Johnston: Policy focused on changing habits, not punishment

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When the clock strikes midnight on Dec. 31 and the new year begins, nobody will be able to light up, dip or vape on USC property. Tobacco-Free USC will take effect on Jan. 1, 2014, hurting anyone from using any tobacco product on campus.

The policy is designed to encourage people to partake in more healthy habits and reduce the effects of tobacco use on campus, including secondhand smoke, according to Jessica Johnston, chair of USC’s Tobacco Free Task Force and the director of Healthy Carolina. Its enforcement will be community-based; students, faculty and staff are encouraged to ask tobacco users who violate the ban to put out their cigarette and seek help kicking the habit.

“We are helping to empower the community to enforce this policy as a community,” Johnston said. “We want everyone to step in and play a part in this.”

Officers from USC’s Division of Law Enforcement and Safety are included in that community enforcement, but will not ticket students or change patrolled habits to specifically seek out smokers, according to division spokesman Capt. Eric Grabski.

“One primary role is to help the safety of the campus,” Grabski said. “We do not plan on charging that role in any way.”

However, if people repeatedly violate the ban, they can face consequences beyond a gentle reminder that they cannot use tobacco on campus.

For students, a first reported violation to student conduct will result in a required 30-minute workshop on smoking offered by Residential Life. If a student is reported a second time, he or she will face a $50 fine and complete an essay about how their tobacco use will affect their health. If they “communicate readiness for change,” they will meet with a Campus Wellness staff member to determine a cessation program that they will complete. Those who are unwilling to change their smoking habits will watch a documentary about smoking and write an essay about the effects.

A third offense will result in a $75 fine, probation and other required community service hours or the completion of a cessation program.

Faculty who violate the policy will answer to their department or division head, and staff will report to their immediate supervisor and be disciplined in accordance with already-established policies.

Johnston cited the decrease in alcohol violations after the introduction of stiffer fines as evidence the policy is working.

Tobacco ban to be peer enforced

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But the six-man group was down to five when their bass vocalist Geston Pierre missed his flight to the show. To fill the empty spot, Sam Orr, a first-year political science student and beat-boxer for opening a cappella group the Carolina Gentlemen, was given the surprise chance to perform on stage with Committed.

“It’s mind-blowing,” Orr said. “I’d been watching their videos for a while on YouTube when I found out they won ‘The Sing-Off.’”

Orr says he got together with the group’s members and learned the bass parts to four songs right before the show.

“I was incredibly nervous, but once you get up there you get a little more comfortable,” Orr said. “It’s so much fun.”

The Carolina Gentlemen and co-ed a cappella group Cockappella also performed a variety of hits and holiday tunes at the annual concert.

Man escapes police custody, later apprehended

A man who escaped Columbia Police Department custody was caught Wednesday. The State reported. Sidney Eugene Mitchell, 32, had been arrested for driving under the influence Wednesday morning. Around 9:30 a.m., Mitchell began acting erratically and appeared to need medical attention. Police called emergency medical services and, while officers were waiting for first responders, Mitchell managed to escape, department spokeswoman Jennifer Timmons said. He was later found at a vacant house near Bluff Road shortly before noon. When a Columbia police officer and Richland County sheriff’s deputy found him, Mitchell tried to run away again, but was “obviously unconscious,” Timmons said in an email.

Mitchell, a 6-foot-3-inch bald man, was wearing blue jeans and no shirt when he originally escaped police custody.

Texas governor speaks to South Carolina crowds

Texas Gov. Rick Perry did not mention any presidential ambitions during a speaking arrangement in Spartanburg Tuesday, The State reported. Perry touted his state’s economic development successes while addressing the Rotary Club of Downtown Spartanburg. He told the club that governors hold the key to solving health care and education issues nationwide, not legislators in the nation’s capital.

Perry is not running for re-election as governor and neither was more interested about Republicans winning in the 2014 midterm elections. The Texas governor also spoke at a fundraising banquet for the South Carolina and Spartanburg Republican parties.

Perry spoke at a Des Moines, Iowa Republican fundraiser last month. Iowa and South Carolina are both early presidential primary states. Perry lost the South Carolina primary in 2012.

