



# TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

July/August 2013  
Vol. 9, No. 10

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

## On the Front Burner



Column from Town Manager  
**Roger L. Stancil**

Great organizations don't just happen. They are grown and nurtured by all of us when we each accept Responsibility for our part.

The Town of Chapel Hill values excellent service to all who live, work and visit Chapel Hill. The Town recognizes that excellent service emanates from excellent employees.

To retain, develop and attract excellent employees, we are underway with the following initiatives:

1. Write clear policies that are consistently applied throughout the Town (underway, starting with medical policies)
2. Train, train, train (supervisory training, EPMDS training, trainer on staff in HRD, Organizational Effectiveness Coordinator to think about the human side of change and mine for talent.
3. New ways to discuss workplace issues without fear of retribution (Ombuds and new options in revised 1975 personnel ordinance)
4. Asking employees what you think, what we do well and what we could do better (employee engagement survey conducted earlier this year with results to be shared in the fall)
5. Competitive compensation (pay and benefits) - Class and Comp study
6. Communicate clear expectations for what we are expected to do and how we do it (Employee Performance Management and Development System)
7. Reward those who meet those expectations (Talking about that this year)

(continued on p. 3)

## Derek Adams

**Transit Operator III**

**Joined Town:** Aug. 2, 1992

As an operator for Chapel Hill Transit's EZ-Rider service, Derek helps residents with disabilities get around town to run errands, go to medical appointments, go grocery shopping, go to the wellness center or do whatever else they need to do in a day. Passengers provide a medical examiner's certificate to be eligible for the service.

Derek is one of 23 EZ Rider operators who make 235 trips every day, and he says his shifts are always busy. Since passengers use the service frequently, the operators develop relationships with passengers. Derek has driven some passengers for close to 20 years. He says they have many interesting conversations about topics ranging from travel to basketball. EZ Rider provides door-to-door service and also provides a Senior Shuttle, which travels a fixed route with specified pickup areas. Currently, 1,085 passengers are signed up to use the service.

In addition to getting passengers where they need to go, EZ Rider drivers manage occasional emergencies because the passengers have medical issues. Sometimes passengers need to be taken to the emergency room or Urgent Care for medical assistance. A hard part of the

Derek lives in Mebane with an extensive reptile collection, which includes colubrids (non-

## Value in the Spotlight

# Responsibility



Melanie Miller photo

venomous snakes), small pythons, several other types of snakes and a gecko. He likes to fish, and is lucky to have a pond in his neighborhood so he can go fishing after work.

Derek grew up in Bowie, Md., and moved to North Carolina to be closer to his father. He enjoys visiting family, including his father in Durham and sister in Maryland.

—By Melanie Miller, Communications and Public Affairs

"Derek consistently demonstrates the values of the Town through the excellent service he provides our EZ Rider customers on a daily basis."

—Brian Litchfield, Chapel Hill Transit Director

If you know another outstanding Chapel Hill employee who should be featured in TOWNtalk, contact Catherine Lazorko at 969-5055 or [clazorko@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:clazorko@townofchapelhill.org).

## COMING UP

**Thursday, Aug. 8: Locally Grown Movie: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, 8 p.m., (movie starts at sundown) Wallace Plaza, 150 E Rosemary St.; [www.locally-grown.com](http://www.locally-grown.com)**

**Monday, Sept. 2: Town Holiday. Most municipal offices will be closed.**

**Sunday, Oct. 6: Festfall Arts Festival, Noon-6 p.m., W. Franklin Street**



Town employees were celebrated at the Employee Appreciation Luau Luncheon (pg 4). Servers included Brian Litchfield and Sabrina Oliver.

# In Brief

**Clint Daly** (Public Works) and his wife Kelsey gave birth to their daughter June Anne Daly on Aug. 5. She weighed approximately 7 lbs. 12 oz.

Congratulations to **Jaime Palacios** (Fire) and his wife Elsa, who welcomed their new daughter Elissa on May 30. She weighed 7 lbs. 15 oz. and was 21.5 inches long. Mom and baby are doing well.



**Dennis Puckett** (Fire) and his wife Kristen welcomed a new baby girl, Kenzie Rose Ann Puckett, on June 29.

Puckett is currently overseas with the military, but was able to watch the birth on an iPad.



**Matt Lawrence** (Fire) received the 2012 NC Safe Kids Outstanding Leadership Award for his leadership of the Orange County Safe Kids Coalition. Lawrence served as the chairperson of this group from 2007 to 2013. This award was presented at the NC Safe Kids annual meeting on May 22, 2013. Congrats, Matt.



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

## Running for a Cause

The Annual Orange County Law Enforcement **Torch Run for Special Olympics** was held on May 29. The Chapel Hill Police Department's goal is to raise \$50,000 this year.

**Phil Smith** (Police) said, "Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2013 Orange County Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics!! We had a large turnout and the weather was almost perfect!"



