



# TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

June 2009  
Vol. 5, No. 10

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

## A Short Report

By Roger L. Stancil,  
Town Manager

In the October 2006 edition of TOWNtalk, I shared with you that I believe our values drive our behavior. It is easier to understand why people do what they do if we understand what is important to them. I shared my own values in the September 2006 TOWNtalk and asked you to talk with me if you did not think my actions reflected my stated values.

On November 8, 2007, the Senior Management Team adopted a set of values to share with you. That set of shared values was communicated to all employees so they could become the basis for your discussion of decisions within your department. I encouraged you to challenge your department head and me when our decisions and behavior did not seem to be consistent with our values. I believe such discussions can only lead to greater understanding by everyone of the reasons for, and results of, our decisions. Greater understanding leads to shared commitment or a realization that a different decision might be better. In any case, we are a more effective team.

Now it is time for the senior management team to share with you what those values mean to us and seek your feedback. Our goal is to create a set of shared values we can all endorse. We have created a video with each department head talking about our adopted values. We want you to understand what these words mean to us. We will be arranging for small groups of employees to watch the video and offer feedback and suggestions to me that would make the list of values meaningful to you. We will then share a revised version of the Values with everyone. At the end of this process, we will be able to say this is who we are and how we do business in the Town of Chapel Hill. Look for this video coming to your place of work.

## Akalema Pherribo

Akalema Pherribo has worked Chapel Hill Transit for five years. He enjoys driving the buses, especially the 60-foot-long articulated buses. He is also a driver for the EZ Rider service, where he patiently assists disabled riders. He enjoys interacting with riders and providing excellent customer service. He has a willingness to help the riding public to safely meet their transportation needs. His motto and daily living experience is "Treat people the way you want to be treated."

He enjoys his job so much, he even had his license plate personalized as "Bus Driver."

Akalema serves on several committees for the Town, including the Employee Forum, the Transportation Employees Forum, and the transportation run cut/scheduling committee.

As a first time contestant in the Regional and State Bus/Van Rodeo in 2009, he entered both van competitions and won first place in both events.

Akalema grew up in Hillsborough, the fifth of eight children.

Akalema has a love for digital photography and shares his beautiful pictures and colorful sayings with his co-workers. He can be seen walking for wellness around Millhouse Road.

His other hobbies include watching *National Geographic*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Wild Kingdom*,

## Value in the Spotlight

### Respect

trustworthy • open • defender  
of individual rights • customer-  
focused • sensitive • civil • decent



*Desperate Housewives*, *Escape to Chimp Eden*, and more. He also enjoys traveling, refinishing antique furniture, lawn manicuring and landscape work and biking, and he is thinking of adding roller blading. He loves eating delicious foods of all types!

**Philosophies:** Work at keeping a positive attitude and encourage others to do the same.

Always treat others as you wish to be treated and whatever your work is, always strive to do your best!

## COMING UP

**Thursdays, June 18 to Aug. 20:** *Locally Grown Rooftop Music and Movies.*  
[www.townofchapelhill.org/locallygrown](http://www.townofchapelhill.org/locallygrown)

**Monday, June 22:** Council considers final Carolina North development agreement.

**Friday, July 3:** Town holiday. Most municipal offices will be closed.

**Wednesday, July 8:** Public Information Meeting on the Town's Voter Owned Election Program, 7 p.m., Town Hall



**Buy Local, Eat Local, Be Local!** *Locally Grown Rooftop Music and Movies*, featuring live music, movies and family-friendly activities, will be presented every Thursday from June 18 to Aug. 20 on the Wallace Plaza, 150 E. Rosemary St.

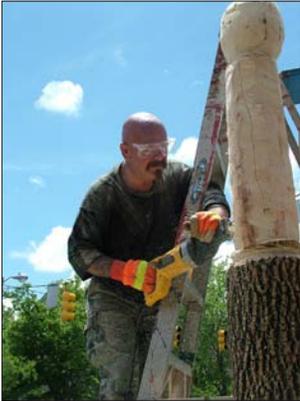
# In Brief

Congratulations to **Rae Buckley** (Planning) and her husband Billy on their new addition! Josie Buckley was born at 1:36 p.m. June 10. She weighed 8 lbs., 4 oz. Mom and baby are doing great.



