

Quarterly Programs and Issues
4th Quarter 2023 – 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:

10/01 - Data was compiled recently by RFATS looking at some of the projects needed and how they can plan ahead with rates of population and traffic of drivers on particular roads. Executive Director David Hooper says all of the agencies in the Charlotte Metro follows what RFATS does and they try to stay on the same page with what transportation investments should be made moving forward.

10/02 - Lawyers for six death row inmates out of appeals in South Carolina are asking the state Supreme Court to give full consideration to the state's new lethal injection rules as well as the electric chair and firing squad before restarting executions after an unintended 12-year pause. The inmates said judges should decide now if the state's new lethal injection protocol using just the sedative pentobarbital as well as killing prisoners by electrocution or shots fired into the heart do not violate the Constitution's ban on cruel and unusual punishments. Lawyers for the prisons and Gov. Henry McMaster asked the Supreme Court on Sept. 19, the same day they announced the lethal injection drugs were available, to toss out a lower court ruling that the electric chair and firing squad were cruel and let executions start as soon as possible. South Carolina has 34 inmates on its death row. The state last killed someone on death row in May 2011.

A school review and rating site has released new data on its top school districts in South Carolina. Niche DOT com has ranked Fort Mill as tops in the Palmetto State with Clover third. The website mixes reported state data on schools with reviews from parents, students and others affiliated with the district. The two York County districts also had very strong test scores that were recently released.

10/03 - York Counties recent news of manufacturing businesses coming to the area made the cover story of the Charlotte Business Journal. In the last 8 months it has been announced that Pallidus is bringing with it an investment of \$443 million along with 400 plus jobs. Along with it is the news of Silfab coming to Fort Mill which plans to invest \$150 million and create 800 new

jobs. The story looked at manufacturing projects being on the rise and where are they going. One of the big reasons it says the County was able to get these investments was access to utilities, particularly power. The other was availability of buildings that were completed to accommodate the investments. York County Director of Economic Development David Swenson was featured in the piece and says as of 2022's fourth quarter, the County still had around 840 jobs lost in manufacturing from the end of 2019. Pallidus and Silfab will certainly more than replace that. It also reads that these projects could fast track adding to Charlotte's goals to "solidify its growing economy."

10/04 - Congressman Ralph Norman is speaking out about the vote to vacate the Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy. He said he was profoundly disappointed in several key elements of his performance, and said it was not the appropriate time to remove him from the role. Norman thinks lawmakers undivided attention needs to be on reducing spending in the remaining appropriation bills. He adds that while he's willing to find common ground on a speaker...he "remains firmly committed to holding the line on fiscal responsibility, border security, and the ongoing fight against the constant overreach of Washington liberals."

10/05 - A Chester County man is now behind bars after SLED officials say he embezzled more than \$13,000 from his employer. On Monday, October 2nd, Agents with the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) charged 30-year-old, Joshua Warren Stilwell of Fort Lawn with Breach of Trust with Fraudulent Intent. Stilwell took more than \$10,000.00 from his employer, Chester County Natural Gas Authority (CCNGA). The report states when Stilwell was questioned by his supervisor, he provided training invoices to explain the transactions however those agencies claimed to never receive payment.. After a review of several financial records, Stilwell used the money for his own personal reasons

10/09 - Americans are split along party lines about whether they are getting the latest COVID-19 booster or not. While seven in ten Democrats say they're likely to get it or already have, fewer than three in ten Republicans say they will. That's according to an Ipsos poll. As of early October, six-percent of Americans say they've already gotten the shot.

10/11 - The new Chief of the Catawba Indian Nation says he will NOT sign-off on the proposal made by the Catawbas to the "National Indian Gaming Commission" which would resolve objections the commission has made to the contract between the Catawbas and SkyBoat LLC, over development of Two Kings Casino Chief Brian Harris says the proposed buyout of \$125 million to Skyboat is too much, and he questions what that amount is based on. The National Indian Gaming Commission had originally ruled that the agreement gave too much ownership and authority over the Two Kings project to Sky Boat. Even though the gaming commission approved the proposal, Harris said he feels it is not in the long term interests of the Catawba Nation. The Catawbas opened a temporary casino in 2021 along I-85 about 30 miles outside of Charlotte with 1,000 gaming machines and a sports book. Construction on the permanent \$800 million Two Kings Casino has been on hold ever since the gaming commission's ruling in December.

