



TOWNtalk

September 2005
Vol. 2, No. 1

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

www.townofchapelhill.org

A Short Report



BY CAL HORTON, Town Manager

Ordinarily we would not think of folks in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama as our neighbors because they seem so far away. But the tragic effects of Hurricane Katrina bring them closer to us. All of us have seen the terrible images on television and have some sense of the scale of human tragedy caused by the storm.

Town employees from the Fire Department have been called by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide storm recovery services. The work is non-emergency community relations that will consist of direct outreach to persons in the affected areas. They will assist victims in understanding the process of applying for federal assistance, distribute information, provide minimal first-aid, and take reports.

I expect that other resources will be requested in the near future.

We will do our best to help our neighbors just as they helped us recover from Hurricane Fran; and, our thoughts will be with those who have lost family, friends and their way of life.

COMING UP

Employee Day in the Park - 1 to 4 p.m.

Sept. 17 South Estes Drive Community Center

Noontime Lunch & Learn:

Understanding Your Vision Benefits -

Sept. 22 at Chapel Hill Public Library

Parks & Recreation Registration through

Sept. 23 for Chapel Hill and Orange County residents. Walk-in registration begins Sept. 26 for residents and non-residents

Combined Campaign Kickoff -

11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sept. 30 at Town Hall

Festifall is the 33rd annual arts and crafts fair on West Franklin Street - Oct. 2.

Bill Rehm

Web Developer/Administrator

In the Spotlight

Joined Town:

April 2005

Department:

Information Technology

Duties: Have you seen the new Town website? Rehm worked closely with CivicPlus, the company that granted the Town a free "extreme web make-over." To improve the usability of the final design, he now will take over the maintenance of the external web site. In the future, Rehm will integrate the Town's other web server at townhall.townofchapelhill.org with the CivicPlus design and build the Town's intranet.

Personal: A native of Butler, Pa., Rehm is the 10th of 12 siblings. Yes, 12! He has a BA in English and a BS in computer science from the University of Pittsburgh. Previously, he worked for a number of Silicon Valley internet start-up companies, including Ask Jeeves and octopus.com. His interest lies in the technology side of human-computer



www.townofchapelhill.org -- Bill Rehm worked with CivicPlus and a hard-working team of Town employees to launch the new Town web site, which is being improved daily. Contact him at webgeek@townofchapelhill.org. The bottle on his desk is sparkling cider, a congratulatory gift from IT Department Director Bob Avery, for getting the Town's new web live to the world on Aug. 25, 2005.

interactions. Rehm lives in Carrboro with his wife, Karen Rossie, and daughter, Grace, 9. He describes his pastimes as geek-related. He volunteers his web skills for the Institute for Southern Studies and Southerners on New Ground, reads about 20 blogs on an almost daily basis, and loves the blues (he caught a John Hammond show recently). His last gift to his mother was a flat-screen LCD monitor.

Town Offers Assistance to Gulf Coast



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) put out a call to municipal fire departments to aid in Hurricane Katrina relief, and members of the Fire Department -- (photo, l-r) **Douglas Parrish, David Sasser, Gerald Boone and Christopher Stephens** -- willingly answered the call. On Sept. 6, the firefighters departed to Atlanta for training before transfer to the Gulf Coast. Their deployment will be for 30 days. The work will be non-emergency community relations.

In Brief

Recognition is overdue for several **Public Works** employees who have been recognized as Employee of the Month honorees. These employees are nominated by their supervisors for outstanding employee performance.

Craig Wortham, Mechanic II, **Andrew Fuentes**, Mechanic II, was the Employee of the Month for July. **Jim Upchurch**, Groundskeeper II, was recognized as the Employee of the Month for June. **Craig Wortham**, Maintenance Mechanic II, was Employee of the Month for May. Congratulations all!

Robert Sykes (Public Works) and wife Stephanie are the proud parents of Savannah Renee Sykes born at 9:22 a.m. on June 12. Savannah was 8 pounds 12 ounces and 21 inches long. Welcome Savannah!

Police Lt. **Chris Blue** received a master's degree in public administration from NC State University in May. He began coursework – including information technology, e-government, public policy analysis, budgeting and management systems – in spring 2001. Lt. Blue has a bachelor's degree in journalism from UNC-Chapel Hill. Lt. Blue joined the Police Department eight years ago and has worked in the Patrol Division and the Community Services Unit.

Nate Davis (Parks and Recreation) received the Sandy Brownstein Award from the local Crime Stoppers Chapter in May in recognition of his contributions to the safety of citizens. Each year the Chapel Hill-Carrboro-UNC Crime Stoppers selects a citizen for the award, which is given in memory of Sandy Brownstein, one of the founders of the local Crime Stoppers Chapter and a longtime supporter of public safety and crime reduction efforts in our community. Davis was an early board member of Crime Stoppers and has been an employee of the Parks and Recreation Department for 33 years.

On July 20, the Fire Department recognized the promotions to fire captain for Dennis Jordan, Rob Pruitt and Doug Sutton. **Dennis Jordan** has eight years of service in the department and 16 years in public safety including a number of years as a police supervisor. He is a certified Fire Instructor II and has an Award of Merit (2003) and a Lifesaving Award (1991).

