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# CRESCENT People: Congressman Jeff Duncan on "Wow" Moments, the Fab Four's Political Rockstar Status, and Looking Out for Each Other

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[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/DuncanChairingNatResSub.jpg)

***You’ve been in DC for a year now. What’s the coolest thing you’ve done?  Here you are, coming from South Carolina as a freshman, and I know that when you were first elected to the South Carolina House, you had the moment of, “This is really neat.”  What’s the one thing that you’ve done so far that gave you that “wow” moment?***

There have been a couple of things. To be there Day One when we were sworn in and see the gavel taken out of Nancy Pelosi’s hand.   We elected a new Speaker that day, and to be a part of that, to realize that I was a part of history being made, that was a “wow” moment. Coming in an eighty-seven member freshman class that actually gave the leadership that power.

And the second thing… I had the opportunity to go down to the jungle areas of the Philippines, to Mindanao, a Muslim area, to meet with Special Forces, the SEALs and Rangers, Delta Force, guys who are working with the *Filipinos* to fight terror down there.  You don’t hear about what’s going on with the Abu Sa’id terrorist faction down in the Philippines.  To go down in the jungles there, to meet them, to support those guys and say, “Look, I know this isn’t one of the things that is on the news every night.  That you guys probably most American don’t know what you’re doing.”  But to meet with those guys and then to go out when we left the jungles and get on a Zodiac, a rubber SEAL raft, and ride out in the river and ride right up on the back of a PT boat that’s waiting on us out in the river and that Zodiac actually pulls right up on the back of that boat.  And to hop out and it’s got 50 calibers up on the boat.  It’s a PT boat and you go in there and ride back through the waters between the islands there to get back to Zamboanga and talking with the guys on the boat and say, “Why are you here?  Why’d you sign up for the Navy?  Why are you doing this?”  And one of the guys looked us and he said, “On September 12, 2001, a buddy and I were so upset that American was attached on 9/11 that we went down and signed up.  We wanted to never let this happen again.”  And this guy’s on a boat in the jungle in a river with body armor on and it’s hot and sweaty and meeting a Congressman and saying, “I never wanted that to happen again to America and my friend and I went and signed up the day after 9/11.  We joined the United States Navy and we’re down here now fighting one faction of the terrorists.”  That’s a “wow” moment.

That’s sacrifice.  That’s love for your country.  That’s patriotic pride.  That’s anger.  That’s, I’d say, desire. It’s a conviction to not sit back and criticize.  Not sit back and say, “We ought to be doing this.”  To pick up arms, sign up and serve our country and go wherever your nation sends you to fight the threat to our liberty.  That touched me and made me realize that I’m serving, but I’m not serving in that capacity.

I don’t have to pick up arms, but I need to support those guys because they’re doing it. I need to make sure our military has everything they need, and one thing our delegation’s been strong on, we want to make sure our military is not used as a pawn in this debate of raising the debt ceiling or spending money or creating a budget that they’re not going to use the military to hold over our head. They’ve used the military and I’m going to continue to fight them on…I say them…leadership and others, to fight them on their ability use the military as a pawn in this bigger game of chess with regard to spending and debt and deficits because I remember that gentleman.  I remember that sailor on that PT boat in the Philippines who said he want to pick up arms to defect my liberty.

***People don’t understand the sacrifice elected officials make by serving. How has your family dealt with you being away?  And how have you dealt with it yourself?***

That’s probably the toughest part of this job, is being away so much.  I’ve got three boys. Their ages are 11, 13, and 16.  They need Dad, and honestly, Dad needs them.  It comes down to quality time when you are at home.  Throwing a football yesterday afternoon with two of the boys in the back yard.  Helping my son with his homework last night.  Just spending quality time trying to maximize when I am at home that I am at home with them and I’m not…this job will keep you as busy as you will let it.

The staff will schedule you for people who want to see you in the district as much as you will let them.  So we try to balance that.  We try to be very good at constituent service and understand the district but also balancing that with the family time that’s so important.  And I just ask that CRESCENT’s readers understand that all the congressmen are dealing with the same issues.  Balancing family time with work time.  And they’re gone a lot.  If they would just be a little sympathetic with that.  That’s the only appeal I have to them.

***South Carolina congressional freshman class is portrayed pretty much as rock stars.  How does that make you feel because, politicians don’t usually get the best shake, the best reputation? When you talk among yourselves, what do you think about that?***

We’re not doing this for any notoriety. We’re doing this…I think we’re a good reflection of our state and the people who sent us to Washington.  We’ve voted as a reflection of those we represent.  I won’t say we’re rock stars with everybody.  We’re vilified by some as well.  I will say that leadership and others in Washington know that the South Carolina delegation is very principled, that we understand the reason we came to Washington.  We understand the changes that happened in November of 2010, and we’re living that.  We’re voting that conviction.  I can’t say that about everybody that came to Washington, that they’ve stuck to those convictions and those principles, but I will say that about the South Carolina delegation.  We can do that because we support each other.

When you know, you turn around, you’ve got four or five other guys standing behind you, standing with you, giving you that strength, it makes it a lot easier.  When it’s an issue Mick or Trey or somebody’s got and he knows we’re standing right there with him, then it makes it a lot easier.  So there is strength in numbers and our delegation is very unified and supporting each other.

We’ve gone into each other’s districts and talked about supporting votes and we haven’t always voted alike, but we’ve been willing to go and defend the other guys vote.  If I voted differently from Tim or Trey on an issue…Mick and I probably voted alike on most issues…I think we all have.  We have been willing to go into the other district and defend their vote, not to defend our vote.  Not to say, “He was wrong, I voted differently.”  No, to defend their vote because we get their position.

GE’s second  engine for the new fighter airplane.  Part of us voted against it because we believe the United States is spending too much money and we’ve got to make cuts and do we need this second engine?  Well, GE is a constituent of Trey’s and he voted for it because it is a job creator and supports his district and the people who are working in his district.  I get that.  And also there is an argument about that engine that he can make as well, the need to make sure that we’ve got a backup engine, but from a fiscal standpoint, he can support my position – that America’s broke.  We’re $15 trillion in debt, we’re spending $1.5 trillion than we’re bringing in as a nation.  That’s got to stop somewhere.  So he could defend my vote and I could defend his vote and we’re willing to do that.  That’s the kind of delegation we’ve got.

***Now you’re going to share a county, too.***

We’re going to share a county, and I’m going to end up with the GE plant in my district.  Most likely, I think the line comes down right there at it, right there near Donaldson Center (SCTAC).  I guess, what I’m saying is that we’re willing to support each other.  We do support each other.  We’ve got a great delegation.  I’m proud of those guys.  I’m proud to serve with them.  I’m proud to be in the trenches with them and I couldn’t ask for a better delegation to serve with.

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# WHAT’S GOING ON: Greenville Selected for UCI Para-Cycling Road World Championships In

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[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/ParacyclingChampionshipAnnounce.jpg)

The world governing body of professional cycling Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) selected Greenville to host the UCI Para-Cycling Road World Championships in September 2014. This event is projected to include more than 450 athletes and 200 coaches and staff from over 45 countries. The Para-Cycling Road World Championships have not been hosted by an American city since Colorado Springs in 1998.

The five-day competition is scheduled for Labor Day weekend (August 28-September 1, 2014). Races will include the individual time trial and road race disciplines for men, women and teams. The handcycle relay is a team discipline that has become a showcase event for spectators. All athletes compete in categorized events using bicycles that are adapted to his/her abilities: traditional or adapted bicycle, tandem, tricycle or handcycle.

“The UCI is delighted to be returning to the United States with the UCI Para-Cycling Road World Championships in 2014. The UCI particularly looks forward to this event in South Carolina, as a World Championship event brings a high level of global attention and acts as an important vector for growth of cycling at regional and national level,” said UCI President Pat McQuaid. “The huge interest in this major international event further confirms the growth of the Para-cycling movement worldwide.”

The economic impact and exposure for the Upstate will be significant. Based on a recent economic impact study from the data collected from participants and spectators at the Para-Cycling Road World Championships held in Canada 2010, Greenville should anticipate more than $4.5 million for the local economy.

Duane Parrish, Director of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, noted, “The selection of Greenville and South Carolina for this prestigious and inspiring event is another indication of the respect our state is gaining as a venue for major sports competition. In addition to being able to experience firsthand this world-class event, the citizens of the upstate will benefit from the money spent directly in the community and the considerable value of the global media coverage it generates.”

The Greenville 2014 bid was a collaborative effort between the City of Greenville, U.S. Handcycling (Evergreen, Colo.), Medalist Sports (Atlanta), and Notus Sports, a developing South Carolina non-profit organization focused on bringing events to the Upstate. Medalist Sports is the sports management agency that has produced the USA Cycling Professional Championships in Greenville for the past six years, which has included the U.S. Handcycling National Criterium Championships. In 2009, Medalist partnered with U.S. Handcycling to bring two national races to Greenville. The U.S. Handcycling Series continues to be part of the USA Cycling Professional Championships each year.

