



TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

October 2009
Vol. 6, No. 2

www.townofchapelhill.org

A Short Report

By Roger L. Stancil,
Town Manager

Your participation in the Combined Campaign each year reflects the fact that the Town of Chapel Hill is a community that cares. This is a tough year when we did not receive a raise and that can make giving difficult. It also means these are tough times for others in our area who have lost their jobs or their homes. I encourage you to join me in thinking hard about what we can give in these difficult times and find ways we can at least meet our totals of giving in the past, around \$20,000.

The annual combined campaign, the only charitable drive authorized to solicit Town employees for payroll deduction pledges, raises money for numerous agencies, including a wide variety of health care, service, and environmental organizations. Each department has an assigned representative who will collect employee pledge forms. The deadline for pledges is Nov. 18.

I invite you to join me at the campaign kickoff event will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30, at Town Hall. Employees are invited to stop by, learn more about the campaign, and enjoy hot dogs, games, baked goods and a raffle. You will have fun with your co-workers while helping to support worthy causes.

The four combined campaign federations – Triangle United Way, Earth Share of NC, Community Health Charities of NC, 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.

If you would like more information about how you can get involved by scheduling a information presentation for your department or by supporting the kickoff event (contribute baked goods, prizes, games or energy), please contact Combined Campaign Chair Mark Bayles at 919-969-2036 or mbayles@townofchapelhill.org.

Ozetar (Snap) Gaskin

Snap began working with the Town in June 1984 as a Laborer in the Public Works Department. At the time, it was very rugged manual labor. Some of the work is easier now than it was when he started working for the Town because equipment does work that used to be done by muscles. Snap learned how to do excellent work from “the old guys” and was promoted several times.

Snap worked on interesting projects, including many phases of the Streetscape project to improve the appearance of Franklin Street. The job could be dangerous at times. Snap recalled when he had a severe allergic reaction to a bee sting. Another time, he and several co-workers came down with pneumonia after working in a drainpipe.

A life-size photo of Snap that was taken while he was working was displayed in the Ackland Art Museum on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus.

Snap retired in June 2009, but he still works for the Town occasionally, running street sweepers and flushers after big events like Halloween.

Snap was born in Washington, D.C., and moved to North Carolina in 1984. He has been married to his wife, Ruby, for 26 years, and they have six children and two grandchildren. He is a devoted family man, and enjoys spending time with his children and grandchildren. He is planning to do a lot of fishing with his sons during retirement.

Value in the Spotlight

Respect

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



Snap Gaskin (left) receives a service award from Public Works Director Lance Norris.

Snap likes helping other people, especially by cooking. He always shared food with his co-workers, and one of his fondest memories of working with the Town was cooking and eating every week with the Streets division. He sometimes cooks for his whole neighborhood. His specialties are fish, Italian-style lasagna, spaghetti and salad.

QUOTE: “They don’t make them like me any more.”

COMING UP

Friday, Oct. 30: Combined Campaign Kick-off, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Town Hall

Saturday, Oct. 31: Homegrown Halloween

Tuesday, Nov. 3: Election Day

Thursday, Nov. 12: Bring Your Lunch and Learn: Healthcare Consumerism, noon to 1 p.m., Transit Training Room

Saturday, Nov. 14: Shred-A-Thon, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Home Depot, 625 Hampton Point Blvd., Hillsborough

Nov. 26-27: Town Holiday. Most municipal offices will be closed.



Homegrown Halloween aims to return the spontaneous Halloween celebration on Franklin Street to its roots as a small town community gathering and reduce crowd sizes.

In Brief



Amy Harvey (CaPA), her husband Mike and daughter Morgan have added a

beautiful baby daughter to their family. Sydney Elizabeth Harvey, born on Oct. 7, weighed 7 lbs. 3 oz. and was 20 inches long. Congratulations Amy, Mike and Morgan!



Congratulations to **Brian Parker** (Fire) and his wife, Ashley, on their new addition, Dalton Wray Parker. Dalton,

born on Oct. 8, weighed 8 lbs. 14 oz. and was 20 inches long. Mom and Dalton are doing well. He's such a cutie.