Texas Beach City Hall safe after evening fire

While someone tried to set the Myrtle Beach City Hall on fire Tuesday night, it was back to business late Wednesday morning, the Sun News reported.

Two people attempted to set fire to the building Tuesday night, but the fire was extinguished by an employee of a neighboring business before officers could respond, according to Myrtle Beach police. There was minimal damage to the building’s exterior and no damage inside.

One window screen and some bushes were burned, but the only inconvenience to city workers was a strong smell of diesel in the building, according to a city spokesman.

A witness to the fire told police he heard a loud explosion and saw a “large fireball” come from City Hall around 11 p.m.
Student senators were decked out in their holiday finery Wednesday night for the final meeting of the body before winter break. Yarmulkes and Christmas sweaters were worn, tinsel was draped over shoulders and one senator’s festive socks made Student Body Treasurer Haley Guyton crack up during her weekly report.

“I’m sorry, I just saw Sen. Kaufman’s socks and lost it for a second,” Guyton said as Sen. Jonathan Kaufman lifted his leg to show off green and red socks with zebra stripes and white fur trimming.

The meeting served as an occasion for housekeeping, with updates delivered about projects from the past and few reports from senate leadership. The collection and calculation of data for Rate My Landlord, a database of off-campus housing reviews, has concluded, according to President Pro Tempore Lindsay Richardson. Progress is also being made on Carolina Closet, a program to rent or loan out business clothes to students, Richardson said, though negotiations for a space to house the closet have been “a bit of a hassle.”

Student Body President Chase Mizzell touted the success of the Gamecock Pantry, which opened Nov. 18.

“We have had a number of clients come through, and the stories are remarkable,” Mizzell said. “The ways we’re able to help people are impressive and exciting.”

Walk Home Cocky, which launched on Oct. 21, has helped more than 200 students be escorted to their cars and residence halls, Mizzell said.

Richardson also proposed creating opportunities for Student Government service to be counted as an internship or become a paid position. She said “quite a couple” other colleges and universities have this option for members of their student governments, and Richardson said she got her idea from Ohio State University, where members of their student government can get paid or earn class credit.
USC's tobacco ban will be communally enforced.

Community-wide, it won't be enforced, so everyone can relax.

USC is kicking off the Nicotine Offense Initiative, a new campaign to cut down smoking on campus, by sending letters to students. The initiative involves banning smoking in public areas and on the campus grounds. The letters will be delivered to students' mailboxes, and the university will also be increasing surveillance and enforcement efforts. The campaign aims to reduce tobacco use among students and promote a healthier campus environment.

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When the Affordable Care Act was introduced, many policymakers warned that the law would force health insurance companies out of business. However, the market has proven to be resilient, and health insurance companies continue to provide coverage to millions of Americans. The ACA has had some challenges, but it has also achieved some significant successes.

For example, the ACA's insurance marketplaces have provided access to health insurance for millions of Americans who previously couldn't afford it. In addition, the ACA has expanded Medicaid coverage to millions of low-income individuals.

However, the ACA has also faced criticism from some quarters, particularly from Republicans who oppose its provisions. Some of the biggest challenges have come from efforts to repeal and replace the ACA, which has not been successful in Congress.

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Price adjustment nullifies bill’s aid

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ObamaCare helps few at cost of many

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Kool & the Gang to bring the funk on New Year’s

Legendary jazz group will play free show Dec. 31

What better way to celebrate one of Columbia’s largest parties of the year than a live performance from the band that brought us “Celebration”? This year’s Famously Hot New Year will include a free live performance from Kool and the Gang, along with up-and-coming soul singer ZZ Ward. The annual celebration, which attracted more than 20,000 people last year, includes food and beer vendors, fireworks and of course, music. Band member Robert “Kool” Bell said fans should expect to hear some classic Gang hits from the ‘70s and ‘80s like “Celebration” and “Get Down on It.” He added that even after years of the band’s success, those staple songs never seem to get old.

“The crowd is always so energetic and their reaction is great,” Bell said. “Sometimes we change them up, but at the end of the day, we love the songs and we love what we do.”