In Para-Cycling time trials, athletes start individually in staggered intervals and race against the clock. In Para- Cycling road races, athletes have mass starts for each category and distances will vary, with distances as long as 65 kilometers. Male and female athletes compete in categories related to defined disabilities, such as amputation/limb loss, blindness/visual impairment, spinal cord injury/wheelchair-users and cerebral palsy/brain injury/stroke.

Athletes are divided into four groups of disabilities for Para-Cycling

– Blind and visually impaired (B and VI) – Blind and visually impaired athletes ride on tandems, accompanied by sighted pilots.

– Cerebral Palsy (CP) – Athletes with cerebral palsy ride on bicycles or tricycles based on their disability.

– Locomotor Disabilities (LC LC) – Amputees and other individuals with an apparent functional disability ride on bicycles, with approved adaptations, as necessary.

– Handcycling (HC) – Wheelchairs athletes ride on hand tricycles.

“We are honored as a contributor to worldwide Olympic and Paralympic sport, to continue to host world events on U.S. soil, and especially in Greenville, which has a rich history of hosting successful national cycling races,” said UCI Executive Board member and U.S. Olympic Committee Board member, Mike Plant.

“We are extremely excited to be hosting the 2014 Para-cycling Road World Championships in Greenville, SC,” said USA Cycling President & Chief Executive Officer Steve Johnson. “The city of Greenville has been an outstanding host of the USA Cycling Professional National Road Championships for the past six years and I know the support and enthusiasm shown by the Greenville community will carry over into hosting the Para-cycling World Championships.”

With the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games taking place this September, many of the top para-cyclists are already excited about having the Worlds in the United States. One such star is world champion handcyclist and U.S. Paralympic gold medalist Oz Sanchez.

“I’m thrilled to hear the U.S. will be hosting UCI Para-cycling World Championships in 2014! Racing on U.S. soil at this world series, with a promising win, holds numerous personal opportunities. More importantly, it is a testament to the continued growth of the sport within the U.S. which will inevitably help all involved,” said the five-time World Champion, a former U.S. Marine who lives in San Diego. While serving as a U.S. Marine and transferring to become a Navy Seal, Sanchez was involved in a hit-and-run motorcycle accident, which resulted in a spinal cord injury (SCI). He has since become a successful professional athlete in the adaptive sport of handcycling and Triathlon.

“Most of my personal excitement stems from what it will mean to the wounded warrior community. There is no question in my mind that sports are the best and most effective therapy injured individuals can utilize. My hope is for this event to be mass publicized and grand scale exposure to occur within the community, in addition to attracting new, significant talent. My hat is off to Greenville, SC for setting the stage for what is to come. There are ‘No Limits’ to the momentum this event will generate!”

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# WHAT’S GOING ON: Carolina Ballet Theatre Presents "Jolly Roger: A Pirate's Tale"

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[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/JollyRogerCBT.jpg)

March 24-25 at 2:00 p.m. at The Peace Center’s Gunter Theatre, Carolina Ballet Theatre announced it will present *Jolly Roger: A Pirate’s Tale*. Under the artistic direction of Hernan Justo, the story “transports audiences to the high seas for a swashbuckling good time.*“*

Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased at the Peace Center Box Office by calling (864) 467-3000 or online. Tickets are $30 for adults and $20 for children.

Included in each ticket price is an exclusive book signing by *New York Times* bestselling children’s book author Melinda Long. Melinda will be available in The Peace Center’s lobby to sign her award-winning books *How I Became A Pirate*and *Pirates Don’t Change Diapers*, directly following each performance. Long’s newest book, *Pirates Activity Book,* will also be available during this event. Books are available for purchase in advance, at CBT’s studio located at 872 Woodruff Road in Greenville, or at the show.

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# CRESCENT Books: Acclaimed Chef John Malik Trades His Kitchen for a Keyboard

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[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/DoughnutsForAmyCover.jpg)

One of the Upstate’s best known chefs recently made an about face. After three years as the executive chef of a busy retirement community, he now has a new title — published novelist.

Many know Chef John Malik from 33 Liberty, the restaurant he owned with his wife Amy until 2008. Now, the 2008 James Beard semifinalist for “Best Chef in the Southeast” has a new novel, *Doughnuts for Amy*, available on Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

*Doughnuts for Amy* is a love story set in Woodmont, a fictional retirement community on the north side of Greenville County.

Nick St. Germaine, Woodmont’s executive chef is struggling emotionally as he approaches the second anniversary of his wife’s death.  Nick takes solace in early morning workouts at his gym and buries himself in Woodmont’s kitchen.

Beset by nightmares and challenged by his high school senior son to move forward one day at a time, Nick feels as if he is doing that but just barely.

Things change when the divorced Amy Sommers becomes the new director of Woodmont.  Amy comes close to showing Nick the door her first day on the job but eventually…well the rest is available for your Kindle or Nook e-reader.

*Doughnuts for Amy* is full of great characters, great food scenes, love, emotion and of course a delicious scene in which Chef Nick makes doughnuts for…well, you get the picture.

Although the novel is fictional, it does take place in Greenville, and several of John’s favorite restaurants make appearances.

*Doughnuts for Amy* on [Amazon](http://www.amazon.com/Doughnuts-for-Amy-ebook/dp/B006G4GLXE/ref%3Dsr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1327596034&sr=1-1" \o "Doughnuts for Amy on Amazon" \t "_blank) \* *Doughnuts for Amy* on [Barnes & Noble](http://www.barnesandnoble.com/s/doughnuts-for-amy?keyword=doughnuts+for+amy&store=allproducts" \o "Doughnuts for Amy on Barnes & Noble" \t "_blank) \* *Doughnuts for Amy* on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Doughnuts-for-Amy/146521008788049%22%20%5Co%20%22Doughnuts%20for%20Amy%20on%20Facebook%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) \* John Malik on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/chefjohnmalik%22%20%5Co%20%22Chef%20John%20Malik%20on%20Twitter%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

You can also see Chef John Malik at [Nose Dive](http://www.thenosedive.com/%22%20%5Co%20%22Nose%20Dive%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) in Greenville on February 6 and  [Solstice Kitchen](http://www.solsticekitchen.com" \o "Solstice Kitchen" \t "_blank) in Columbia on March 6.

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# WHAT'S GOING ON: Antiques in the Heart of Aiken Show and Sale

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[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/VICTORIANA.jpg)

The 13th Annual “Antiques in the Heart of Aiken Show and Sale” will be held this weekend, February 3 – 5, 2012 at the Aiken Center for the Arts (122 Laurens Street SW in Aiken).

Over 23 dealers from New York to Texas will be featured and showcasing items such as furniture, linens, jewelry, silver, rugs, porcelains, Civil War memorabilia, and crystal.

Show and sale hours are Friday from 10am – 6pm; Saturday 10am – 6pm; and Sunday from Noon – 5pm.  Restoration experts are also available during the show.

Admission is $8.00.

During show hours, lunch and desserts will be available in the Sweetheart Cafe.

For more information call the Center for the Arts, visit [www.aikencenterforthearts.org](http://www.aikencenterforthearts.org/).

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# CRESCENT People: Congressman Jeff Duncan Recalls Visiting the Troops and How South Carolina's Congressional "Fab Four" Handled Voting to Increase the Debt Ceiling

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[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/StainedGlassInMemberChapelOfUSCapitol_Duncan20110527.jpg)

***You spent some time very recently in the climate that’s much warmer than where we are right now…***

And it wasn’t the Caribbean. It was over in Afghanistan and Pakistan and Iraq visiting with our troops and understanding the situation over there in the theatre.

We’ve got our Iraq troop drawn-down.  They want to be out of Iraq based on the President’s order by the end of the year.  And I’ll say the military is performing that very, very well because that’s the order from the Commander-In-Chief.  Do they think we should be leaving Iraq?  They won’t give you an answer on that because they feel like that’s counter to the order they were given.  But, when we met with the Iraqis themselves and we met with their defense forces and their border and intelligence people, they’ll tell you they don’t want to see a void.

They are trying to ramp up their manpower and their processes to fill that void as American troops pull out.  I believe, personally, that President Obama said when he was campaigning, that we would be out of Iraq in his first term and he’s going to make sure that happens.  Win, lose or draw, he’s going to make sure that happens.  So we’re going to watch that very closely.

I wanted to make sure I understood the situation.  I may have to vote on something in the near future about Iraq.  Visited the troops in Kandahar in Afghanistan and looked at their mission, the things they’re enduring every day, the things they’re doing every day.  A drawn mission that supports their efforts down there.  Visit with the Ambassador and General Allen who is the theatre commander there in Afghanistan.  Trying to understand their mission and some of the challenges they have.

And then I had the opportunity to go to Pakistan.

And while I was in Pakistan, I sat down with the president of Pakistan which, for me as a freshman Congressman from South Carolina, to have an opportunity to sit across from a world leader and ask him some tough questions was quite an honor.  And here’s what I asked him because I was there with a total of 5 congressmen, 4 other congressmen, and they had asked questions about the border and the Taliban and the IEDs and Peshawar and the frontier.  So, by the time it got to me, I asked him about religious freedom. I asked him about tolerance for the persecuted Christians.  Lessening of blasphemy laws in Pakistan.

