



TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

December 2007
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www.townofchapelhill.org

A Short Report

By Roger L. Stancil,
Town Manager

Actions we take and decisions we make, whether they be in our work life or our personal life, are based on our values. When someone knows us well, they are surprised when our actions are not consistent with what they believe our values to be. If we take time to discuss that with them, we may find their values are different from what we assumed or they may provide information which tells us why they acted differently from what we expected. In any case, that conversation helps us know each other better and sometimes helps us make different decisions next time.

I see the statement above happen all the time in my relationships at home with my wife and children. When we state our values clearly and talk about the times that our actions do not appear to match our beliefs, things go much better.

I want to work in a place with that same environment. To further that goal, the Senior Management Team has worked over the last year to develop a statement of the values we hold in common. In November, the Team agreed unanimously to a statement of values and by doing so, we agreed to base our actions and decisions on those values. We also agreed that if any member of the Senior Management Team, or any other employee of the Town, had a question about whether our actions were consistent with our stated values, we would work hard to create an environment in which we could have a conversation about that and learn from that conversation.

Our values are on the back page of this newsletter. Think about them. Ask your department head about them. Help us get better at making decisions that are consistent with our values.

Over the next year, we will be discussing these values with all employees. You will be given an opportunity to suggest changes that can then make this an acceptable statement of the values all Town employees hold. I like to think about working in a place like that.

Charles Alston

Parking Enforcement Officer

Department: Parking Services

Joined Town: October 1986

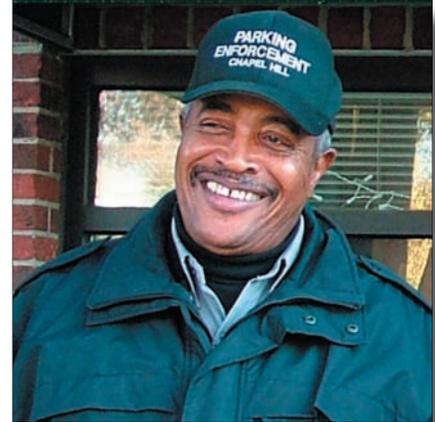
Duties: Alston came to Chapel Hill to conduct a firearms training course at the Police Department and ended up applying for a job with the Town. Alston first worked with the Police Department. For five years, he was the only Parking Enforcement Officer. His first challenge was to memorize the parking ordinances.

Alston's duties include monitoring parking meters, no parking zones, Town parking lots, residential areas, bus zones and loading zones. A typical day involves writing 25-35 tickets; on busy days, such as UNC home football game days, he writes as many as 50 tickets.

Some people get irate when they receive a ticket. Alston's technique for dealing with them is to stay calm, so they'll be calm. Alston is a people person, and he enjoys meeting people, including residents, merchants and visitors, and assisting them with information and directions. He says, "Most of the people in the Town know me." Parking Superintendent Brenda Jones says, "He is a hard worker, and he is always willing to go the extra yard."

Personal: Alston was born in Chapel Hill and traveled the world after enlisting in

In the Spotlight



the Army in 1964. He has been to Hawaii, Japan, Okinawa, Thailand, and several European countries.

Alston plans to retire in a few years and spend a lot of time hunting and fishing. He participates in bicycle rides to raise funds for charitable causes, including Cystic Fibrosis. He likes the simple life, and he enjoys talking to people and giving them advice. He is a prison sponsor for the Orange County Correctional Center in Hillsborough, which involves taking prisoners out for six hours to help them re-adjust to society before they are released from prison.

Quote: "I love my job."

COMING UP

Saturday, Dec. 8: Chapel Hill-Carrboro Holiday Parade, 10 a.m., Franklin Street

Friday, Dec. 14: Holiday Breakfast, 9 to 11 a.m., Town Hall HR Training Room

Friday, Dec. 14: Public Works Holiday Meal, noon to 2 p.m., Public Works Building No. 2

Thursday, Dec. 20: Lunch & Learn: "Gym in Your Pocket"

Friday, Dec. 21: Service Awards Reception

Dec. 24-26: Town Holiday. Most municipal offices will be closed

Monday, Jan. 1: Town Holiday. Most municipal offices will be closed



Kumar Neppalli greets a special visitor to the Holiday Breakfast in 2006. The 2007 Holiday Breakfast will be held at 9 a.m., Friday, Dec. 14, at Town Hall. See page 2 for more information.

