

Quarterly Programs and Issues 3rd Quarter 2015 – WRHM & WVSZ

Programs:

WRHM/WVSZ provides local newscasts nine times each weekday. One-minute updates run on the half-hour, Mon-Fri, between 6 and 10am. In addition, longer newscasts air at 7:02 and 8:02am and on the half-hour between 3 and 6pm. On Saturday, the longer newscasts air on the half-hour between 9am and 12noon.

Public Service Announcements are aired on a rotating basis, and are prerecorded. Some are voiced by members of the community. Public service announcements air daily.

The FM107 Community Calendars air on a daily basis, and are updated two to three times per week. Those calendars provide dates, time and phone numbers of events occurring in Lancaster, Chester, York and Chesterfield Counties. These programs air multiple times per day.

Critical Issues facing the region, covered by FM107 news during the quarter include:

Statehouse law enforcement confirmed that a statue of former Governor Benjamin Tillman had been defaced with red paint. Lieutenant Kelly Hughes, a Highway Patrol trooper who works with the state Department of Public Safety, says an officer spotted splashed paint on the statue's right leg. Division of General Services crews worked to remove the stains. Hughes says initial reports were that someone had fired a paintball gun, but investigators now believe someone threw a small water balloon. Tillman was controversial for his term as governor 25 years after the Civil War ended... particularly his efforts to disenfranchise African-American voters... and his openly white supremacist views.

Agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives joined the investigation and other federal agencies were notified of yet another fire at a southern church. This one happened at the Mount Zion A-M-E Church in Greelyville. The same church was burned to the ground by the K-K-K in 1995. That fire was featured in a story in the Los Angeles Times about the "long history of violence against black churches" that was published just last week. Federal authorities say they are investigating several recent fires at predominantly black churches, but so far the blazes do not appear to be related.

Chester police chief Andre Williams has resigned... telling Channel 9's Greg Suskin that it was time to move on. He will work for the school district as a liaison between the Chester County school system and the new private company taking over school security. Williams' title will be director of security for Chester County Schools.

Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson addressed the Confederate flag during a stop in Spartanburg. Talking with reporters after a visit to Wade's Restaurant, Carson... who is African-American... says he believes the flag should come off the Statehouse grounds. But he believes debate has "gone off the deep end." Carson also addressed the Supreme Court ruling last week that effectively legalized gay marriage across the country. The retired neurosurgeon says he thinks the court overstepped its authority.

Republican presidential candidate and former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee was in the Upstate. He visited restaurants in Anderson and Greenville... before speaking at an Anderson town hall hosted by U-S. Senator Tim Scott. Huckabee talked with Greenwood's W-C-R-S radio... mostly about the Supreme Court's ruling on gay marriage two weeks ago. Huckabee says he supports term limits for members of the Supreme Court because they are NOT held accountable for their rulings.

GOVERNOR NIKKI HALEY SIGNED A BILL FORGED BY LAWMAKERS THAT STRIPS THE FLAG, POLE AND FENCE NEXT TO THE CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS MONUMENT...AND MOVES THE FLAG TO THE CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM. IN JUNE, NINE PEOPLE WERE GUNNED DOWN IN A HISTORICALLY BLACK CHURCH IN CHARLESTON... WITH THE SHOOTER POINTING TO THE CONFEDERATE FLAG AS A MEANS OF PERPETUATING HIS RACIAL TIRADE. STATE HOUSE MEMBERS APPROVED A BILL JUST AFTER SENDING THE LAW TO THE GOVERNOR'S DESK.

A GROWING FISSURE BETWEEN LANCASTER COUNTY COUNCIL AND THE COUNTY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD GREW A LITTLE WIDER TODAY/MONDAY AS THE BOARD APPROVED THE FIRST PHASE OF A FORENSIC AUDIT INTO THEIR FINANCES -- WHILE STANDING BEHIND THE DECISIONS OF DIRECTOR KEITH TUNNELL. BOARD CHAIR MARGARET GAMBLE SAYS THE COUNTY'S PROBE IS LITTLE MORE THAN A WITCH HUNT. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR STEVE WILLIS SAYS THE COUNCIL BELIEVES TUNNELL AND THE BOARD SPENT RESTRICTED FUNDS ERRONEOUSLY. BUT DESPITE THE VALIDITY OF THE COUNTY'S CLAIMS, BOARD MEMBERS ARE COGNISANT OF THE FACT A MAJORITY OF THEIR FUNDING COMES FROM THE COUNTY AND CAN BE WITHDRAWN AT ANY TIME. THOSE SAME BOARD MEMBERS SAY THEY'RE EAGER TO GET THE FINANCIAL QUESTIONS OUT OF THE NEWS CYCLE -- SOMETHING THEY SAY IS NOT HELPING MAKE THE CASE FOR RECRUITING NEW BUSINESS TO LANCASTER COUNTY.