10/16 - The Rock Hill City Council Election is happening today.. Early, in-person voting showed just 35 people voted during the two week period. Election officials say there are around 20-

thousand eligible voters. There are three wards on the ballot – Ward 1 where the incumbent Derrick Lindsay is trying to keep his seat, same as ward 3 incumbent Kevin Sutton. There is a contested race for Ward 2 with Kathy Pender not running for re-election. Brent Faulkenberry and Hope Matthews are running against each other for that Ward 2 Seat.

10/17 - The South Carolina Court of Appeals is allowing a stay of Alex Murdaugh's murder conviction appeal and allowing his defense to seek a new trial in circuit court. An order signed by Judge H. Bruce Williams granted a motion to suspend Murdaugh's conviction appeal in order to file a motion for a new trial. A jury convicted Murdaugh in March in the June 7, 2021, killings of his wife, Maggie Murdaugh, and their son, Paul Murdaugh. Murdaugh's attorneys claimed jury tampering by Colleton County Clerk of Court Rebecca Hill in September. The defense also alleges Hill asked jurors for their opinions about Murdaugh's guilt or innocence, "invented a story" about a Facebook post to remove a juror she believed might vote not guilty, and "pressured jurors to reach a quick verdict, telling them from the outset of their deliberations that it 'shouldn't take them long.'" The order requires Murdaugh's attorneys to file status updates every 30 days.

10/18 - The International Economic Development Council has presented two Excellence in Economic Development Awards to Chester County Economic Development at their inaugural Recognition Night event last month at the IEDC Annual Conference in Dallas, TX. The awards were the Silver Award for General Purpose Website and a Bronze Award for Economic Development Organization (EDO) of the Year. The awards were bestowed specifically for the organization's work that impacted 25,000 – 200,000 residents. Every year IEDC looks specifically for economic development organizations, government entities, initiatives, and programs that have demonstrated consistent, exemplary performance in the economic development profession, leading the execution of projects that have a significant impact on revitalizing communities, and playing a major role in shaping and improving the practice of economic development.

The Lancaster County School Board made it official last night selecting Raashad Fitzpatrick unanimously to lead the Lancaster County School District as its next superintendent. Fitzpatrick was selected from a list to five finalists and will replace the retiring Jonathan Phipps... Fitzpatrick comes from assistant superintendent and district ombudsman roles in Greenville County Schools. Almost two dozen of Fitzpatrick's 25 years in education have come as an administrator... Board Chair Brad Small said, "I am confident that Dr. Fitzpatrick will serve Lancaster County School District well. We are excited to move forward to do what is best for the education of our students."

10/19 - Republican presidential candidate Ron DeSantis got cheered during his town hall Thursday night in Rock Hill. He appeared at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2889 which is one of four stops for the Florida Gov this week in South Carolina. DeSantis touched on several topics including the Israel-Hamas conflict. He declared his support for Israel and its right to defend itself. Additionally, he criticized former President Donald Trump for being too focused on the past and said there needs to be a positive campaign to defeat Biden. Asa Hutchinson was at the event and had similar comments about Trump. DeSantis left the VFW and made his way to

Winthrop joining the Carolina Republican women's groups of North and South Carolina for a Q&A session there.

10/22 - The Chester Fire Department is knocking on doors across Chester, in an effort to give the gift of early fire detection to homeowners in the City. It's all part of a smoke alarm blitz, with firefighters working to install smoke alarms in any home that may be in need of the detectors. More than 60 homeowners have gotten these smoke alarms installed in each room of the home. Chester firefighters hope this initiative will lead to less emergencies in the City and say there are plans to hold the blitz event every year. First responders urge anyone in City limits who missed out on the alarm blitz, to reach out to Chester Fire as they are always willing to install new smoke alarms for those in need.

10/26 - Two people are dead after a serious crash in Chester County Wednesday afternoon. According to the South Carolina Highway Patrol, the collision happened on S.C. 72 near East Chapel Road just before 3 p.m. Troopers say the two people died after three vehicles crashed. Four others were injured, including two children, according to the SCHP. The names of the victims were not immediately available. This crash remains under investigation by the highway patrol.

10/31 - Fort Mill Wrestling and Basketball are currently looking for other places to compete after damage has been done to the gym. A pipe broke in the ceiling of the school over the weekend. Other schools in the district are being utilized for practices while the Town of Fort Mill is helping regarding allowing the use of Banks Street Gym. P.I.O. Joe Burke says they caught it early as a staff. The estimated cost of the damage could be at up to \$1 million, but an exact number hasn't been determined.

