



# TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

January 2009  
Vol. 5, No. 5

[www.townofchapelhill.org](http://www.townofchapelhill.org)

## A Short Report

By Roger L. Stancil,  
Town Manager

Any New Year brings challenges and new adventures. The year 2009 will be even more challenging than most as we face a financial future that is unprecedented.

We enter the year in crisis. I have a Japanese-American friend who told me that the Japanese character for "crisis" is composed by joining the characters for "danger" and "opportunity." While we may worry about the danger as we start the year, my wish for all of us is that we seize the opportunities of our situation over the next few months to provide excellent service to our residents and keep the great employees we have that make that possible.

I have been meeting with groups of people who work for the Town recently to talk about our financial situation. I have said that my first priority is the people who work for the Town today because they are the best hope of continuing to provide excellent service in the face of diminished resources. To keep that priority our driving force, we must look at everything we do to see if we can do it better and more efficiently or to see if we need to be doing it at all. Those ideas are in your heads, and I ask you to share your ideas with your managers and supervisors.

I also stated that I wanted to look at changes in two Town programs: workers compensation and benefits for employees who come to work for the Town at some future date (not current employees). I will be putting together information on these proposed changes and sharing them with you in writing and in discussion with groups throughout the Town. I will consider these changes in a manner consistent with our management team values and our strategies. I will be transparent in my thinking; I will encourage you to ask questions so we can share relevant information; I will be compassionate about the effects of policy changes on people who are affected.

I look forward to thinking with you about the future in a way that helps us maximize the opportunities and minimize the danger.

## Kendal Brown

**Joined Town:** October 1988

**Department:** Planning

Kendal began working for the Town in 1988 and returned to UNC in 2000 to earn a master's degree in social work. She was a social worker until returning to the Town in 2007. Her experience as a planner and social worker has provided Kendal with special skills as a facilitator and mediator. With these skills, she is able to facilitate common ground on land use issues and conflicts.

As a Current Development Planner, Kendal helps people navigate the Town's review and approval process for developments. She creates reports to advisory boards and Council that analyze development proposals against Town regulations and policies. The work is challenging, requiring her to juggle multiple projects and work with a variety of people with different levels of understanding of review processes.

Kendal enjoys working relationships with Town staff and likes working with advisory boards that show a high level of involvement, dedication and expertise. She says it's exciting to watch democracy at a local level with a high degree of citizen participation.

Kendal was born in Galveston, Texas, and came to Chapel Hill to earn a degree in biology at UNC. She now lives west of Carrboro in Orange County on a few acres in the country with her two cats, Davie and Fran (who likes to stalk deer). When not working, she's often on the go with a variety of creative and active pursuits, including gardening, visual arts, yoga,

## Value in the Spotlight

# Social Equity

advocacy • balanced • fair • compassionate  
sharing • appreciation of diversity • communicative



meditation, jazz music, exercise and cooking.

Kendal is certified as a Reiki master (pronounced Ray-Key) and donates Reiki energetic healing sessions to the injured and ill. She has volunteered with the Durham-based Domestic Violence Crisis Hot Line and Cornucopia House, a cancer support center. During her time as a social worker, she worked with clients with mental health and substance abuse issues, and hopes to do more of that type of outreach some day.

## COMING UP

**Jan. 3:** Homestead Aquatic Center opens

**Jan. 11:** Parks and Recreation registration opens for Chapel Hill and Orange County residents

**Jan. 19:** Town Holiday. Most municipal offices will be closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

**Feb. 20-21:** Council Budget Retreat



A video documentary of the dedication of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard will air at noon and 7 p.m. on Jan. 19 on Chapel Hill TV18.

# In Brief

Congratulations to **Jackie Fuller** (Parks and Recreation), who graduated Magna Cum Laude from Shaw University with a B.A. in Criminal Justice. We applaud your accomplishment!



**Luis Rodriguez** (Fire) is happy to announce the birth of his new baby girl,

Cameryn Mya. She was born on Dec. 6 at a healthy 5 lbs. 10 oz. Mother, proud father and new baby are all doing well.

**Doug Kelly** (Fire) is a proud new grandpa. His daughter, Stephanie, gave birth to Emilee Rae Adams on Friday, Dec. 5.

**Lynne Wade** (Human Resource Development) welcomed a new grandson, Tanner Lee Wade, born on Dec. 6.



**Susanna Williams** (Fire) is beaming with pride as auntie. Her sister, Johanna, gave birth to Katarina, the first baby girl in the family of many boys, on Dec. 9.

**SUBMIT YOUR NEWS AND PHOTOS** to TOWNtalk! The next deadline is Feb. 2 for the February issue, distributed on Feb. 13 with the biweekly payroll. Send submissions to [publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org) or call 968-2743.



