More cold and then rain on the way

By Eric Connor
STAFF WRITER
econnor@greenvillenews.com

The streets of downtown Greenville slowly came to life as the bright Christmas Day sun shined with no hint of anything but the city's buildings standing in its way.

Falls Park was purely a sightseeing experience as all but a handful of downtown businesses stayed closed. As the shadows cast wider, the empty ice rink began to draw visitors.

The slow pace of downtown was but the calm before the storm – when today people will fill stores again, receipts in hand.

The sun and the cold will once again greet them, but while the cold will stay, the dry won't as the holiday break stretches into the weekend and an already-wet December nears its final days.

Come Saturday night, a weather system from the Gulf of Mexico is expected to pass through and drop more rain, said Andrew Kimball, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Greer.

However, unlike last weekend when the Upstate tied a record for warm temperatures reaching 70 degrees, the rain should be a cold one with highs staying in the 50s and lows in the 30s, Kimball said. The temperatures will be too warm for any snow to fall, he said.

WEATHER

Continued from Page 1A

The weekend will dry out quickly, giving way again to sunny, cold weather until the New Year, Kimball said.

Whatever rain that falls will mark the end of a wet 2013 that saw a sudden end to a crippling drought.

In the first half of the year, the Upstate appeared to be on a fast course to breaking the all-time record for amount of rainfall in a year – nearly 78 inches, a record set in 1901.

July was the wettest month on record at Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport, since records were first kept in 1884.

The rain stopped in late summer through early fall, but since Thanksgiving has fallen in buckets when it comes.

The Greenville-Spartanburg area stands about 10 inches short of the rainfall record, despite above-normal rainfall in November (4.13 inches) and December (5.29 inches).

The Asheville area shattered its 40-year-old rainfall record for the year by 10 inches.

The longer-term prediction through the rest of the winter calls for above-normal temperatures and below-normal rainfall, though Kimball said climate patterns now don't paint a distinct enough picture for forecasters to predict with a high level of confidence.