11/01 - A Chester man is going to prison after distributing fentanyl. Dasean Ratez Moses, 30, was sentenced to ten years in prison after pleading guilty to three counts of Distribution of Fentanyl, one count of Possession with Intent to Distribute Fentanyl, and one count of Possession of a Firearm by a Person Convicted of a Violent Felony, according to the office of the Sixth Circuit Solicitor. Moses' trial was scheduled to start Tuesday but he entered a plea deal before the jury was selected. Moses was living in Chester County during this investigation and will serve his time at the South Carolina Department of Corrections.

The Lancaster Police Department, sent out a warning to drivers about possible break-ins connected to a nation wide Tik Tok challenge. Officers say if you drive two particular brands of cars, you could more likely become a target. Detective Sgt. Shaquelle Sharperson said the reason for this is all due to missing software in some Kia vehicles made between 2011 and 2021, and Hyundai cars made between 2015 and 2021. The police department says it is working with area Kia and Hyundai dealerships to minimize the theft issue, and officers urge anyone driving one of the cars to do the same as security software updates may be available depending on your vehicle model.

Duke Energy is kicking off month long campaign providing nearly \$400,000 to help fight hunger in South Carolina this holiday season. Funds from the Duke Energy Foundation will support more than 60 feeding programs in November leading up to the Thanksgiving holiday. More than

500,000 South Carolinians lack consistent access to high-quality meals, and 1 in 8 of those are children.. Mike Callahan, Duke Energy's South Carolina state president said, "Our hope is by shining a light on these efforts, organizations we're supporting will continue to receive the support they need to help reduce and hopefully one day eliminate hunger in our communities."

11/02 - A driver is in custody after leading deputies on a chase in York County Thursday. Deputies said around 1:30 p.m. that they were on Old Pinckney Road at Chester Highway for the crash. In a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, deputies said a car had crashed into a power pole and caught fire. Authorities said the driver had led deputies on a chase, but didn't say why deputies were pursuing them. The driver has been taken into custody, deputies said.No further information has been released.

11/06 - South Carolina's highest court apparently is not ready to allow the state to restart executions after more than 12 years until they hear more arguments about newly obtained lethal injection drugs as well as a recently added firing squad and the old electric chair. The state Supreme Court set a Feb. 6 date for a hearing over a lawsuit by four death row inmates out of appeals who initially argued dying by electrocution or bullets to the heart is cruel and unusual punishment. South Carolina has not carried out an execution since 2011 after the state's supply of lethal injection drugs expired and companies refused to sell them more unless the transaction could be kept secret. The state passed a shield law earlier this year after years of calls from Gov. Henry McMaster and the director of the state's Department of Corrections.

Pathways Community Center is celebrating 5 years. The organization works as a network hub of health and human service agencies including homeless shelters and provides free programs, and resources to families and individuals in need. Courtney Denton is one of the founding and current board members and says there are multiple places to serve the homeless. Pathways is having a 5th anniversary celebration community block party on Friday the 10th from 2-5. There will be live music, food and games for the kids.

11/13 - G-O-P PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES CONTINUE TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL FOLLOWING THE THIRD DEBATE EARLIER THIS WEEK. THIS AS FORMER PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP CONTINUES TO SHOW A SIZEABLE LEAD IN THE RACE FOR HIS PARTY'S NOMINATION. 20-24 G-O-P PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE NIKKI HALEY JOINS "FOX NEWS SUNDAY" AND SAYS HER CAMPAIGN IS PICKING UP STEAM. RECENT POLLS FROM FIVETHIRTYEIGHT SHOW HALEY IN THIRD PLACE IN THE NATIONAL POLLS AT EIGHT-POINT-SEVEN PERCENT. FLORIDA GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS IS AHEAD OF HER AT 14-POINT-ONE PERCENT.

20-24 REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFUL AND SENATOR TIM SCOTT (R-SC)ANNOUNCING HE'S SUSPENDING HIS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN SUNDAY NIGHT. SENATOR SCOTT TELLING FOX'S "SUNDAY NIGHT IN AMERICA WITH TREY GOWDY" HE FEELS THE VOTERS ARE TELLING HIM "NOT NOW, TIM", AND HE WANTS TO RESPECT THEY ARE TELLING HIM. SENATOR SCOTT SAYS HE HASN'T CONSIDERED BEING A RUNNING MATE FOR ANY OF THE OTHER CANDIDATES.

