2015 is here.
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"Today’s announcement takes us one step closer to replacing out-of-date policies that were not working, and puts in place a policy that helps promote political and economic freedom for the Cuban people."

— U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew on the revised Cuban embargo

“All of Europe is crying today. All the free world is crying. All men and women who believe in freedom and reason are crying.”

— Italian Premier Matteo Renzi after the attacks on Charlie Hebdo in France

“This is just the beginning of my revenge. . .This is the eighth time I’ve been nominated. I can’t f------g believe I won.”

— Kevin Spacey on his first Golden Globe win

“We have changed the image of South Carolina. But we aren’t finished. Not yet.
Not even close.”

— Nikki Haley during her second inaugural address

“Some of our faculty will be blinded by the light when they come out from the underground.”

— Charles Bierbauer, dean of the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies, on the new journalism school building
Weekend Calendar
Jan. 16 to 18

FRIDAY — Jan. 16

CINETHON
Tapp’s Art Center, 1644 Main St.
Fri, 6 p.m. to Mon, 9 p.m., $50 pass / $7 ticket

Hosted by the Point of View (POV) Film Series at Tapps, Cinethon is a 72-hour film festival made up of 26 different movies. From Friday until Martin Luther King Day on Monday, Tapps will host a “giant slumber party meets epic movie marathon,” with all different genres from various film eras.

CMA JAZZ ON MAIN
Columbia Museum of Art, 1515 Main St.
Fri, 7:30 p.m., $5 Students / $35

Columbia Museum of Art’s Jazz series is back. World-class, renowned jazz pianists George Shearing, Ahmad Jamal and Oscar Peterson will perform Friday, featuring guest saxophonist Doug Henry.

SATURDAY — Jan. 17

PASSAFIRE
Music Farm, 1022 Senate St.
Sat, 8 p.m., $10 students / $15

The progressive, dubstep group PASSAFIRE is heading to Music Farm in the Vista this weekend and fellow dub band TATANKA is set to open the show.

PHAROAHS IN SPACE
Art Bar, 1211 Park St.
Sat, 10 p.m., $5

This Columbia-based three-piece rock band is taking over Art Bar this Friday. Since the release of their first album in 2013, they’ve made a name for themselves locally, especially known for their high energy shows.

SUNDAY — Jan. 18

AWAKE AT LAST / DEFINITELY A FIRST / ROPESWING MARATHON / CALLOSUM
New Brookland Tavern, 122 State St.
Sun, 6:30 p.m., $6 over 21 / $8

New Brookland Tavern’s Sunday headliner is Awake at Last, a melodic rock band out. They’ll partner up with Sumter-based pop punk group, Definitely a First, Ropeswing Marathon out of Irmo and USC-based Callosum.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. GOSPEL FEST
Koger Center for the Arts, 1051 Greene St.
Sun, 6 p.m., $10 adults, $5 students

For this year’s 2015 MLK Celebration, the university will host three choral groups: Men of Praise, Reverend Matthew Mickens and the Highway Travelers and Flossie Boyd Johnson and Favor.
What Columbia needs in 2015

Arts and Culture

Belvin Olasav
@BELVINOLASAV

A more cultural Five Points
Five Points could be the cultural heart of Columbia, but that’s not what we have. Five Points does one job well: getting people drunk. The rest of it — the odd shops and mostly decent restaurants — is more window dressing than anything else, and that’s not how it has to be. Look at Atlanta’s Little Five Points — it has two theaters, two bookstores, a music venue, a diverse set of restaurants and clothing shops that aren’t marketed to middle age men. Five Points has Papa Jazz. It’s not that Five Points can’t have its bar scene, it’s just that it could easily support more.

