

TOWNtalk

November 2005
Vol. 2, No. 3



A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

www.townofchapelhill.org

A Short Report



By Cal Horton,
Town Manager

I recently participated in a game of "Intergenerational Trivial Pursuit" as part of a panel at a public administration conference. I represented those age 60 and over and the other two panelists were, respectively, ages 30 and 41. The game was to ask questions of the other panelists that someone from your generation would be able to answer, but which would "stump" the representatives of the other generations. The audience joined in if the panelists failed to answer a question correctly.

It was a revealing exercise. For example, people of my generation remembered that CONELRAD was an emergency broadcasting system set up after World War II. On the other hand, I could not distinguish the Rap artists from the Rhythm and Blues artists in a list of a half-dozen from the past five years, although most of the youngest people in the room could do so.

It was a vivid reminder that we see things differently and react to words, images and behavior differently based not only on our ages, but also because of cultural heritage, gender, race, sexual preference, place of birth, and a complex myriad of differences. The differences that we bring to work with us sometimes cause communication challenges; but they also increase the creative power of the Town as an organization. Our diversity helps us do a better job for the public.

By the way, CONELRAD stood for Control of Electromagnetic Radiation.

Thank you for the great work.

Tanita Howard

Administrative Clerk

Joined Town:
January 2004

Department:
Clerk's Office

Duties: Take a guess at how many agenda packets are made for each Town Council meeting. Forty packets averaging about 500 sheets are produced. That's 20,000 sheets of paper (and it doesn't include the extras for the audience! Tanita Howard is responsible for making the copies (recycled paper only) with "Jessica," the name she's given the newly installed NUVERA 120 digital copier printer and "Janet," the color printer at the Clerk's Office. She also copies this newsletter and many other jobs for Town departments. Setting up (arranging mics, projectors, etc.) for Council meetings and "anything that needs doing" are her additional duties.

"Around here, you don't have a lot of time, so you have to do your best within the time you're given," Howard says. "I love the people I work with, and we know how to keep things moving – and fun at the same time."



Annual Holiday Luncheon -- Join your fellow employees from noon to 2 p.m. Nov. 18, at Fire Station No. 1. Bring a dish to share please!

In the Spotlight



Tanita and Jessica – She is a powerhouse that can print, copy, fold, collate and staple up to 120 sheets a minute. Tanita Howard keeps the machine that she named "Jessica" running smoothly.

Personal: A native of Chapel Hill, Tanita is married to Nathaniel, who works for the U.S. Postal Service, and they have a son, Antonio, 5. Tanita will stay overnight Wednesday at her mother's house to start cooking for Thanksgiving when their large family, including her two brothers and three sisters and their families, will come together. Dinner will include turkey, ham, fried chicken, cooked cabbage, collard greens, macaroni and cheese and her mother's sweet potato pie. Everything is made from scratch. But before they begin eating, everyone gathers in a circle to share those things for which they are thankful. The tradition began with her grandmother, who passed away two years ago on Thanksgiving.

COMING UP

Veterans Day - Nov. 11

Holiday Luncheon - Nov. 18

Thanksgiving Employee Holiday - Nov. 24-25

Tree Lighting & Sing Along - Dec. 2

Employee Longevity Breakfast - Dec. 2

Christmas Parade - Dec. 3

Sugar & Spice (see pg. 4) - Dec. 9

In Brief

Brady Moore (Public Works) helped organize the 14th annual conference of the Fleet Services Division of the NC Chapter of the American Public Works Association (NCAPWA) in Atlantic Beach. Despite serious damage to the hotel from Hurricane Ophelia, the conference was a notable success. Classes were presented to the fleet managers and technicians. Instructional classes were presented by GM, Ford, Parker-Hannifin, Atlantic Coast Trailers, AC Delco and purchasing professionals from UNC and the City of Greensboro. Moore serves as vice president of the organization, and he is pictured below in the middle of the front row with his colleagues and board members from the Fleet Services Division.



Helping Habitat - Town employees from Police and Planning departments picked up carpentry tools while volunteering last month to assist in a Habitat for Humanity building project at 605 Nunn St. The house is situated along an entryway block to the Northside neighborhood. The Northside Initiative comprising EmPOWERment Inc., the Orange Community Housing and Land Trust, and Habitat for Humanity of Orange County is working to rehabilitate or rebuild eight properties in a one block area.



process involved years of GIS experience, taking classes in the latest technical issues, and participating in professional organizations and conferences.