**Karin Michel** (Library) and Alex May became the parents of twins on

March 1. Veronica Rose weighed 5 lbs., 14 oz. and Rebecca Violet weighed 5 lbs., 12 oz.



**Dwight Bassett** (Economic Development) gave new life to a tree that was damaged in the NCAA men's basketball victory celebration by carving it into an original sculpture.



**“Survivor”** – That's what **Maggie Bowers** (Public Works) calls

this red-tailed hawk that flew into one of the windows at Town Hall. While giving it space to recover, Maggie snapped this shot while on her lunch break.



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

## Southern Community Park Dedicated

Southern Community Park, the second largest park in Chapel Hill, was dedicated June 6. Located in Southern Village, the park features basketball courts, an inline hockey court, a disc golf course, a children's play area, a dog park, picnic shelters, a meadow area and trails.

For more information, visit [www.chapelhillparks.org](http://www.chapelhillparks.org)



**Cash handling training** is being offered by Business Management for Town employees who handle cash and their direct supervisors. The course takes two to three hours to complete and will be offered on the following dates:

- 2 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, June 17, Public Works Conference Room
- 9 a.m. to noon Friday, June 26, HRD Training Room
- 2 to 5 p.m. Thursday, July 9, Public Works Conference Room
- 9 a.m. to noon Wednesday, July 15, Public Works Conference Room

To sign up, email **Ken Pennoyer** (Business Management) at [kpennoyer@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:kpennoyer@townofchapelhill.org).



**Torch Run** – On June 3, participants from Orange County law enforcement agencies, including the Chapel Hill Police Department, ran the annual Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics North Carolina. The program has raised \$11 million since it began 28 years ago.



**A Mobile IT Showcase** hosted by the Fire Department on May 13 at Town Hall was attended by around 75 people from across the state. Participants learned about the latest in fire and rescue mobile computing equipment.

**Computer Upgrades in Progress:** Service Pack updates are being installed on all Vista machines. To reduce interruptions to your work, leave computers logged off (but not shut down) whenever they are not in use. The Service Pack installs may launch upon logon and take up 30 minutes to install. If you have questions, please contact **Colleen Molby**, **Barry Thompson** or **Scott Cantrell** at extension 2020 or [ITsupport@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:ITsupport@townofchapelhill.org).

**Town Honors the UNC Tar Heels:** Mayor Kevin Foy read a proclamation on May 18 celebrating the UNC Tar Heels Men's Basketball team for its 2009 NCAA National Championship.



Accepting the honor on behalf of the team were Tyler Zeller and Dick Baddour, UNC Director of Athletics.

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.



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# Compliments



**Alan Lamb** (Transit) was commended by Marilyn Ghezzi for going beyond the call of duty to help her get to the correct bus stop.

**Keica Hargraves** (Transit) was complimented by Tanya Burch for her excellent driving skills and for being pleasant. "She is doing a great job and should be commended."

Burwell Ware thanked the **Public Works Department** for improving sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes on Kingston Drive leading to the Timberlyne Shopping Center. "Thanks for helping to make Chapel Hill more walkable and bikeable."

Nancy Klusmeyer thanked the **Fire Department** for minimizing property damage by quickly putting out a fire at Stratford Hills. "I continue to marvel at how little I lost, how quickly you organized and put out the flames! Thank you all so very much."

Lee Lambert of Blake & Associates thanked the **Planning Department** and **Inspections Division** for being "a dream to work with."

**Cathy Andrews** (Planning) thanks everyone for the cards, emails, support, thoughts and prayers as she continues to deal with the loss of her mother, Bessie E. Hedrick. "All acts of kindness have touched my heart greatly."