It is a Muslin country, but we do have Christians over there who are being persecuted.  We had an assassination of a guy in the Spring.  We’ve got a girl who is in jail now. I think she has been in jail for five years for blasphemy.  It’s religious persecution toward Christians, so I had the opportunity ask him about that.  I had the opportunity to say, “We believe in our First Amendment rights and one of those is freedom of religion, and America would love to see Pakistan allow more tolerance toward other religions and allow more religious freedom.”  And he gave a very polished political answer that he, too, believed in religious freedom and Pakistan under his leadership is moving toward more openness and more tolerance of other religions.  I didn’t get a chance to but I wanted to say, “What about Ms. Bebe who’s been in jail for a while for blasphemy?  Based on what you said, are you going to release her?”  I didn’t get a chance to go that far. but to sit there and look him in the eye and ask him about that was quite an honor for me.

***You have never made your faith a secret.  How has that played a role in your decision to run initially for offices in the state and then kick it up to federal level?***

That really goes back to December of 2001 when my wife and I… I was asked to consider running.  I went home and talked with her about it. We had a good laugh about anyone wanting me to run for the State House, and then we made the decision we would pray about it.  And so, through that Christmas, through that wintertime period, December and January, we prayed about it and there was more and more confirmation.

I really believe you get confirmation from the Lord through prayer, circumstances, and the Word.  The circumstances were definitely there and more and more people came out of the woodwork to encourage me to run for office.  So we felt like that was confirmation.  And I just had an inner peace about it being the right thing to do at that time.  We won. I served for eight years, and then when I made the decision to run for Congress, the same thing happened.  We always try to seek guidance from above, so I came out with a peace.

You know, I was a state representative for eight years, and I was going to have to give that up because I could only run for one office at a time.  Did I want to do that and take a gamble in a race that you were going to see six or seven other people jump into?  I just had a peace that I was a winner either way.

God put on my heart that I either win and go to Congress and serve my country or I didn’t win, I go home, I go back to work.  I’m a father.  I have three sons.  I’d be home there more for my boys and experience life in a more, I guess, laid back fashion than I was experiencing serving in Columbia.  So I really felt at peace about it.  I always have.  And then I’ve been in Washington eleven months now, and we’ve had a lot of challenges.  We’ve had challenges on spending issues and trying to cut.  We’ve had a debt ceiling increase and…

I’ll tell you a quick story.

We went over. It was a Thursday evening about 6:15. They said they were going to call votes about 6:30 on the debt ceiling increase, on whether we were going to allow the nation’s borrowing ability to go from the $14.3 trillion up to $16.7 trillion, a $2.4 trillion increase in our borrowing ability.  You know what Washington’s going to do.  If they have the ability borrow they money, they’re going to borrow it all.

I was going to vote “No”.  I just didn’t feel good about allowing the country to borrow more money, and I signaled that very early, so I think leadership was very certain that I was a “No.”  So I go over to the Capitol for that vote at 6:30, and I get over there and I find out from some of the floor staff that they didn’t have the votes and they were going to postpone the vote.  I said, “I walked all the way over here from my office.”  I said to myself, “I think I’m going to go to the chapel and pray about this.”  Because I was struggling with it.  Whether it was the right thing to do.

I wanted to pray for the leaders, and so I’m walking over to the chapel which is right off the Rotunda in the center of the building, and I’ve got to go from the House chamber through the old House chamber which is now known as Statuary Hall and through a little hallway where the old exterior wall of the Capitol was.  Then, right by the hallway that goes down to the Speaker’s office suite in the Capitol and then in the Rotunda, well, being such a significant issue, all the reporters are camped out in Statuary Hall and in the hallway leading to the Speaker’s office and there must be a hundred.

So I’m walking over there. There is no way to get there from where I amwithout going through that throng of reporters, so I’m walking through there, and they see me.  And they probably couldn’t have recognized my name or called my name but they knew I was a Congressman based on where I was coming from and how I was dressed and that sort of thing.  They probably knew I was from South Carolina or some of them did.  They come over and they stick microphones and tape recorders in my face.  They say, “Congressman, are you going to a meeting with the Speaker.”  I said, “No, I’m not.”  They said, “No, really. We just saw Joe Wilson go in there.  We feel like the South Carolina delegation is being called to the Speaker’s office.  You’re really going to a meeting with the Speaker, right?”  I said, ”No. I’m not. I’m actually going to the chapel to pray about this.”  “Oh, you’re thinking about changing your vote.”  “No, I’m a pretty solid ‘No.’ I’m going to pray for them that maybe they’ll change their vote.  I’m going to lift up the Speaker.  I’m going to lift up the President.  I’m going to lift up Harry Reid and the others involved in this negotiating process, so, if you’ll excuse me…”

So I walked on through and they kind of follow me through the Rotunda and kind of looked where I was going. To this day, I don’t think they believed I was going to the chapel.  A)  I don’t think they knew there was a chapel and B) they thought I was skirting them to get to the Speaker’s office.

So I go in the chapel, sit down and my phone buzzes about the time I get in there.  And it’s Mick Mulvaney, Congressman Mulvaney.  He’s sent me a text message that says, “Duncan, where are you?”  He’d done the same thing, come to the Capitol to vote.  They cancelled votes and (I thought) he probably wanted to go get something to eat, if I know Mick.  “We’re over here, let’s go grab a bite to eat and talk about this.”  Well, he said “Duncan, where are you?” I sent him a text back and I said, “I’m in the chapel praying.”  He said, “Hold on, I’ll be right there.”

So Congressman Mulvaney comes over and on the way, he runs into Tim Scott from Charleston, and he brings Tim along with him.  Well, keep in mind, they’ve got to go through this same throng of reports, and I know now that the reporters really felt like the whole South Carolina delegation was getting called to the principal’s office or the Speaker’s office.  They come around, and I hear them trying to get in the door. I get up and open it, and when I open the door, those two gentlemen are standing there, and there are two or three reporters who have followed them around to a “Members Only” area to see where they were going.  I don’t think they believed there was a chapel.  So we open the door, and they come in.

The reporters are sticking their heads in, and I said, “Y’all come on in.”

There’s a beautiful stained glass in the chapel, if you’ve never been there.  It’s got Washington kneeling, the way his men said he prayed all the time about his decisions, and he’s kneeling in the stained glass and it says, “Psalms 16:1  Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.”

That’s where our national motto comes from that’s under attack now, “In God We Trust.”

Anyway, it’s a beautiful piece of stained glass.  So I cut it on so they can see it.  They take a few pictures, these reporters did, and we say, “Excuse me.”  We push them out and close the door and we sit there and we’re talking about this issue, the three of us.

We’re praying together about this, and then I get a text message on my phone from my wife.  She said, “Are y’all in the chapel praying?”  I said, “Yeah, but how do you know?”  She said, “It just reported across Fox News that the South Carolina delegation was in the chapel praying about this.”  I said, “Wow.”  It only took minutes, minutes, OK.  So I said, “Yeah, I’ll call you back.”

So we’re sitting there and Mick Mulvaney says, “Guys, I’m going to look up some scripture.”  He reaches over, there’s a prayer bench, he grabs a Bible off that.  He flips over to Proverbs 22:7.  He said, “This isn’t what I thought this verse was.  I remember the scripture reference, but I thought it was something else, but look what it is.”  And the second part of that verse says, “The rich rule over the poor and the borrower is servant to the lender.”  And we’re in there talking and praying about raising the debt ceiling.  Increasing the borrowing ability of the nation, and the scripture says, “the borrower will be servant to the lender.”

I said, “Guys, I’m done. I’m cooked.  You can stick a fork in me. That’s confirmation from God that we don’t need to raise the debt ceiling of this country because the borrower is servant to the lender, and God’s telling us right here that we need to be very, very careful borrowing money.”  I said, “That just confirms me up that I’m a ‘No.’”  So we left there and went to a meeting with the Speaker and, as it turned out, we all voted “No.”  It was the right thing to do.

To Read Part 1, Click *[HERE](../2012/01/16/jeff-duncan-part-1/%22%20%5Co%20%22Jeff%20Duncan%20--%20Part%201)*. To Read Part 2, Click *[HERE](http://www.crescentmag.com/2012/01/23/jeff-duncan-part-2/%22%20%5Co%20%22Jeff%20Duncan%20--%20Part%202)*.

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# WHAT’S GOING ON: Business Notes

Published Date : January 25, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Livingston-Rutledge.jpg)

The Reserve at Lake Keowee is pleased to welcome back Rutledge Livingston as its Director of Sales. From 2000-2008, Livingston served as The Reserve’s Director of Sales and the company is thrilled to have him rejoin its senior management team.

A native of Hendersonville, N.C., Livingston has been a top producer in residential real estate for more than 25 years – 15 of those years in sales management – and brings a wealth of knowledge to the position. Prior to his hiring, Livingston worked as a consultant for two years and served as Director of Sales for The Cliffs at High Carolina in Asheville, N.C. At The Reserve at Lake Keowee, Livingston will be responsible for selling homes and homesites and recruiting, hiring, and leading its sales team. He will also be involved in new real estate product design and offerings within the community and serve as an advocate for owners and club members who need to resell their home or homesite.