11/14 - A woman from Rock Hill will serve a max of 30 years after being convicted of the death of her disabled daughter. On Tuesday, a York County jail found Jackleen Elizabeth "Jackie" Mullen 26 guilty of homicide by child abuse and aiding and abetting homicide by child abuse. The daughter was found in a dresser drawer. The child was India Heavenly Lacy Martin, aged four and had special needs. She could not walk or talk, and needed a feeding tube. The murder happened in 2020. In the trial, Rock Hill police testified they found the child after Mullen told police she was with relatives in North Carolina. Mullen is facing a minimum of 20 years in prison.

11/16 - A K-9 and a Lancaster County Deputy were both involved in a crash Wednesday just south of the North Carolina state line in Indian Land. It happened at 9Am near US 521 at Possum Hollow Road. Three different vehicles were involved. The deputy was driving a vehicle from the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office and he along with the dog are expected to be fine. No other injuries are clear as the SC Highway patrol is still investigating the crash and other vehicles in collision.

The City of Chester has announced a new Police Chief. William Petty was appointed by City Administrator Malik Whitaker. He has previously served as Deputy Police Chief which Whitaker said gave him great insight into the position and created a positive impact in the department. Prior to coming to the City of Chester Police Department, Petty served as the Chief of Police for Limestone University where he led the school's transition from armed security to a sworn police officer staff of 16 with a focus on establishing the agency's practices for compliance with federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and standards. He was spent time in Fort Wayne Indiana as a director of Campus Safety at Trine University.

11/21 - And after rumors and reports last week, former President Donald Trump and his campaign has confirmed that he will indeed be in attendance of Saturday's Clemson and South Carolina game. Trump will join longtime ally and Gov Henry McMaster for the annual Palmetto Bowl in Columbia. The campaign for Trump sent an email out saying that he will visit the game at the invitation of the Governor. The USC-Clemson rivalry game takes place three months before the state's First in the South Republican Presidential Primary.

11/24 - A single shot was fired by a customer at a Walmart in Indian Land. Lancaster County Sheriff's deputies responded to the Walmart on Highway 521 late Wednesday. It apparently accidentally discharged by the customer who was carrying it. No one was shot according to officials. The customer left the store and has not yet been identified.

11/28 - Representative Jermaine Johnson will file a bill that will require state lawmakers to volunteer as substitute teachers in public schools. Rep. Johnson of Hopkins will file the bill ahead of the 2024 legislative session. His bill will require every member of the General Assembly to serve as a substitute teacher five times a year.

11/29 - DISGRACED EX-LAWYER ALEX MURADAUGH BEING SENTENCED FOR MULTIPLE FINANCIAL CRIMES IN SOUTH CAROLINA TUESDAY. MURDAUGH SERVING 27 YEARS IN PRISON, AND WILL HAVE TO SERVE AT LEAST 23 YEARS OF

THE SENTENCE. HE IS ALSO SERVING TIME FOR KILLING HIS WIFE AND SON BACK IN 20-21.

The South Carolina Department of Public Safety releasing new numbers when it comes to those who died while traveling in South Carolina over the holiday weekend. According to the report, 876 people have died in crashes in South Carolina since January 1st. In the Tri-County, those numbers break down to 26 people were killed in York County, 12 in Lancaster County, and 10 in Chester County. Over the holiday weekend, which the SCDPS considers to be from Friday, November 24th, through Sunday, November 26th, 7 people were killed in car crashes which is down from 11 in 2022.

11/30 - Santa himself is in town and ready for Christmasville. The annual Rock Hill event kicked off on Thursday night and gets amped up later today with a parade then a full slate of activities this weekend. Santa did want to put out a message, that regardless of the weather, Christmasville is happening all weekend long. For a complete list of all the things to do this weekend beginning tonight, visit Christmasville Rock Hill DOT com.

The York School District has extended the contract of their superintendent following a positive evaluation. Per a release, Superintendent Kelly Coxe also got a 4% salary increase and an extension of one year to conclude in June of 2026. Board Chair Scott Childers, in a post-meeting statement, expressed the Board's gratitude for Superintendent Coxe's dedication to the district's vision, effective management of operations, and focus on enhancing teaching.