## Enjoy the Summer!

TOWNtalk is on a break for the summer, and will resume in September. Please continue to send news and photos to [publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org). Vacation photos are always welcome!



## Employee Service Awards

Employees were recognized for service milestones at a ceremony on June 19.

### 5 Years

**Catherine Lazorko** (Communications & Public Affairs)  
**Ray Gornto** (Engineering)  
**Nan Guldenschuh** (Fire)  
**Robert Minick** (Parks & Recreation)  
**Latonia Davis** (Police)  
**Mike Mineer** (Police)  
**Deborah Timmons** (Police)  
**Mike Fishback** (Transit)  
**Valjean Gibson** (Transit)  
**Ed Hicks** (Transit)  
**Eddie Jones** (Transit)  
**Akalema Pherribo** (Transit)  
**James Triplett** (Transit)  
**Ronald Watson** (Transit)  
**Henry Wilson** (Transit)

### 10 Years

**Robert Sykes** (Engineering)  
**James Bona** (Fire)  
**Christine Brown** (Library)  
**Carol Abernethy** (Manager)  
**Sandra Edwards** (Parks & Recreation)  
**Leo Vereen** (Police)  
**Emily Cameron** (Public Works)  
**Kenneth Jones** (Public Works)  
**Mark Shrader** (Public Works)

**Layton Leach** (Transit)  
**Martha Peoples** (Transit)  
**Horace Sewell** (Transit)

### 15 Years

**Vencelin Harris** (Fire)  
**Doug Parrish** (Fire)  
**MJ Goodrum** (Library)  
**Tracy Dudley** (Parking)  
**Karen Rose** (Police)  
**Van Bennett** (Public Works)

### 30 Years

**Decatur Cole** (Transit)

### 33 Years

**Louise Pettis** (Public Works)  
**Richard Terrell** (Public Works)

### 34 Years

**Larry Stroud** (Public Works)

### 35 Years

**Caprice Mellon** (Fire)  
**Mark Bayles** (Library)  
**Joe Layton** (Police)  
**James Jones** (Public Works)

### 36 Years

**Nate Davis** (Parks & Recreation)

## Recycling

Recycle while on your summer vacation. Many of us forget about recycling when we go on vacation. If you're vacationing in North Carolina:

Most rest stops and state parks have recycling bins for cans, bottles and paper.

Many rental homes have curbside recycling service. Ask the rental agency or owner for the specifics. You may have to work a little harder to find recycling at a hotel or motel. If they have a bar, they must have recycling by law.

Check the North Carolina Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance Web Site at [www.p2pays.org](http://www.p2pays.org) or call (800)763-0136. Click on "Local Government Solid Waste Contacts" and select the county and city of your destination to get contact numbers to call for more information.

Be persistent. Dropoff sites are not always as plentiful and accessible as here at home. If all else fails, bring your recyclables back to Orange County.

— Blair Pollock, Orange Community Recycling

## Green Tips

### Green Tips for Your Home

**Keep your Thermostat Honest:** In order to avoid overcooling your home during the hot North Carolina summer months, make sure that your TV set or any other heat-generating appliances are not located too close to your home's thermostat. The heat generated from these appliances can trick your thermostat into thinking that it's hotter inside your home than it actually is, which in turn causes your air conditioning to run more than it needs to.

**Right-Size Your Cooking:** While most people are doing a lot of their summer cooking on the grill, chances are some of you are still cooking on the stove from time-to-time. If so, it's always a good idea to match the size of the pan to the size of the burner (or heating element) in order to avoid wasting energy. For example, putting a large pan on a small burner can increase your cooking time and therefore waste electricity or gas.

— John Richardson, Office of Sustainability

# A Difficult Budget Year

## Retiree Healthcare Defined Contribution Plan

Recent changes in the rules that govern how local governments account for their long-term healthcare costs for retirees have created an unfunded liability of \$45 million for the Town. A proposed plan would increase the retiree responsibility for paying medical benefits. This would affect new employees hired after July 1, 2009.

