



TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

November 2009
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www.townofchapelhill.org

A Short Report

By Roger L. Stancil,
Town Manager

Our greatest management challenge is clear, concise, trusted communication. I recently met with a group of employees assembled by Catherine Lazorko to share perspectives on how the Town communicates internally and externally. I appreciated the straightforward and thoughtful comments. I provided those comments to the Senior Management Team and asked them to consider with you how the comments apply to communication within your department.

Please consider the key themes below that I heard and if you have suggestions about how we can improve, tell your supervisor, your department head or Catherine Lazorko:

- With the size of the Town, it is difficult to be familiar with the many people across many departments that you may want to share information with;
- Communication about policies, practices, and ordinances is limited;
- If we are going to be a Team and be “eyes and ears” for each other then it helps to know the kinds of things other staff members would like us to be on the lookout for;
- We need improved crisis communications, planning ahead for emergencies;
- Many priorities require an interdepartmental approach and considerable communication and cooperation across divisions and departments. It means we all have to be “in each others’ business.” How do we do that better?
- How can we communicate better before the fact about issues under consideration that affect our jobs and the services we provide to foster trust, inclusion and cooperation among the Town staff?
- How do we encourage and reward “horizontal” communication, i.e. communication directly between lower-level staff of different departments versus “vertical” communication that goes up, over and down?

CALL TO ACTION: Support employee work groups; support the Employee Forum; volunteer your communication ideas to your department head or to Catherine Lazorko.

Colleen Molby

IT Analyst

Joined Town: February 2009

Who you gonna call for a technical problem? Call Colleen Molby at phone ext. 2020! Colleen runs the IT Helpdesk and is available to troubleshoot problems associated with your computer, printer, email, software, and telephone. In most instances, she will access your computer using the “Remote Desktop” tool, which allows her to see everything that appears on your screen and make the necessary repairs as if she was sitting at your desk.

With a background in network support and server administration, Colleen moved to North Carolina from Troy, Mich., a suburb of Detroit, in early 2009. She previously worked in a technical support role to about 150 different companies around North America. Technical problems at the Town are the same as those experienced by companies around the world, she notes.

Colleen suggests trying these steps before calling the Help Desk:

- If your computer is “frozen” or “locked up,” turn it off and turn it back on.
- If your email is not working properly, close Outlook and re-open it.
- If your printer is “Ready” but nothing prints out, turn it off and turn it back on.
- If you are having trouble accessing a software program or a folder, check to see if others in your department are having similar issues as this may indicate a network problem.

Value in the Spotlight

Innovation

open-minded • courageous • learning
curious • flexible • change-oriented
idea development • risk taking



Catherine Lazorko photo

On the personal side, Colleen says she is pleased she chose North Carolina for her new home. She enjoys socializing with friends, exploring the Triangle and visiting her brother, who lives in Jacksonville. She also is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in psychology through online courses from Baker College in Michigan.

Our Value: “I get excited about new technologies that make life easier. If I can do one thing here, it would be to help the Town remain on the cutting edge of technology and to provide the users with tools that will allow them to work more efficiently.”

COMING UP

Friday, Nov. 20: Arbor Day Celebration, 11 a.m., Southern Community Park

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

Saturday, Dec. 12: Holiday Parade, 10 a.m. to noon. Info: www.chapelhilljaycees.org

January 29-30: Council Planning Retreat



Chapel Hill will receive its tenth Tree City USA award at the Nov. 20 Arbor Day ceremony.

In Brief

To raise funds for the North Carolina Children's Hospital Mustaches for Kids campaign, **Josh Mecimore** (Police) is letting his mustache grow until the middle of December! Sponsor the mustache by making a donation, large or small. For more information, visit 222.raleighm4k.com or email jmecimore@townofchapelhill.org.



Mike Taylor (Public Works) has been appointed to Interim Town Engineer as a national search is conducted for the position. Mike has been performing construction engineering and design review and

other engineering assignments for the Town for about 20 years. As Interim Town Engineer, Mike will serve as the division manager of the engineering and design services division of the Public Works Department.



"Johnnie Joins the Fire Department," the musical fire safety education puppet show produced by the Fire Department and the Chapel Hill Museum, is wrapping up a successful season that has reached over 500 children since Oct. 4. Thanks to those who assisted with the production: Traci Davenport, **Chris Bradley** (Fire), Kamie Edwards, Liz Medfesser, Rob Maddry, Myra McVicker, **Heather Robinson** (Fire), **Pat Spencer** (Fire), **Milbrey Starnes**, **Mary Lee Tyndall** (Fire), Doug Kelly, and **Matt Lawrence** (Fire).



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



Veterans Recognition: Town of Chapel Hill employees who are veterans or who have family members in active duty were recognized this week for their service and sacrifice by the Mayor and Town Council in honor of Veterans Day. Pictured here are (L-R) are Council Member **Jim Merritt**, **Leo Vereen** (Police), **Brian Curran** (Police), color guard **Ray Enoch** (Fire), **Bob Avery** (Business Man-

agement), Council Member **Matt Czajkowski**, and **Rick Fahrner** (Police). Capt. Vereen accepted the proclamation on behalf of all employees.

