



TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

February 2009
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www.townofchapelhill.org

A Short Report

By Roger L. Stancil,
Town Manager

Tuesday, January 20, was a proud day in Chapel Hill. Clearly, it was a day for celebrating the Inauguration of President Barack Obama for all that his inauguration means to our nation. But it was also a proud day because of you.

When we wake up and snow and ice is on the ground; when school is closed for the children; when work is far away; when historic events are occurring and we are interested in seeing them happen, it is more difficult to keep that commitment to the residents of Chapel Hill. But you did.

You came, as you promised to do all the things that keep Chapel Hill open and working for the people who live and work here. You accomplished your job with pride and success. And I hope you were able to see the historic events of the day in Washington, D.C. and around the world.

Your Professionalism, your Teamwork, your Respect for our fellow workers and our residents are the values that make this a great place to work. I am proud to work with you and happy for the opportunity.

Thank you.



Charles Mitchell

Public Works

Joined Town: Jan. 2, 1985

On snowy days, Town employees like Charles Mitchell work long days to keep the roads clear and safe. Charles is one of two Construction Crew Leaders who supervise a team of workers who are responsible for running snowplows and brine and sand spreaders during wintry weather. They also do construction and maintenance of sidewalks, roads, curbs and gutters, fencing and retaining walls.

In icy weather, the crew gets to work early to start spreading brine, followed by the snowplow and the sand spreader. They sometimes have to work through the night, and a big snow can mean 12-hour work days. Charles says his co-workers are a good group of people. Everybody works together and wants to help.

Charles works extra hours during special events like Halloween and game days, setting up traffic barricades and cleaning up the streets after the event. Pouring concrete also means long days, because two crew members have to stay with the concrete until it is dry. In the summer, they may have to come in at 5 a.m. to get ready to pour concrete before the day gets too hot.

In addition to his regular duties, Charles helps cook for Public Works events like fish fries, Thanksgiving and Public Works Appreciation Day.

Charles lives in the country near Jordan Lake on his old home place, accompanied by Chica, an American bulldog; Diamond, a Chihuahua; and some chickens and rabbits. In his time off, he likes to work on projects around the house and in the garden. Last

Value in the Spotlight

Teamwork

cooperative • mission-focused • strength shared decisions • consequence awareness relationships • enhancement of resources



Melanie Miller photo

summer, he completed a rock wall.

When Charles is not working, he relaxes by fishing, and he also enjoys bowling and motorcycle riding.

Our Value: Charles is always willing to assist with new and difficult tasks. He can be counted on to get all assignments completed with excellent results. Charles is a very hard worker and completes all tasks in a safe and professional manner. His favorite quote is "Let's all jump in and get it done so we can go."

— Shelton Burnette, Streets and Construction Services Superintendent

COMING UP

Feb. 14: Learn about assistive reading technology for people with low vision; 4 - 6 p.m., Chapel Hill Public Library. Information: 929-5256

Feb. 14: Family Concert with Two of a Kind, 11 - 11:45 a.m., Chapel Hill Public Library. Pre-register at 968-2778.

Feb. 20-21: Council Planning Retreat

Feb. 20-22: Library Book Sale



February is Black History Month. Learn more about the African American community in Chapel Hill by visiting the Black History Month exhibit at Town Hall, on display through Feb. 27.

In Brief



Phil Smith (Police) was honored on Jan. 6 for his 15-year involve-

ment with the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run. During the course of his involvement, his agency has raised over \$875,000 for Special Olympics of North Carolina.



Honored at the fire promotion ceremony on Feb. 2 were

(left to right) **Emily Dondero, Michael Crabtree, Gerald Boone, and Chris Bradley.**

The Chapel Hill Firefighters Association Local 2580 received the Professional Fire Fighters and Paramedic of North Carolina (PFFPNC) Local of the Year Award for 2008 for the unparalleled assistance provided to volunteer and career firefighters in need throughout North Carolina. It is the third time since 2002 that Local 2580 has received this prestigious award.

Volunteers are needed to assist children and young adults with disabilities during Adaptive Aquatics at the Homestead Aquatics Center, 300 Northern Park Drive. The class will meet from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. on Tuesdays, Feb. 17 through March 31. Information: (919) 968-2813



TOWNtalk is produced by the Communications and Public Affairs Department
Editorial/Graphics: Catherine Lazorko,
Melanie Miller



Catherine Lazorko photo

Celebrating Dr. King — Public Works hosted its 11th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration on Jan. 16, with the theme “A Reality of the Dream — Change Has Come.” The featured speaker was Dr. Chuck Stone, retired professor of African American Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill.

TEMPLATES AND OTHER RESOURCES for departments are now available online. Go to <http://townhall.townofchapelhill.org/staff/> and log in like you do when you log in to your computer: domain\userid and then password.