Forrest Heath (Public Works) and wife Kandis are the proud new parents of a beautiful daughter, Fallon (Xiuzhao), who they adopted from China. Fallon, 16 months, is their second child and joins an active big brother, Forrest III, age 8. The couple began the adoption process about 2 ½ years ago, and Kandis skillfully and patiently navigated through red tape, politics, mounds of paperwork and approvals. Finally, in August they took a 14-hour flight to China, where they enjoyed tourist stops at Tiananmen Square, and the Great Wall, all in Beijing. They finally met their brown-eyed girl at Nanchang and traveled on to the American consulate in Guangzhou to finalize papers. Forrest's proudest moment came when little Fallon finally reached out to him for a lift-up and hug from Daddy.

COMING SOON FROM HUMAN RESOURCES

Town employees will have the opportunity to sign up for supplemental insurance with AFLAC. The AFLAC representative will be making arrangements with each department head to set up a time when she can speak to the employees and answer questions about the plans options. The supplemental insurance program was researched and recommended by the Employee Forum.

Additional information will be forthcoming in December about enrollment meetings for Flexible Spending Accounts as well.

For more information contact the Human Resources

Department at 968-2700.



Deborah Squires (Engineering) has received professional certification as a Geographic Information System Professional (GISP). The certification from the Urban and Regional Systems

Association demonstrates professional practice and integrity in the GIS field. It also establishes and maintains high standards of both professional practice and ethical conduct. The



Editing and Layout: Catherine Lazorko
Proofreaders: Carol Abernethy and Ted Hobgord
Contact: clazorko@townofchapelhill.org
919/968-2893

TOWNtalk is a publication for and about Town of Chapel Hill employees. It is published monthly September through June. It is copied in the Town Clerk's Office on recycled paper.



Published by:
Town of Chapel Hill
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Police recognize promotions of top officers



Police Chief Gregg Jarvies conducted a swearing-in ceremony on Nov. 3 for new police supervisors and commanders.

Pictured from left to right are Lt. Robert Carden, Sgt. Jason McIntyre, Sgt. Allison Finch, Sgt. Will Quick, Lt. Leo Vereen, Sgt. Donnie Rhoads, Capt. Jackie Carden, Lt. Milton Durham, Major Brian Curran, Lt. Kevin Gunter and Capt. Chris Blue.

Congratulations to all!

Employee Forum



Welcome to the Employee Forum By Will Quick (Police), Chair

The Employee Forum is an advisory committee to the Town Manager. The forum identifies ways to recognize individual worth and ways for the Town to value diversity, encourage a sense of community among town employees, and assists in the communication of issues and activities affecting employees.

The Employee Forum is preparing for its fourth year of existence. I encourage each and every town employee to explore, in greater detail, the functions of the Employee Forum. How, you may ask? By going to the Employee Forum link via www.townhall.townofchapel.org.

Some of the ideas developed by the Employee Forum include town ID badges, an employee wellness program, an employee health fair, and availability of a supplemental insurance provider (AFLAC). Possibilities to improve your work environment are only limited by imagination and your willingness to voice your ideas.

The Employee Forum is your tool to affect positive changes. We look forward to your participation.

Fuel Savers



Carpooling Report By Mike Taylor (Engineering)

The things we have to do to save a little money! When gas prices started to go through the roof I decided to start carpooling to work with my fellow Apexites **Phil Mason** (Planning) and **Kumar Neppalli** (Engineering). We plan ahead and typically carpool about three days a week. While I appreciate the savings of about \$20 a week on gas, I also am getting to know my co-workers from across the hallway a bit better.

It's a strange partnership! Phil is from up-state New York, Kumar is from south India, and I am a native Tar Heel.

I think the origin of our births must have some influence on our varying driving styles. Phil drives a new Mini Cooper and uses the highest tech radar detector on the market.

Kumar drives a new Jeep and is a contradiction of driving practices. For example, he never uses cruise control. When we suggest he give it a try, large beads of sweat pop out of his forehead and his hands get so wet with perspiration

that he can barely hold onto the steering wheel.

As for me, I drive an old Ford. I don't like to use my turn signal, and I see no problem with stopping in the middle of the road if I want to get a better look at something. Plus, Kumar seems to be a little embarrassed about all the smoke coming out of my exhaust pipe. I've told him not to worry about it. I'm only doing my part to keep down the mosquito population!