12/01 - When it comes to pay for law enforcement officers, California ranks first and Mississippi is last. And South Carolina joins Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana as the only four states with an adjusted median salary below 50-thousand-dollars for police, sheriff's department and other agency officers according to information released by the non-profit organization USA Facts.

12/04 - State Rep. Raye Felder says she will NOT seek reelection for the State House seat that she's represented for the past 12 years...Felder told The Herald, "there comes a point when the time has come to move on to new things in life." She said her time in the state legislature has been a rewarding way to give back to her community...Recently, Rep. Felder helped secured \$25 million for Fort Mill to relocate its public works department from a former National Guard Armory in Fort Mill.

On Sunday, December 3rd, a soybean processing facility in the Town of Kershaw caught fire and caused several agencies to respond. According to the Lancaster County Emergency Management Director, Darren Player, at 5:00 pm, first responders received several calls that a fire had broken out at the soybean processing facility in Downtown Kershaw. The plant is owned by Archer Daniels Midland and has been in the Kershaw area for decades. According to officials, the fire started in an area that dries the products, and dust in this area caught on fire. Emergency responders did confirm no-one was injured in this fire.

York County Detectives have charged a Clover man after an extensive four-month state and federal investigation into contracts related to residential home construction. Christian Joseph Novellino, 49, was taken into custody by deputies on Monday at his home and was charged

with seven counts of breach of trust. Novellino is the principal/owner operator of Construction Up Homebuilders.. Allegations from victims suggest minimal progress or no work was completed towards fulfilling the terms of the contracts. When requesting refunds, affected parties were reportedly informed that the funds were unavailable or offered inadequate compensation. The investigation remains ongoing, and further charges may be pending.

12/05 - Winthrop has chosen a new Provost. Sebastian van Delden, dean of the School of Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering at the College of Charleston, is Winthrop University's new provost and vice president for academic affairs. He will join Winthrop on Jan. 18. He earned a bachelor's degree, master's degree and Ph.D. in computer science from the University of Central Florida. His Ph.D. dissertation focused on artificial intelligence. The provost reports directly to President Edward A. Serna and is a valuable member of Winthrop's cabinet.

12/06 - The Fort Mill School board has set March 19 as the date for voters to decide on a proposed \$204 million bond to construct a new middle school, a new early childhood education facility, purchase land and address maintenance needs. Any remaining money would be used for ongoing renovation, repair or expansion needs of the Fort Mill District. The bond funds what the district sees as needed for the next five years. The board also heard from its construction consultant who detailed almost \$700 million of needed upgrades in the next 10 years.

12/07 - A SURGE OF MIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS CONTINUE TO ARRIVE AT THE U-S BORDER WITH MEXICO IN THE HOPES OF BEING ALLOWED INTO THE COUNTRY. THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION CLAIMS THEIR STRATEGY IS ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF MIGRATION IN LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES ... BUT SOUTH CAROLINA REPUBLICAN SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM ON FOX'S "HANNITY" CALLS ON THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION TO FOCUS MORE ON THE U-S. TUESDAY SET THE RECORD FOR THE MOST IMMIGRANT ENCOUNTERS WITH OVER 12-THOUSAND ... AND OVER 10-THOUSAND OF THEM WERE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY BY CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION.

OneH2, a leader in sustainable hydrogen solutions, today announced it is expanding its U.S. footprint by establishing the company's first South Carolina operation here in York County. The \$16 million investment in Clover will create 87 new jobs by 2026...Created in 2015 and headquartered in Longview, North Carolina, OneH2 designs and manufactures innovative products ranging from hydrogen production plants and distribution equipment to vehicle powertrains and fuel systems. One H2 has plants in California, Michigan, Ohio and North Carolina, and aims to establish a nationwide hydrogen infrastructure network that will make transitioning to hydrogen fuel easier and more economical for business owners and industrial operations. The company purchased a 246,000 square-foot building located on Highway 57 in Clover and will use this facility for warehousing and to manufacture hydrogen fuel equipment. Operations will come online in stages, starting in the first quarter of 2024 and be completed in 2025 with the full workforce. Individuals interested in joining the OneH2 team should visit the company's careers page.