In Brief

Jim Orbich (Police) has been chosen for recognition at the 2007 ASIS Law Enforcement Appreciation banquet. Orbich has worked for the Chapel Hill Police Department for 15 years and has served as a defensive tactics instructor, a Taser instructor, a member of the tactical team and K-9 instructor.



Rick Shreve (Finance) and his wife Sarah welcomed a healthy baby boy,

Solomon Osiris, on Nov. 3. He weighed 7 lbs., 2 oz. Mom and baby are doing fine.

Brian Walker (Police) was invited to speak on Cyber Bullying and Social Networks at the NC School Social Workers Association Fall Conference Nov. 14 -16 in Asheville.



Vanessa Weymouth Tart (Finance) and Donnie Tart celebrated their marriage Saturday,

Nov. 3 in Timberlake, N.C. Donnie was formerly employed by the Town of Chapel Hill in the traffic signal department and now works for the state of North Carolina.

Three Chapel Hill firefighters helped catch a shoplifter at the Chapel Hill North Harris Teeter on Oct. 27. **Gerry Boone, Sam Smith,** and **Jerry Blalock** chased a shoplifter about a half mile down the road from the store and helped identify him to police.



TOWNtalk is produced by the Communications and Public Affairs Department
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Presenting Your Town Council – The seating of the 2007-09 Town Council took place on Dec. 3 after the newly elected and re-elected were sworn into office. The Council elected Council Member Ward as mayor pro tem. Pictured left to right, standing, are Council Member Matt Czajkowski, Council Member Bill Thorpe, Council Member Ed Harrison, Council Member Mark Kleinschmidt, Council Member Bill Strom, and seated, Council Member Laurin Easthom, Mayor pro tem Jim Ward, Mayor Kevin C. Foy, and Council Member Sally Greene. The first regular business meeting of the Council will be held at 7 p.m. on Jan. 14, 2008.

The West End Valet Parking Service was chosen by the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership as Chapel Hill's Best Community Partnership Initiative in 2007. Parking Enforcement Officers (below, l-r) **Charles Alston, Vanessa Sanders** and **Leonard Thompson** play an integral part in the program's success by ensuring that meters are blocked off and reserved daily for valet parking use. The Town partners with downtown businesses, UNC, and the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership to provide valet parking six nights a week for patrons of businesses in Franklin Street's West End.



Renovations are complete, and the Chapel Hill Community Center at 120 S. Estes Drive has re-opened.

The recreational facility has been closed since January for a \$2 million renovation project. The swimming pool is now open, and the climbing wall is anticipated to open during the week of Dec. 10. Please call the Community Center at (919) 968-2790 or the Hotline at (919) 685-8316 for scheduling information.

Celebrate the holidays with breakfast at Town Hall and/or lunch at Public Works.

The Town Employee Holiday Breakfast will be held at 9 a.m. Friday, Dec. 14, in the Town Hall Human Resources Training Room. Bring a breakfast treat to share, and enjoy good food, dazzling conversation, and cool music.

After breakfast, Town employees are invited to the annual Public Works Holiday Meal, to be held from noon to 2 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14, in the Field Operations Crew Area of Public Works Building No. 2, 6850 Millhouse Road. Attendees are asked to either contribute \$8 or bring a dish (vegetable, casserole, salad or dessert) and contribute \$4. Please sign up at the Public Works front desk or with Kay McDaniel, Larry Stroud or Maggie Burnett by Tuesday, Dec. 11.

A Homebuyer's Education Class will be offered from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8, at Chapel Hill Public Library. This course, presented by The Affordable Housing Alliance and EmPOWERment Inc., will cover a variety of topics, including an Introduction to Affordable Housing Coalition Classes, Understanding Mortgages, Household Budgeting/Money Management, Debt Management & Predatory Lending, and Shopping for your Home: Who are the players?

Childcare and lunch will be provided. There is no charge to attend. To register, call Deanna Carson at (919) 967-8779 x 203.

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Please recycle with white paper.



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Compliments



EZ Rider drivers **Derek Adams** (Transit) and **Barbara Gear** (Transit) received compliments from He Du for their outstanding customer service skills. “Both are very helpful and go out of their way to assist passengers.”

Tim Auble (Transit) was complimented by Shriya Bhushan for his positive attitude and friendliness. “He is extremely cheerful and goes out of his way to accommodate passengers.”