“We are excited to have Rutledge rejoin The Reserve to lead our sales effort. He brings a wealth of experience and knowledge of The Reserve, and his enthusiasm and passion for our community is infectious and will undoubtedly excite our team,” stated Chuck Pigg, Vice President of Greenwood Communities and Resorts and Community Manager of The Reserve at Lake Keowee.

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# YOUR TURN: “The Best Legislature That Lobbying Can Buy” By Phil Noble

Published Date : January 25, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/PhilNoble.jpg)

We hear a lot about lobbyists and special interest money in South Carolina politics but no one ever seems to talk about the hard numbers. So, here are a few numbers gleaned from 2011 lobbyist reports that are publicly available online at the SC Ethics Commission web site.

Read ‘em and weep.

SC has 542 registered lobbyists, and 545 lobbyist principals (the people who pay the lobbyist)

* there are 822 different lobbying contracts, often with one principal hiring multiple lobbyists
* 12 state agencies have lobbyists, mostly colleges and universities
* 36 separate contracts is the largest number of contracts for one lobbyist
* $11,118 is the average size of a lobbyist contract
* $142,000 is the biggest single lobbying contract from a single principal
* 22 lobbyists make over $100,000 a year in direct lobbying contracts alone
* $525,802 is the largest amount paid in various contracts to a single lobbyist
* $11,385,031 is the total paid to lobbyists in 2011 for lobbying contracts
* $12,113,965 is the total of lobbyist payments, including contracts and expenses
* $71,258 per legislator is the total lobbying cost per legislator, for 124 Representatives and 46 Senators

Who are these lobbyists? Many are former legislators, current and former political office holders and their families, former staff, and lots and lots of lawyers. And not all these ‘good ole boys’ are boys, of course ; there are many highly paid women lobbyists as well.

It would be easy to go on a rant and write extensively about the evils of lobbyists and how they have corrupted our political system, but I won’t. I’ll let the above numbers speak for themselves.

A few final points. First, these are just the reported lobbying expenses. They do not include the campaign contributions that these lobbyists ‘direct’ to the legislators through corporate and individual contributions from the lobbyist principals or the related special interest political action committees’ contributions.

Secondly, these amounts do not include any fees or consulting contracts that special interest groups and lobbyist principals pay directly to the legislators for ‘professional services.’

Third, not every lobbyist and lobbyist principal is a ‘special interest bad guy.’ There are many good businesses, organizations, non-profit groups and others that are advocating for legitimate and beneficial public policy goals. We should all look closely at these people and their issues and determine for ourselves who is working for the benefit of all of the people of South Carolina and who is working to benefit only themselves.

Fourth, I’m not a professional researcher so I would encourage others – the media, academics and citizens – to check my facts and my math, but more importantly, to look for themselves at who is paying whom in South Carolina’s rotten political system.

All of this information was dug up with just a couple of hours of research on my home computer. There is a lot more research that needs to be done to shine a light on the grubby world of money and politics in South Carolina. As U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis said in 1913, “Sunlight is the best disinfectant.” It still is.

Like many South Carolinian’s, I’ve come to believe that our government is broken and our politics is corrupt. In fact, I believe that our government is broken *because* our politics is corrupt, and that  it will only be cleaned up  when we know the truth about who is paying whom and what they are buying.  Only then will we be able to demand the kind of root-and-branch reform that our malignant political culture so desperately needs.

*Phil Noble is a businessman in Charleston and President of the SC New Democrats, an independent reform group started by former Gov. Richard Riley. Contact Mr. Noble at phil@SCNewDemocrats.org or [www.SCNewDemocrats.org](http://www.scnewdemocrats.org/).*

*DISCLAIMER: The opinions, beliefs, and viewpoints expressed by the author are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of* CRESCENT: The Magazine*.*

*To submit an op-ed for CRESCENT’s “Your Turn” section, please email it to input@crescentmag.com.*

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# Red Sox Extend Player Development Contract with Greenville Drive Through

Published Date : January 24, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/2010SAL_AllStarGame.jpg)

The Boston Red Sox and Greenville (SC) Drive announced the extension of their Player Development Contract (PDC) for an additional four years. The extension keeps the Red Sox South Atlantic League Single-A affiliate in Greenville through the 2016 season.

Red Sox Director of Player Development Ben Crockett and Drive Co-Owner/President Craig Brown made the announcement prior to the Drive’s annual Hot Stove Event yesterday — this year featuring Red Sox manager Bobby Valentine and former USC Gamecock standout Jackie Bradley, Jr.

“As an organization, we truly value our relationship with the Drive and the City of Greenville, and we are excited to extend our affiliation for an additional four seasons,” said Crockett.  “Our minor league players benefit greatly from their experience with the Drive’s outstanding staff under the leadership of Craig Brown and Mike deMaine, as well as Greenville’s state-of-the-art ballpark and passionate fan base.”

The Red Sox originally entered into an agreement with the Drive when the franchise moved from Columbia, SC to Greenville for the 2005 season.  The PDC had since been extended twice, most recently for four years through 2012 prior to the 2008 season.

“This is a great day for the Greenville Drive and the entire Upstate of South Carolina,” said Brown. “The partnership we have forged with the Boston Red Sox is of enormous importance to us and the very talented Major League prospects that consistently play for the Drive at Fluor Field.  The true test of a world class organization is the delivery of sustained success over a period of time and the Red Sox have set the standard in this regard.  In the end, the success of an organization is the result of its people, and working with the Red Sox ownership group, Ben Cherington, Mike Hazen, Ben Crockett, the coaching staffs and entire the Red Sox organization has been a wonderful experience.  The Red Sox set the bar very high both on and off the field, which serves as an inspiration to our organization.  We are delighted to formally extend our relationship and look forward to the continued development of our partnership for many years to come.”

The Drive have compiled a winning record in five of seven years since becoming an affiliate of the Red Sox, including each of the last four seasons, and have made the playoffs twice in the last three years, reaching the South Atlantic League Championship Series in 2010.  Alumni who have recently appeared in the Majors with the Red Sox include Lars Anderson, Daniel Bard, Michael Bowden, Clay Buchholz, Felix Doubront, Ryan Kalish and Ryan Lavarnway.  Greenville’s Fluor Field at the West End, which opened in 2006, is modeled after Fenway Park.

Greenville is one of Boston’s six minor league affiliates, joining Triple-A Pawtucket (International League), Double-A Portland (Eastern League), High-A Salem (Carolina League), Short-A Lowell (New York-Penn League) and Rookie Gulf Coast Red Sox (Gulf Coast League).

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# FROM THE DESK OF: The Happiest Guy in Florida

Published Date : January 23, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/SunnyNewt.jpg)

***BY: Taft Matney***

As the sun rose over Florida this morning, just a day removed from the South Carolina primary, there’s no doubt that the happiest guy in the state is Newt Gingrich.

Forget about the piles of direct mail and robocalls in South Carolina. Think about how crazy last week was.

It started on Monday morning with voters and candidates alike believing that Mitt Romney had won both the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary, making him 2-0 coming in to South Carolina.

Let’s be honest. At that point the race was Governor Romney’s to lose. He was poised to win South Carolina 35% to 26% over Gingrich and head to Florida as the presumptive GOP nominee. All he had to do was maintain.

Then, one by one, the wheels fell off the bus.

Monday Night, in the Myrtle Beach debate, he was first hit with the question about releasing his taxes. By completely blowing the answer and coming off as if he had something to hide, it became the defining issue of the week.

No worries for the Romney camp, though. After all, they’d have nearly three days to come up with a better answer for the debate in Charleston where the question was sure to come up again. Right?

OK, so the media asked him on Tuesday and Wednesday to clarify his position on releasing his taxes, to which he replied that he pays a roughly 15% rate, and for some reason he couldn’t figure out how to explain that he’s actually “between jobs” – having been unemployed since 2007.

On Thursday morning, Governor Perry dropped out of the race and endorsed Speaker Gingrich.

Fast forward to Thursday night when, in another nationally televised debate, somebody had the gall to again ask Governor Romney about releasing his tax records. Lucky for him, his team used the past 72 hours to come up with a great comeback if asked if he would release his tax returns in the tradition that his father started. “Maybe,” he responded. That’ll show ‘em, Mitt…or not, as a chorus of boos erupted from the audience.

Never mind the fact that another network was preparing to broadcast an interview with Speaker Gingrich’s second ex-wife that claimed he asked her for an open marriage so he could pursue a relationship the Callista, his current wife.

Did anybody think to capitalize on that? After all, we’re talking about South Carolina where politics is a gladiator sport. Guess not.

[Of course there were also the fake emails on Friday](http://www.crescentmag.com/2012/01/20/more-presidential-campaign-dirty-tricks/%22%20%5Co%20%22More%20Presidential%20Campaign%20Dirty%20Tricks). There was the one in the morning that was supposedly from CNN claiming that Speaker Gingrich forced his second ex-wife to have an abortion. CNN had to make several statements saying that the email didn’t come from them, but that didn’t deter the political tricksters who, later that day, sent another fake email to South Carolina Republicans.