Celebrating 50 years together in 2014, Kool and the Gang has had countless top-25 hits, sold over 70,000 albums and won two Grammys, but they show no signs of slowing down anytime soon. The group just released their first Christmas album “Kool for the Holidays” which was recorded during Kool and the Gang’s most recent tour with singer Kid Rock.

“We made sure to give all the classic Christmas songs a Kool and the Gang twist,” Bell said. “We always got [to] give it a little funk.”

But Bell said they couldn’t resist doing another album coming next year to celebrate their 50th anniversary.

“They said only the strong survive in this industry,” he said. “We wanted to do an album that shows that.”

He added that the album should feature some friends of the band, including Van Halen and Kid Rock.

Until then, Bell said Columbia’s New Year’s crowd should get ready to party.

“This is our first New Year’s performance outside,” he said. “Even if it’s cold out, we’ll heat it up. It’s always a party when we’re around.”

It is hard to imagine the Moosehead Saloon in Five Points without crowds of people filling it and lines of people impatiently waiting to get in. But a visit to the Five Points pub in the early evening on a Tuesday reveals a lot more about the up-and-coming bar. The country-themed bar, complete with a mechanical bull, is now managed by Theresa Giglotti and has been doing well since it opened in early July, she said.

Walking into Moosehead’s and talking to Giglotti is like being welcomed into a good friend’s house. She explains everything, from what the daily specials are to the unique types of whiskey she’s found at different locations, making sure guests are comfortable every step of the way. Giglotti is full of personality and fire, and it’s clear that’s what she looks for in the girls she employs to work behind the bar.

Each girl is trained personally by Giglotti, and even if they have had no previous experience working behind the bar, they are all trained on how to greet customers, talk about daily specials, smile and make sure customers have a good time.

Giglotti has been working with Matt Schmansky, the owner of Moosehead’s, on and off for about eight years. After working an array of bar jobs, trying everything from rooftop bars to murrains bars, she was on her way to move to Florida when Schmansky called her and made her an offer she couldn’t refuse, she said. Since then, she said she’s seen so much progress at the bar from herself and her staff.

“People that have been in the business for years have said that they’re amazed we have such a close staff and environment,” she said.

Though the college crowd is a large portion of Moosehead’s customers, Giglotti prides herself on the fact that it is not their only demographic. She’s gotten customers that, as she says, “are two to three times my age, which is great . . . we have variety for everyone.”

Giglotti normally bartends after Caitlyn McGuire

Since the country-themed bar’s opening in early July, Moosehead’s has done well, according to manager Theresa Giglotti (left). McCarty normally bartends after Caitlyn McGuire.

Moosehead Saloon keeps Cola country
already coming into the bar two to three times per day to get her orders in, check schedules and make sure everything is set for the upcoming night. She manages mostly at the beginning of the weekend and bartends on the weekends, confirming that even though she loves working Saturdays, Thursday is really her favorite night to work.

“We have $3 Fireball. How Fireball,” she said. “The girls try to match, we all wear our Fireball tanks Thursday nights, then our Jack Daniels shorts Friday nights, where we nicknamed it Black Jack Fridays, and then we wear our favorite team top on Saturdays, along with the jean shorts and the cowboy boots, too.”

Giglotti added that the girls will often get up on the bar and do a line dance, inviting others to join them. If others want to learn, the girls will teach them, too.

It’s clear that Giglotti loves the environment she works in. Her eyes light up as she talks about how much fun the staff has together and the things they’ve made personal at the bar, such as the mechanical bull that is a great draw for most customers. “His name is El Diablo, because when he’s running his eyes light up bright red,” she said. “And our operator is named Moosie, coincidentally, and sometimes when there’s no one riding him he’ll make the bull dance to different songs.”

The bull also brings up some funny stories that she’s witnessed when patrons climb up. “We saw a guy back flip onto it one time,” Giglotti said. “I wouldn’t believe it until my other manager showed me pictures!”

