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NOVEMBER 22, 2009

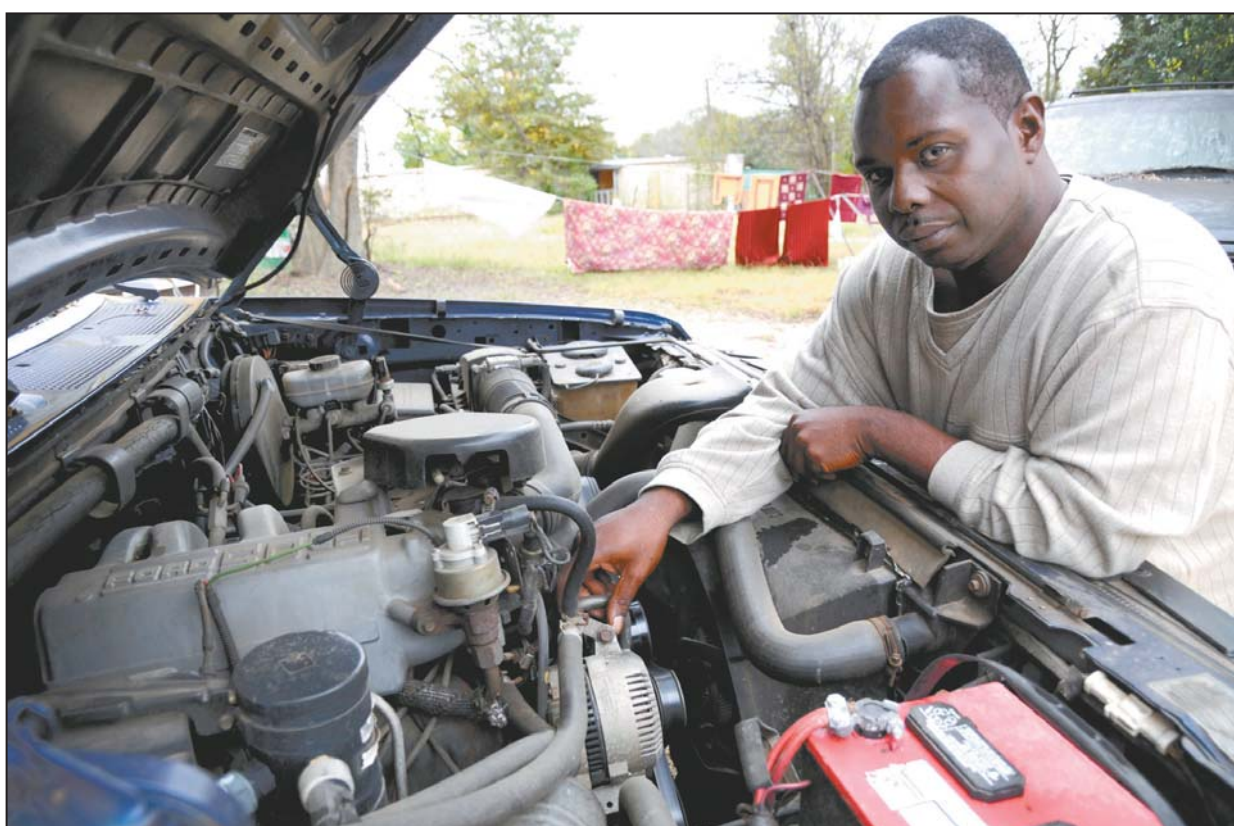
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ORANGEBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

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**'There is no work'**



Certified brick mason Edward Spigner has been unsuccessful in finding employment in the field of construction. He fills in the gaps by doing lawn care and carpentry jobs around his neighborhood, and working odd jobs with his brother.

People who've worked all their lives finding themselves out of a job

By GENE ZALESKI  
 T&D Staff Writer

Santee resident Ricky Void, 50, has had a lot of jobs in his lifetime. All looked relatively secure for Void, who last worked for the Bosch plant in North Charleston. After all, Void had been working as a forklift driver for more than two years and the stability was welcome. But this security would all change in the summer of 2008 when Void was informed his services were no longer needed.

Since then Void has been without a job. "I have had a lot of jobs, man, but I have never faced unemployment like this," he said. "There is no work."

Void said many agencies encourage job seekers to acquire employment for a couple of weeks and then draw on unemployment. "What sense does that make?" he said. "I do everything I can. It has gotten to the point where I have had to go get food stamps. I have not drawn food stamps since I don't know when."

Void says his only car has broken down and now he is without transportation. "I am living with my aunt," he said. "Man, there are a lot of bills. I get help from the family. If it was not for family I would be like everybody else walking in the stores trying to rob them. It is going to get worse."