Chris Blue (Transit) was thanked by Millie Fordham for excellent and friendly service on the N bus. “Chris is hard working and a distinguished employee.”

Bruce Sampsell wrote to thank **Kumar Neppalli** (Engineering) for his assistance in the process of petitioning the Town Council regarding street parking in the Chesley community.

Cassandra Farrington called to express her appreciation to the Public Works Department for maintenance of the BrightSun Place apartments. She thanked the crew, which included **Sam Rone, Jim Upchurch, Lorenzo Vanhook, Michael Shoffner, and Kelvin Harris**, for the wonderful job they did.

New Employees (Oct. 24 – Nov. 30)

Shannon Bailey (Library) — Library Assistant
Sherlita Brandford (Transit) — Transit Operator
Stevie Jones (Transit) — Transit Operator
Gloria Murchinsonn (Transit) — Transit Operator
Joseph Ray (Transit) — Transit Operator
Christopher Latta (Transit) — Transit Operator
Timothy Czupka (Information Technology) — IT Analyst
Edward Bunker (Transit) — Mechanic
Albert Gardner (Transit) Bus Service Technician

Retiring Employees

Randy Ballard (Public Works)
 Effective January 1, 2008



***New Playground** – Mayor pro tem **Jim Ward** (with mic) addressed a special audience of children who attended the Nov. 29 ribbon cutting for the new playground at Hargraves Recreation Center, 216 N. Roberson St. The \$113,000 project features new play equipment, stormwater improvements, new sidewalks, fencing, landscaping and stairs. Staff members pictured are Parks and Recreation Director **Butch Kisiab** and Public Works employee **Eugene Farrar**.*



Employee Forum

Socially Responsible Investing

A new year is often viewed as new beginning. While resolutions often focus on improving physical health, some people use this opportunity to review their financial well-being.

Many Americans invest in stocks and/or mutual funds. Although every investor's goal is to make money, some also want to help make a meaningful contribution (or not support companies engaging in questionable practices). This led to the Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) trend.

There are currently about 200 SRI-focused mutual funds and countless individual stocks. Participating funds or companies use screens to identify their cause(s). Examples include community investment, environmental practices, human rights and animal testing. Unfortunately, companies self-label so research may be necessary.

The Employee Forum has approached Prudential (our NC 401(k) provider) about offering an SRI option. Although it's not currently feasible, we wanted to inform co-workers about SRI's existence. As with all investments, read financial data carefully before investing. Some SRIs perform well financially; others don't. This article is for informational purposes only. The Forum does not endorse any particular investment strategy.

Recycling

Holiday recycling reminders:

There will be no curbside recycling on Christmas Day or New Year's Day. Recycling will be collected on the following Saturdays, Dec. 29 and Jan. 5.

Use up your holiday batteries?

Recycle them at any Solid Waste Convenience Center, Radio Shack stores in Chapel Hill, Weaver Street Market or Whole Foods.

Get new e-toys? Bring your defunct electronics to Solid Waste Convenience Centers to be recycled.

Plagued by holiday styrofoam packing materials? Take them to a packing store. Call ahead. Do not leave styrofoam at dropoff sites – it will be thrown away, not recycled.

Don't leave plastic bags in curbside bins, carts at apartments or at dropoff recycling sites. If you collect your recyclables in plastic bags, please empty the bags and then discard them in your regular trash or recycle clean, dry empty bags at grocery stores along with plastic dry cleaning film.

— Blair Pollock (Orange Community Recycling)

FSA Deadline

Friday, Dec. 14, is the last day to submit Flexible Spending Account Election Forms to Human Resources to participate in the Flexible Spending Account program for the 2008 plan year. The plan year will begin Jan. 1, 2008, and end Dec. 31, 2008.

Senior Management Team Values

In November 2007, the Town's Senior Management Team adopted the following set of values to guide their behavior and decisions. These values are Ethics, Social Equity, Professionalism, Respect, Innovation and Teamwork. It is the intent of the Town Manager and the Senior Management Team to strengthen the organization with a commonly held set of values that drive our mission and objectives. To learn more, please read the Town Manager's column on page 1. You are encouraged to discuss and share your ideas about these values. Eventually, the Manager would like us all to agree on a set of values to be shared across the organization after all employees are given an opportunity to review and suggest possible changes.