Rob Pruitt has served the department since September 1996 and has been in the Fire Service since 1988. **Doug Sutton** came to the department in December 1993 from the Goldsboro Fire Department where he had served since 1989.



Fire Chief Dan Jones announced promotions to fire captain of (in photo, l-r) Dennis Jordan, Doug Sutton and Rob Pruitt. A ceremony with employees and families was held at Town Hall on July 20.

Police Capt. **Bob Overton** was one of 249 law enforcement officers to graduate in June from the FBI National Academy Program held at Quantico, Va. FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III was the principal speaker at the graduation ceremony. Officers are selected to attend the academy, and only five or six officers from North Carolina are chosen each year. The program offers 10 weeks of advanced investigative, management and fitness training for selected officers having proven records within their agencies. Capt. Overton began his career with the Police Department in 1986.

Eighteen Town employees and their families participated in the **Employee Art Exhibition** organized by the Public Arts Commission and held at Town Hall from June through August. Participants came from eight departments (Engineering, Fire, Housing, Library, Manager's Office, Planning, Public Works and Transit). There were 71 pieces showing a range of talent including painting, drawing, ceramics, photography, collage, textile art, and more. **Alice Mogle** (Library) offered a series of designed quilts, **David Bonk** (Planning) shared his eye for precision in hand-painted, pewter British soldiers from the

Revolutionary War, and **Carol Abernethy** (Manager's Office) impressed many with her hand-painted silk scarves, all of which sold.

The Town received the highest form of recognition in governmental financial reporting in August from the Government Finance Officers Association. The **Finance Department** was presented the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Annual Financial Report. It has received the award for the past 20 years.



Steven Page and Mark Kern (Public Works) were among 114 employees who visited health information booths at the Employee Health and Wellness Fair held Aug. 19 at the Hargraves Gymnasium.



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Combined Campaign

The Town's annual Combined Campaign Kick-off will be held from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 30, at Town Hall. Employees are invited to learn more about the campaign and enjoy hot dogs, games, baked goods and a raffle.

The annual combined campaign, the only charitable drive authorized to solicit Town employees for payroll deduction pledges, raises money for numerous carefully screened agencies, including a wide variety of health care, service and environmental organizations.

The three combined campaign federations – Triangle United Way, Earth Share, and NC Community Shares – will have tables set up at the Campaign Kick-off, and chances for prizes will be available when employees visit tables.

HURRICANE RELIEF

With the assistance of **Maggie Burnett**, the **Employee Forum** is collecting funds for victims of Hurricane Katrina. Please contact your employee representative if you wish to donate directly for this purpose. Donation forms for the Combined Campaign also will offer an option to give to hurricane relief.

Town employees also have rallied to assist Firefighter **Jose Alvarez'** family. Last fall, Jose's wife, Shawn, and their children, Jose Jr., 14, and 10-year-old twins Sunshine and Joshua, moved to New Orleans to care for Ms. Alvarez' terminally ill mother. Jose made the difficult choice of staying here so that he could maintain his employment while supporting his wife's care of her mother. Most of the family's household goods were moved to New Orleans with the family so that the children could maintain a normal home and school life; Jose roomed with friends during their absence. Although Jose's family sought shelter during the hurricane, the home and all of their belongings were lost in flooding.

Monetary donations are being accepted by the Chapel Hill Fire Fighters Association at any Chapel Hill Fire Station or can be mailed to Chapel Hill Fire Fighters Association, PO Box 16223, Chapel Hill, NC 27516. Donations should be clearly marked for the Alvarez family. Empowerment Incorporated is accepting donations of paint, building supplies and labor to refurbish the residence that they have available for the family. Empowerment Inc. may be contacted at (919) 967-8779.

Let's Meet for a Day at the Park!



Employees are appreciated all year long! Coming up is Employee Day in the Park from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 17, at South Estes Community Center. Come with your family and enjoy a catered lunch (RSVP required in advance).

We came together for several social events over the summer. On June 24, heaping plates of barbecue were served at the Employee Appreciation Lunch held at Chapel Hill High School (pictured above is Maggie Burnett of Public Works and Linda Burnett of Parks and Recreation, who drew names for door prizes, and photo at left is Deborah Yancey Davis of Transportation).

Special thanks to our sponsors for door prizes (see page 4). On Aug. 19, the Town sponsored an Employee Health Fair attended by more than 100 employees, some of whom enjoyed free massages (at left). Stay tuned for events throughout the year, planned by a Parks and Recreation-Human Resources team.



Are you able to ride the bus or your bike to work? Do you have ideas for saving fuel for your department or the Town? This new column will feature the ideas and experiences of employees who are experimenting on new modes of transportation, or new practices that help conserve fuel

Employees are encouraged to take the Smart Commute Challenge at www.smartcommute.org. Through Sept. 30, anyone employed in Wake, Durham, or Orange County or in Research Triangle Park is eligible to win prizes if they pledge to consider use of public transit, carpooling, vanpooling, biking, walking or telecommuting.

