

TALKBACK

803-644-2384

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Clean up your own yard first

For the Creekside Homeowners Elected Member who has nothing else to do but complain, how about cleaning up your own yard and remove the truck off the lawn. Talk about an eyesore.

No rules about house colors

For the person that commented about the club having the electric blue: They need to realize that it's not considered electric blue; it's the color of the state flag. And as far as I know, people can paint their places or business or their houses any color they want. In fact, we have a hot pink house in Aiken. I don't see why this person even has a right to complain.

Tree disease could hit Aiken

In regards to the trimming of Gregg Avenue oaks, we should be more concerned about SOD, sudden oak death blight. It has been found in South Carolina and our magnificent oaks could be a thing of the past in the not-too-distant future.

Letter to editor was illuminating

Dr. Clanton Mosley's letter to the editor published Jan. 25 is both insightful and illuminating. He does seem to prove that not everyone evolves - quite a blow to any Darwinist who thinks that development should be universal.

City doesn't pick up leaves in yard

To the big mouth who wants to report the trash: The city picks up our trash and leaves the garbage and the yard debris in the street and we have to go pick it up ourselves. But they see it and don't pick it up. They leave pounds of leaves. And should we report them?

Qualifications key for superintendent

The Associate Superintendent job should be advertised throughout the state and require at least a doctorate and at least three years' experience.

Call our Talkback hotline at (803) 644-2384 and leave your message, or e-mail it to us at editorial@aikenstandard.com. Readers' names are not necessary to make a comment and will not be published in the newspaper. Comments should be brief and to the point, and the Aiken Standard reserves the right to edit for space and content.

Students learn to appreciate opera

By ROB NOVIT
Senior writer

When she attended a special performance of an opera last week, Taylor Holley readily admitted she thought it would be boring.

"It really kept my attention," said the sophomore at the Aiken Performing Arts Academy charter school.

"I had never seen an opera before, and it wasn't what I expected."

The Aiken Opera Society sponsored the appearance of Opera Express, an education outreach division of Opera Carolina, based in Charlotte.

The young vocalists performed "How Nanita Learned to Make Flan," a children's opera sung in both English and Spanish.

That delighted APAA's director, Beverly Clyburn, who said the students have studied Spanish at school.

"They were able to follow the storyline," Clyburn said.

"The next time they hear the word 'opera,' they won't be so fearful. The students thought the (performers) would be screaming the whole time."

The opera tells the story of Pablo and his daughter, Nanita.

He operates a shoemaker's shop in a small Mexican village.

Pablo didn't have time to make new shoes for Nanita's communion, so after he goes to sleep, Nanita creates her own beautiful, rainbow-colored shoes.

Later, the shoes come to life, leading Nanita on a series of adventures before she is able to return home safely.

Former USC Aiken Prof. Dr. Sandra Field, an Aiken Opera Society Board member, helped coordinate Opera Express' appearance.

"The students seemed to enjoy it and asked interesting questions



A young Mexican girl named Nanita (Carelle Flores, right), is dismayed when an old farm woman (Leandra Ramm) takes her magical shoes. The operatic performance was presented recently for students from the Aiken Performing Arts Academy.

"The singers were really good. They really reached the high notes. Maybe I'll go to another opera."

Ontario Oliver
student

afterwards," Field said. "They were interested in how the performers are going about making careers. They could see themselves doing

similar things in performing, stage managing or in the technical side.

"This is about making opera accessible."

Student Ontario Oliver liked the accompanying piano music and the artwork for the production.

"The singers were really good," he said.

"They really reached the high notes. Maybe I'll go to another opera."

The current Opera Society president, Billy Benton, said the performance is the sixth of the school year sponsored by the organization and the first with Opera Express. The society holds a number of

fundraisers to bring the programs to Aiken.

"We were very pleased to work with the Aiken Performing Arts Academy," Benton said.

"It was nice to see that the students enjoyed it. The actors aren't much older, so the students could relate to them. We'll do more performances next year in the spring. There isn't a good repertoire for (high) school.

"Hopefully, we'll work with Sandra to find suitable performances for this age."

Contact Rob Novit at rnovit@aikenstandard.com.

Winter returns with a vengeance

By KRISTIN MERRIWEATHER
Staff writer

Coats, scarves and mittens will be needed again today as locals head out into the brisk morning weather.

Although skies were sunny, frigid temperatures lingered in the air yesterday.

According to the Aiken Standard's weather station, the high temperature Monday was 43 degrees and the low, a new record for this January, was 22 degrees.

The cold weather is expected to remain today. Overnight and early morning temperatures in the low 20s will lead to another chilly afternoon.

With partly cloudy skies the high today is expected to be in the lower 50s, said Jim Kilmer with the National Weather Service.

The clouds will remain through the night.

"Temperatures will be below normal for the next few days," Kilmer said.

According to the forecast, a cold front will be coming through tonight leading into Wednesday morning with more 20-degree weather.

The rest of the day will be dry and sunny with a high around 50 degrees.

"The next decent chance of rain won't be until the end of the week," said Kilmer. "But the weekend looks pretty nice, it will be in the upper 50s."

There is a 50 percent chance of rain for the end of the week, dropping temperatures back down to the lower 50s, he said.

Contact Krystin Merriveather at kmerriveather@aikenstandard.com



A chilly morning greeted Aiken on Monday, and that will continue throughout the week. According to this sign, the temperatures reached 26 degrees early in the morning. The Aiken Standard's weather station recorded a low of 22.

Staff photo by Michael Gibbons

BRIEFLY

StormFest coming up Saturday, Feb. 3

Weather enthusiasts of all ages are invited to attend WRDW Storm Team 12's StormFest 2007 on Saturday, Feb. 3 at Fort Discovery in downtown Augusta. This year's mild December and early January temperatures might have local residents wondering whether global warming is to blame. Learn more about the ongoing debate on climate change from experts including South Carolina State Climatologist Hope Mizzell and Georgia State Climatologist Dr. David Stooksbury. Also, get advanced storm spotter training from the National Weather Service based in Columbia. StormFest is free and will be catered by Rhinehart's. Participants also will receive a free T-shirt. The event starts at 10 a.m. RSVP by emailing News 12 Meteorologist Adam Clark at adam.clark@wrwd.com, or send your RSVP to Storm Team 12 at 1301 Georgia Ave., North Augusta, S.C. 29841.

Donate books, items to a worthy cause

The American Association of University Women will be collecting books and other items each Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for their Books N' Things Fair. Items can be dropped off at the old Belk building in Kalmia Plaza.

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Aiken's character trait for the month of January is Enthusiasm.

Monday's winning numbers:
Pick 3 Midday: 9-1-7
Pick 4 Midday: 8-2-5-1
Pick 3 Evening: 1-0-5
Pick 4 Evening: 2-3-0-4
Palmetto Cash Five: 24-9-2-6-13
Multiplier: 2

Monday's winning numbers:
Cash 3 Midday: 3-3-9
Cash 4 Midday: 7-0-3-9
Cash 3 Evening: 7-6-3
Cash 4 Evening: 2-0-5-2
Fantasy 5: 9-22-24-5-15

Coming soon

And the answer is ...



Where in Aiken is it? Don't miss the latest installment of our puzzle. Wednesday