Diversity on restaurant scene
Sure, Columbia has some good ethnic restaurants. We somehow have two Ethiopian places, after all. But the sad truth remains that the vast majority of Columbian dining is American food: burgers, steaks and a sparse seafood selection. Our offbeat dining opportunities are niche establishments, while the majority of our restaurants offer nothing revolutionary or even unusual. What Columbia needs isn’t even higher quality restaurants, it’s an identity. The city is perfectly positioned to be a mid-budget fun dining alternative to Charleston’s high-budget fine dining, and it’s time to seize the opportunity.

Music Farm Columbia getting bigger acts
It was like a gift to Cola’s music scene — Music Farm announced it was opening a branch in Columbia, finally giving the city the mid-sized music venue that it so desperately needed. The idea was that it would court acts too big for New Brookland Tavern but not big enough for Township Auditorium, the known but not huge indie acts that music lovers treasure. And then, after bringing Washed Out for the premiere, the drought came. Music Farm Columbia has been getting decent acts, but most of them are small or local, when what it really needs are some events. They just announced Tune-yards, Future Islands and Son Lux, so they’re already on their way to achieving their destiny, but they need to stay on that track.

Community

Natalie Pita
@NATALIEPITA

More parking spaces, both on campus at USC and in the city
With the university’s announcement that they will now enforce towing, especially on Greene Street, parking has become even more of an issue. It’s been an issue in Columbia for years, but it’s only getting worse as the university and Columbia continue to grow. Perhaps 2015 will be the year USC and Columbia finally get more parking options.

More protected left turns to make driving in Columbia easier
Between pedestrians trying to cross streets and drivers trying to get where they’re going at the same time, Columbia can use anything that makes roads safer — protected left turns would make driving in Columbia both easier and safer.

More restaurants in Columbia to accept Carolina Cash
In the last year and a half, the number of options students have to use their CarolinaCard off campus has grown. But it shouldn’t end there, especially with most dining options on campus closed on weekends. More off-campus dining options are a win-win for students who want something other than cafeteria food and university officials who want students to make use of Carolina Cash.

A forum with USC President Harris Pastides for students to openly discuss issues
The university has held forums on lots of different topics this year, including parking and student ticketing. Last year, there was a forum on safety in Five Points. These forums tend to have a substantial turnout, and the university must find the forums useful if they’re constantly hosting them. So, why don’t we have a general forum to talk about any other problems we see on campus?
Arden Key to make up his mind

At first glance, you may wonder whether or not South Carolina really needs an 18-year-old kid who has decommitted from the program twice and who refers to himself on Twitter as a “Walking Legend”. The answer: Dig up the Texas A&M game and watch it in its entirety.

Arden Key, a four-star defensive end who initially committed to the Gamecocks back in June 2013, decommitted three months later, then renewed his commitment in June 2014 before decommitting again earlier this month.

Clearly, Key loves the excitement of the recruiting process and plans on milking it for every drop of attention he can get.

Earlier this week, he announced that he would make his decision on Feb. 2, two days prior to national signing day, which is set for Feb. 4.

South Carolina remains fixated at the top of his list along with Auburn, LSU and Miami. Key, the No. 24 recruit in the 2015 class according to ESPN, will take an official visit to South Carolina on Jan. 23.

A Return to the College World Series

In 2012, South Carolina’s baseball team lost to Arizona in the College World Series final. After the loss, the Gamecocks lost their head coach Ray Tanner to a comfy, new Athletics Director position. After the move, the team welcomed its current head coach Chad Holbrook and yet to return to college baseball’s promised land.

A loss to North Carolina in the Super Regionals in 2013 and a loss to Maryland in the 2014 season have kept the Gamecocks on the outside looking in, but a return to the College World Series could restore South Carolina’s baseball team to its glory days of 2010 and 2011.

A return to Omaha would also secure Holbrook’s job for a while at least. If the Gamecocks fail to reach that stage, a coaching change could feasibly take place, and nobody wants to see a former head baseball coach (Tanner) fire the man he chose to succeed him in his old position. So, for the sake of Gamecock nation, a return to the College World Series is something South Carolina needs in 2015.
Students leave, Five Points stay

It’s 11 p.m. on a Friday, and Five Points is deserted.