By this time the tide had more than turned, and on Saturday, with the aid of Democrats and independents who boastfully voted Republican for the day, a record 601,577 turned out to vote.

Flipping what the polls showed at the beginning of the week, Gingrich bettered Romney 40% – 28% and sent the four remaining campaigns to Florida with only Ron Paul not having a win under his belt.

The bottom line is that the man who started the week as the presumptive nominee now had the same number of wins as Gingrich and Santorum.

Comparatively, Romney spent little time in the state and through a combination of his own actions and inactions, giving up South Carolina was Romney’s own doing. South Carolina wasn’t a big piece of his strategy. His staff was minimal, and a lack of outreach to potential volunteers was not an effective way to build support.

On the other hand, after having his consultants quit his campaign earlier in the year, Gingrich had an effective staff that worked well with activists, provided accessibility to the media, and built a strong ground game.

While it was a roller coaster of a week with ups, downs, twists, and turns, it was also just another week in South Carolina politics. One thing’s for sure, today Newt Gingrich is they happiest guy in the state of Florida.

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# CRESCENT Entertainment: The Piedmont Boys' Greg Payne Talks About What Social Media Means to New Artists

Published Date : January 23, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/GregPayneVertical.jpg)

***How have social media outlets changed the way you communicate, you get the word out there?***

It’s huge for us.  It benefits us way more than it does somebody who is already a big star, obviously.

Anybody…I can put anything on YouTube and, for some reason, it can just catch fire.  It can be viral in a couple of days.  Next thing you know, you’re famous.  So I think it’s leveled the playing field for any new artist to put their music out.  Like the YouTube and the Facebook and the iTunes.  We’re on iTunes.

People can’t go to Walmart and buy my songs, next to Jason Aldean’s, but they can go to iTunes.

“Oh, here’s Jason Aldean. Here’s The Piedmont Boys. Let’s buy both.”  So, it puts us on the same playing field as all the big guys.

I don’t know exactly how I feel about it.  I wish people wouldn’t buy a record and burn it for all their friends, but you can’t stop it.  I’m not going to hate on that.  As long as the songs are getting out there and people are coming to your web site, they’re coming to your Facebook, they’re coming to your show, that’s, to me, what it’s all about.

***What else do you either want to get off your chest or want people to know.***

Well, we’ll probably get on another tour with the Jagermeister guys.  I never hear from the guys until January or February.

I also want people to, if they’d be kind enough, to like us on Facebook and if they like what we’re doing, spread it to their friends and family because that’s what it’s all about — getting our music out there to more and more people.  Letting it spread.  Because I love more than anything playing music, especially playing music in front of good crowds that are receptive.  The more they give back, the more I put out.  We’ve been blessed…have some really good fans out there and we want to keep building on that.

*To keep up with The Piedmont Boys, visit them at [www.ThePiedmontBoys.com](http://www.thepiedmontboys.com/%22%20%5Co%20%22The%20Piedmont%20Boys%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).*

If you want to hear The Piedmont Boys live, catch them:

* **Friday, January 27, 2012** at Rusty Rudder in Cornelius/Lake Norman, NC
* **Friday, February 3, 2012**  at The Handlebar in Greenville, SC
* **Saturday, February 4, 2012** at Johnny and Junes in Winston Salem, NC
* **Friday, February 10, 2012** at Ford’s Oyster House in Greenville, SC
* **Saturday, February 11, 2012** During the Southeastern Wildlife Association at Reds in Charleston SC
* **Friday, February 17, 2012** at Rhythm and Brews in Greer, SC
* **Saturday, February 18, 2012** CD Release Party with Early Ray LIVE @ Puckett’s Farm Equipment in Charlotte, NC
* **Friday, February 24, 2012** at Chuckwagon in Sumter, SC
* **Friday, March 9, 2012** at Rusty Rudder in Cornelius/Lake Norman, NC

*To Read Part 1, Click [HERE](../2011/12/19/piedmont-boys-part-1/%22%20%5Co%20%22The%20Piedmont%20Boys%20--%20Part%201).* *To Read Part 2, Click [HERE](../2012/01/09/piedmont-boys-part-2/%22%20%5Co%20%22The%20Piedmont%20Boys%20--%20Part%202).* *To Read Part 3, Click [HERE](http://www.crescentmag.com/2012/01/16/piedmont-boys-part-3/%22%20%5Co%20%22The%20Piedmont%20Boys%20--%20Part%203).*

The Piedmont Boys’ new album [“All on Red” is now available on iTunes](http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/all-on-red/id496741426%22%20%5Co%20%22%22All%20on%20Red%22%20available%20on%20iTunes).

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# CRESCENT People: Congressman Jeff Duncan Discusses Job Creation and Economic Development

Published Date : January 23, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/JeffDuncanListeningTour.jpg)

***Is government getting in the way of being able to pursue that American dream, at least from the current President’s administration and their philosophy?***

Well, the current president and also the past Congress perpetuated that.  Yeah, through the bailouts and the takeovers, takeover of healthcare, the individual mandate requiring somebody to do something.

The fact that we’ve seen more government regulation, that’s going to stymie business growth and opportunity.

If you’re going to start a business today, a new business startup is having to deal with EPA regulations or local business regulations and licensing and then a tax policy.  The uncertainty in the marketplace. People ask themselves, “What are my taxes going to be?”  You know, we see what’s going in Washington.  Folks just want some certainty.  If my tax rate is going to be “X,” I can deal with it.  But we don’t know. We don’t know what Washington’s going to do with taxation and tax policy because every time the President goes to the microphone, he talks about raising taxes.  And he’s run the whole gamut, but when he talks about raising taxes on the wealthiest of Americans, most Americans know that’s going to trickle down to higher costs for them.

So what are tax policies?  What are the regulations going to be that affect my business?  The EPA, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, things that are changing that are hurting business.

I’m going to change the product here so as not to say what the business is, but we’ve got a business in my district that makes widgets and they’ve been affected because their gadget is compliant with the air quality standards.  But to keep that gadget from being adjusted by me and you, as the end purchaser of that, they have to put a tamper-resistant piece over it to keep you from being able to adjust that gadget because the EPA is saying that, for air quality standard purposes, you shouldn’t adjust that gadget.  It’s set by the factory to meet their air quality emissions.  Well, now they’re having to deal with regulations about that tamper-resistant piece and how long it would take the average individual to defeat that piece so he could adjust that gadget.

And that business is a United States business who has facilities overseas in other countries and they can move the whole operation over there, but they don’t want to that.  But they want some certainty in the marketplace.  “Look, you told us we had to have the widget that had this emission standard.  We’ve done that.  We’ve put the tamper-resistant piece on there to keep the average guy from tampering with the gadget so he won’t affect emissions.  Now you’re basically beating us up over the fact that somebody with a screwdriver in some warehouse somewhere with a hammer, defeated that and in ‘x’ number of minutes and was able to adjust the gadget.”

I just scratch my head and go, “Have we gotten down to that level?”  We’re going to affect that type of business — job-creators in a county in South Carolina that is shipping product worldwide. that is very successful, making a profit, returning shareholder value to the shareholders, providing return on investment.  None of that matters.  It’s whether somebody can defeat that tamper-resistant piece in x number of minutes.

Getting back to the certainty, you’ve got taxation, regulation and litigation.

Litigation.  Companies should be able to make a business decision to locate wherever they want to without fear or retribution or suit from the government.  The NLRB is suing Boeing right now for making a decision to come to South Carolina, a right-to-work state (***NOTE:*** *The [National Labor Relations Board dropped its case against Boeing](../../../../../2011/12/09/nlrb-drops-case-against-boeing/) on December 9, 2011, after the interview with Congressman Duncan was recorded.*).

Let’s say you have a cabinet shop in Wisconsin.  And you look at South Carolina and you say, “You know, there’s a lot of pine down there, and I could move my cabinet shop or my woodworking facility down to South Carolina and be closer to that, that resource.”  So, you make the decision to move down there and you start going through all the licenses and worry about what the state taxes are going to be and locating and then you get a knock on the door and it’s the NLRB saying, “We think you moved to South Carolina because South Carolina is a right-to-work state and you’re from a union state.  We think you’re doing it to punish those union workers by relocating to the right-to-work state and we’re not going to let you locate in South Carolina.  You’ve got to move back to Wisconsin and provide jobs for those union guys.”

And you go, “No, wait a minute, I came because there is an ample supply of soft pine that I can use in my woodworking.”  “No, no, we feel like you moved because you want to punish the union workers up there and you cannot locate in South Carolina. You’ve got to move back.”

That’s what’s Boeing facing right now.  NRLB wants to keep them from building Dreamliners, the airplane that they’re going to build in Charleston.  Keep them from doing that in South Carolina because the NLRB is saying that Boeing did that to punish the union workers in Washington State even though Boeing made the decision to come here.  It’s a right-to-work state, they can manufacture cheaper, the real estate’s less expensive, they were already building part of the fuselage there anyway, and, instead of having to move that around the country, we’ll just build the whole airplane there.  And it’s not just Boeing that’s affected.  It’s everything that goes into that airplane, every widget, every seat cover, wiring harness, windshield, you name it.  Those companies were going to locate in proximity to that plant.

