

Stocks rise

Wall Street finished mostly higher Tuesday after billionaire investor Warren Buffett offered to help out troubled bond insurers, easing some of the market's concerns about further deterioration in the credit markets. The Dow Jones industrials rose more than 130 points.

3B

Survey doubts recession

Pessimism may be the mood on Wall Street, but a survey of top economists by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia found the forecasters predicting the U.S. will escape a recession. The bank's venerable quarterly survey of Professional Forecasters reckons that the U.S. gross domestic product will rise by 0.7 percent in the first quarter, and by 1.3 percent in the second.

State agency awards Governor's Cup to downtown Greenville

By Jenny Munro
BUSINESS WRITER
jmunro@greenvillenews.com

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism has recognized Greenville's West End as a magnet for tourists with the 2008 Governor's Cup award.

The community received the award Tuesday during the Industry Awards Luncheon at the Governor's Conference on Tourism and Travel in Columbia. The Greenville Convention and Visitors Bureau nominated the West End for the award, open to all tourism partners that demonstrate a significant tourism-related economic impact.

"This very successful and

thriving tourist attraction for our downtown has been a major engine for economic development," Greenville Mayor Knox White said in a videotaped acceptance of the award. "Just in the past three years since Falls Park opened, we have realized over \$100 million in new private investment along the Reedy River, just outside Falls Park."

Lauren Posta, marketing manager for the CVB, said that attractions like the Peace Center, Falls Park with Liberty Bridge, West End Field and RiverPlace were the reason her organization made the nomination.

"All those attractions have been major drawing cards for tourism," she said.

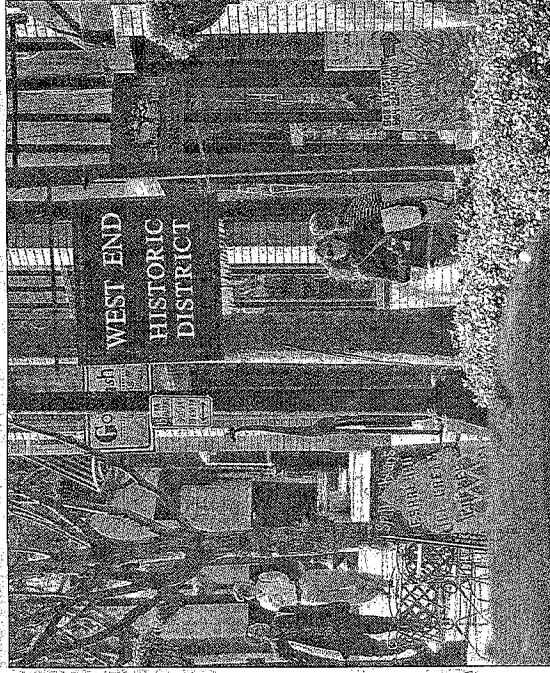
In addition, the region has added to its restaurant and retail base and is the site of many festivals and events in Greenville, she said.

When the city first began working with the West End, the district was narrowly defined, said Nancy Whitworth, the city's director of development. Initially, it was the area immediately south of Camperdown Way.

"That definition has expanded a whole lot," she said. But the West End still begins with the Reedy River as it has since Greenville's history began. In the early years, the river — with no bridge — was the dividing line between downtown Green-

See WEST END on page 2B

West End named tourism magnet



OWEN RILEY, JR. / Staff

Tops in tourism: Greenville's West End was awarded Governor's Cup as a magnet for tourists Tuesday by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

WEST END

FROM PAGE 1B

ville and a totally separate neighborhood, the West End. It now includes West End Street and extends down Pendleton and other nearby streets.

What the West End has become "is a place that people want to come and visit," Whitworth said.

City of Greenville and community leaders, often through the use of public/private partnerships, systematically implemented a "bold vision of revitalization projects that cohesively revived the quality and beauty of Greenville's West End," said the CVB.

More than 1 million visitors have walked across Liberty Bridge, a pedestrian bridge over Reedy Falls and the river, according to the city. Smith Travel Research reported Greenville County's hotel occupancy was 65 percent in 2007, up from 53 percent in 2004. Gross retail sales for the West End area increased 145 percent since Falls Park opened — to \$12.5 million from \$5 million.

Restaurant sales soared even more, reaching \$12.5 million last year from \$1.7 million when the park opened.