

THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

Helping hungry students

Thumbs Up to a wonderful program in Pickens County that helps make sure elementary school students don't go hungry on the weekends and thus show up on Monday morning not able to learn. This program started because caring individuals took action when they saw an obvious need. The program is called Feed a Hungry Child PC and more information is available at www.pickenschildren.com. The program provides "backpack" food to students in about a dozen elementary schools in Pickens County, and the group behind the effort wants to expand to middle schools and high schools, and also provide meals to students during the summer months, according to a Sunday story by John Stevenson of GreenvilleOnline.com. The idea started when Kathy Brazinski, principal of A.R. Lewis Elementary School in Pickens, noticed students going to see the school nurse on Monday morning. They weren't sick; they were hungry and were going to get crackers. From there, Milledge Cassell had seen a story last year in *The Greenville News* about a school backpack food program in Rock Hill. And a true community effort sprang up in Pickens County to make sure young students didn't go hungry on the weekends. The Pickens program is part of the nonprofit project of Feeding America and the Golden Harvest Food Bank. People can donate to buy plastic bags of child-friendly food that is then discreetly put in backpacks on the last day of a school week.

Rain, cold didn't stop them

Thumbs Up to the 3,692 runners who endured a cold rain last Saturday to participate in the 34th annual Carolina First Reedy River Run. Another Thumbs Up to the sponsors, including Carolina First, and to the volunteers who also got wet in many cases. The runners competed in either the 10K or 5K runs. Although the weather was miserable, it apparently helped the elite runners because they set or tied some course records. And another record was set: 2,406 runners competed in the 5K — far more than the 2,105 in 2009.

The Greenville News

Greenville's a cool place

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Thumbs Up to Greenville on being named one of the 18 coolest places to live in America by Men's Journal Magazine. The city earned the ranking thanks, in part, to things most of us already know about: major employers like Michelin and BMW; a walkable downtown; and Fluor Field. It also was praised, according to a report in *The News*, for **Upstate Forever**, an environmental group; and the NEXT Innovation Center where entrepreneurs can jot ideas on the walls. It made the list along with places like Durango, Colo.; Fargo, N.D.; and Frisco, Texas. Thumbs Up, too, to the folks at the Greenville Convention and Visitors Bureau and its press agency, TKPR, who saw an opportunity to get Greenville included in the list and seized it.