

## Metro Extra

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## METRO&amp;STATE

Briefly

## House approves disclosure bill

In a key vote Thursday, the House approved a bill that would open public access to disciplinary proceedings against doctors.

The legislation would allow disclosure of complaints once a medical board investigative committee finds grounds to proceed with what is called a "formal complaint." A physician's answer to the complaint also would become public.

That information would be disclosed 10 days after the formal complaint.

Once a case is made public, further hearings and some documents also would be public unless a party to a case can show it would be an unreasonable intrusion into private matters.

Under current law, all aspects of a medical discipline case are confidential until the board reaches a final decision or issues a public temporary sanction.

## COLUMBIA

## USC plan calls for razing Carolina Plaza

USC wants to demolish Carolina Plaza as part of the overall plan for its research campus, Harris Pastides, the university's vice president for research, said Thursday.

USC will present a comprehensive building plan and funding request for the research campus to the S.C. Research Centers of Economic Excellence Review Board on May 11, Pastides said. That plan includes the demolition of the university-owned Carolina Plaza — a former hotel and Assembly Street landmark.

He said that the land where the building is located would be used for expansion of the university's biotechnology and biomedical research programs.

If the review board approves the overall plan, Pastides said the USC Board of Trustees then would be asked to approve the demolition of Carolina Plaza. Demolition also would require approval from the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Columbia Design/Development Review Commission.

## City files motion to dismiss hotel lawsuit

The city of Columbia said this week that a \$1.15 million lawsuit filed by members of the development team that worked on the abandoned publicly funded convention center hotel should be dismissed.

Gary Realty Co. and Garfield Traub Development filed suit in March, claiming the city owes them for their work in developing plans for a \$71.1 million publicly funded Hilton hotel. The city later abandoned the plan and chose a private developer for the hotel.

Columbia filed its response in Richland County circuit court Wednesday. Its response accuses the development teams of providing insufficient evidence to support its claims and seeks that the lawsuit be dismissed.

No hearing date has been set in the case.

## Motorcycle marathon rider to visit Midlands

Bob Mutchler, a motorcycle marathon rider from California, is coming through South Carolina today as part of his trip through the United States and Canada to raise money to fight polio.

Mutchler, a member of Rotary International, rides to raise money for one of the group's main goals — eradication of polio around the world.

Mutchler is arriving in Columbia from Atlanta and will be a guest at the Five Points Rotary Club on Friday afternoon.

Contributing: Staff writers  
Clif LeBlanc, John Drake  
and Maurice Thomas

## LIFE&amp;FAITH



Tray Staley, right, helps Trevor Lynch work on a problem that requires him to figure the annual percentage rate on a loan during the About Face Program at Bible Way Church of Atlas Road. The church is getting ready to hold an official opening ceremony for its C.R. Neal Dream Center. PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD BENNETT/THE STATE

## Church realizes dream of community center

## Bible Way Church transforms former elementary school

By CHRISTINA LEE KNAUSS  
Staff Writer

A former elementary school off Atlas Road is taking on a new role for the community.

The C.R. Neal Dream Center will officially open at a ceremony Sunday, May 15.

The dream center is a community center built in what used to be Atlas Road Elementary School. It is the result of three years of prayer and work by community members, clergy and members of Bible Way Church of Atlas Road, the 8,000-member congregation whose sanctuary sits across the road.

The Dream Center, named after a former principal at the school, will be home to services including a victims' services substation of the Richland County Sheriff's Department, the About Face after-school program and a full-service computer lab.

The Rev. Darrell Jackson, pastor of Bible Way Church, and other church and community members started working on transforming the school into a community center shortly after the building became vacant in 2002.

## IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** Grand opening of C.R. Neal Dream Center

**WHEN:** 2:30 p.m. May 15

**WHERE:** C.R. Neal Dream Center, 2430 Atlas Road

**CONTACT:** (803) 647-9111

The building holds memories for Jackson. He attended the school and later served on the school board after it became C.R. Neal Alternative School. While it was Atlas Road Elementary, the building played a role in the history of Bible Way Church.

After the church's first location, known as "The Little Red Church," burned in the 1960s, the congregation worshipped in Atlas Road Elementary's cafeteria until its first sanctuary on Atlas Road was completed.

The Bible Way Community Development Corporation has a long-term lease on the property with Richland County.

An after-school program and activities for senior citizens have already started at the center. Computer classes are slated to begin May 18.

Richland 1 Adult Education will offer basic skills and GED testing at the beginning of the next school year.

The buildings have been renovated.

Hallways and classrooms are painted a golden yellow, floors are carpeted, and new furniture and desks are in all the rooms.

One of the classrooms is home to Med Tech, a certified nursing assistant training program, and holds a hospital bed and medical equipment.

The cafeteria is also being renovated.