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

## Sugar and Spice

Town employees enjoyed sweet treats at the Sugar and Spice Employee Appreciation Event on Dec. 22 at Hargraves Community Center. The menu included doughnuts, bagels, muffins, fruit and more.



**The Homestead Aquatic Center** at 300 Northern Park Drive is now open. A grand opening celebration will be scheduled later in the year. The facility will be open from 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on weekends.

Progress continues on the **Town Hall HVAC replacement project**. The large rooftop units are scheduled to be replaced on Saturday, Jan. 17. Both parking lots and the parking deck will be closed during these operations for safety. Because the building will be without heat during the switchover this weekend was selected to take advantage of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on Monday, Jan. 19. Full operational capacity may not return until the following Wednesday.

TOWNtalk, a publication for and about Town of Chapel Hill employees, is issued monthly September through June.  
It is printed on recycled paper.  
Please recycle with white paper.



**A new generic copayment waiver program** will be available in January. Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC will waive copayments and coinsurance for generic prescriptions filled or refilled between Jan. 1 and June 30. This is a modified and smaller version of the generic copayment waiver programs BCBSNC has launched in the past, including the recent Medication Dedication program. However, whereas Medication Dedication only includes generic medications associated with specific chronic conditions, the new six-month program will include all covered generic medications.

Because groups can only participate in one generic copayment waiver program at a time, groups that are currently enrolled in the Medication Dedication program will have the six-month copayment waiver program through June 30, 2009. Then, beginning July 1, 2009, these groups will return to the Medication Dedication program. At that point, any member who fills or refills a generic medication prescription not included in the Medication Dedication program will be charged the generic copayment for that medication.

Covered employees who have an HSA or HRA plan can take advantage of the new program; however, the employee must satisfy any prescription drug or plan deductible amounts prior to copayment or coinsurance amounts being waived for generic drugs. If you have questions, please call (919) 403-1986.

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[publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org) or (919) 968-2743

## Welcome New Employees!

**April 1 - Nov. 18, 2008**

Greg Roberts (Parks & Recreation – Groundskeeper II)  
 Kelvin Harris (Parks & Recreation – Groundskeeper II)  
 Herman Alston (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Quentin Craven (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Karen Daye (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Gideon Lecraft (Police – Police Officer I)  
 Sandy Webb (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Dwight Ratliff (Transit – Service Attendant)  
 Brian Litchfield (Transit – Assistant Director - Transportation)  
 Fredrick Lynn (Public Works – Solid Waste Collector)  
 Melissa Holland (Fire – Firefighter Level I)  
 Douglas Shick (Fire – Firefighter Level I)  
 Martin McCain (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Graeme McCulloch (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Ernest Odei-Larbi (Engineering – Engineer II)  
 Jennie Stokes (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Mary Kuzianik (Business Management – Accounting Clerk)  
 Jeffrey York (Manager – Public Arts Administrator)  
 Alexander Street (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Steven Wright (Manager – Public Arts Coordinator)  
 Dontrell Cotton (Parks & Recreation – Groundskeeper II)  
 Jayson Staley (Parks & Recreation – Groundskeeper II)  
 Garrett Davis (Planning – Planner)  
 Larry Graves (Fire – Firefighter Level I)  
 Jesse Griffin (Library – Library Asst I)  
 Michael Sasser (Fire – Firefighter Level I)  
 Acevedo Aguilar Santos – Public Works (Maintenance Mechanic III)  
 Chadwick Brown (Transit – Mechanic Helper)  
 Melanie Miller (CaPA – Graphic Artist)  
 Joseph Haywood (Police – Police Officer I)  
 Pearlene Hill (Police – Police Officer I)  
 John McNeill (Police – Police Officer II)  
 Daniel Peterman (Police – Police Officer I)  
 Eddie Ravenell (Police – Police Officer I)  
 Betty Byrd (CaPA – Admin Clerk)  
 Michael Castro (Police – Police Officer II)  
 Michael Beckman (Human Resource Development – Occupational Health & Safety Officer)  
 Jeanette Coffin (Manager – Secretary/Receptionist)  
 Paul Ferrante (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Ralanda Gentry (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Javius Newman (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Shankia Nickerson (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 Mario Tobias (Transit – Transit Operator II)  
 David Morgan (Parking – Parking Attendant Sr.)  
 Steven Green (Engineering – Heavy Equip Operator Sr.)  
 Justin Tilley (Parks & Recreation – Groundskeeper II)

## SMT Notes

The following is a brief update of some of the items that were announced and have been discussed recently by the Senior Management Team (SMT). To stay up to date on Town news and activities, subscribe to Chapel Hill eNews by contacting [pio@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:pio@townofchapelhill.org).

