

## THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

### Arts awards come to Greenville

Thumbs Up to Tommy Wyche, the Greenville-based Carolina Youth Symphony and Carolina First bank for winning three of the state's nine top awards for the arts this year. Since 1972 the South Carolina Arts Commission Board has presented the Elizabeth O'Neill Verner Governor's Awards for the Arts for outstanding achievement and contributions to the arts in our state. Greenville attorney and community leader Tommy Wyche was honored with the 2011 Verner Award for Lifetime Achievement. Carolina First received the business award for contributions to the arts. And the Carolina Youth Symphony won the Verner Award for an organization. Wyche was called a "key champion for the arts for nearly 50 years." Among many other accomplishments, he was the principal leader in developing downtown Greenville's Heritage Green campus. Carolina First was recognized for always being "a great supporter of community programs and initiatives." And Carolina Youth Symphony was cited for its work over the past 54 years in educating "thousands of students who have either gone on to careers in music or developed a boundless appreciation of symphonic music."

### Upstate champions honored

Thumbs Up to the seven award winners at the second annual ForeverGreen Awards sponsored by Upstate Forever. The individuals and organizations were recognized for their significant contributions in the fields of land conservation, air and water quality, sustainable development, public service and volunteer work in the Upstate. Honored were: Extraordinary Achievement, Tommy Wyche, for his "determined, passionate and creative leadership for nearly 40 years" in protecting more than 100,000 acres of the Blue Ridge Mountains in South Carolina; Public Servant of the Year, Greer Mayor Rick Danner, who was called a "strong proponent of alternative transportation;" Clear Skies Champion, Pickens County, which now "powers its entire truck fleet with biodiesel;" Land Conservation Champion, Naturaland Trust, established in 1973 by Tommy Wyche and the oldest land trust in South Carolina; Clean Water Champion, Dave Hargett, an environmental consultant who "has worked tirelessly to protect and improve water quality throughout the Upstate;" Sustainable Communities Champion, Frank Powell, who has been a "pioneering advocate for environmental sustainability and conservation" at Furman University; and Volunteer of the Year, Rick Huffman, founder and president of Earth Design, Inc.