Jackson said the idea for the Dream Center came after he heard of similar church and community programs in Los Angeles and Houston that involved transforming abandoned buildings into community centers.

"It allows us to fulfill a big mission in the community, and it's a cutting-edge ministry tool for evangelism," Jackson said. "We'll be able to show the community that the purpose of our church is not just to worship but to serve, and share our belief in God through that service."

The C.R. Neal Dream Center is a dream come true for Sarah Franklin, a Bible Way church member who also serves as administrator of the center. She also remembers her days as an Atlas Road Elementary student.

"It's amazing what this building has become," Franklin said with a smile during a recent tour of the building. "We want to be able to provide services for everybody, at every stage of life."

Reach Knauss at (803) 771-8507 or [cknauss@thestate.com](mailto:cknauss@thestate.com).

## 4 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PROJECT HOPE

**What it is:** A relief effort to rebuild structures and improve general living conditions on the coast of southeast India, in the area hardest hit by the December tsunami. This effort was launched by Parnarth Niketan, a Hindu organization that has worked for many years to meet the needs of the people of India.

**Interesting fact:** Swami Chidan and Saraswati, who heads the organization, has taken part in Partners in Dialogue interfaith programs in Columbia and sponsors the Encyclopedia of Hinduism project, which has its central offices in Columbia.

**A fund-raising effort:** Partners in Dialogue, a Columbia-based interfaith organization, is hosting a drop-in to kick off its fund-raising initiative for Project Hope at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday. A video and other information about the project will be shared. The drop-in is at the Hindu Temple, 5703 Kiwash Road, off Bush River Road.

**For more information:** Contact Hal French at (803) 777-2178. To donate, make checks out to Project Hope and send to the Department of Religious Studies, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208.

— Christina Lee Knauss

## MATTERS OF FAITH

## SPECIAL SERVICES

**GREATER CAROLINA BAPTIST:** Women's Day program, 2:30 p.m. May 15 at 1419 Anthony Ave. (803) 252-3845.

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL:** Liturgy of Blessing and Thanksgiving, 10:30 a.m. May 15 at 2827 Wheat St. Celebration lunch will follow. (803) 799-4757.

**SUTTON BRANCH BAPTIST:** Celebration services, 7 p.m. Wednesday through May 13 at 420 Sutton Branch Road, Lugoff; the Rev. Willie Simon of Good Aim Baptist Church in Elgin will speak. Banquet, 7 p.m. May 15 in the fellowship hall; keynote speaker will be the Rev. J. Britt Coleman of Second Calvary Church in Heath Springs. Sunday worship, 10 a.m. May 15.

**ST. MARK BAPTIST:** Women's Day program, 10 a.m. May 15 at 2700 Chestnut St. Guest speaker will be the Rev. Veronica H. Bailey of New Samaritan Baptist Church. (803) 256-7133.

**"ADVANCING THE KINGDOM":** Teaching, preaching and healing, 9 a.m., 2 and 7 p.m. today and Saturday at Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, 1101 Lincoln St. Children's church, 7 tonight and all services on Saturday. Free registration. (803) 699-0923.

**ANGLICAN CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY:** Choral Evensong, 5 p.m. May 15 at 2512 Beltline Blvd. Forest Acres. Pentecost Sunday event will feature music by William Mathias, including his service for Jesus College and "As Truly as God Is Our Father," an anthem written for the Friends of Saint Paul. (803) 782-4219.

**BIBLE WAY CHURCH OF ATLAS ROAD:** Southern Regional Worship and Arts Conference Thursday through May 14 at 2440 Atlas Road. Registration at 6 p.m. Thursday, followed by a worship service at 7 p.m. Remainder of the schedule includes registration 8:30-9:30 a.m., workshops 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; CeCe Winans in concert at 7 p.m. May 13. \$45. (803) 776-1238 or [www.bwcar.org](http://www.bwcar.org).

## MUSIC

**A MOTHER'S DAY MUSICAL CELEBRATION:** 5:30 p.m. Sunday at Lower Richland High School Arena, 2915 Lower Richland Blvd., Hopkins. Featuring The William Brothers, Elder Jimmy Hicks and the Voices of Integrity, Ernest Pearson and the Singing Disciples, Big Mack and the Harmonettes, Lemmie Battles, the Rev. F.C. Barnes and Company and more. \$16; at the door, \$20. Children 10 and younger, \$10 at the door only. Call Loretta Coleman, (803) 238-2196.

**GOSPEL SINGING:** Morning Star and the Ken Clubb Singers, 7:30 p.m. May 14 at Yellowrock Hall, 2211 Platt Springs Road, West Columbia. Donation will be taken at the door.

**GOSPEL SINGING:** The Memory Singers in concert, 11 a.m. May 15 at Fox Hill Baptist Church, Koon and Fox Hill roads, Lugoff.