The Chapel Hill Police Department held its first annual **Guardians of the Hill 5K** race to benefit the Special Olympics on June 15. More than 100 runners turned out, including (pictured here, L-R) **Catherine Lazorko** (CaPA), Chief **Chris Blue** (Police), **Brian Litchfield** (CH Transit) and **Ralph Karpinos** (Attorney).



**Learn something new!** The library now has two computers that are licensed to access Lynda.com training resources. Lynda.com offers online training for software applications including Office and other productivity software, and also includes other topics such as conflict resolution, effective public speaking, and more.

## Wendy Smith

(Stormwater) demonstrated water run-off to the Chapel of the Cross Vacation



Church School with her interactive "enviscape." The children said they knew all about water run-off, but they loved learning more.

## Create a Trading Card for Banned

**Books Week!** Artists of all ages are invited to submit 5" x 7" original artworks on paper inspired by banned or challenged books or authors. The deadline for submissions is Monday, Aug. 19. Entries will be exhibited during Banned Books Week (Sept. 22–28) and seven will be selected to be used for a series of trading cards.

For more information, visit [tinyurl.com/nxpxp8v](http://tinyurl.com/nxpxp8v), email [sbailey@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:sbailey@townofchapelhill.org) or call 919-969-2026.

**Kinetix is changing to O2 Fitness.** O2 Fitness has purchased the Chapel Hill and Carrboro Kinetix locations and will honor the Town's original contract with Kinetix. Members now have the option to use any O2 Fitness location for an extra \$5 per month. Pay the fee directly to O2 Fitness — just go to any O2 Fitness location and tell them you're with the Town of Chapel Hill and want the \$5 upgrade. If you don't want to upgrade, you can continue to use the Chapel Hill and Carrboro locations for the regular fee.

The Elliott Road location in Chapel Hill is now open at 5:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. The Carrboro location will continue to have 24 hour access.

To sign up, contact Jim Orr at 968-2849 or [jorr@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:jorr@townofchapelhill.org).

# SMT Notes

SMT notes are posted on the Intranet within a day or two of the SMT meetings. Access the notes from the intranet at <http://intranet> by clicking on "Published Documents" on the left-hand side of the page, then clicking on "SMT Meeting Notes" under the "Teams" column.

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# Compliments



**Parking Services** was thanked by Sybil A. Skakle for the courtesy ticket program. "I rarely visit downtown, and when I took a friend to lunch did not realize there was a meter behind my car that required a fee."

**Jeff Clark** (Police) was commended by **Dan Jones** (Fire) for doing an outstanding job of participating in a command officer career development exercise. "Jeff's public safety experience made his role play and his evaluation and observation very insightful and contributed significantly to our result."

**Leo Vereen, Corey Kuhns** and **Jeffrey Beckett** (all Police) were thanked by Arjun Raghavan for participating in a fundraiser basketball game for Friends of Bolin Creek.



**William Bellamy** and **Fred Lynn** (Public Works) were commended by **Leo Vereen** (Police) for representing the Town value of Teamwork. During the rainfall preceding the approach of tropical Storm Andrea, a tree fell blocking the US 15-501 off-ramp at South Columbia Street. They passed by the location and realized they could assist with opening the ramp by using their equipment. They removed enough of the tree so the ramp could be opened until a Landscaping crew arrived to complete the job.

**Pat Spencer, James Spero** and **Larry Graves** (all Fire) were thanked by Alex May for giving his three young children fire helmets and a tour of the truck. "The kids were fascinated, and I was very proud that our Fire Department is so kid friendly."

**Chris Jensen** (Stormwater) was thanked by Dave Hanson for performing a site visit and providing suggestions and advice.

**John Tracz** (Police) was thanked by Mark Geercken (Police) for stopping by the Spanish for Fun event and interacting with the crowd. "As you can see by the photo the kids loved him. Thanks for the help."

## On the Front Burner

*(continued from p. 1)*

We created a new performance feedback system because you told me you did not trust our old performance feedback system. In focus groups, you said you wanted:

- Clarity in expectations and consistency in application.
- Values included in feedback.
- Mutual discussion of performance with a chance for employees to give supervisors feedback.
- Ongoing feedback, not just once per year.
- Plans for developing new skills and skills that needed improvement

Feedback on what you do will be based on the job descriptions that have just been rewritten for clarity throughout the Town.

Feedback on how you do your work will be based on our adopted Values.

We have tried to design a system that addresses your concerns. The test is in implementing it starting in October of this year. As we talk to every employee about what to expect, help us evaluate how well we are doing so we can get better.

## Ask the Ombuds

by **Jim Huegerich** and **Faith Thompson**

In the April edition of TOWNtalk the Ombuds presented the theme - I Want to Work in a Place Where . . . Continuing that theme the Ombuds office has seen about one-half of the Town employees. Concerns raised by you fall into the following categories: Clarity, Equity, Fairness, Trust and Access.

