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Aiken Standard

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THURSDAY, November 14, 2013

AIKENSTANDARD.COM

Vol. 147, No. 318 Aiken, S.C. ★★ 75¢

Number low for health care plan signups

BY RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
AND LAURIE KELLMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Planting a paltry number on a national disappointment, the Obama administration revealed Wednesday that just 26,794 people enrolled for health insurance during the first, flawed month of operations for the federal Obamacare website.

Adding in enrollment of more than 79,000 in the 14 states with their own websites, the nationwide number of 106,000 October sign-ups was barely one-fifth of what officials had projected — and a small fraction of the millions who have received widely publicized private coverage cancellations as a result of the federal law.

Please see **SIGNUP**, Page 14A

Fewer than 600 in state secured health coverage

COLUMBIA (AP) — Federal officials say 572 South Carolinians managed to secure health insurance through the problem-plagued federal website in its first month.

They were among 26,794 people covered by new policies across the 36 states where the federal government is running the online marketplace. That's according to numbers released Wednesday by the Department of Health and Human Services.

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AREA DEATHS

Edward Eugene Looney, Aiken
Jeanette W. Eubanks, Warrenton
Louisa Busbee, Graniteville
Mary Jane Pooch, Aiken
Rosie Lee Guyton, Wagener
Deaths and Funerals, 6A

WEATHER



Sunny.
High 58. Low 36.
Complete 5-day forecast, 6C

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Comanche code talkers played an important role in World War II. Standing third from the left is the late Ralph Wahnee whose widow, Bessie Ruth "Becky" Wahnee, lives in Aiken.

Talking in code

World War II code talker's wife gets a gold medal for his service

BY DEDE BILES
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Aiken resident Bessie Ruth "Becky" Wahnee never asked her late husband Ralph what he did in World War II, and he never talked to her about it. But since his death in 1987, she has learned that he played an important role, serving as a Comanche code talker.

On Nov. 20, Becky will accept a Congressional Gold Medal on Ralph's behalf during a ceremony in the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center's Emancipation Hall in Washington, D.C. The Gold Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom are the country's highest civilian awards.

"It is the greatest honor that I will ever have in my lifetime," Becky said. "I'm just overwhelmed by the whole situation. When I married Ralph, who would have ever thought it would go from that to this? It's out of this world."

During World Wars I and II, the U.S. military used Native American servicemen to relay secret battle messages based on words from their traditional tribal languages. They became known as code talkers.

According to the Comanche National Museum and Cultural Center's website, the government handpicked 21 Comanche men to participate in the World War II code talker program. Seventeen went on to enlist in the Army, and they received training as radio operators and line repairmen with the 4th Infantry Division. The Army gave them free reign to develop secret Comanche code words that no one outside the group would be able to understand, including other Comanches.

Fourteen of the Comanche code talkers were sent overseas to fight in the European Theater.

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STAFF PHOTO BY DEDE BILES
Bessie Ruth "Becky" Wahnee shows photographs that include one of the Comanche code talkers of World War II. Her late husband, Ralph Wahnee, was a code talker.

Palace Malice named horse of the year

BY BEN BAUGH
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There's no one who has a greater appreciation for Aiken and a good horse than Dogwood Stable's president W. Cothran Campbell.

That's why it's poignantly appropriate for Campbell that Palace Malice has been selected the 2013 Aiken Trained Horse of the Year.

The 2013 Belmont Stakes and Jim Dandy Stakes winner becomes the second Dogwood Stable horse to receive the distinction, with the first being Limehouse in 2005. Palace Malice was trained in Aiken by Legacy Stable's Brad Stauffer. The ceremony will be held on



The greatest move that Dogwood Stable ever made was to move here in 1986. And if you have a good horse, living in Aiken embellishes the experience enormously.

Cot Campbell, Dogwood Stable president

Sunday, March 16, 2014, at 12:30 p.m., at the Aiken Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame and Museum, the day after the running of the 72nd edition of the Aiken Tri-

als, the first leg of Aiken's Triple Crown.

The history of Thoroughbred racehorses who've trained in Aiken and over the Aiken Training Track

is absolutely magnificent, said Campbell.

"Some of the greatest horses who've ever looked through a bridle have trained here, and have come out of here," said Campbell. "The greatest move that Dogwood Stable ever made was to move here in 1986. And if you have a good horse, living in Aiken embellishes the experience enormously. I'm a great fan of the Aiken Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame and Museum, and I'm flattered and delighted but not surprised that Palace Malice has been named in the same company as the previous winners."