Need help with taxes? Free tax assistance is available for eligible households with RSVP VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance). Households with combined income under \$50,000 who are not filing a schedule C or E can receive free electronic filing and computerized returns.

VITA tax assistance is available at several locations, including the Chapel Hill Community Center, 120 South Estes Drive; the Seymour Senior Center, 2551 Homestead Road and Carrboro Town Hall, 301 W. Main St.

To make an appointment call 968-2086 for appointments at Carrboro Town Hall, 968-2086 for appointments at the Seymour Senior Center or 968-2086 for appointments at the Chapel Hill Community Center. Information: www.co.orange.nc.us/aging/vita.asp

SAVE MONEY by using the library! All Town employees are eligible for a free library card, even if they live outside of Orange County. NC Digital Library is one of several new online resources offered by the Chapel Hill Public Library. Use it to get free downloads for eBooks, eAudiobooks, music and videos. To log in, visit www.chapelhillpubliclibrary.org and click on “NC Digital Library.” You will need your library barcode and PIN to check out materials. Information: 968-2780



Public Works and Engineering have merged into a single department under the leadership of Lance Norris. Possible new names are being considered for the department, but for now the department will continue to be called Public Works.

CORRECTION: We regret an error that appeared in the January TOWNtalk regarding the status of the Carolina North project. The Chapel Hill Town Council and University Trustees continue to meet to design the framework for a development agreement, which is on a schedule for possible adoption in June 2009. Learn more at www.townofchapelhill.org/carolinanorth

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Community Art

“Our Stories, In Focus” is a community art and history project that offers a variety of ways for Town employees and others to explore their own stories as they learn about the history and character of this community. Old photographs, letters and other memorabilia brought in by participants will encourage storytelling and serve as raw material for a community work of public art.

Bring your piece of history (a photo, a letter, etc.) to any of three community workshops where your item will be scanned or photographed and included in a community “tapestry” created by local artists Leah Sobsey and Lynn Bregman-Blass. Workshops will be offered in oral history, journal writing, story circles and genealogy.

Sessions will be held from noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday, March 3, at the Frank Porter Graham Student Union, UNC-Chapel Hill, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 21, at University Mall at 201 S. Estes Drive in Chapel Hill, and from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 28, at the Century Center at 100 N. Greensboro Street in Carrboro. The events are free and open to the public.

For more information on the project, visit www.chapelhillarts.org and click “Programs” then “Community Art Project.”



Employee Forum



On Jan. 8, the Employee Forum held the election for 2009 officers. Officers elected were:
Chair: **Kay McDaniel** (Public Works)
Vice Chair: **Lynne Wade** (Human Resource Development)
Secretary: **Sheleatha Wright-Quick** (Police)
The next Employee Forum meeting will be held on Thursday, Feb. 12, at the Police Department, 828 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Honoring Employees for Service

Service awards were presented Dec. 19 at Hargraves Center. Congratulations to all!

5 Years

Scott Flowers (Police)
James Wilde (Police)
Sharon Fisher (Transit)
Kim Weaver (Transit)
Wendy Walsh (HRD)
James Wilkinson (Transit)
Manglio Lopez-Martinez (Housing)
Lonneta Bostelman (Police)
Chris Gillum (Police)
Anthony Jeffreys (Police)
Santiago Hernandez (Engineering)
Barbara Doakes (Transit)
Pilar Dominguea (Transit)
Ty Edwards (Transit)
Milton Fields (Transit)
Raymond Weston (Transit)
Robbin Justice-Jones (Parks & Recreation)
David Britt (Police)
Paula Gibbs (Police)
Rodney Kornegay (Public Works)
Jason Bellavance (Police)
Terrence Fearington (Police)
Joshua Mecimore (Police)
Eduardo Salazar (Transit)

10 Years

Andrew Bowden (Housing)
Paul McKinney (Police)

Harold Waddell (Public Works)
Warren Edwards (Public Works)
Scott Newton (Public Works)
Philip Mason (Planning)
Sandy Kline (CAPA)
Andrew Farrar (Public Works)
Tim Logue (Library)
Karin Michel (Library)
Allison Finch (Police)
Rodney Newcomer (Police)
Steven Seagroves (Police)
Doug Brooks (Transit)
Clyde Clark (Public Works)
Tyrone Clark (P&R)
Kay McDaniel (Public Works)
James Upchurch (Parks & Recreation)
Brian McJunkin (Transit)

