

# Bluffton Today

## Bluffton hearts & darts

Posted: March 20, 2016 - 12:06am

### **Drilling decision the right move**

**Hearts ...** to the federal government's reversal on oil drilling off the Atlantic coast.

President Barack Obama's administration announced last week it will not permit drilling, a little over a year after it said it would open up areas from Virginia to Georgia to oil and gas leases. This is a major win for South Carolina and its neighbors.

Dozens of coastal communities lined up against drilling and oil exploration in 2015, rightly concerned about damage to coastal ecosystems and seismic testing's effect on marine life. As we said last year, the potential economic benefits of drilling are simply not worth the gamble.

That wasn't the only problem with the proposal. U.S. Mark Sanford opposed it in part because state officials would not have been given access to testing results before drilling leases were approved. "This is fantastic news for the coast of South Carolina," the former governor said in a statement. "It's a decision that speaks volumes to the importance of voicing one's opinion and local input in the political process."

We commend the public officials and citizens who spoke out and helped make last week's announcement a reality.

USC men left out of field

**Darts ...** to falling on the wrong side of the bubble.

The University of South Carolina men's basketball team just missed its first appearance in the NCAA tournament in 12 years last Sunday when the selection committee left the Gamecocks out of this year's field. It was a disappointing decision to say the least, given the team started the season 15-0 and tied for third in the Southeastern Conference.

While Vanderbilt, a team the Gamecocks beat and finished with the same 11-7 SEC record, was one of the last four teams selected, USC was one of the first four left out, as its consolation was a No. 1 seed in the less glamorous National Invitation Tournament. It's likely the team was just one more win away from making the Big Dance.

Still, the Gamecocks are trending upward under coach Frank Martin and seem primed for big things in the years to come. And their counterparts in the women's game should provide USC fans with plenty of March excitement. The No. 2 overall seed, the USC women entered the NCAA tournament Friday looking for a second consecutive trip to the Final Four.

France honors Sun City veterans

**Hearts ...** to Sun City's Karl Olsen and Bill Eisenhart.

The World War II veterans were among six residents of the Carolinas who were awarded the French government's National Order of the Legion of Honor this month in Columbia. The award, established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, is France's highest honor. Olsen and Eisenhart each played a role in liberating the country from German control.

Olsen left his native Denmark to work on a ship in 1940, shortly before the Nazis invaded. Unable to return home, he traveled to the U.S. and joined the Army after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was made a citizen when he reached Europe for combat.

Eisenhart enlisted after the war effort affected his rubber company job in Ohio. His assignments included aerial support for troops who invaded in Normandy in June 1944. He continued to fly for decades, including 43 missions in Vietnam before he retired in 1977.

Olsen and Eisenhart remain humble about their acts of heroism — “We were there to do a job and win the war,” Olsen said — but they are certainly deserving of this most recent honor.

<http://www.blufftontoday.com/bluffton-opinion/2016-03-20/bluffton-hearts-darts#.VvMIR9IrJD9>