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS AND

PHOTOS to TOWNtalk! The next deadline is Oct. 27 for the November issue, scheduled to be published on Nov. 6. Send submissions to publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org or call 968-2743.

GET INSTANT UPDATES ON

Town programs and events at www.facebook.com/pages/Chapel-Hill-NC/Town-of-Chapel-Hill/29918532261 or twitter.com/townchapelhill.



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

New Fire Recruits



The 2009 firefighter recruit class was sworn in on Oct. 13 as they completed their training and received shift and station assignments.

Left to right: Training Chief **Robert Bosworth**, Firefighters **Portia Peterson**, **William Wright**, **Chris Tomlin**, **Michael Quigley**, **Justin Lawson**, **Kendall High** (back), **Ashley Brooks** (front), **Jonathan Powell** and **Jesse Torchia**.

Get on board the **Pittsboro Express Bus!**

Reduce transportation costs with this smooth ride that takes about 45 minutes to get to Chapel Hill. Instead of fighting traffic, spend your commuting time relaxing, reading or even napping.

The bus stops at the County Courthouse in downtown Pittsboro or at the free park-and-ride lot in front of Lowe's Building Supply at US 15-501 at US 64 Bypass just north of Pittsboro.

View the Pittsboro Express schedule at www.townofchapelhill.org/index.aspx?page=1220

This pilot project is supported by a coalition that includes federal, state, Chatham county and Pittsboro governments, Chapel Hill Transit, UNC, and the Lowes shopping center.

Nominations for the Cal Horton Service Award will be accepted through Friday, Oct. 30. This award recognizes and honors distinguished service by Town employees. Submit nomination forms to Human Resource Development by 5 p.m. Oct. 30. For more information, contact the committee members: **Deborah Squires** (Public Works-Engineering), **John Newark** (Public Works), **Lance Norris** (Public Works), **Dan Jones** (Fire), and **Loryn Clark** (Planning). Nomination forms are available on the website at www.townofchapelhill.org/towntalk.

Bring your lunch and learn about healthcare consumerism from noon to 1 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 12, in the Transit Training Room.

Representatives from Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina will provide information about health care trends and practical money-saving tips. RVSP to lwade@townofchapelhill.org.

TOWNTALK SURVEY RESULTS

For those of you who completed the TOWNtalk readership survey, thank you for your participation.

The respondents to our survey were clearly avid newsletter readers, as 97 percent reported reading the newsletter always or regularly. These readers also rated highly the quality of the newsletter – 37 percent rated the periodical as “excellent” and 63 percent rated it as “good.” We received a 4.3 percent rate of response.

We learned more about what you really like to read! The popular columns (rated as being read “always” and “regularly”) are Employee Spotlight (97 percent), A Short Report (87 percent), Announcements about Benefits from Human Resource Development (87 percent), SMT Notes (67 percent) and Service Award Listings (67 percent).

Respondents split nearly evenly on the question of which format newsletter they were more likely to read (48 percent chose online, and 51 percent chose a printed newsletter). We have decided to make the change to issuing an electronic format but are responding to those departments that request a reduced number of printed copies.

The newsletter is designed and spearheaded by graphic artist Melanie Miller and edited by Catherine Lazorko. You, the employees and the readers, are the ones who make it good. Stay involved, read the newsletter, share it, and please send your comments.

Try our new wellness program if you are interested in controlling or reducing your weight during the holiday season. Weight Watchers at Work is offering a special for a nine-week series. The cost is \$99, and the Town will pay \$50. If you meet your goal, you will receive a \$25 reimbursement. We need 15 guaranteed participants for this program. Please e-mail Lynne Wade in the HRD Department by 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 2, if you are interested.

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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The Employee Forum met with Roger Stancil on Oct. 8 to update the Manager on the employees' reaction to the statement of values video. The Forum presented a summary of reactions and several comments were made. The Forum will have a special meeting on Oct. 29 at Public Works to discuss the Employee Forum's set of values.