Lancaster County's downtown has become the second state-recognized cultural district in South Carolina by the state's Arts Commission. The city will use the designation to attract visitors and residents to downtown and promote the area as a hub of arts and culture. A cultural district is defined as an easily identifiable geographic area with a concentration of arts facilities and assets that support cultural... artistic and economic activity. Rock Hill became the state's first recognized cultural district earlier this year.

State Representative Gary Simrill of Rock Hill says he's very pleased lawmakers were able to provide local governments with 216-million dollars in one-time road money this year. However... Simrill maintains that South Carolina needs a sustainable source of revenue for roads and bridges. He says now that vehicles are generally more fuel efficient... the Palmetto State is still using an antiquated system of road use fees. Simrill says a road funding plan that passed the House during this past session collected gasoline taxes based on volume and value. He says he hopes that plan can win Senate approval next year.

South Carolina senior U-S Senator Lindsey Graham is continuing his efforts to kickstart a struggling Republican presidential campaign. He unveiled members of what he called his "South Carolina National Security Coalition," a group of former military officers who he says will advise him. Graham told reporters at the South Carolina Military Museum that he worries the timing is perfect for a terrorist attack on American soil. Graham continues pushing foreign policy... which has been almost his entire focus this election. Graham told reporters at the Military Museum that... if elected... he would send more troops to Iraq to destroy ISIS.

One of the first African-Americans to serve in the South Carolina legislature since the end of Reconstruction has passed away. Former State Senator Herbert Fielding died at the age of 92. He was part of a trio of African-Americans elected to the House in 1970... the first black Democrats ever and first of either party since Reconstruction. James Felder was also elected that year. He and fellow Columbia lawmaker I-S Leevy Johnson joined Fielding as the first African-American legislators in the 20th Century. Fielding, a Charleston funeral director in his private life, only lasted three years his first time in the House. But he was re-elected ten years later and retired from the Senate in 1992. Felder says Fielding was an honorable lawmaker.

WHILE RAIN BECAME A WELCOME RELIEF TO MANY ACROSS THE CAROLINAS, IT'S DONE LITTLE TO HELP THE DROUGHT SITUATION. THE LATEST DROUGHT UPDATE RELEASED CONFIRMED, IN FACT, THE DROUGHT HAS SPREAD. CHANNEL 9'S KEITH MONDAY SAYS IT'S NOW MORE DIFFICULT FOR RAIN TO PENETRATE THE INCREASINGLY HARD GROUND... LEADING MUCH OF THE RAIN THAT DOES FALL TO JUST RUN OFF WITHOUT SOAKING IN.

It's been more than a month since the Confederate battle flag came off the Statehouse grounds... and tension still simmers between Republicans who opposed the flag's removal and state leaders who pushed it. Several legislators are now facing challengers from their own party... who say they are running because of the flag. Laurens Republican Mike Pitts says he did not support removing the flag down without a monument or another less-offensive flag taking its place. He says that compromise effort was sabotaged by House and Senate leaders. Pitts says behind the scenes, the state G-O-P chairman was pushing for the flag to come down... largely for political reasons. Pitts made the comments to Greenwood's W-C-R-S radio.

Governor Nikki Haley has asked South Carolina's public health agency to look into Planned Parenthood's operations in the state, following undercover video released by an anti-abortion group suggesting some of the group's clinics in other states might be illegally selling aborted baby body parts. But Republican legislator Donna Hicks of Spartanburg is asking the Governor to go a step farther and defund Planned Parenthood during that investigation. Hicks says she'd like to see Haley fight to defund Planned Parenthood the way she fought to bring down the Confederate Flag. Federal law allows Planned Parenthood to charge researchers for the costs of fetus tissue... so long as it doesn't make a profit. But the group has said its South Carolina clinics do not sell the tissue.

5th District Congressman Mick Mulvaney says he understands why a handful of Republican presidential candidates are running on an anti-G-O-P platform. The Indian Land businessman says he didn't think that attitude would be embodied by billionaire Donald Trump. Mulvaney says there are four or five legitimate Republican hopefults in the race. Mulvaney says he sees NO good in a third party candidate. Meanwhile... he says if Vice President Joe Biden enters the Democratic presidential field... it will mean the threat to frontrunner Hillary Clinton is real. Mulvaney says if Biden became president... he would be much easier for Republicans in Congress to work with than Obama.

The head of the state agency responsible for protecting disabled or vulnerable adults warns other priorities are taking up its time and resources. Department of Social Services director Susan Alford told state senators last week that the agency's resources and focus have been almost entirely on helping children and foster families. Alford... who took over the struggling agency earlier this year... warns that its resources have been stretched thin already to help children, leading to the neglect of programs for vulnerable adults. Alford says she's tried to make improvements by putting adult protective services in a separate division with its own director.

The state Department of Health and Environmental Control says a Chester County resident has been referred to their health care provider for consultation after being exposed to rabies in the Great Falls area. D-HEC says the exposure occurred. The victim was attacked and bitten by a fox while in their yard. The fox tested positive for rabies the next day.