Though many bars have come and go in that same spot, “Moosehead’s is here to stay,” Giglotti said, smiling.
For the next three weeks, your passion is more direct and easy. Rely on others. Share resources. Be able to borrow and win. You may have to defend what you say impacts your family’s comfort. View that rings true. Plan with others and discover powerful results. Confer Group participation gets you extra efficient. Pack your schedule. Don’t deplete resources. Consider all possibilities. Lead to new questions. It could get easier to spend your family’s comfort. Time. Try something new, or explore areas you normally avoid to discover new, or explore areas you know about yourself. Set your goals over the next two months. Increase your assets are gaining value. Consider it a wonderful combination. To deepen your studies, read. Ask probing questions. Involve bluffing. Involves bluffing. Never think before handing something this important. It’s a philosophical discussion. For solutions to today’s puzzle, go to daigamecock.com or download our app!
Friday's game is a great opportunity, because it's the next game on the schedule, but what the value of the team has been giving up too many offensive and defensive is more of a struggle for him to keep words out save for the athletes, it once winter break hits and campus the grind of the regular season. The men's squad is 2-2, and after four games, averaging nine points per game. For the Gamecocks, the matchup to look at will be Johnson defending Starks. Johnson has shown quickness on offense, but his defensive game still needs developing, according to his coach. Johnson said he is not intimidated by the opportunity to face one of the country's best players. “We’re treating this game like it’s the next game. We got a great game, and (a) great challenge coming against South Carolina State. If they can come away with a win, it’s a great game, and it’s great challenge coming up Friday,” Johnson said. “They have great players, but we also have great players as well. We’re not coming in scared, or going up against the hype.”

The two-sport athlete's experience will play a large role in Friday's game with an Oklahoma State around him. "Bruce is off the charts," Martin said. "It's not where it needs to be. This isn't a Weaver type guy, running a double marathon here and it's about keep going we are so tight at the moment. A key factor when playing against such a strong opponent offensively and defensively is understanding the speed of the game. Smart has shown early that Oklahoma State possesses one of the more dangerous backcourts in the country. Smart is currently averaging 20.5 points per contest, with five rebounds and 3.6 assists. "They have a chance at being one of the special teams in the country," Martin said. "They've got big-time players and experience. For the Gamecocks, the matchup to look at will be Johnson defending Starks. Johnson has shown quickness on offense, but his defensive game still needs developing, according to his coach. Johnson said he is not intimidated by the opportunity to face one of the country's best players. "We’re treating this game like it’s the next game. We got a great game, and (a) great challenge coming up Friday," Johnson said. "They have great players, but we also have great players as well. We’re not coming in scared, or going up against the hype."

Gamecocks to face top-10 opponent
Ellington set to return to hardwood for game at Oklahoma State
Salvatore Costa

The South Carolina men’s basketball team will travel to No. 9 Oklahoma State on Friday with a key addition to its roster, junior guard Bruce Ellington.

At Tuesday’s press conference, coach Frank Martin said Ellington had been practicing with the team and would be available come tip-off against the Cowboys. The Gamecocks are in need of a vocal presence like Ellington to come in and be a spark plug who could get young people excited. "Bruce is off the charts," Martin said. "Him practicing today made our team better, just because of his speed. He understands stuff." Martin consistently speaks highly of Ellington’s willingness to learn and desire to win. With such a key factor when playing against such a strong opponent offensively and defensively is understanding the speed of the game. Martin said the team has been giving up too many offensive rebounds and needs developing, according to his coach. Johnson said he is not intimidated by the opportunity to face one of the country's best players. "We’re treating this game like it’s the next game. We got a great game, and it’s great challenge coming up Friday,” Johnson said. “They have great players, but we also have great players as well. We’re not coming in scared, or going up against the hype.”

Men’s basketball set for trip to Hawaii over break
Women’s team will play
No. 18 North Carolina
Tanner Abel

While most of the students at the University of South Carolina will be spending their winter break relaxing, the men’s and women’s basketball teams will be hard at work practicing in the grind of the regular season. The men’s squad is 2-2, and after four games, averaging nine points per game. For the Gamecocks, the matchup to look at will be Johnson defending Starks. Johnson has shown quickness on offense, but his defensive game still needs developing, according to his coach. Johnson said he is not intimidated by the opportunity to face one of the country's best players. "We’re treating this game like it’s the next game. We got a great game, and (a) great challenge coming up Friday," Johnson said. “They have great players, but we also have great players as well. We’re not coming in scared, or going up against the hype."

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