accurate and updated criminal history data.

Those measures are seen as crucial to stemming gun suicides — the cause of two-thirds of gun deaths — by blocking immediate access to weapons.

But, an Associated Press review shows, they would have had no impact in keeping weapons from the hands of suspects in several of the deadliest recent mass shootings that have spurred calls for tighter gun control.

The shooters at Sandy Hook and San Bernardino used weapons bought by others, shielding them from background checks. In other cases, the shooters legally bought guns.

In Aurora, Colorado, and at the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C., men undergoing mental health treatment were cleared to buy weapons because federal background checks looked to criminal histories and court-ordered commitments for signs of mental illness. The Obama administration is making changes in that realm by seeking to plug certain Social Security Administration data into the back-

ground check system and by helping states report more information about people barred from gun possession for mental health reasons.

The suspect in a shooting at a church in Charleston, South Carolina, should have been flagged at the time, but errors and delays cleared the way for his purchase.

See GUNS, page 4A

FINDING COURAGE



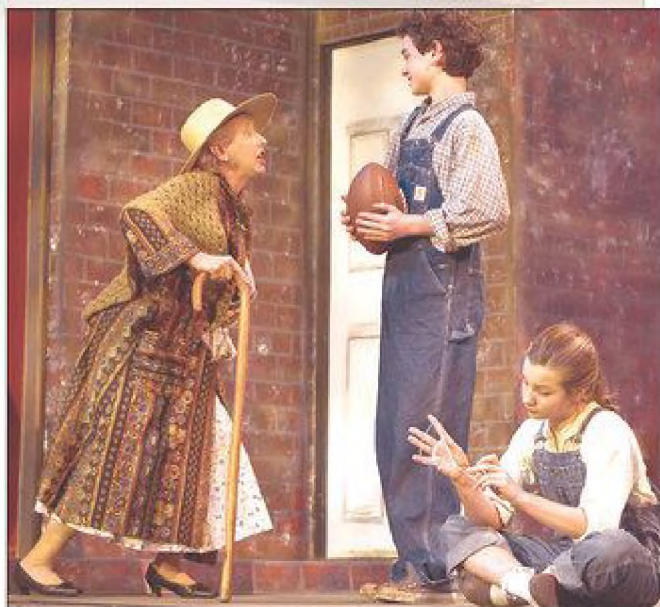
GCT holds dress rehearsal of 'To Kill a Mockingbird'

ABOVE: From left, Cole Blumer, playing Atticus Finch, and Randy Walenceus, playing Heck Tate, perform as Jem and Scout, playing Tom Robinson, look on during a court scene in *To Kill a Mockingbird* Wednesday night at the Greenwood Community Theatre. RIGHT: From left, Lisa Smith portrays Mrs. Dubose, while Brady Bagwell, playing Jem, and Audrey Adams, playing Scout, look on.

PHOTOS BY JOSHUA S. KELLY/INDEX-JOURNAL

If you go

■ **WHAT:** Stageplay of *'To Kill a Mockingbird'*
■ **WHEN:** 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday and Sunday.
■ **WHERE:** Greenwood Community Theatre, 110 Main St., Greenwood.
■ **TICKETS:** Call the box office at (864) 229-5704 or order online at: greenwoodcommunitytheatre.com



EDUCATION

Spearman: State should give schools grants, not loans

By SEANNA ADCOX
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — South Carolina should give grants to poor, rural school districts to help them maintain buildings and encourage consolidation, state Superintendent Molly Spearman said Wednesday.

Spearman told a Senate panel that a school infrastructure bank and a fund to encourage collaboration should be part of the Legislature's plan for improving public schools.

Lawmakers are under court order to come up with a plan by the summer. The state Supreme Court's revised November order followed justices' ruling a year earlier that the state doesn't provide educational opportunities in poor districts that initially sued over funding in 1993.

A House committee's recommendations, issued last month, include creating a low-to-no-interest loan program for facilities.

But poor districts can't afford to pay back such loans, Spearman said.

"The needs need to be paid for by the state," she said, while adding "I don't think we just need to go in and give them money for facilities."

The Legislature should first fund an evaluation of plaintiff districts' infrastructure needs, she said. That could be done as part of a larger "efficiency study" that also reviews transportation, staffing and curriculum, expected to cost roughly \$3 million, Spearman said.

Senate Minority Leader Nikki Senzler, D-West Columbia, questioned the timeline.

"Aren't you talking about something way down the road?" he asked. "Once it's built, we're talking years, and we can't wait years."

But Spearman said evaluations in the districts that sued could be completed in a matter of months.

"No, we're not thinking years. They've waited long enough," she said, referring to the 23-year-old case.

Spearman said she can't suggest how much to set aside for infra-



MOLLY SPEARMAN

AAMC earns third Certified Zero Harm Award



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THE ISLAND PACKET

THURSDAY, January 7, 2016



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DREAMING OF MILLIONS

Local Powerball players share what they would do if they won jackpot



JOSH MUELMAN • Staff photo

Sakitha Williams, an employee at Parker's gas station at Jenniler and Buck Island roads in Bluffton, sells a Powerball ticket on Wednesday to a customer who declined to give his full name.

By MATT McNAB
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Pointing to the yellow school bus driving past the Parker's along Buckwalter Parkway on Wednesday, Taynia Muhammad-Leak was sure of the first thing she would change if she hit the Powerball that night: her job.

"I'll stop driving that," she said with a laugh.

Muhammad-Leak joined her two co-workers with the bus company for their routine trip to Parker's on Wednesday for their daily lottery play, ready to purchase a Powerball ticket that could reach up to \$600 million before the numbers were drawn late Wednesday night.

As of noon Wednesday, the lottery had reached \$500 million, but late sales could

push the jackpot even higher. Wednesday's drawing would be the largest winner since the \$564.1 million hit in February, according to The Associated Press.

If no one wins Wednesday, numbers will be drawn again Saturday — likely giving lottery players a chance at a record Powerball prize.

The largest Powerball jackpot was a \$590.5 million prize won by a Florida woman in May 2013, according to The Associated Press.

Please see
JACKPOT
on 7A



NKorea claims it tested H-bomb

Declaration met with skepticism, condemnation

By FOSTER KLUG
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea's declaration that it had tested a hydrogen bomb for the first time was greeted with widespread condemnation — but also skepticism — as world powers vowed Wednesday to punish the impoverished and defiant nation with new international sanctions.

The isolated country's fourth nuclear test since 2006 was a "reckless challenge to international norms of behavior and the authority of the U.N. Security Council," British Ambassador Matthew Rycroft said.

The council met in an emergency session and called the test "a clear violation" of its resolutions. It agreed to start work immediately on a resolution for new sanctions.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

For an analysis on the consequences of the alleged H-bomb test, go to 7A.

The international community must respond with "steadily increasing pressure" and rigorous enforcement of existing measures, U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power said.

Four rounds of U.N. sanctions have aimed at reining in the North's nuclear and missile development, but Pyongyang has ignored them and moved ahead with programs to modernize its ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons.

The last sanctions resolution in 2013 was co-sponsored by the U.S. and China, and both countries will be key to an agreement on a new one. Whether any new sanctions can slow North Korea's nuclear program, however, remains to be seen.

There was a burst of jubilation and pride in North Korea's capital of Pyongyang, where a TV anchor said Wednesday's test of a "miniaturized" hydrogen bomb had been a "perfect success" that elevated the country's "nuclear might to the

DID YOU WIN?

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