They were going to provide good paying jobs.  They were going to buy real estate, build facilities, and provide that to Boeing and, right now, they can’t make the decision to do that if Boeing has to move back to Washington State.  So it’s not just Boeing that’s affected.

***Can’t business owners open or move their businesses wherever it would be best for that business without the government approving where to open that business?***

You could until recent memory.

You could until this administration decided they were going to help their buddies in big labor and support union operations.  This is really going to be a landmark case to see if the NLRB has the ability to tell you or Boeing or the cabinet shop I was talking about or any other business where they can locate or where they can’t locate.  I think NLRB is going to lose this suit, but we’re watching it very closely.

That goes back to the uncertainly I talked about.  Taxation, regulation, litigation.

I think government’s role is to provide some sort of certainty to business…large business, small business, job creators…some sort of certainty in the marketplace where they can make decisions.  They know what their taxes are going to be.  They know what regulations they’ve got to comply with.  They know they’re not going to be sued.  Cap-and-trade has kind of gone away, but they know they’re going to have good reliable power, that we’ve got American energy independence, that we’ve got a good stable supply of power and your utility rates are not going to fluctuate dramatically year-to-year because of somebody’s idea that the earth is getting warmer because of greenhouse emissions and global warming.  Luckily, that’s off the table for now.  But if we have this president re-elected next time or Congress stays the way it is or changes back, that’s definitely back in play.

***A president who conveniently decided to delay his decision on the expansion of the Keystone XL pipeline.****..*

He delayed it until after the election.  His Department of State and a lot of others are fine with Keystone, so he delayed to basically cozy up to the environmentalists.  It’s (Keystone) the right thing, it’s a job creator.

He was out there on this jobs tour.  I really ought to take the “s” off and call it a “job tour” because he’s only trying to protect his own job, but the Keystone XL pipeline would have provided a tremendous number of jobs, even in South Carolina because of the pipe manufacturing, the tires that go to the oil companies using the oil sands in Canada.

They’re made by Michelin in Lexington County, South Carolina.

There’s a trickle down of about two or three thousand jobs for our state.  But about 200,000 jobs nationwide that would have gone along with construction of that pipeline and also the refining capacity, ramping up the refineries down in the Gulf Coast states, the shipping, everything you can think of.  It’s a job creator and the president killed it or at least delayed it.  Delayed it to the point that you’ve got companies such as Keystone, they’re looking to do something different.  You’ve got oil companies in Canada, they’re looking to ship their oil up by a different means, maybe send more to the West Coast or more to the East Coast to be sent around the world versus coming to the United States and being refined into gasoline products and other products that come from hydrocarbons here in this country.

***And they’re also claiming it would be cheaper to send it to China and let everything be processed over there.***

Yeah, and there we go.  There’s some more jobs going to China.  And that’s been result of the policies of this administration.  As much as they want to have the rhetoric about job creation here in this country, they’re killing jobs in this country.

To Read Part 1, Click *[HERE](http://www.crescentmag.com/2012/01/16/jeff-duncan-part-1/%22%20%5Co%20%22Jeff%20Duncan%20--%20Part%201)*.

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# CRESCENT Provides Commentary to Irish Network for South Carolina Republican Primary

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Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/RTE-Logo.jpg)

[RTE News’ “This Week”](http://www.rte.ie/news/thisweek/%22%20%5Co%20%22RTE%20News%20%22This%20Week%22%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) is Ireland’s longest running current affairs program, and CRESCENT editor Taft Matney joined RTE’s Fran McNulty and Richard Downes yesterday morning to provide commentary on Saturday’s presidential preference primary in South Carolina.

Listen to the audio *[HERE](http://http://www.taftmatney.com/20120122_TaftMatneyOnRTENewsThisWeek.mp3%22%20%5Co%20%22CRESCENT%27s%20Taft%20Matney%20On%20RTE%20News%27%20%22This%20Week.%22%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*.

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# More Presidential Campaign Dirty Tricks (A.K.A. South Carolina Politics)

Published Date : January 20, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Newt_20L2_AbortionHoax.jpg)

Earlier this morning, emails began circulating throughout South Carolina political circles claiming to originate from CNN as “breaking news” that former House speaker and GOP presidential contender Newt Gingrich forced his second ex-wife Marianne to have an abortion.

The email was fake.

Although the message allegedly came from “BreakingNews@mail.cnn.com,” [according to CNN political reporter Peter Hamby](http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2012/01/20/fake-cnn-email-used-as-dirty-trick-in-south-carolina/%22%20%5Co%20%22%22Fake%20CNN%20email%20used%20as%20dirty%20trick%20in%20South%20Carolina%22%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) who frequently covers politics in South Carolina, “CNN did not send out the email alert.”

The email stated, “A source close to Marianne Gingrich tells CNN that former House Speaker Newt Gingrich forced her to abort a pregnancy conceived during the affair that preceded her marriage to Gingrich.”

Now, a second fake email is making the rounds. This time it claims to be a statement from the Gingrich campaign offering a statement of apology.

Titled “Newt Gingrich Responds to Abortion Allegations,” the email reads, “I have said many times, including on the debate stage last night, that I am not a perfect human being and I have made mistakes in my life. This was one of them. I have had to apologize to God and to seek reconciliation. The fact is, I am not proud of some decisions I have made or actions I have taken, but I believe in the power of redemption and I trust the voters of South Carolina do as well.”

The originating email address is “campaign@newt20l2.org.” If pasted in to a word processing program like Microsoft Word and if the programs “change case” function is applied to make all characters upper cases, the address changes to “CAMPAIGN@NEWT20L2.ORG.”

The “1” in 2012 is actually a lower case “L,” making the originating domain “newt20L2.org.”

According to records, the “newt20L2.org” was privately registered today using GoDaddy.com, LLC.

While this is not the first dirty trick used in South Carolina politics, it is doubtful it will be the last, either. Polls are open tomorrow, January 21, from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.

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# FROM THE DESK OF: Campaigns are like Political Christmas Tree Lots

Published Date : January 19, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/christmas-tree-lot-130730924856s.jpg)

***BY: Taft Matney***

Christmas tree lots. They’re set up overnight, they open on a busy corner, they run for a few weeks, and they’re gone. Employees often come from out of state, and, let’s just say, it’s easy to question the skill sets of a lot of them.

The same can be said for political campaigns.

Are there exceptions? Yes, especially when the staff hires are local.

We have some incredible, battle-tested political talent in this state,  but the number of Lee Atwater wannabes and “I read PRIMARY COLORS, watched THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT, and have THE WEST WING box set” types can really do more harm than good if they’re given too much rope.

This cycle, there’s been a lot of that from the presidential campaigns. It’s too late to do anything now, but to the out-of-staters who made South Carolina home for a couple of months and to the fresh-faced campaign workers (who aren’t limited to the “just got out of college” set) who think campaigns are a great career path, take an old guy’s advice for success down the road.

***Don’t act like you’re local iffin you ain’t.***

It’s important to learn your area, who the players are, what the personality dynamics are, and how things are done, but that takes time. I know that with a presidential campaign, especially in SC, time is a commodity. After Saturday, we won’t get another presidential campaign visit until 2015, but that means you have to squeeze more in to that finite campaign calendar. Make friends, let them guide you, and LISTEN to what they have to say. If you try to do things YOUR way, you’re failing yourself and your candidate.

***Know the rules.***

This goes both toward an application of the law and just how things are done. Never assume. Find a strong legal counsel – one recommended from people in the know. Talk with state party officers, major donors, activists. The way you do things in Wisconsin may very well be different than the way things are done in South Carolina. In fact, I’d pretty well bet on it.

***Build relationships.***

Sensing a theme yet? When former House Speaker Tip O’Neill said that, “All politics is local,” he wasn’t kidding. It wasn’t just some nifty saying he thought would look nice on a bumper sticker. You can’t go in to an area and think you know it all…or anything, for that matter. The local elected officials, party officials, and activists got there before you, and they’ll be there after you. They’ll be your best sources of information, networking, and volunteers.

***Utilize relationships.***

When you build relationships, you’ll discover that people want to help you. They, just as much as you, want your candidate to win. Let them help. Plug them in so that they can actually help. Don’t just give them busywork. Don’t let their emails and voicemails go unanswered. Aside from showing no common courtesy, ignoring or discounting what were once enthusiastic supporters makes them, at the very least, blasé about your efforts. At worst it makes them frustrated or angry at you, which could spill over to your candidate. Neither of those would be considered “good things.”

***Be appreciative and keep your word.***

Real friends are very difficult to come by in politics. It’s a difficult and sometimes painful lesson to learn. When you find friends, keep them. If somebody helps you, make sure you thank them appropriately. It’s important to embrace the “Dance with the one who brought you” philosophy. If you make a promise, keep it. The only thing you can ever really control about yourself is your word. The second you go back on it, is the second those friendships and loyalties disappear. Trust is paramount, and friendships must be reciprocal. Just because you’re working on the same campaign with someone doesn’t make you friends, though. Sometimes you’ll work with people you can’t trust, and this is the most difficult concept for a lot of people to grasp because you still have to be nice. You’re temporarily on the same team and likely will be again down the road if you decide to stay in politics. Just know the difference between friends and people you work with and have to be nice to.