In those discussions here is what you have said you want in a workplace:

**A place where** RESPECT Values are shared by all at all times

**A place where** all employees are:

- Essential for helping achieve the vision and the mission of the Town
- Respected for who we are
- Given equal opportunities to grow and develop

**A place where** I am a valued, included and supported member of my Team

**A place where** I am encouraged, given opportunity and supported as a Learner

**A place where** everyone has equal access to Communication, both relevant information and opportunity for input

**A place where** my story is encouraged, solicited and given opportunity to be told

**A place where** dialogue between employees is encouraged and focuses on the concepts of:

- I have some information, others have other information
- Each of us may see things the others do not
- Differences are opportunities for learning
- People are trying to act with integrity given their situations

**A place where** outcomes are jointly designed, seek common ground, and results in "Win/Win" strategies

Change begins with me. Join with me in helping build a future where this is a workplace in which you can say with confidence, "I want to work!" You are essential in creating this workplace.

## Green Tips

### LED Lights in Council Chamber

The Council Chamber can be called a new name thanks to a recently completed lighting upgrade. The "LED Chamber" is now illuminated exclusively by state-of-the-art LED lighting. This could be the first studio-capable public meeting space in the country to be able to make that claim.

The multi-phase project has decreased energy use by 83 percent in that space and will result in thousands of dollars in savings between lower lighting costs, reduced cooling needs, and less frequent maintenance requirements.

The project involved CaPA, IT, Facilities, and the Sustainability Office. As the Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt put it, now we are definitely cooler than Carrboro.

—Brian Callaway, Office of Sustainability

# BREATHE and Support Smoke-Free

**Tyron Edwards** (Transit), or T.Y., as he is known, entered the Wellness @ Work Tobacco Free Employee Program soon after it began in Fall 2011. He smoked between one to two packs of cigarettes per day, and had been smoking since he was 16 years old. He reported being “just tired of smoking.” Even with his readiness, he said that it was hard to do and he needed to put in the effort so he wouldn’t backslide.

T.Y. was drawn to the program by the financial incentive of \$100 if he remained tobacco free for six months. He bought his own patches, and believes that spending his own money for those also increased his incentive to quit. He credits the Wellness @ Work program for diagnosing him correctly, and for prescribing the correct medication. He also said the support he received from his family and friends was a big help.

Wellness @ Work offers Tobacco Cessation Program for Town of Chapel Hill Employees. Today, when you come into the program, your patches, gum, and lozenges are available at no cost (but of course you can buy them if, like T.Y., it helps you feel more committed to becoming tobacco free). Either way, you’ll be investing in your

health, your future, and the freedom that comes from no longer being dependent on tobacco.

You’ll receive **free** medication, weekly support and treatment plan.

Phone: 919-445-5358

Email: [barbara\\_silver@med.unc.edu](mailto:barbara_silver@med.unc.edu)

OR Log in to the Wellness @ Work Portal to make an appointment: [chapelhillwellnessatwork.org](http://chapelhillwellnessatwork.org)



## Did You Know?

Town policies were amended on June 17, 2013, to prohibit smoking in all Town vehicles. The new smoke-free rule for vehicles is aligned with the goals of our Wellness@Work program and the Orange County Health Department’s public education campaign to promote smoke-free public places and make our community healthier. Through public education and cessation programs offered by both the Town and Orange County, we hope to reduce smoking rates.



## Employee Appreciation Luau Lunch

Every year, the Employee Appreciation lunch gives Town workers a chance to take a break from work, relax, and have fun with new friends and old from all Town departments.

This year, a festive luau theme added to the fun. In addition to old favorites bingo, basketball, cornhole, the first-ever Town Employee Dodgeball Championship was added to the lineup. Special music was provided by the Public Works Gospel Choir and Transit (Chapel Hill).

Lucky employees won exciting door prizes, including gift cards from local businesses, brunch at the Carolina Inn and a



free night at the Franklin Hotel or the Courtyard Marriott.

### Mahalo Team!

After such a great time at our Employee Luncheon, I wanted to thank our team for the great job they did to provide this event for us. Beginning with Stephanie Yeatts and the Employee Appreciation Committee who coordinated a flawless day for us today. The Hawaiian themed décor, and all the smiling faces, really brightened my day.

In addition to **Stephanie Yeatts’** fine work, I’m sure she would tell you, she couldn’t begin to make these events happen without her staff, **Jason**

### Greene, Steve Wells, and Daquan Hayes, all of whom were impeccable hosts!

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to all the Senior Management Team and staff volunteers, who really made it a day of appreciation by helping out, and sharing their hospitality and service!

— Wes Tilghman



2013 Employee Appreciation Dodgeball Champs:  
The Manager’s Office Team