Capt. Vereen retired from the Army as a First Sergeant after 23 years. His wife, Florence, retired from the Army as a Sergeant First Class. Their son, Antonio, has served the Army for 16 years as

a drill sergeant. Antonio has deployed three times, to Afghanistan, Iraq and Haiti. The Vereens' nephew, Larry Graves, a Chapel Hill firefighter, is currently serving his second tour of duty to Afghanistan, where he has been stationed for the past nine months.

WATCH THE VIDEO!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6f1J4-hdtaU



Several Town employees – **Debbie Timmons**, **Kurt Gurley**, **Donnie Rhoads**, **Tony Sorrell**, **Chris Blue** (all Police) and



Catherine Lazorko (CaPA) – ran the Outer Banks Marathon on Nov. 8. The 26.2 mile course begins in Kitty Hawk and ends in Manteo. The runners were fortunate to have blue skies, sunshine and no wind. Congratulations, all!

Pictured after the race are (top, L-R) Tony Sorrell, Donnie Rhoads and Chris Blue (all Police); and (bottom, L-R) Catherine Lazorko (CaPA) and Debbie Timmons (Police).

Another road race finisher was **Ralph Karpinos** (Attorney), who battled hills, 30 mph headwinds and pouring rain to complete the Raleigh Half Marathon on Nov. 6.



Operation Medicine Cabinet, co-sponsored by the Chapel Hill Police Department, collected 36 pounds of pills and 40 pounds of liquid medications for safe disposal. Pictured are Leslie Erb, Cindy Whitlow, Sherry Wang, Stephen Lair, **Charlie Pardo** (Police), **Mark Geerken** (Police) and Dale Pratt Wilson. Another Operation Medicine Cabinet event is being planned for later this winter.

Great Gift Idea!

For the holidays, why not give Town logo mugs (\$20) or chocolates imprinted with the Town logo, from Chocolaterie Stam (\$5).



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publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org or (919) 968-2743

Compliments



Wallace Alston, Aaron Jacobs, Dexter Turpin and Ashley Cousin (Transit) were thanked by students from Scroggs Elementary School for transporting them to the Forest Theatre for a performance. "Thank you for letting us ride your truly awesome city bus!"

Dan Jones (Fire) was thanked by Juliann Tenney for a superb presentation to the East Chapel Hill Rotary Club. "I believe that everyone was impressed (and likely amazed!) with the breadth of your activities in support of ensuring our regional security."

Barry McLamb (Fire) expressed his appreciation for **Jean-Luc Kirk's** (Police) assistance at a structure fire on Arcadia Lane. "His support exemplifies the Teamwork value as expressed in the Town's value statement. He is an outstanding representative of the Police Department and the Town."

Martha Peoples (Transit) was thanked by Caitlyn Hill for her good driving and kindness when Martha assisted her in getting to her destination when she took the wrong bus. "She's a wonderful person and I wanted to make sure you were aware of how much I appreciate that."

Stan Norwood (Transit) was complimented by Richena Curphey for being friendly, courteous and a very good driver. "I appreciate his friendly greeting each morning as I head off to school. Many of the other drivers are good too but he deserves special mentioning. Keep up the good work."

The Parkwood Volunteer Fire Department thanked **Dennis Bailey, Greg Peeler, Andrew Fuentes, Jimmy Lambert, Pat Spencer and Jimmy Spero** (all Fire) for assisting with a medical emergency in Parkwood. "They did an outstanding job in a stressful situation. I applaud their efforts and positive attitudes."

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.

CIP Projects: Capital project requests were due Nov. 20. A prioritized list of projects is expected to be compiled by Jan. 15, 2010.

Healthcare Task Force: Department heads should ensure that all employees are "kept in the loop" regarding this progress. Each department's representatives have the information; how it is distributed is up to department directors and task force members.

Successes, Trends & Priorities: Departmental information for the Council Retreat is due to CAPA no later than Nov. 25. The Council Retreat is scheduled Jan. 29-30.

Community Survey: Departments are reviewing the drafts of the survey, which asks questions about services and key issues. It will be mailed to 600 randomly selected residents in early December.

Internet Policy and Adverse Weather Policy are currently being reviewed by the Senior Management Team policy group.

New Council Orientation: A committee of employees are developing a new way of orienting newly elected officials, using a mock meeting and a series of short information sessions.

Agenda Review: There are changes to the agenda review process that will be implemented for the first January 2010 meeting. A written summary of those changes will be sent to everyone soon.

**SUBMIT
YOUR
NEWS AND
PHOTOS**



to
TOWNtalk! The next
deadline is Nov. 24
for the December issue, scheduled to be
published on Dec. 4. Send submissions to
publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org or call
968-2743.