Politics isn’t brain surgery – especially if your job is to build grassroots support. Strategy and messaging are coming from people above your pay grade. Should you show initiative and do some out of the ordinary things to help your candidate (like creating blogs or creative collateral)? Absolutely. Should you forego your duty to build relationships in order to do these things? Absolutely not.

Your time as a presidential campaign staffer is short. Make sure you leave something for yourself when it’s over. Make sure you have a network in place and an established reputation that will make candidates want to come to you down the road. Then you can set up your very own Christmas tree lot.

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# YOUR TURN: “SC Legislature: Off to a Quick Start – In the Wrong Direction” By Phil Noble

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Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/PhilNoble.jpg)

The state Legislature convened in Columbia and quickly went to work. Given the results so far, we would have been better off if they had stayed at home – and there in lies a solution to the problem that has worked in many of other states.

So what critical problem or big issue did they tackle this week? Was it fixing our broken state budget? Or improving education? Or creating jobs?

Nope. None of the above.

Instead, the Senate passed a bill honoring two dead people – Pres. Ronald Reagan and Eartha Kitt, the famed African American singer and actress from the town of North – and then immediately got in a fight about it. As one Senator said, “I fully support recognizing President Reagan without having to diminish his great accomplishments by equating them to the actions of a liberal gay rights activist.”

How many jobs did this create?

Next, they took up debate on a bill to require unemployed people to pass a drug test before they could receive unemployment benefits. You would have thought we settled this issue back in September, when Gov. Haley made a big deal out of claiming that 50% of the applicants at the Savannah River plant failed a drug test. In fact it is less than 1 percent.

As a *Post and Courier* reporter pointed out, if this bill becomes law, “they could run afoul of the federal government just like two signature pieces of legislation passed last year: Voter ID and immigration reform.” It would seem that intelligent people would quit wasting time passing laws that clearly will not pass federal muster.

What’s curious is that “wasting time” is not an issue for many legislators; they dilly-dally around with unimportant issues and spend time posturing and making speeches that no one really listens to.

Now, don’t get me wrong: there are plenty of good diligent hard working legislators in both parties that sincerely want to do the right thing. But the dirty little secret is that, for many, being in Columbia six months out of the year is a both a pleasure and a perk, and they actively work to stretch it out as long a possible.

The Legislature convenes the first of January each year and usually stays in session about six months, sometimes longer if they get called back to deal with the governor’s vetoes and other special issues. Though officially in session throughout the work week, they generally don’t meet at all on Monday or Friday and they roll in late morning on Tuesday and roll out early afternoon on Thursday.

Why do they stretch it out so long? There are lots of reasons. Some legislators simply enjoy the attention. For others, coming to Columbia makes them feel like big shots in the big city, as they get lots of TLC from their staff, lobbyists and others who are competing for their time and attention.

There is an old saying around the statehouse that describes the session as “three dull days and two glorious nights,” and for too many legislators this is the case. The social calendar of the Legislature is chock full on breakfasts, lunches, dinners and receptions sponsored by special interest groups, lobbyists and even the occasional legitimate citizens’ group. They are so busy that they even have official committees of both the House and Session just to deal with all the invitations they receive.

The legislators love these events for the free food, the open bars, and the fawning attention. For lobbyists, the strategy seems to be to corner the legislators and talk with them about a tax break or other special deal while they are stuffing their faces with liquor and canapes.

And the tasty morsels don’t stop at the buffet line. Though it is said to have improved slightly in recent years, the ratio of blonde highlights to bad comb-overs is still suspiciously high at these Legislative receptions. And no one there seems to mind much one way or the other when one of the latter decides to go into ‘special session’ for the evening with one of the former – after all, (good ol’) boys will be (good ol’) boys, right? Or so says the culture of indolence and indulgence that goes largely unchallenged these days under the Dome in Columbia.

As is often the case, the solution to this is quite simple: limit the time of the legislative session – say, to 60 days every year. This will force the Legislature to take up the important stuff and quit wasting time.

A quick look at other states shows that this is an eminently reasonable solution. For example: Florida is nearly four times as big as South Carolina, yet they only meet 60 days a year. In fact, according to a National Conference of State Legislatures study, 32 state legislatures meet for less time annually than does South Carolina, and four other states only meet every other year.

The old maxim is that work expands to fill the time available. So, let’s shorten the session and force them to get down to serious work.

It will be good for the state and save tax money to boot. And the legislators themselves would probably be a lot better off – healthier, anyway –  if they cut down on the lobbyist-provided food and drink, and got a good night’s sleep back in their own districts once in a while.

*Phil Noble is a businessman in Charleston and President of the SC New Democrats, an independent reform group started by former Gov. Richard Riley. Contact Mr. Noble at phil@SCNewDemocrats.org or [www.SCNewDemocrats.org](http://www.scnewdemocrats.org/).*

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*To submit an op-ed for CRESCENT’s “Your Turn” section, please email it to input@crescentmag.com.*

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# "Certified SC" Indoor Winter Farmers Market each Saturday at State Farmers Market

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Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/CertifiedSCGrown.jpg)

With the South Carolina Primary this Saturday, the South Carolina Department of Agriculture is asking people to “vote” for local farmers and specialty food marketers by shopping at the indoor Winter Certified SC Farmers Market.

The indoor market is open each Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. inside the Corbett Building located at the State Farmers Market, 3483 Charleston Highway in West Columbia. The market features vendors selling a wide variety of fresh, local products.

In addition to collards, cabbage, sweet potatoes, and other seasonal produce, the market vendors a variety of local meats including cured bacon and grass fed beef. Other items unique to South Carolina offered include: goat milk soap, Shea butter, and body scrubs; soy candles, SC‐made painted crafts and jewelry; gourmet salt, rubs, baking and dessert mixes; honey, syrup, sauces, dips, jams, and jellies; cookies, cakes, breads and other baked goods; peanut brittle; frozen blueberries and pears; wine and juice; and other specialty products.

The indoor Winter Certified SC Farmers Market is held each Saturday in the Corbett Building at the market from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. through March 31.

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# Kentucky Derby Legend Pat Day to address Thoroughbred association

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Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/LilETee1992DerbyPhotoSIgnedPatDay.jpg)

The guest speaker for the SC Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association annual awards dinner is Hall of Fame jockey Pat Day. The event will begin at 7 p.m. Jan. 21 at the Robert Mills Courthouse, 607 S. Broad St in Camden.

A native of Colorado, Day was competitive in sports from his childhood. Despite his small and wiry physique, he won a state wrestling championship in his weight category. His daredevil nature and natural abilities led him to try his hand at rodeo bull riding, but his true talents came to light when he started riding Thoroughbred race horses.

His first win was in 1973 at Prescott Downs, AZ. Unhampered by the weight issues which plague so many jockeys, Day quickly climbed the ranks in the Midwest. By the late ‘70s he was at the top of the national standings and began his run as leading rider at Churchill Downs.

Day’s racing career over the next three decades reads like a jockey’s textbook on success. He won the Kentucky Derby with long shot Lil E. Tee in 1992, and his list of champion mounts include Unbridled, Summer Squall, Tank’s Prospect, Louis Quatorze, Canadian Triple Crown winner Dance Smartly, and 1968 Horse of the Year, Lady’s Secret.

He is the top money-winning jockey in Breeders’ Cup history, and he is the only jockey to have ridden in the first 21 years of the event.  His personal pick for the best horse he ever rode was Easy Goer, who battled Sunday Silence in the ’89 Triple Crown. Sunday Silence won the Derby and the Preakness, but Easy Goer turned the tables in the Belmont Stakes with a dominating 14-length victory.

Day’s professional honors include four Eclipse Awards and induction into the National Museum of Racing’s Hall of Fame in 1991. He won the George Woolf Memorial Jockey Award in 1985 and the Mike Venizia Memorial Award in 1995 for “extraordinary sportsmanship and citizenship.”

In 2005, Day traded in his tack for a new position as industry representative for the Racetrack Chaplaincy. He now divides his time between his family in Kentucky and spreading the Gospel at tracks, colleges, and churches worldwide.

Tickets for the Jan. 21 banquet are $75. The dinner will be preceded by a silent auction beginning at 6 p.m. To reserve a seat or for more information, contact sctoba@frontier.com or call 803-206-4473.

For information about South Carolina’s equine industry, contact Marsha Hewitt at the South Carolina Department of Agriculture (mhewitt@scda.sc.gov or 803-734-2210).

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# WHAT’S GOING ON: Business Notes

Published Date : January 18, 2012
Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/20120108_MorrisFinancial.jpg)

**Morris Financial Concepts Announces Expansion with New Team Members**

Morris Financial Concepts, Inc., a nationally recognized, fee-only financial planning firm, is pleased to announce an expansion with the addition of three new team members, Dan Callahan, Tiffany Pripeton and Karrie Saboe.