12/08 - Wells Fargo says they are ending its longtime sponsorship of the "Wells Fargo Championship" played at the Quail Hollow Club, starting in 2025. The 2024 annual PGA tour

event is set for May 6-12...In a statement Wells Fargo said, "to drive efficiency and support our business long-term, we regularly review and adjust our overall sponsorship strategy." The San Francisco-based bank has sponsored the championship since the tournament began 20 years ago. Wells Fargo has more than 27,000 employees in Charlotte, the largest employee base for the company. What happens next to the high-profile sporting event for the Charlotte region was not immediately clear.

12/11 - 29-year-old, Jonathan Levi Beam, has been charged with 3 counts of Distribution of Fentanyl while an inmate inside the Lancaster County Detention Center. According to the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), Beam smuggled fentanyl into the detention center upon his arrival. Once inside the detention center Beam distributed fentanyl to three different inmates. Officials say Beam distributed fentanyl to an inmate, which resulted in an unreversible medical emergency and his death. Another inmate indicated Beam was the distributor after it happened a second time. They say Lancaster County Detention Center documents, video surveillance, and witness statements support the information provided by the inmate.

12/13 - The Rock Hill Police Department say burglars cut a hole in the nail salon to break into Norman Hege Jewelers next door Sunday morning. Police said the back door of B & K Nails on Herlong Avenue was pried open. The burglars cut a hole in the drywall to get into Norman Hege Jewelers, which caused an alarm to be activated. Thieves got away with about \$700 worth of jewelry because the expensive merchandise was in a safe. Kristin Hege Sandler said the burglary was disheartening and very frustrating to deal with. She said the damage to the store would cost more to repair than the items that were taken. Investigators are going through security video in hopes of getting a clear image of the burglar.

Two people from Georgia face South Carolina's new, tough, drug trafficking law. York County agents in the Multijurisdictional Drug Enforcement Unit seized fentanyl and more than 6 pounds of methamphetamine hidden in their truck after an Anderson Road traffic stop on a truck with Texas plates... The street value of the meth is around \$180,000 and investigators also seized more than 25 grams of fentanyl and a Glock handgun... The people arrested include 44-year-old Thomas Aaron Hurt, who's charged with trafficking meth and two weapon crimes.. Alison Michelle Clance, 34, is charged with trafficking fentanyl and two weapon charges.. Convictions in SC for trafficking the amount of drugs seized now carry mandatory sentences of 25 years in prison.

Duke Energy has awarded \$225,000 in grants to organizations making critical home improvements for South Carolina's seniors. 15 nonprofits across the state received up to \$20,000. Each organization will administer the funds based on the nonprofit's mission, some addressing long waiting lists for certain repairs. Grant uses include installing safety handrails in bathrooms, replacing rotting floors, installing handicap ramps and repairing unsafe steps. Here in the Tri-County, Habitat for Humanity of York County received 20,000 and the Citizens United for Redevelopment and Economic Stability of Chester got 10,000 in funds.

12/14 - A Republican-led effort headed by SC Senator Tim Scott to strip Harvard and other higher education institutions of federal funding is gaining steam, as calls grow in Congress to "defund" any institutions that allow antisemitism on campus... Less than two weeks after the Oct.

7 Hamas terrorist attack on Israel, a group of GOP senators, led by Sen. Tim Scott, has introduced legislation that would rescind federal education funding for colleges and universities that allow "violent antisemitism," pointing directly to Harvard's silence at the time after more than 30 student organizations at the school blamed Israel for Hamas' attack on its civilians.

12/15 - After 11 years USC-Lancaster's Dean, Walt Collins is leaving the campus, but he is staying within the USC system. Leaders with USC-L say the promotion names him Executive Vice Chancellor for USC Palmetto College based out of Columbia. USC Lancaster is one of four University of South Carolina System campuses, along with Palmetto College Columbia, that comprise USC Palmetto College. He will start his new role in January. As the search gets underway for a new Dean, Dr. Courtney Catledge, Director of the USC Lancaster Bachelor of Science in Nursing Collaborative Program, has been appointed interim dean. She has been with the University for more than 15 years.

The Lancaster County Sheriff's Office says it has terminated one of its deputies following a domestic violence incident at the deputy's home in Kershaw County. Marcus Pressley, Jr. was arrested and charged the night of December 14th by the Kershaw County Sheriff's Office with an offense or offenses arising from a domestic violence incident. Sheriff officials say Pressley was hired in 2015 as a corrections officer in the detention center. He was moved to the patrol division in 2016. At the time of his termination, officials say he was a deputy in the patrol division in the southern portion of the county.