It’s hard to picture.

There are no crowds, no lines snaking out of bars. No one is sprinting across the street from Breakers to Pour House in a race against the flashing red hand. Even Cook Out is eerily quiet, with only a handful of cars inching through the drive-thru.

It sounds like an apocalyptic version of Columbia’s bar district, but really, it’s just a Friday night in December. When students headed home for the holidays last month, Five Points stayed right where it was.

“It’s a lot mellower, a lot lower key because it’s a lot less crowded,” Jake’s Bar & Grill manager Jung Pak says.

When temperatures drop, the menu at Jake’s gets a few more soups and chilis and managers order “a little leaner” when it comes to alcohol, since they aren’t selling as much.

“Everybody knows that shifts do get cut because there’s just not enough business for that,” Pak says.

Without the flow of 20-somethings ordering shots of Fireball and beer after beer every Friday and Saturday night, several bars in Five Points saw a downturn in profits. But three weeks later, with students back and the semester underway, the raw January air starts to fill with the familiar Five Points din.

Salty Nut Cafe manager Colby Thomas guesses most students headed back to Columbia a few days before classes started last week, judging by how many showed up to the bar last Friday.

“This past weekend was really good. But a month or two ago—” Thomas says before he pauses and shakes his head.

Profits weren’t as high with the kids leaving, but the Salty Nut’s bar isn’t of day entertaining a different drink palate. Instead of beers, goers prefers liquors drinks and Thomas says.

“The kids leaving definitely says, “but we’ve still got a realin.”

Delaney’s manager Andy Delaney’s manager Andy somewhere between 30 and 40

Hannah Jeffrey
@HANNAHJEFFREY34
without the collegiate regulars. Thursday afternoon, gearing with everyone back in town.

Of the late-night college crowd, empty — it’s a different time different clientele with a different and shots, this group of bar-

ed “more top shelf-type stuff,”

slows us down a little bit,” he good local crowd that comes

Melanson estimates that percent of the pub’s patronage comes from USC students. But when they’ve all gone home, the older crowd comes out of the woodwork.

“They’re scared of all the kids, so they stay away when school’s in,” Melanson says.

The popular Pint Night destination transforms from a busy bar scene to more of a restaurant feel, as older customers come in seeking appetizers and dinner, not bottles of Blue Moon and cheese fries on Wednesday nights.

“Pint Night does not (drop off) because a lot of kids that have graduated are coming back in town, so they still come out,” he says. “But Thursday nights with bourbon and vodka are a little more popular when school’s in.”

But just steps down the road from Salty Nut, Papa Jazz Record Shoppe is coming off its most profitable month of the year. After all, December means Christmas, Christmas means gift-buying and record stores don’t rely on the same clientele consistency bars do.

“Busiest time of the year, Christmas time,” Papa Jazz owner Tim Smith says. “All the retails will tell you it’s the busiest time of the year.”

Smith knows winter break means a drop-off for bars’ attendance and profits, but he doesn’t share bar-owners’ concerns. As a general rule, he says, business is better when school is in session. But the spirit of giving the holiday season brings keeps his shop well above water every December.

“Now, if the kids were in school and it were Christmas,” Smith says, smiling at the profitable possibility, “that would be even better.”
Fashion was fun in 2014. It was by no means bad. Delicate gold jewelry, peplum, crop tops, matching sets, normcore, boyfriend jeans: they all ruled the style scene this past year.

But another year has passed and the inevitable is bound to happen: some of our favorite moments will stay put in 2014 and some others will rise above the rest and continue their reign in 2015. There are some definite front-runners out there; listed below are the favorites to stay in 2015.

