

Peace Center's Broadway

By Ann Hicks

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The Peace Center is anticipating a banner season this year with shows that are still selling out the New York stages. Those hits represent four out of the five shows in the 2009-2010 Greenville News Broadway Series and share 24 Tonys among them.

"The season just doesn't get any bigger than this," says Robert Gilbert, the venue's public relations manager. The season headlines with three weeks of "Wicked," a new

musical that is described with one simple line — "so much happened here before Dorothy dropped in."

To "Oz," that is.

The national tour of "Wicked" is rapidly selling out in every market, says Carol May, Peace Center vice president of marketing. She expects the same enthusiasm in Greenville once tickets go on sale. The winner of 20 major awards, including a Grammy and three Tonys, the story of the two sisters, the Good Witch Glinda and the Wicked Witch of the West, makes for "the

most complete and completely satisfying new musical in a long time," according to *USA Today*.

And, here's the lineup:

"Chicago" ignites the new season in August with its sensation-grabbing tale of sin and all that jazz. Still glittering on Broadway, it has become the seventh-longest running production in the history of the Great White Way. It plays at the Peace Center Aug. 25-30.

"South Pacific" follows in a spanking new production that is currently playing at the

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Series is sizzling hot



Photo by JOAN MARCUS

The national touring production "South Pacific" will make a stop at the Peace Center in November.

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Lincoln Center Theatre. Greenville will get its first national touring show from Nov. 17-22 — a sweeping, romantic tale of two couples finding love and tragedy on a tropical island during World War II.

“**Wicked**” opens on Jan. 27 and plays through Feb.

14. Just remember, the venue expects a rush on those tickets.

“**Spring Awakening**,” follows March 16-21. The winner of eight Tony Awards, the show fuses morality, sexuality and rock and roll, and is the most talked about show on Broadway, May says.

“Spring Awakening” is not for everyone, she cautions. In fact, the Peace Center plans to do “a

strong educational campaign around it.” May, a parent of teenagers, says the show maintains a great parental Web site to discuss the pros and cons of bringing your children to the show. “It has glorious music and spectacular lighting and other special features,” she says, and also brief nudity and sexual situations.

“We’re not suggesting this show to anyone who

may find it uncomfortable,” she says. On the other hand, she adds, it is a groundbreaking play that “needs to be in Greenville, especially since it has a huge following with teens and college students.”

The evergreen, ever-popular **Riverdance** closes the season May 18-23 on the Irish/Celtic phenomenon’s farewell tour.

Options

Broadway tickets are on

sale only by subscription until Aug. 24, except for “Wicked.” General tickets for that show will not go on sale until Oct. 3. Subscriptions for the five-show package (1 ticket to each show) start at \$201, or \$169 if choosing the four-show option with the choice between “Spring Awakening” or Riverdance.

Subscriptions are available online at www.peacecenter.org, at the box of-

fice, or by phone, 467-3000 or 800-888-7768.

You’re invited

Get a sneak peek at the 2009-2010 series at the “Inside Broadway Party” at 6 p.m. April 16

See exclusive behind-the-scenes videos and hear the inside scoop from New York press representatives. Tickets are free for this special event. Call 864-679-9225 or email broadway@peacecenter.org.