Please see **HORSE**, Page 14A

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HORSE

CONTINUED from 1A

Palace Malice eclipsed the \$1 million mark in earnings during his sophomore campaign. In addition to his scores in the 145th Running of the Grade 1 Belmont Stakes, the third jewel of Thoroughbred Racing's Triple Crown, the bay colt won the Grade 2 Jim Dandy Stakes, and placed second in the Grade 1 Blue Grass Stakes and the Grade 1 Jockey Club Gold Cup Stakes.

"The Aiken Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame couldn't be happier that Palace Malice is the 2013 recipient of this award," said Lisa Hall, supervisor of the Racing Hall of Fame and Museum. "His win in this year's Belmont Stakes has put our city in the national and international

spotlight and created a tremendous amount of excitement about the industry that has given so much to Aiken since the 1940s. The Aiken staff, from the grooms, hot walkers, exercise riders and trainer Brad Stauffer are to be commended for their work with Palace Malice. They gave Palace Malice the good foundation that directly led to his success this year."

A son of two-time Horse of the Year, Curlin, Palace Malice is out of the stakes winning broodmare Palace Rumor. Palace Malice was bred by William Stamps Farish in Kentucky and was foaled on May 2, 2010. The Grade 1 stakes winner is trained at the racetrack by five-time Eclipse Award winning trainer Todd Pletcher. The bay colt returned to Aiken last Friday, and galloped over the Aiken Training Track on Tuesday.

"I was greatly surprised and touched to see what I guess was nearly 100 people at the clockers stand and our barn," said Campbell.

Palace Malice, a horse with unlimited energy, who loves to train, seems to be comfortable with all of the attention, willingly posing for pictures.

"He does understand who he is, and understands cameras," said Campbell.

Palace Malice has three wins, four seconds and one third from 12 lifetime starts and has won \$1,481,135.

Ben Baugh has been covering the equine industry and equestrian sport for the *Aiken Standard* since 2004. Among the awards Baugh has won include the 2003 Raleigh Burroughs Award as the turf writer making the most impact on the Florida Thoroughbred Industry.

SIGNUP

CONTINUED from 1A

The White House raced to reassure anxious Democrats who are worried about the controversial program, which they voted into existence three years ago and which seems sure to be a major issue in next year's election campaigns. The administration, trying to regain the initiative, for the first time indicated a willingness to consider legislation to stave off the wave of cancellations that's compounding the website technology problems.

Some Democrats are seeking changes in Obama's signature program, and key Republicans, many pressing for repeal, said that even Wednesday's feeble sign-up figures appeared to be pumped up. The final number — 106,185 people — would be even smaller if it counted only those who finalized their enrollment by actually paying their first month's premium, Republicans said.

Administration officials and senior congressional Democrats expressed confidence in the program's future. "We expect enrollment will grow



ONLINE
For an extended version of this story, go to aikenstandard.com

substantially throughout the next five months," said Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, who is in overall charge.

"Even with the issues we've had, the marketplace is working and people are enrolling," Sebelius said. Responding to GOP critics, she said the first premiums are not due until Dec. 15.

The online, state-level insurance markets were envisioned as the new portal to coverage for people who don't have health plans on the job. But the federal market was overwhelmed by technical problems when it opened Oct. 1, and the experience of state-run markets has been mixed.

The administration said an additional 1 million individuals have been found eligible to buy coverage on the markets, with about one-third qualifying for tax credits to reduce their premiums. Another 396,000 have been found eligible for Medicaid, the safety-net program that is shaping up as the health care law's early success story.

STATE

CONTINUED from 1A

What do you think?

Comment on this story at www.aikenstandard.com, write to Opinions, *Aiken Standard*, Box 456, Aiken, S.C. 29802 or send an email to editorial@aikenstandard.com.

The national total reached 106,185 when including enrollment in the 14 states with their own websites. The numbers include those not yet paying premiums.

The report said South Carolinians completed about 11,250 applications between Oct. 1 and Nov. 2, representing nearly 21,000 people.

One-third of the 15,300 individuals deemed eligible for coverage through the marketplace qualify for federal subsidies that reduce a policy's cost. More than 3,100 adults and children qualified for Medicaid instead.

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Sandy Ericson



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