12/20 - Tega Cay leaders have elected to cull the city's out-of-control deer population. The decision was made during Monday's city council meeting. Back in October, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources approved Tega Cay to cull the herd, but they could only kill 80 deer. Staff has appealed the current SCDNR count of 80 and is seeking approval to cull a total of 160 deer before March, according to information from the city. In the summer, officials said the population was around 1,028 deer. City leaders had considered an alternative method for controlling the deer population. It would involve the use of ZonaStat-D, something council members said had been suggested by the newly formed Tega Cay Conservation Society. City leaders said they are still researching and discussing the PZP method as a means of continued population control due to the size of the herd, "but there are still some unknowns." The city said it hopes to have those questions answered and a potential plan in place by the fall of 2024.

12/26 - Two South Carolina lawmakers are pre-filing bills in an effort to establish a minimum salary for teachers. Representative Joseph H. Jefferson wants new teachers to receive 52-thousand dollars annually. Representative Wendell Gilliard pre-filed a separate bill proposing new teachers receive at least 70-thousand dollars in pay each year. If either bill is voted into law when state legislators return to session next month, it would take effect in the 2024-2025 school year. Representative Ashley Trantham of Greenville is proposing a measure to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws to create a sales tax exemption for small arms ammunition.

Colleton County court clerk accused of jury tampering in Alex Murdaugh's murder trial is allegedly admitting to plagiarism in a book she co-authored about the trial. Journalist Neil Gordon, who co-wrote "Behind the Doors of Justice" with Becky Hill, said he confronted her after reading through her emails with a BBC reporter. Gordon said Hill admitted she plagiarized

portions of an unpublished article from the BBC reporter. Book sales now halted. Gordon says he will no longer partner with Becky Hill on any projects.

12/27 - A Rock Hill man is facing time behind bars on multiple drug charges, according to our partners at CN2 News. Investigators with the York County Multijurisdictional Drug Enforcement Unit arrested David Lee Stevenson, Jr., 33, from Rock Hill for trafficking more than 25 grams of fentanyl in the county. Stevenson is also wanted for fentanyl trafficking in North Carolina. Stevenson was arrested on Mount Holly Road in Rock Hill. At the time of his arrest, Stevenson was found with about 276 grams of fentanyl.

12/28 - The Lancaster Police Department is investigating a shooting that left one person dead Wednesday afternoon. It happened just after 4pm on Willow Lake Road which is east of downtown Lancaster. Police say they found a male who had a gunshot wound lying in the road. The victim was taken to MUSC-Lancaster where he later passed away. He has not been identified by the county Coroner and no arrests have been made as of yet. No other information has been released. Anyone with information about this shooting is asked to call the Lancaster Police Department.

Comporium announced Thursday morning it was awarded more than \$51.9 million dollars in grants to fund fiber network projects. Earlier this month the South Carolina Broadband Office announced that it was providing grant funds for 17 fiber network projects. They awarded over 112 million statewide through its American Rescue Plan Acts Capital Projects fund program. Four of those grants were awarded to Comporium as they are one of the eight internet service providers under the SCBBO. Comporium says it will use these grants, along with its own funds, to extend advanced broadband services to customers in 9 South Carolina counties. Officials say they estimate the total cost these four projects to be just shy of \$78 million and that they will connect 6,610 addresses to Comporium's advanced fiber-optic network.

12/29 - Activists continued calling on state leaders to pass a hate crime bill on Wednesday amid multiple investigations into a Conway area cross burning. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held a news conference over a Thanksgiving weekend cross-burning that left a Black couple living in the Conway area scarred. Cross-burning has long been seen as a hate symbol in the South, popularized by the Ku Klux Klan. The bill, named after Sen. Clementa C. Pinckney, one of the nine victims of the 2015 racist killing of nine churchgoers in Charleston, has stalled in the Senate after passing in the House for the last three years. The South Carolina General Assembly is set to meet again in January. NAACP task force member Cedric Blain-Spain said passing the bill should be the assembly's first order of business.

12/31 - A hearing date has been set regarding jury tampering allegations in Alex Murdaugh's murder trial. The Hampton County Guardian reports the tentative date is January 29th at the Richland County Judicial Center in Columbia. Judge Jean Toal takes over for Judge Clifton Newman, who recused himself from post-trial issues after presiding over the murder trial earlier this year. Murdaugh received a life sentence after he was convicted for the murder of his wife and son.