15 Years

Doug Sutton (Fire)
Bill Blankenship (Fire)
Craig Wortham (Public Works)
Wilbert Mason (Transit)
Milton Durham (Police)
Bill Cozart (Police)
Carla Burnette (Housing)
Andre' Jones (Public Works)
Nancy Chao (Library)
Ivan McLamb (Public Works)
Sam Rone (Parks & Recreation)
Brenda Jones (Parking Services)
Johnny Parker (Fire)

20 Years

Jackie Thompson (Housing)
Victoria Madsen (Police)
Henry Harris (Police)
Peter Barkley (Transit)
Clint Thorpe (Transit)
Tom Bick (Engineering)
Diana Harris (Fire)
Robin Clark (Police)
Jason McIntyre (Police)
Stan Norwood (Transit)

25 Years

Tina Vaughn (Housing)
Barbara Gear (Transit)
Richard Goldston (Public Works)

30 Years

Tom Mills (Transit)
Scott Simmons (Planning)
Raymond Alestock (Parks & Recreation)

31 Years

Iris Schwintzer (Transit)
Maggie Burnett (Public Works)

32 Years

Toby Booth (Transit)

33 Years

Jim Huegerich (Police)

37 Years

Dayle Gibson (Public Works)

39 years

Flora Parrish (Police)

The Inauguration of President Barack Obama

The following essay is a personal account by Catherine Lazorko, who was one of several Town employees who attended the inauguration in Washington, D.C. Others include Tracy Dudley, Carlo Robustelli, Jerry Neville, Henry (Sam) Rone, Mike Gary, Maggie Hite, Carol Baer and Meeghan Rosen's teenage son Ben. Did we miss you? Let us know by contacting us at 968-2743 or publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org.

With scarves wound around necks and up past our noses, draped in fringed shawls and red-white-and-blue bandanas, our woolen hats pulled down snug, we came. With American flags pushed into back pockets and swinging plastic grocery bags with our lunches and cameras, we came. In hooded sports parkas and ankle-length fur coats and ushanka hats; wrapped in extra blankets from the car, we came. From our homes across the United States and lands farther, we came. Now we merged together toward the National Mall, from convoys of buses or from where we filled up the trains to overflowing; some of us arrived on bicycles, and others, like my family, on foot, walking from all different directions. We are here for the inauguration of President Barack Hussein Obama on January 20, 2009.

My family – myself and husband David and 11-year-old twin sons Nick and Ben – traveled across the Roosevelt Bridge from Arlington, Va., about a four-mile trek to the National Mall. It was about 20 degrees when we observed that the Potomac River was partially frozen. Past the Watergate Hotel and down Virginia Avenue, we advanced. Everywhere there was a feeling of polite excitement and anticipation. “Good Morning!” greetings echoed from

volunteers. At the Washington Monument, seagulls flapped overhead with the flags, waving together in the morning sunlight.

We became part of an immense crowd estimated at two million that gathered on the National Mall. A feeling of national pride energized the air. We gathered near a Jumbotron and listened to the program, alternating using binoculars to view the scene unfolding on the Capitol steps. My favorite parts were the musical performances, such as “Air and Simple Gifts,” music based on a humble Shaker hymn. Aretha Franklin was positively regal singing “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” in her rhinestone-studded bow hat. Finally, the oath of office was administered by Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens. At that moment, Barack Hussein Obama claimed his place in history as America’s 44th president and first black president.

“Welcome, my fellow citizens,” President Obama began. This address further elevated my brimming patriotism. The people upon the Capitol steps are answerable to us, The People! Yes, we are the ones waving the flags! The Government is the People, all of us together! On a day like today these simple ideas made me warmer, and I danced a little jig! And I wasn’t the only one, as I saw people crying, smiling, laughing – as well as straining from difficult perches to fully witness the event.

The President’s speech called attention to the serious challenges ahead of our nation. He said: “We remain a young nation, but in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to



pursue their full measure of happiness.”

Following his speech, we were ready to find heat, seats and hot chocolate. So was everyone else. Once again, we joined the crowd of people of all ages and colors and winter coat bundles. Human traffic jams formed within barricades that had been erected during the event with scarce few openings for the tens of thousands attempting to exit. In spite of the discomfort and confusion, we checked in cheerfully with these strangers at our elbows, and held onto our abundant hearts, overflowing with happiness, hope and quite possibly love – as in the words of Langston Hughes “Let America be the dream of dreams – Let it be that great strong land of love.”

This was just one day; the feeling will not last. But I am a dreamer. I will forever remember this as a day when our country held an inaugural that was open, accessible, and brought us all together in a spirit of unity.



Tracy Dudley (left, Parks and Recreation) and her daughter DeShauna attended the inauguration after DeShauna performed with the W.G. Pearson Magnet Middle School Orchestra. Catherine Lazorko (right, Communications and Public Affairs) and her husband and sons also attended the inauguration.