The next Employee Forum meeting will be held Thursday, Nov. 12, at the Town Operations Center Building 1 large conference room.

Employee Forum Accepting Nominations

Public Forum representatives are needed in Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Housing, Transit, Police and Fire.

Employees may nominate up to three employees in your department. You may also nominate yourself. To be eligible to serve as a Forum representative you must be a regular employee who has completed the probationary period and have 12 months of continuous service with the Town. Temporary/contract employees are not eligible to self nominate or vote in the elections. Elected representatives will serve for a two year period. Send nomination forms to **Angie Turner** (Public Works) or **Mike West** (Parks & Recreation) by Oct. 28.

The department head or supervisor will review the nominees to ensure that the employee is meeting job performance requirements and is in good standing. Thereafter, an election will be held in each department to determine who the representative(s) will be based on receipt of the highest number of votes. If the number of candidates running within a department is equal to or less than the number of seats for that department, those candidates will represent the department and an election will not be required. The new representatives will be expected to begin their new duties after elections when the next meeting of the Forum is held on Dec. 10, 2009.

Nomination forms will be sent to all Town employees. For more information, contact **Kay McDaniel** (Public Works) at kmcdaniel@townofchapelhill.org or **Lynne Wade** (HRD) at lwade@townofchapelhill.org.

SMT Notes

The following is a brief update of some of the items that were announced and have been discussed recently by the Senior Management Team (SMT). To stay up-to-date on Town news and activities, subscribe to Chapel Hill eNews by contacting pio@townofchapelhill.org.

Welcome: Introduced **Cliff Turner** (HRD) and **Tripti Dahal, Annette Rogers, and Emily Dipierro** (Business Management).

New GIS Map Tool: **Chase Barnard** gave a presentation on a GIS map tool for leaf pickup. Chase said he, **Deborah Squires** and **Bill Rehm** had worked on the product. The color-coded map shows where leaf pickup is currently being conducted and the schedule for future pickups.

Community Survey: ETC Institute has been hired to conduct a community survey, which is a Council goal. The institute specializes in municipal community surveys. Karen Falk, project manager with ETC, explained the timeline of the survey and the process and gave examples of surveys that ETC had conducted. She noted that their surveys had a plus or minus five percent margin of error. SMT members will review

provided questions and make changes and comments. Several drafts are expected before the survey is finalized. Results of the survey will be presented to the Council in January.

Training and Development Committee Meetings, Sustainability and Operations Team Meetings, and the Health Care Taskforce: Town Manager **Roger Stancil** reiterated the importance of these committees and told members to support staff in attending the meetings. He also asked for input on reasons why staff may not be attending the meetings.

Orientation for New Council Members: Ideas requested for improvement.

Council Planning Retreat: To be held on Jan. 29-30, 2010. Departments will be asked once again to provide information on successes, trends and priorities prior to the retreat.

Post Employment Benefits (OPEB): The new program will affect only employees hired after June 30, 2010. Those currently employed with the Town are on a defined benefit program, and those hired after June 30, 2010 will be on a defined contribution program.

Recycling

The next Shred-A-Thon for confidential paper recycling will be held from from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 14, at the recycling drop-off site behind Home Depot in Hillsborough at Hampton Pointe Shopping Center. It is open to all residents of Orange County. There is a limit of 10 boxes of paper per person. Please remove all plastic, CDs or spiral bindings. Staples and paper clips are okay. To recycle shredded paper at the curb or drop-off sites, please place in a paper bag, not plastic, to prevent being wind-blown.

The Orange County Solid Waste Department is selling Earth Machine compost bins for \$50. You can purchase an Earth Machine between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at the Orange County Solid Waste Management Administration office at 1207 Eubanks Road in Chapel Hill. There is no limit on how many compost bins you may purchase.

—Blair Pollock, Orange Community Recycling

Green Tips

Share-a-Widget – Have you ever had a home project that required a specialized tool that you didn't own? Well, instead of running out and buying the widget that you'll use once in a blue moon (or maybe never again), consider asking your neighbors if you can borrow the one hanging in their garage. Chances are you've got a specialized widget that they'd like to borrow, too.