The state Department of Health and Environmental Control will NOT review an appeal of an air permit issued to GiTi Tire... which plans to build a plant near the Chester County town of Richburg. Published reports say resident Dave Cole appealed the permit D-HEC issued in August to the full agency board. Cole can still appeal to the state's administrative law court. GiTi is building a 560-million-dollar tire plant that will employ some 17-hundred employees over the next ten years. Construction should begin next month... and be completed by late 2016.

The right money at the right time. Published reports indicate that's what supporters of a possible movie studio and entertainment complex on the Catawba Indian Reservation want. Studio South and the Tribe are considering developing 124 acres on the eastern York County reservation for the facility. The 350-million-dollar project would include multiple sound stages... a hotel... a Catawba cultural center... a school for film and music... retail outlets... offices and a tour. Bert Hesse of Studio South says the right money at the right time means the least expensive amount for an estimated two-million dollars in pre-development and for startup costs.

Charleston officials say the city has come up with a plan for how to distribute more than 2-point-5 million dollars from an Emanuel A-M-E Church memorial fund to pay survivors and the shooting victims' families.

The city created the fund in the aftermath of the shootings. Mayor Joe Riley says donations poured in from all 50 states. Riley says 300-thousand dollars was used early on to pay for funerals and the needs of the victims in the days immediately following the shootings. Joe Rice is one of the attorneys who crafted the final arrangement. More than half of the fund will be given to the victims' families. The five church members who survived the shooting will receive 25 percent of the donations, divided equally. The six dependent children of the victims will receive 10 percent of the donations.

A state Senate panel took the first steps towards legalizing medical marijuana in South Carolina. The Medical Affairs subcommittee advanced a proposal that allows the drug to be prescribed for limited cases in South Carolina. Supporters like Beaufort Republican Tom Davis say it will help those suffering from severe pain or traumatic brain injuries. But law enforcement agencies strongly oppose the idea. State Law Enforcement Division chief Mark Keel says the treatment is not approved by the F-D-A or most medical groups. The proposal will be taken up by the full committee next year.

The Chester County school board has voted four-to-three to release Superintendent Agnes Slayman from her contract... but not without a six-figure parachute. School district employees claim Slayman threatened to kill district employees and has created a hostile work environment... prompting more than half of the district's senior staff to seek medical attention for stress-related health issues and depression. The investigative report provided to the school board this month was obtained by The Herald. Slayman's attorney... Lewis Cromer of Columbia, told the newspaper that Slayman denies those claims... and emphatically denies that she's ever seriously threatened to kill anybody. Cromer says Slayman has never had the intent to harm anyone. The Chester County school district will reportedly pay Slayman 300-thousand dollars.

Lancaster police are investigating an armed robbery that happened earlier this morning. A news release says a black male walked into Crenco's on the Highway 9 Bypass West about 4-40 and approached the clerk. Police say he was brandishing a silver handgun... and used his hood to partially conceal his identity. After demanding cash and cigarettes... police say the man got into a red or burgundy compact car similar to a late 90s model Honda Accord driven by someone else. The suspect is described as being six-feet-one with a thin build wearing a black hooded sweatshirt.

PUBLISHED REPORTS SAY THE FORMER ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT AND CLERK OF COURT FOR THE CHESTER COUNTY COUNCIL HAS FILED A LAWSUIT AGAINST THE COUNTY. CAROLYN CLAYTON... WHO WAS ACCUSED OF ALTERING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES... CLAIMS SHE WAS UNFAIRLY TARGETED AND WRONGFULLY TERMINATED. THE SUIT ALLEGES THAT CLAYTON'S FIRING WAS RETALIATORY AND WRONG... AND SHE WANTS A JUDGE TO RULE THAT SHE NEVER RESIGNED. SHE ALSO WANTS BACK PAY. COUNTY SUPERVISOR SHANE STUART SAYS HE COMPLETELY DENIES ANY ACCUSATION THAT HE PUSHED CLAYTON OUT OF HER JOB.

THE DIRECTOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA'S MEDICAID AGENCY SAYS THE GOVERNMENT HEALTH CARE PROGRAM PAID FOR 222 ABORTIONS OVER THE PAST FIVE FISCAL YEARS, BUT NONE OF THOSE WERE PROVIDED BY PLANNED PARENTHOOD. DIRECTOR CHRISTIAN SOURA TOLD A HOUSE PANEL WEDNESDAY THAT A REVIEW DID DISCOVER TWO QUESTIONABLE PAYMENTS TO PLANNED PARENTHOOD THAT MIGHT BE FOR ABORTION, BUT THE AMOUNTS MAKE THAT UNLIKELY. HE SAYS THOSE MAY BE CLERICAL ERRORS. THE LAW ALLOWS MEDICAID TO PAY FOR ABORTIONS IN CASES OF RAPE, INCEST, OR WHEN THE MOTHER'S LIFE IS IN DANGER. THE HOUSE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE IS INVESTIGATING TAXPAYER FUNDING TO PLANNED PARENTHOOD.