Recycling

Backyard compost bins make fine holiday gifts. You can get one for only \$50 (well below retail) between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at Orange County Solid Waste Management, 1207 Eubanks Road. Cash or check only (sorry, we can't accept credit cards). Can't make it during those hours? Call us, and we'll make arrangements for you to get a bin (or even two).

The Thanksgiving holiday cooking frenzy often generates more steel cans that are readily recyclable with all your other cans and bottles. Please rinse and flatten with the lids tucked inside. Labels are okay.

—Blair Pollock, Orange County Solid Waste

Green Tips

Save Dough by Making Your Own Cup-a-Joe! Making your own coffee can save money and provide greater choice.

By purchasing a coffee maker and grinder for your home or office, you have the flexibility to buy whole beans (which gives you more coffee for your buck) and purchase coffee that supports sustainable interests (e.g., fair-trade and organic coffee).

If you purchase a reusable travel mug, then you can reduce the waste from disposable cups and have a container for any additional cups of coffee throughout the day at work. Above all, making your own coffee will lead to considerable savings when compared to what you are likely to spend at a coffee shop.

Adapted from "Green Tips for Coffee Lovers" at www.GreenerTrends.com.

—John Richardson, Office of Sustainability

Support the Combined Campaign

Thanks for supporting the Combined Campaign with pledges and fundraisers! Many employees came to Town Hall on Oct. 30 and to Public Works and Transit on Nov. 6 for Combined Campaign kickoff events. Everyone had a great time, ate a lot of hot dogs, nachos and baked goodies, had a lot of fun playing games and got good information from the representatives of the four federations of the Combined Campaign.

Pledge forms have been distributed to all departments. Return your pledge forms to

your departmental representative by Monday, Nov. 23. Pledge whatever you can to help support these worthy causes. Every little bit helps!

For more information about the Combined Campaign, contact **Mark Bayles** (Library) at mbayles@townofchapelhill.org or 968-2777 ext. 123.



Josie Buckley, daughter of daughter of Rae Buckley (left, Planning), meets Vanessa Tart (right, Business Management).



M.J. Goodrum (center, Library) and Mark Bayles (right, Library) serve chili dogs and nachos to Erin Kawamata (left, Public Works).



The Phantom of the Opera (Jeff York, Public Arts) enjoys chili dogs and a drink.

The Winners Are...

Town Hall Kickoff

Grand Door prize winner: **Ernie Rogers** (Engineering): \$50 Harris Teeter Gift Card
 Otto's Pick and Putt: **Flora Parrish** (Police): \$25 "The Loop" Gift Card
 Darts for Dollars: **George Small** (Engineering, retired): \$40 University Mall Gift Card
 Darts: **Mark Bayles** (Library), \$30 Dick's Gift Card
 Operation: **Erin Kawamata** (Public Works), \$25 Kitchenworks Gift Card
 M&M Count: **Renee Moyer** (Planning)

Public Works Kickoff

Darts: **Mike Riggsbee** (Public Works), \$25 WalMart Gift Card
 Darts for Dollars: **J.P. Price** (Public Works), \$25 Panera Gift Card
 Otto's Pick and Putt: **Cary Degraffenreidt** (Public Works), \$25 Lowe's Gift Card

Town Hall Raffle

Chelsea Laws (Inspections): Jean Jacket
Mike Taylor (Engineering): Gray Hematite Necklace
Sabrina Oliver (CaPA): Jean Jacket
Renee Moyer (Planning): Clay Bowl
Jeff York (Public Arts): Optical Illusion Necklace
Jeannette Taylor (Engineering): Designer Pen
Sandy Kline (CaPA): Silver Necklace
Roger Stancil (Manager): Fall Centerpiece
Cathy Andrews (Planning): Berry Candle
Sandy Kline (CaPA): Pumpkin Bowl
Kristi McClellan (Library): Thermos
Cathy Andrews (Planning): Designer Jumper
Bob Avery (IT): Wood Leaf Tray
Mike Taylor (Engineering): Sea Cookie Pin

Mike Taylor (Engineering): Red Scarf
Brenda Jones (Parking): Cancer Bracelet
Kay McDaniel (Public Works): Photo
M.J. Goodrum (Library): Black and Brown Necklace

Renee Moyer (Planning): Floral Cup

Public Works Silent Auction

Kay McDaniel (Public Works): Hot Pepper Dish
Melody Ellis (Landscape): Ceramic Bowl, Ceramic Doily Bowl, Ceramic Pitcher
Mike Riggsbee (Public Works): Golden Stars Plates and Cups Set

Susie Whaley (Landscape): Sport Tek Pullover, Coffee Mug Set
Audrey Gattis (Public Works): Gorgeous Flower Bouquet
Shelton Burnette (Public Works): North End Jacket, NY Yankees Baseball Cap



Vampiress Myrah Worth-Evans (Parking) learned more about the campaign agencies.