A "defined contribution" plan establishes the Town's contribution to retiree healthcare benefits. Our current "defined benefit" plan establishes the benefit level. As costs increase, so does the Town's liability and costs. This change will help stop the growth in our liability and costs, freeing up funds to pay for current and future retirees that have the current defined benefit healthcare plan.

Current employees will not be affected by this change.

## Changes to Employee Safety and Worker's Compensation Benefits

The Town has instituted changes to further improve its safety program and reduce preventable accidents, as well as workers compensation and accident costs. Our goals are to prevent accidents and also to reduce claims. Changing the Town's worker's compensation benefits to conform to state requirements will save an estimated \$30,000 per year in direct costs.

Changes will extend the waiting period before receipt of workers' compensation from three to seven days. Benefits payments will be 66.7 percent of regular salary with no state and federal deductions up to the maximum payment of \$816 per week.

In order to improve the safety reporting procedures, Town Manager Roger L. Stancil last year declared safety violations a serious incident to be reported immediately to the Town Manager. He also authorized the hiring of a new safety officer, Mike Beckman, who is supervising a Town-wide safety program.

## 2009-10 Budget Highlights

The Chapel Hill Town Council adopted the 2009-10 budget on June 8. To view the budget information online, visit [townhall.townofchapelhill.org/agendas/2009/05/06/1/](http://townhall.townofchapelhill.org/agendas/2009/05/06/1/)

- General Fund budget totals \$49.8 million with a tax rate reduction to 49.4 cents per \$100 of assessed value
- holds the line on spending, only three-tenths of 1 percent higher than last year's budget, although costs continue to rise
- maintains employee salaries and benefits (comprising almost 70 percent of general fund operating expenditures)
- no cost of living increases for employees
- maintains key public assets
- \$400,000 for retiree healthcare liability
- \$1.1 million to cover a 17.1 percent increase in medical insurance costs for all employees
- maintains services at or near current levels
- living wage policy adopted at \$11.06 per hour for all standard full time employees.

## Letter from Employee Forum to Town Council on May 20, 2009

Good Evening Mayor Foy, Council Members, Managers, Employees and Citizens:

My name is Kay McDaniel, Employee Forum Chair and an employee of the Public Works Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Town of Chapel Hill Employee Forum that represents all Town Employees.

I would like to recognize all Town employees at this time if they would please stand.

In spite of all the budget struggles, the Town of Chapel Hill is a wonderful place to work because the Town knows and understands the value of its employees. The employees take pride in providing service to the community and citizens to enjoy and feel safe.

We the employees have been well informed by our Town Manager of the difficult budget crisis that the Town of Chapel Hill is facing. We appreciate how well Mr. Stancil has communicated with the employees. We understand that the employees have to share the burden of the rising costs associated with the cost of living such as gas, food and health care. With so many government agencies cutting personnel to meet their budget needs and companies in the private sector going out of business, we are in support of the budget Mr. Stancil is recommending

for 2009-2010 which allows approximately all 710 employees to continue employment without affecting our retirement benefits or longevity.

Although our benefits will remain intact, most employees will be affected by the increasing cost for health care that continues to be a major problem in America. This upcoming budget year 2009-2010 includes a 17 percent increase to the current premium rate for health insurance that will be deducted from employees pay checks with dependent or family coverage. This will cause a decrease in net pay. We ask that you keep in mind any increase incurred big or small for employees is a decrease in the amount of money that will be taken home to support families and meet financial obligations. We the employees are very thankful for our jobs and all the hard work that went forth to keep our jobs secure. We are hopeful for a brighter future where we will continue to receive cost of living raises and no budget cuts. We are committed to performing our jobs to the best of our ability and providing a high level of service that Chapel Hill has grown to love and expect.

We would like to thank our Town Manager, Roger Stancil for supporting the Employee Forum. Thank you for your time this evening.