Please send your "Fuel Savers" submissions to the editor at clazorko@townofchapelhill.org or call 968-2893.

"I live near downtown Raleigh and the drive to Town is long, stressful, and uses quite a lot of gas in spite of having a fuel-efficient car. So I was delighted to learn in August that Triangle Transit Authority just started an Express bus service between Raleigh and Chapel Hill. I've been riding the bus for the past couple of weeks. With rising gas prices the fare for a week is now much less than the cost of a week's worth of gas, even cheaper if I get the 30-day pass. The ride is about as long as driving, the stops are convenient, and I get to work and home relaxed and refreshed. I highly recommend it!"

– **Patricia D'Arconte** (Stormwater Mgmt)

Note: For more information about routes and schedules of TTA, visit www.ridetta.org or call (919) 549-9999.

Compliments

Praise
from
Citizens



Police Officer **Deborah Timmons** was thanked on June 27 by Rachel Patterson for her response to a car burglary. "I just want to tell you how helpful and polite she was to me. Although this was relatively small, considering the scope of crime that others experience, I really appreciated the way that she handled everything. She was very nice and understanding, and gave good advice on what to do and who to call next. She searched the nearby roads for my stolen work tote bag and found it and most of the contents in the woods next to the road. She was able to recover everything but my checkbook. The books and papers in my bag wouldn't mean much to anyone else, but finding them saved me a lot of work. It was a relief to get something back. Just wanted to pass that on."

Human Resources

Interested in learning how to make your 401 (k) Plan work for you? Take 20 minutes to meet with Barry Rosett, your NC 401(k) plan specialist, to learn more.

Time: 9-11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 20

Place: Human Resources Training Room

Time: Noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 20

Place: Public Works Sanitation Conf. Rm

If you would like to schedule an appointment with Barry Rosett, call 968-2700.

Recycling

You can make a difference by 'closing the loop' and choosing products with recycled content, including paper towels, toilet paper and computer paper for home or office use. If you belong to an organization that prints a newsletter, bulletin or other publications, ask them to make sure they're printed using recycled paper, then say so on the publication. Orange County Solid Waste can help you with paper specifications: 968-2788 or recycling@co.orange.nc.us

—*Blair Pollock,*

Orange County Recycling Coordinator

New Employees

Stephen Baines (Transportation),

Transit Operator (transfer)

Krystal Black (Library),

Materials Processor (transfer)

Stacy Colvin (Fire), Firefighter

Ryan DePew (Fire), Master Firefighter (rehire)

Robert Farrell III (Public Works),

Signs & Marketing Tech II (rehire)

William Higgins (Police), Police Officer

Gerhard Konig (Transportation),

Transit Operator (transfer)

Brandon Perry (Police), Police Officer

Lee Sparrow (Police), Police Officer (rehire)

Haywood Strickland (Transportation),

Transit Operator

Clint Williams (Police), Police Officer



Employee Forum

Computer Lottery

Winning names have been drawn from a hat for the Employee Computer Loan Program. The program offers Dell GX200 computers for a one-year loan from the Information Technology Department.

Winners are **John McKerlie** (Police),

George Powell (Housing), **Allison**

Finch (Police), **Jackie Thompson**

(Housing), **Jim Orbich** (Police), **Jim**

Huegerich (Police), **Charles Bullock**

(Housing), **Roy Richardson** (Housing),

Martha Adamo (Clerk's Office),

Carla Burnette (Housing) and **Tanita**

Howard (Clerk's Office).

The Employee Forum next meets on Oct. 13 at the Housing Department.

Thanks for door prizes!

The Town of Chapel Hill thanks the following businesses for donating door prizes given at the Employee Appreciation Luncheon on June 24.

A & M Grill

Aesthetic Hair Styling

Applebee's

Aqueduct Conference Center

Aveda Institute of Chapel Hill

Bagels On The Hill

Balloons & Tunes

Bandido's Mexican Cafe

Betty's Flower Design

Breadman's Restaurant

Buffalo Wild Wings

CD Alley

Carolina Brewery

Carolina Pride

Carrboro Mini Mart

Chapel Hill Herald

Chapel Hill Florist

Chapel Hill Museum

Chapel Hill Tire Company

Chick-fil-A

Cliff's Meat Market

Courtyard by Marriott

Delaine's House of Beauty

Elmo's Diner

Four Eleven West

Great Harvest Bread Co

Ham's Restaurant

Hampton Inn & Suites

Harris Teeter

Holiday Inn

Jim's Famous BBQ

Johnny's T-Shirt, Inc

Lloyd Tire & Alignment

Mama Dip's Kitchen

McFarling's Exxon

Midway Barber Shop

New Horizons

Office Supplies & More

Paint the Earth

Panera Bread

Papa John's Pizza

Penang Malaysian & Sushi

Purple Puddle

Ramshead Rathskellar

Sheraton of Chapel Hill

Shrunken Head, Inc.

Spanky's

Squid's

STA Travel

TJ's Campus Beverage

Top of the Hill

Wal-Mart Super Center #1191

W.B. Yeasts Irish Pub

Wentworth & Sloan Jewelers

Whole Foods

Ye Old Waffle Shop