Sharing specialized tools or other items helps save space and money and reduces the demand for resources that would otherwise be used to make these products. To take it a step further, consider starting or participating in a lending program with your neighborhood association.

Adapted from the "Green Living Handbook" by David Gershon (2008)

—John Richardson, Office of Sustainability

Flu Update For Town Employees

Need a flu shot? Visit www.findaflushot.com.

The Orange County Health Department is encouraging Town employees and other residents to follow the six steps below to assist in reducing the spread and negative impact of flu-like illnesses.

- Get seasonal flu vaccination as soon as possible. (The Town's recent flu shot clinic on Oct. 9 was a tremendous success with almost 200 people receiving vaccinations.)
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. If a tissue is not available, use your elbow or shoulder not your hand.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol based hand cleaners are also effective hand sanitizers.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean commonly touched surfaces more often.

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay at home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)

The Town has received a large shipment of supplies such as hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes and tissues for employees working at locations where they come into contact with the public such as recreation centers, buses, and other public facilities.

Public health officials are strongly encouraging parents with school age children to keep students at home if they have flu-like symptoms. This practice will assist in reducing the spread of flu viruses.

Health departments are receiving H1N1 vaccines from the state in small batches.

Initial shipments of vaccine have been

distributed to medical providers, first responders and also offered at walk-in clinics to key populations.

As more vaccine arrives more opportunities for vaccination will be made available. Call the Orange County Health Department's Chapel Hill location for a seasonal flu shot appointment: 968-2022 ext. 0.

For updates on H1N1 vaccine availability monitor the Flu Line at 245-2479 or the department's website at www.co.orange.nc.us/health



Welcome New Employees!

Nov. 18, 2008-Oct. 13, 2009

Vada Bailey (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Thomas Bartolotta (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Timothy Beamon (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Matthew Brinkley (Bus Mgmt)—Budget Manager
Ashley Brooks (Fire)—Firefighter Level I
Lamont Burum (PW)—Mechanic II
Dwight Butler (Transit)—Coord-Safety And Training
Matthew Cecil (Transit)—GIS Technician
Ashley Cousin (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Phyllis Croff (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Tripti Dahal (Bus Mgmt)—Accountant
Eric Dallin (Police)—Police Officer II
Jason Damweber (PW)—Admin Analyst
Emily Dipierro (Bus Mgmt)—Coordinator-Payroll
Brian Dunagin (Fire)—Firefighter Level I

Robert Earhart (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Melody Ellis (P&R)—Groundskeeper II
Frederick Farrington (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Michael Fennell (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Jessica Gentry (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Soyinia Hargraves (Housing)—Office Assistant
Mary Hartman (P&R)—Lifeguard
Kendall High (Fire)—Firefighter Level I
Margaret Irvine (P&R)—Lifeguard
Christopher Jensen (PW)—Engineer III
Mario Johnson (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Ryan Jones (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Alan Lamb (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Colleen Molby (IT)—Information Tech Analyst
Reginald Moore (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Mary Jane Nirdlinger (Manager)—Special Project Coordinator
Portia Peterson (Fire)—Firefighter Level I

Judith Petty (Transit)—Admin Clerk
Michael Quigley (Fire)—Firefighter Level I
Annette Rogers (Bus Mgmt)—Accounting Tech II
Lana Simons (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Benjamin Smith (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Christa Smith (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Justin Tilley (P&R)—Groundskeeper II
Christopher Tomlin (Fire)—Firefighter Level I
Jesse Torchia (Fire)—Firefighter Level I
Clifton Turner (HRD)—Human Resources Specialist III
Dexter Turpin (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Robert Warren (Transit)—Transit Operator II
Juan Weathersby (Police)—Information Svcs Tech Analyst
Meghan Webb (Library)—Library Asst I
Brian Wilcox (P&R)—Groundskeeper II
Erin Wilson (P&R)—Lifeguard