‘70s influences

The spring and summer 2014 runways were teeming with ‘70s influences, with everything from houndstooth prints to wide-legged pants that made even those who hate pants swoon. This trend is sure to continue throughout 2015 because there’s no one who doesn’t love a good bohemian moment. Mixing and matching muted color palettes like mustard and maroon or adding knee-high socks is an instant way to play off of the ‘70s trend that had everyone swooning at Fashion Week.

Babydoll Dresses

Though the peplum dress was all the talk in 2014, 2015 will see the return of the babydoll. The babydoll dress pairs well with either heels or flats and can be dressed up or down. It’s just as much a staple when studying for that first organic chemistry exam as it is when paired with heels and a clutch for a night downtown.

Print Mixing

Also parlaying into the ‘70s trend, mixing and matching prints is no longer off-limits in the style game. Pairing that floral blouse you’ve had for years with a skirt that’s dotted with a tiny geometric print? Go for it. Risk-taking is the new normal in the fashion scene of today. Take a Carrie Bradshaw leap every once in while. It might look ridiculous, but it could end up being one of your all-time favorite outfits. So keep mixing and matching your prints — find what works.

Silver and Gold

Dainty gold jewelry dominated the scene in 2014, but 2015 brings silver and sparkle to the table. It’s a refreshing jump, and those who prefer silver over gold will jump for joy. Take note though: silver cannot be stacked heavily the way that gold can, and therefore, a bit more restraint should be shown when donning sparkling stones and platinum settings.
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FRIDAY
JANUARY 16, 2015
10 P.M.
RH BALLROOM

FRIDAY
JANUARY 23, 2015
10 P.M.
RH BALLROOM
Not Allowed Back in 2015

From snowstorms to last season’s defense, there are a few things from 2014 that TDG staffers could do without this year. Perhaps you’ll agree.

In the arts and culture scene

Belvin Olasav & Lois Carlisle
@TDG_ARTS

Dracula: Ballet with a Bite
The Columbia City Ballet has tried for too long to breathe life into this dead corpse of a production which has plagued the cultural peat bogs of Richland County. This twisted excuse for a classical experience is more like a Milli Vanilli concert where a David Hasselhoff look-alike dances to songs that sound like they were written and performed on a single Casio keyboard in your neighbor’s basement. In other words, Dracula needs to get staked.

Banzaicon and Jam Room Music Festival happening at the same time and place
Jam Room Music Festival, a yearly free music festival that draws some surprisingly big acts to Columbia’s Main Street, was going smoothly. Then the cat-ninjas, claymore-wielding princesses and Narutos spilled out onto the street. Banzaicon, a Japanese Animation and gaming convention, had struck again. Of course, it was still a great music festival, but scantily clad warriors didn’t help with the family-friendly atmosphere. Maybe these are two flavors that just don’t go together.

Overly populist CP concerts
It makes sense that Carolina Productions grabbed Andy Grammer for their last spring concert. He’s mashed potatoes — most people will eat it, but no one’s too excited about it. But it’s time to make a choice that isn’t the most bland, widely-appealing option. USC crowds would still turn out for a strong hip-hop act like Chance the Rapper or Vince Staples, and the rock can come in varieties other than country-lite. Icona Pop was a step in the right direction — bubblegum dance pop is a strong identity, at least — but CP can go farther.

For students

Natalie Pita & Lois Carlisle
@TDG_NEWS

Access codes for textbooks
Tuition is already expensive enough, and adding textbooks for four or five classes just takes it over the top. Even worse, some teachers require you to buy an access code, forcing you to spend money on a new book rather than buying or renting a used copy. Teachers should remember how much college already costs when they’re forcing us to cough up more cash.

Violence in Five Points
This is kind of a no-brainer, but we’ve already seen enough of this with incidents last year, especially the first few weeks of the fall semester. This is something that no one ever wants on campus, but hopefully it won’t return at all in 2015.

Unemployment
Most college students are either unemployed or underemployed after graduation. With graduation in the way-too-near future, it would be nice if we could eliminate unemployment in 2015 just by thinking about it.