Void was among the steady stream of unemployed walking through the doors of the Orangeburg Workforce Development Center recently,

See **JOB, A8**

*"A lot of times when the Lord wakes me up, I look in the mirror sometimes and think about the person that I see because I know there's a better person."*

KENT GLEATON

The stress of it: Support systems needed when times get tough

By DIONNE GLEATON  
 T&D Staff Writer

Kent Gleaton admits to living one day at a time after being unemployed for the past eight months.

He did cabinetry work at a North plant and was able to do fairly well. That was until he lost his job. Life has been anything but easy for the 53-year-old.

With no transportation and a disconnected telephone, a bicycle is his primary mode of travel. He is living on unemployment insurance, but often finds it hard navigating through the state Employment Security Commission's system.

See **STRESS, A8**

**Woman keeps the faith amid longtime job search**

By GENE ZALESKI  
 T&D Staff Writer

Alicia Barnwell, 27, sits outside of the Orangeburg Workforce Development Center with her 2-year old daughter Kelia on her lap.

Kelia's smile brightens up her little face as she takes comfort in her mother's arms, secure knowing that her mom will be there to take care of her from strangers.

Barnwell, who has been unemployed since she graduated from Edisto High School in 2001, says it has been an ever-growing challenge providing for the security and for the needs of her daughter these past few years.

Barnwell says she has applied to a number of employers such as Pizza Hut, Waffle House, Huddle House and Howard Johnson, though without anybody hiring she has had to resort to baby-sitting to make ends meet.

"I have been baby-sitting my sister's kids while she is out there working," she said. "I am applying anywhere I can, but I guess you have to be professional to work and you have to know everything."

Barnwell said as a high school graduate, she has her

GED. But she says with many employers wanting on-the-job experience, she wonders how somebody out of high school gets it. She said it has been her experience that job-training opportunities are also lacking.

"It is hard," Barnwell said, noting that while the father of her child "is around," the bulk of the childcare falls upon her shoulders. "I get a little help from my mama."

Barnwell said she is currently getting by on food stamps and help from her mother.

"I work around the house or either watch somebody's kids for the week," she said, noting she does have experience in housekeeping and would be a good catch.

But no one is fishing.

With her joblessness going on nine years, Barnwell says the frustrations are mounting. She says she gets her strength from serving others, especially her family.

"By looking after my daughter and taking care of my grandmama when she is on dialysis," Barnwell said of how she manages to remain upbeat despite the lack of income. "As

See **SEARCH, A8**



CHRISTOPHER HUFF/T&D

Alicia Barnwell, 28, with her 2-year old daughter Kelia, has been unemployed since she graduated from Edisto High School in 2001. She says the challenges she faces are growing.

**WHAT DO YOU DO NOW?**

So you don't have a job ... With unemployment rates throughout The T&D Region at or near record highs, many are finding themselves searching for work.

Here are some steps to take if you find yourself without a job:

■ On your final day of employment, go to the Employment Security Commission's office at 1804 Joe S. Jeffords Highway to file for unemployment insurance and to register for work.

■ If you have Internet access, go to [www.sces.org](http://www.sces.org) and click on the link "initial claim filing, job registration and direct deposit sign-up." If you don't know how to use a computer, the ESC staff will file an unemployment claim and walk you through the process.

■ Take advantage of the tools available through the Employment Security Commission, including the South Carolina JobLink Web site, which provides job search and resume help. Also, register with the ESC Workforce Center to receive e-mails on new job openings.

**Historic health care bill clears key hurdle in Senate**

By DAVID ESPO  
 AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Invoking the memory of Edward M. Kennedy, Democrats united Saturday night to push historic health care legislation

past a key Senate hurdle over the opposition of Republicans eager to inflict a punishing defeat on President Barack Obama. There was not a vote to spare.

The 60-39 vote cleared the way for a bruising, full-scale debate beginning after Thanks-

giving on the legislation, which is designed to extend coverage to roughly 31 million who lack it, crack down on insurance company practices that deny or dilute benefits and curtail the growth of spending on medical care nationally.

The spectator galleries were full for the unusual Saturday night showdown, and applause broke out briefly when the vote was announced. In a measure of the significance of the moment,

See **HEALTH, A9**

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 Weather ..... **B10**

**DEATHS**

- Bobby Eugene Craft ~ Orangeburg
- William "Billy" Andrew Huiett ~ Orangeburg
- Mrs. Gloria Middleton ~ Orangeburg
- Inez Boyd Parker ~ Harleyville
- Elise Thomas Westbury ~ St. George



**FORGIVENESS**