**Retreat Preparation:** Departments were asked to submit their departmental successes (linked to Council priorities), trends and priorities for the Council Retreat materials booklet.

**Day of Dialogue:** Frances Russell (Human Resource Development) presented a summary of the Day of Dialogue on Nov. 21 when employees from Public Works, Engineering and Parks and Recreation gathered for a day of discussions.

**Financial Update:** There is a hiring freeze. All open positions, whether advertised or not, must be approved by the Town Manager before a job offer can be given. No grants are to be pursued which have the potential to create ongoing financial obligations. The Town Manager said that current employees are the top priority in this economic downturn.

**Website Designs:** Progress is under way on the new website. The Town Manager and web stewards are reviewing the homepage designs from Vision Internet. Web stewards must be totally vested in their web jobs and provided adequate support. SMT leaders are asked to ensure that they are committed to their web responsibilities.

**Townwide E-mail:** There have been a few inappropriate emails in the past week sent townwide by individual employees. There are limitations to sending emails to all Town users. It is best to check in with the Communications and Public Affairs Department prior to sending an email to all employees.

**North Columbia Street Apartments:** The renovation is nearing completion, and tenants, including some Town employees, will move in soon.

**Carolina North:** There will be upcoming meetings between the Town and UNC staff to discuss components of a potential development agreement. The Council endorsed the Horace Williams Citizens Review Committee report about Carolina North, and is using this as its guide during the development process. Learn more at [www.townofchapelhill.org/carolinanorth](http://www.townofchapelhill.org/carolinanorth).



## Employee Forum

The Employee Forum held its last meeting of the year on Dec. 11 at the new Homestead Aquatic Center.

The meeting began with refreshments, approval of the minutes, and introduction of new and present members.

**Robb English**, aquatics supervisor for Parks and Recreation, was so courteous in guiding us through a very informative tour of the new facility. We had an open session for everyone to talk and get to know each other.

Town Manager **Roger Stancil** spoke to us on budget issues and The Day of Dialogue. He also presented certificates of service to the 2008 Employee Forum members.

2008 members present: **Amy Oland** (Business Management), **Jackie Thomp-**

**son** (Housing), **Lauren Draughon** (Engineering), **John Richardson** (Manager/Legal/CaPA), **Mark Geercken** (Police), **Amy Harvey** (CaPA), **Richard Roberts** (Transit), **Wallace Alston** (Transit), **Patricia Huegerich** (Library), **Angie Turner** (Public Works), **Michael Riggsbee** (Public Works), **Kay McDaniel** (Public Works), **Frances Russell** (HRD Liaison). Newly elected members present: **Ross Thompkins** (Business Management), **Sheleatha Wright-Quick** (Police), **Scott Simmons** (Planning), **Akalema Pherribo** (Transit), **Audrey Gattis** (Public Works), **James "Buck" Johnson** (Engineering), **Michael West** (Parks and Recreation), **Sam Rone** (Parks and Recreation) and **Lynne Wade** (Human Resource Development)

I would like to thank all our members for their service in 2008 and welcome our new members.

— Kay McDaniel (Public Works)

# Looking Back: 2008 Year in Review



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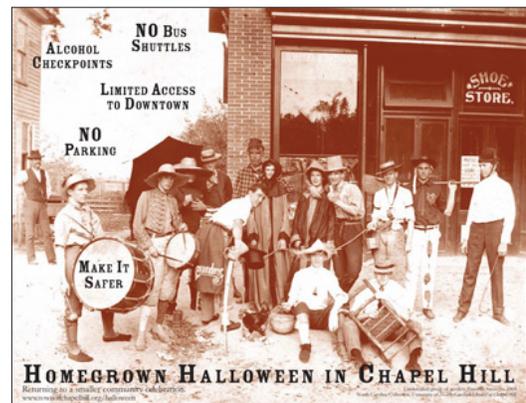


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Chapel Hill history of 2008 is marked by the sad loss of (1) Council member Bill Thorpe who passed away in September. This year, the community put more attention on environmental awareness with the first-ever (2) Earth Action Fair, showed concerns about (3) water conservation during one of the most punishing droughts in the last 100 years – some say the worst ever, focused on community safety with the (4) Community Safety Partnership and (5) Homegrown Halloween. We are also improving the vitality of downtown by bringing new events such as (6) Locally Grown and more public art such as (7) “Exhale” planned for 140 West on Franklin Street. We are pleased that our second year of the (8) Project Homeless Connect event served more than 200 people. The (9) Community Center reopened at the beginning of the year after extensive renovations. We are extremely concerned about pedestrian and cyclist safety and are working on traffic engineering improvements such as (10) sharrows and pedestrian crossings, as well as traffic calming strategies.



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