**MOUNT ANNA MISSIONARY BAPTIST (Aiken):** Sisters in Spirit in concert, 5 p.m. May 15 at 2612 Banks Mill Road, Aiken. Free, doors open at 4 p.m. (803) 643-5620.

## ALSO . . .

**"THIS IS NOT YOUR MOTHER'S WORSHIP":** Play scheduled for May 15 at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church has been canceled. (803) 772-6034.

**WASHINGTON STREET UNITED METHODIST:** "Conversations About Social Justice," 9:30 a.m. Tuesday in the Christ Chapel Courtyard foyer, 1401 Washington St. Dr. Sheila Elliott, associate professor of international politics at Columbia College, will lead a discussion on peace and war. A light breakfast will be available after the discussion for \$3. Sponsored by the Church and Society Committee, the series is held the second Tuesday monthly. Upcoming topics include gays and lesbians in contemporary society, race relations, capital punishment, domestic violence and homelessness. (803) 256-2417.

**BETHEL AME:** Women's Missionary Society clothing giveaway, 10 a.m.-noon Saturday and May 21 in the church basement, 819 Woodrow St. (803) 799-0138.

**PROJECT HOPE:** Interfaith tsunami relief project fund-raiser, 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Hindu Temple, 5703 Kiwash Road (off Bush River Road).

**"THE MESSIAH MYSTERY":** 7 p.m. Thursdays through June 30 at Beth Shalom Synagogue, 5827 Trenholm Road, Forest Acres. Sponsored by the Jewish Learning Institute, the course will be led by Rabbi Hesh Epstein. Open to all religious affiliations; registration fee is \$54, includes textbook, recordings of all classes and refreshments. Scholarships available. (803) 467-3456 or [www.MyJLI.com](http://www.MyJLI.com).

## POLICE BLOTTER

Here are some highlights from police blotters in Richland and Lexington counties.

## Police identify remains found near stadium

Authorities have identified the skeletal remains of a woman found two months ago near Capital City Stadium, Richland County Coroner Gary Watts said.

Retha Dennen Largent, 43, was identified after investigators compared recent X-rays of the body to previous X-rays, Watts said.

Largent, who had no permanent address, did not have any close relatives living nearby, he said.

Watts said the office received a tip from someone who recognized a bust of the woman that was made by the State Law Enforcement Division.

A cause of death has not been determined, Watts said.

## Buffalo roam from Red Bank pasture

Five buffaloes were on the loose late Thursday in central Lexington County, authorities said.

About 8:30 p.m., the buffaloes escaped from a pasture in the 1200 block of South Lake Drive near the Red Bank community, said Lexington County Sheriff's spokesman John Allard.

Three hours later, the five were spotted close to a barbecue restaurant near S.C. 6 and I-20, Allard said. They had not showed up on any roads or residential properties.

The owner was trying to round them up, he said.

— J.R. Gonzales

## COLUMBIA

**Sunset Drive, 1600 block:** A man was attacked and beaten as he took out his trash at 10 p.m. Thursday. He told police that an unknown assailant came up behind him and punched him in the face until he fell. The man kicked him and fled.

## LEXINGTON COUNTY

**Skylark Lane, 100 block:** A man called police at 6:30 a.m. Tuesday when he discovered someone had stolen his heart medication from his unlocked

car. He told officers the \$65 pills were under his front seat and that's all that was taken.

**Platt Springs Road, 5600 block:** Sheriff's deputies are looking for a motive in a series of assaults on a man between Saturday afternoon and 10 a.m. Tuesday.

## RICHLAND COUNTY

**St. Andrews Road, 1200 block:** Police were called at 11 p.m. Wednesday when a man interrupted a church service and tried to block parishioners of The Right Direction Christian Center from attending the evening meeting. Members

told police the man stood on the sidewalk holding a sign denouncing the church and telling worshippers that they were going to hell.

## FOREST ACRES

**Bethel Church Road, 4200 block:** A 31-year-old woman verbally attacked an 11-year-old child at 1:25 p.m. Wednesday when he asked her to move her car. The boy went out to ask the woman not to park in the handicapped parking spot at their apartment parking lot because his grandmother needed to park there. The boy's baby-sitter told police the woman yelled and

swore at the child. The woman admitted to police that she screamed profanities at the boy.

**Bethel Church Road, 4200 block:** A woman called police at noon Tuesday to report that she had been robbed. She said a co-worker asked to borrow her car and \$5 to buy a pack of cigarettes. She loaned him her key, which also had her apartment keys on the chain. He returned her car and keys 45 minutes later. When she went home after work, her door was unlocked and her jewelry box with \$3,450 worth of jewelry was missing.

— Julia Rogers Hook