

# THE BACKSTORY OF SANFORD & SONNETS IS DRIBBLING OUT

✘ I was carping, in this post and comments thereto, about what a fascinating backstory must be behind the Sanford hothouse tale. Ask, and ye shall receive. The State from Columbia SC (h/t esseff44) has a new article up:

A Dec. 30 e-mail planted the seeds of believability for a Tuesday-night phone caller who said Sanford had flown to Argentina. Those anonymous tips led The State to have a reporter at the Atlanta airport to interview Sanford. Then, in rapid succession, the paper told Sanford's aides and a key ally, Davis, that it had e-mails describing an affair between Sanford and a woman in Argentina, and a free-lance journalist knocked on a door in Buenos Aires. A woman at that address initially answered to the name on the e-mails, Maria, then said Maria wasn't at home. But the damage was done. In eight short hours, the combination of the two anonymous tipsters and three actions – Sanford's arrival at the Atlanta airport, unveiling the e-mails and finding Maria – took Sanford from would-be president to disgraced adulterer.

and

Sanford's long, strange absence – and Jenny Sanford's chilly public statements about the governor's whereabouts – had suddenly cast in new light copies of five e-mails purportedly between Sanford and a woman in Argentina.

The e-mail exchanges, pasted into a single e-mail, had arrived Dec. 30 at

The State in an account for letters to the editor. The subject field read, "This is your governor."

The e-mails were from the personal e-mail address of Gov. Sanford to a woman in Argentina named Maria.

Those e-mails outlined a sexual affair.

The editorial page editor who retrieved the e-mail replied to it, asking who the e-mailer was. There was no response.

When the e-mails were sent to the newsroom, a reporter and editor there both e-mailed the AOL account in the United Kingdom, asking questions. There was no response. Then, the reporter e-mailed Maria. Again, there was no response.

Attempts to electronically divine whether the e-mails were genuine also failed to produce results.

With the S.C. Legislature in session and a battle over federal stimulus money escalating, the e-mails went in a drawer.

Then, Knotts announced Sanford was missing.

Please go read the article, it has a plethora of new information and discussion, and is by a full team from The State Newspaper, which is a McClatchy property. You have to hand it to McClatchy, once again they are killing the giants in the newspaper business.