Mr. Callahan joins the Morris Financial Concepts’ team to oversee investment operations. He graduated from College of Charleston’s Business School with a BA in business with a finance concentration and a minor in mathematics. While at the College of Charleston he was active in the investment club and he currently plans to further his education by obtaining the Certified Investment Management Analyst (CIMA®) designation. He participates in the community as a member of the Green Team in the Old Village Mount Pleasant and is a member of Charleston Young Professionals.

Ms. Pripetonenjoys a position with Morris Financial Concepts as a financial planner. Morris Financial Concepts’  holistic approach to caring for its clients is important to her.  In 2010 she interned at Permanent Value, a financial planning firm in San Diego, California. As a top ranked student, she graduated with an Honors Scholar degree and a B.S. in Business from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia and completed the Certified Financial Planner (CFP®) Board-Registered Program, as well as a minor in psychology. She is currently pursuing her CFP designation, and is a committee member with the Charleston Young Professionals.

Ms. Saboe, CPA, brings 15 years of experience in tax and accounting roles to Morris Financial Concepts. She received her bachelor’s degree from Furman University and studied accounting at the College of South Carolina. Outside of work, Saboe spends her time with her family, boating, playing tennis, cycling and swimming.

Morris Financial Concepts, Inc. is a nationally recognized, fee-only financial planning firm located in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina founded in 1987. The firm does not accept commissions or compensation related to the products and services they recommend. Their counsel is based solely on what they consider best for each client, believing that by identifying and aligning their clients’ financial resources, life goals, and core values they will help them achieve an enriched life. Morris Financial Concepts’ mission of holistic financial planning involves the use of time-tested investment strategies, wealth management expertise, and objective advice to craft investment and wealth management plans that are individualized for each client.

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# CRESCENT People: Congressman Jeff Duncan – Introducing One of South Carolina’s Congressional “Fab Four” to a New Constituency

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Author : admin

[](http://www.crescentmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/JeffDuncanFamily.jpg)

*South Carolina’s congressional delegation got four new faces last year. They’ve become famous on Capital Hill for working together as a unit – consulting each other as they work to make decisions and listen to other points of view. Media outlets have gone so far as to refer to them as “The Fab Four” or “The Four Horsemen” (not for the apocalypse but for the wrestling group in the 1980s famous for doing things “their way” and who will be inducted in to the [WWE Wrestling Hall of Fame](http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2012/jan/15/mooneyham-column-four-horsemen-back-saddle/) this year).*

*CRESCENT had an opportunity to talk with former state House member and South Carolina’s 3rd District Congressman Jeff Duncan. He’s a political veteran who has seen his share of battles, but at the same time, he’s as deeply committed to his principles today as he was when he first ran for office. His devotion to his family and his faith keep him grounded, and with the geographical boundaries of the state’s congressional districts changing, he’s introducing himself to a new constituency. They’re lucky to have him.*

***Part of the 4th District is now going to be yours, and there are a lot of folks in the other parts of the state who don’t know who you are, that really should.  So who is Jeff?  Where did Jeff come from and why is Jeff here now?***

Well, I’m just a very proud South Carolinian who understands the state from a historical standpoint and wants to serve his state in the nation’s capital and serve his state in a lot of different capacities.  I have as a state representative and I have in my local community, now I’m serving in Congress.

I was born in South Carolina.  My father was in the textile business and we moved around a lot.  We move around in North Carolina, part of Virginia and back to South Carolina with the textile business.  I went to two different high schools.  I moved about twelve times while I was growing up, so I have a lot of childhood friends, and I think that’s helped me go into different situations very easily because, when you go from one school to the next, as a seventh grader or eighth grader or ninth grader, you learn to adjust to new situations and make friends rapidly and assess the situation rapidly.

I went to two different high schools, and we moved back to South Carolina between my junior year and my senior year, which is very traumatic for a rising senior who was an athlete, football, I wouldn’t say a football star, but a good football player who had the kind of best friends you develop in your ninth, tenth, eleventh grade years of life that I was moving away from. And to move from an area right above Charlotte, NC to Ware Shoals, SC was its own challenge.  But that’s what happened.

So I moved into Ware Shoals which was a 1A school, very small, 75 members in my senior class and wondering why in the world my father uprooted me and moved me to such a small town.  What was going to happen on the football field?  What was going to happen…you know, I had no friends.  Moved in June, school started in September or late August.  Not a lot of time to develop those friendships.  So anyway, long story short is, God knew what he was doing in my life because I met my wife there and we moved to Laurens after we were married.

We dated through college.  I came to Clemson University and played football at Clemson for a couple of years as a walk-on.  I made the team.  I was a guy that helped get the defense ready for the opposing offense.  I was a scout team guy most of the time but had great experiences with guys like…William Perry and playing football with him.  Or Michael Dean or David Treadwell who went on to play for Denver or Dale Hatcher, the only guy other than Ray Guy who has actually hit the scoreboard in the Superdome during a game.  There have only been two punters, but I know Dale and tried to catch his punts.  He could kick very, very high and a long way.  So that experience was great.

And we moved to Laurens when I got out of college and went to work in the banking industry, ended up in Laurens, a small bank, family-owned bank that’s been gobbled up through mergers.  Moved to Laurens in 1989 and pretty much been there ever since.  Got active in the community with the Chamber and with the different things that bankers get involved in but, also, I wanted to get involved in my community because I believed in Laurens County.  I liked what I saw there so as I got involved in the county and got to know more people, in the end of 2001, beginning of 2002, I decided to run for the State House for a vacant seat.

The gentleman was retiring who had been there ten years and a lot of folks came up and said, “We want you to represent us in Columbia.  We want you to run for the State House.”  I’d never really given it much thought even though I studied Political Science at Clemson and had a strong interest in politics, my interest was more, when I was at Clemson, more foreign affairs politics and Middle East politics or the Soviet Union, trying to understand that sort of thing.  So, state level politics never was something I was that interested in.  But when folks started encouraging me to run, we started looking at it, praying about it and decided that that was the time.

So when I ran for office, I won fairly easily, 70-30, and served for eight years in the South Carolina legislature moving up in the ranks to committee chairmanship for my last two years and developing a reputation.  In Columbia, they didn’t need to look up at the voting board to see how Jeff Duncan was voting.  They knew instinctively, he was voting conservatively, especially on spending issues.  And social issues, as well.  I was a very conservative person, had that reputation.  They didn’t have to guess. They knew.  That’s the kind of reputation I want as a Congressman, as well, and I think we’ve done a very good job establishing that the first year in office.  As has our whole South Carolina delegation on the Republican side.

They know we’re going to come down on the side of conservatism.  They know we’re going to be very fiscally conservative. They know, on the social issues, most of the Republicans will be…what’s hanging over the country right now are the fiscal matters, the spending, the debt, the deficits, the borrowing, the bailouts, the takeovers.   Everything you’ve seen Washington get involved in in the last three or four years.  We’re up there trying to reverse that trend.  We’re trying to cut spending, rein in deficits and end deficits so we can build surpluses to begin paying back our debt, ending the government takeover of private businesses, ending the government’s involvement in areas that government has no business being involved in.

People that know me, both in Washington and in the state, know that I carry a United States Constitution with me in my pocket as a foundation of my philosophy that government has a role.  Our founders envisioned a central government to handle a certain number of things, very enumerated or spelled out in the Constitution.  Government’s well beyond those original platform…those seventeen enumerated powers in the Constitution.  Trying to rein government and get back closer to those seventeen enumerated powers.  I don’t know that we’ll ever get back to that, but I think I can do my part. We can do our part as conservatives to rein in that size and scope of government.  To try to get close to what our founders envisions.  I think if we’re able to do that, the country will be very successful once again.

I think limited government, free markets and more individual freedoms or individual liberties are the most important things we can strive for.  My son asked me, over the weekend, he’s doing a project, he said, “Dad, what’s the American dream?”  I had to think about that because I know what the American dream is.  I’m living it.  I started my own business. Ran it for sixteen years.  I ran for public office to serve my community.  And I ran for a national office as a United States Congressman to serve my nation.  While also serving my community and my state, I’m serving my nation.  So I’m living the dream, but how do you articulate that?  And it comes down to basically – freedom.

The man should be free to pursue his own stake in life and succeed or fail or his own without the government propping up but without the government getting in the way.  Taking personal responsibility for their actions and inactions, and hopefully, leading to a lifestyle of prosperity for him and his family.  I think that’s what folks around the world when they see America, they see that land of opportunity to do just that.  To pursue what they want to pursue.  To succeed and have a better lifestyle than what they’ve got or what their fathers and mothers have had.

We’ve got to support that as government.  I think that’s government’s role is to support that and allow more freedom and more opportunity.  That’s the American dream.  So I had to articulate and really think about that for him.  And it was interesting. Congressman Gowdy was asked the same question by my son.  He sent an email to all of them…all the freshman members, and Trey responded very similarly.  And I read his quote afterwards.  More about personal freedom, the ability to pursue prosperity and happiness and it all comes down to liberty.

*Stay Tuned for Part 2.*

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