Surprisingly it's usually a pleasant drive for us. In fact I believe we might just continue the carpool even if gas prices come back down. Kumar has even told me, "Phil's not like we thought; he's really a nice guy!" (I have urged him not to jump to conclusions.) I'm sure it won't be long before we begin singing songs together as we ride down the highway. . . .NOT.

Send your "Fuel Savers" to the newsletter editor at clazorko@townofchapelhill.org or 968-2893.



Employees will come together to recognize the “Front Line” (those who interact with the public on a frequent basis) at Sugar & Spice, a new Employee Appreciation Event. All employees are welcome. This special breakfast will be held from 9 to 11 a.m. Friday, Dec. 9, at the Public Works meeting room. Employees will be served danish, donuts and fruit with hot chocolate and apple cider. Employees who work 2nd and 3rd shifts also may receive breakfast treats at their participating departments. Information: Lauren Radson at 968-2782 ext. 211.

THINK SAFETY... WORK SAFELY

Safety representatives from the Town’s five largest departments, representing 80 percent of all Town employees, met in July 2004 to reactivate a Town-wide Safety Committee.

This Committee then sponsored and nurtured creation of additional Safety Committees in every department so that every Town employee is now represented. Current members of the Committee are **Ron Aiken** (Public Works), **Brian Curran** (Police), **Andrea Judge** (Parks and Recreation), **Alvin Ward** (Fire), and **Julie Waller** (our new Town Safety Officer). **Henry DePietro** is representing the Transportation department until the vacant safety and training position is filled. The Safety Committee’s purpose is to provide guidance and resources to managers and departmental safety committees in hazard assessments and inspections, regulatory compliance and training, and discovering ways of empowering all employees to work safely.

All employees are encouraged to contact any member of the Town Safety Committee with questions or suggestions about safety. Look for the Safety Committee’s new column to appear in *TOWNtalk*’s December issue.

New Employees

Kenneth Alston (Public Works),
Groundskeeper

Scott Beavers (Finance), Revenue
Collector

Jason Blecher (Police), Police Officer I

Richard Bucci (Fire),
Master Firefighter (Re-hire)

Scott Fletcher (Parking Services),
Parking Attendant

Audrey Gattis (Public Works),
Construction Worker

Elizabeth Gregory (Fire),
Master Firefighter (Re-hire)

Stephanie Little (Police),
Police Officer I

Randi Mason (Police), Police Officer I

Patrick Misko (Police), Police Officer I

Shane Osborne (Police), Police Officer I

Stephen Slagle (Police), Police Officer I

Douglas Williams (Police),
Police Officer I

Christopher Wilson (Transportation),
Service Attendant

Mark Wright (Transportation),
Service Attendant

Nikeisha Wyatt (Police), Police Officer I

Retirees

Major Tony Oakley (Police)
will retire effective December 1, 2005.

Service Award Winners

Town Manager Cal Horton recognized employees who have reached milestones in their service during an October ceremony. The following is a list of employees recognized for the May through August 2005 period. Congratulations to all!

5 Years

Kumar Neppalli (Engineering)
Kelly Stokes (Human Resources)
Susan Smialowicz (Public Library)
LaTanya Moore (Transportation)
Karen Patillo (Public Works)
William Poole (Fire)
David Sasser (Fire)
Paul Dodson (Transportation)

10 Years

André Boynton (Parks & Recreation)
Tony Combs (Transportation)
Keith Smith (Public Works)
John Ward (Fire)
Lee Harris (Transportation)
Dennis Bailey (Fire)
Darryl Rimmer (Fire)

15 Years

Curtis Brooks (Public Works)
Leonard Thompson (Parking Services)
Lisa Baaske (Parks & Recreation)
Larry Harrington (Public Works)
Bernard Leach (Parks & Recreation)
Toni Pendergraph (Legal)

20 Years

Ralph Karpinos (Legal)
Lee Sparrow (Police)
David Bonk (Planning)
William Clark (Transportation)
Bobby Pearson (Transportation)
Anthony Brooks (Police)
Edward Brooks (Police)
Jerrie Cole (Police)
Frank Holloway (Police)
Rodney Watson (Fire)
Betsy Barnes (Transportation)
Carol Baer (Public Library)

25 Years

Eva Cohn (Transportation)
Frances Rapley (Public Library)
Tim Richardson (Public Library)

30 Years

Jim Huegerich (Police)