Ice and snow storms that shut down the entire city
Although a day off of school is nice, it’s not as much fun if you can’t go anywhere on your day off because South Carolinians don’t know how to drive in the snow.
In the sports scene

David Roberts
@DAVIDJAYROBERTS

South Carolina’s defense
The unit the Gamecocks typically hang their hats on stunk up the joint in 2014. South Carolina’s defense was the football equivalent of a chopping block. Defensive coordinator Lorenzo Ward’s squad finished near the bottom in many categories including:
Total defense – No. 92 (432.7 yards per game)
Rushing defense – No. 105 (212.2 yards per game)
Turnover margin — No. 73 (-2)
For his unit’s performance, many have called for the removal of Ward at the defensive coordinator position. Despite a couple SEC teams hiring high profile defensive coordinators, it seems as though Ward’s job is secure for now. But that’s only for the time being.
If the Gamecocks’ defense does not improve in a significant way in 2015, you can bet Ward will have his bags packed before the season is through.
For this, South Carolina’s defense lands on the list of things that aren’t allowed to return in 2015.

NCAA ban on Columbia
Finally. The NCAA reformatting its postseason hosting process, allowing the Gamecocks’ women’s basketball team to play at home for their first and second round games.
More importantly, the NCAA did so without forcing the removal of the Confederate flag on the Statehouse grounds, the reason behind the NCAA enacting a boycott on Columbia in 2001.
This year, so long as it is awarded one of the top 16 seeds in the NCAA tournament, South Carolina will play two of its postseason games at home in the Colonial Life Arena, where they have not lost since Feb. 10, 2013.
The Gamecocks were exiled to Seattle, Washington for the first two rounds of the 2014 NCAA tournament where they won 2,800 miles from home. South Carolina was ousted from the tournament by North Carolina in Stanford, California, 2,663 miles away from Colonial Life Arena.
New year, old habits

Hannah Jeffrey
@HANNAHJEFFREY34

It's been a week, and we're starting to accept it.

Gone are the days of vegging out on the couch and binge-watching “Scandal” on Netflix while your mom asks what you want for dinner. The lazy days of winter break bliss have drawn to a close, replaced by the humdrum of syllabus week and never-ending lines at the bookstore.

But it's not all bad — after all, we do choose to return to Columbia at the end of every break. You've been gone for a month. It's time to get reacquainted with the city.

1. Grab a sandwich.
   Doesn't matter where — could be Groucho’s, could be Beezer’s. Maybe go mainstream and order up some Jimmy John’s. Columbia has some sandwiches, and it's been weeks since you've had one. Go. Run to them. (Or get one delivered because you can.)

2. Appreciate nature
   Your hometown is probably cool, and you probably had a lot of fun while you were back there for the holidays. But does it have more trees than Columbia? (Oh, it does? OK, well in that case, you’re probably good on the tree front. Just humor me, and let’s pretend you’re from a city or some sort of suburb naked of foliage.) Walk out onto the Horseshoe and look around you. There are big trees, little trees, shrubs and grass as far as the walk from McKissick to Lieber. Take it all in. Just don’t stay out there too long though because it is January and, you know, wind chill and stuff.

3. Have a staring contest with a squirrel
   This one requires having food, so maybe stop and get that sandwich we were talking about earlier before you take on the squirrel. Step one: spot a squirrel. Get its attention and make it clear that you’re holding food. Step two: stare at the squirrel. Chances are, it’ll start to edge toward you while it formulates a plan to snag your snack. Step three: don’t give in. And more importantly, don’t let that little scamp near your sandwich. By now, you’ve been staring at a squirrel for a few minutes, so you can probably stop. You’re making it weird, and people are staring at you. You know what, you can probably just skip this one.

4. Get stuck behind a train
   Yeah, it’ll be annoying. But think about it: nothing says, “Welcome back to Columbia, the city of getting stuck behind trains” quite like getting stuck behind a train.
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