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Morning News

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2011

TODAY'S WEATHER
Sunny,
high 90. low 59
DETAILS 2A

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The Voice of the Pee Dee A Media General Newspaper

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Coming Events

TODAY

Golf Tournament

Today at 8 a.m. at Governor's Run Country Club in Lamar. Prizes will be awarded for the top three places. Breakfast and lunch will be served. Call Hamer Parnell at 843-326-5462 or Wayne Weaver at 843-326-5155.

Mount Croghan Flea Market

Today from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Pecan Grove on S.C. 9 between Pageland and Chesterfield in Mount Croghan. Call James Taylor at 843-634-2150.

The Pee Dee Doll Club 25th anniversary Doll & Toy Show and Sale:

Today from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Ramada Inn, 1819 W. Lucas St. in Florence. A portion of raffle proceeds benefit the Connie Maxwell Children's Home. Admission is \$5, and children 12 and younger get in free. Call Pam Wade at 843-992-4315.

10th Annual Patriotism Day Parade

Today from 11 a.m. to noon in Florence, sponsored by the Marine Corps League of Florence. The parade reviewing stand will be located on West Evans Street, between McQueen and Coit streets.

Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center presents Dance Recitals featuring Regional Dance Companies

Today at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. in BB&T Amphitheatre at the FMU Performing Arts Center. Attire is casual. Visit www.fmupac.org, or call 843-661-4444.

Toastmasters International Evaluation and Humorous Speech Contests

Today at 11 a.m. at Southeastern Institute for Manufacturing Technology at Florence-Darlington Technical College, 1951 Pisagh Road, Florence. Call Joshua Phiri at 843-661-8228 or email Joshua.phiri@fdtc.edu or Ag54@toastmasters-d58.org.

FMU Performing Arts Center presents 'Shakespeare Showcase' by the FMU Theatre program

Today at 1 and 4 p.m. at FMU Performing Arts Center. Attire is casual. Visit www.fmupac.org, or call 843-661-4444.

'Lest We Forget,' Salute to Veterans Patriotic Tea Party

Today at 2 p.m. at Poyner Adult/Community Education Center, 301 S. Dargan St., Florence. An event honoring military veterans and remembering the devastation of Sept. 11, 2001, with music by Red White Bluegrass. Call 843-413-2681 or email ruteadoff1@gmail.com.

Metamorphosis Art Walk on Dargan

Today and Friday from 5 to 9 p.m. 154-166 S. Dargan St. Florence. Email treiferjohnson@yahoo.com.

Screen on the Green

Today at 7:35 p.m. in Burry Park in Hartsville. "Mr. Popper's Penguins" will be shown, rated PG. Free. Call 843-339-2868, ext. 266.

FMU Performing Arts Center presents 'An Evening with Judy Collins'

Today at 8 p.m. at FMU Performing Arts Center. Attire is casual. Visit www.fmupac.org, or call 843-661-4444.

SUNDAY

FMU Performing Arts Center presents 'An Inspirational Afternoon with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra Spiritual Ensemble'

Sunday at 2 p.m. at FMU Performing Arts Center. Attire is casual. Visit www.fmupac.org, or call 843-661-4444.

Sunday Family Movies

Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at Drs. Bruce & Lee Foundation Library, 509 S. Dargan St., Florence. Call 843-292-7382.

FMU's Dooley Planetarium presents 'The Evening Sky'

Sunday at 3 p.m. on the second floor,

See **EVENTS**, Page 6A

Embattled Mayor Pro Tem

Dillon official gets 9 months



Gurley

From staff reports

DILLON — Embattled Dillon Mayor Pro Tem Randolph Gurley has been sentenced in connection with a variety of criminal charges. On Thursday, At Large Circuit Court Judge Craig Brown

sentenced Gurley to eight years in prison, suspended to nine months active time and three years probation, for felony assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature, Attorney General's

Office spokesman Mark Plowden said.

Gurley must undergo anger management counseling and have no contact with the victim or his family. Gurley initially faced an attempted murder charge, but pleaded

guilty to the lesser charge.

Brown also handed down a sentence of five years in prison, suspended to nine months active time and two years probation, for two

See **GURLEY**, Page 4A

PAC'D HOUSE



PHOTOS BY JOHN D. RUSSELL/MORNING NEWS
The sold-out audience applauds as guests are introduced inside the Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center in downtown Florence on Friday during the center's grand opening. The center officially opened its doors Friday to start the Opening Gala weekend with a formal evening with Roberta Flack.

FMU Performing Arts Center dazzles in debut

BY JOHN D. RUSSELL
Morning News
jrussell@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — After years of planning, construction and preparation, the Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center officially welcomed all comers with its first show.

The black-tie optional kickoff gala event, "A Formal Evening with Roberta Flack" was sold-out, and those lucky enough to secure a ticket said they were dazzled by the facility.

"It's amazing and so big and modern. I wasn't sure what to expect on the inside, but the outside is huge," Florence resident Margaret Bakalarz said. "I think it will definitely bring more entertainment and art (to the region) and give people something more to do."

Pat Hanna was able to get a few sneak peeks at the center's interior before Friday in her role as the Florence Symphony Orchestra Guild president, as she helped prepare for the symphony's concert on Monday night at the center.

From the first time she saw the inside, she said she felt like she was in a big city.

"This is not your typical small Southern building. This is very cosmopolitan, and yet it reflects who we are here. It's just gorgeous," Hanna said.

State Sen. Hugh K. Leatherman of Florence was in his black tie best for the night and was just as excited about the

See **DEBUT**, Page 3A



Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center usher Sheree Meadows (left) helps Johnnie and Barbara Ford with their tickets as they enter the auditorium for the Roberta Flack concert at the center in Florence on Friday.

Pee Dee Muslims reflect on 9/11

BY JOHN D. RUSSELL
Morning News
jrussell@florencenews.com

FLORENCE — The Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks changed the lives of countless people across the globe.

That includes members of the Muslim community in the Pee Dee.



MORE
» Converting to Islam in the post-9/11 era. **1B**
» Local reaction. **Sunday's edition**

Abdul Chatila, who was living in Darlington at the time, had just awakened that morning when a friend called to tell him to

turn on the TV.

"What I saw was unbelievable," Chatila said. "I was shocked like everyone else. We were shocked that something like this could have happened in the U.S."

Yasin Abdul-Hakim, a native of Darlington, was in Philadelphia taking care of an aunt.

"At first I thought it was a sci-fi movie. I watched it on TV for hours because I couldn't believe it was happening," Abdul-Hakim said. "I was sad, bewildered, and it was deeply troubling."

In the hours and days after 9/11, when it was deemed an act of terrorism, some Americans turned their anger and outrage toward Muslims.

On the day of the attacks, Chatila said, he received calls from friends and police in Darlington to check that he was OK and had not receive any death threats.

He said he never received any threats or directed anger at him for being a Muslim and attributes that to people in the Pee Dee being civilized and open-minded.

"It made me feel safe

See **MUSLIMS**, Page 6A



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TERROR THREAT

Big Apple, D.C. on alert, but not worried about threat, officials say.

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