

News Briefs

Smith Level widening hearing

The North Carolina Department of Transportation will hold a pre-hearing open house followed by a public hearing on the Smith Level Road Transportation Improvement Program project on Monday at Carrboro Elementary School.

The open house is scheduled from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., with the public hearing to follow at 7 p.m.

Online policy reconsidered

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools school board will consider revising its staff policies to include the use of personal websites, online social networks and other forms of online materials or communications.

District officials say the policy should include a statement on the use of online communications because of the increasing popularity of social networking websites such as Facebook and MySpace, as well as recent events in other school districts involving inappropriate staff communications online.

Call for centennial committee

Carrboro resident Richard Taylor asked the Carrboro Board of Aldermen on Tuesday for the town's support in creating the Carrboro Centennial Commission.

Taylor proposed a citizen volunteer committee that would plan the celebration of Carrboro's 100th birthday, March 3, 2011.

Board members said they supported Taylor's request, but referred the item to staff in order to work out the logistics of the commission's formation and other details.

Rabid skunk found in Hillsborough

A skunk found in Hillsborough tested positive for rabies recently at the State Laboratory of Public Health.

The skunk was submitted after a resident reported that two household dogs had been exposed to the skunk. The dogs were not vaccinated against rabies and were euthanized. Animals exposed to rabies that have not been vaccinated must either be destroyed or quarantined for six months.

So far this year, Orange County Animal Services has received two positive rabies tests. If any possible exposure to a bat, raccoon or fox is suspected, call Animal Control at 245-2075 or call 911.

Scroggs family donates to school

The Scroggs family has made a \$10,000 donation to Scroggs Elementary School to honor the school's namesake, Mary A. Scroggs. The gift is unrestricted and can be used as the principal and school see fit.

Scroggs served on the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board of Education from 1961 until 1977 and is known for her work toward desegregation and for the construction of several schools at a time of extreme overcrowding.

Police want assault info

The Chapel Hill Police Department is seeking information about a possible assault on West Franklin Street late Feb. 20 or early Feb. 21.

According to police, a 26-year-old white male received a blow to the head that resulted in a fractured skull. The victim has said he remembers playing pool in a local bar but does not remember an attack. He is being treated at UNC Hospitals.

Police are asking anyone who might have information related to the incident to call either the Chapel Hill Police Department at 968-2760 or Crime Stoppers at 942-7515. Calls to Crime Stoppers are confidential and anonymous and the caller may be eligible for a cash reward up to \$1,200 for information that leads to an arrest.

Scroggs named CHHS interim principal



PHOTO BY KIRK ROSS

Scroggs retired last year after 30 years in education.

CHAPEL HILL — Steve Scroggs, former assistant superintendent for support services for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, has been appointed as interim principal of Chapel Hill High School.

Scroggs replaces Jacqueline Boyd Ellis who announced earlier this year that she was leaving Chapel Hill High to work in administration for Durham Public Schools. Ellis will work collaboratively with Scroggs until March 20 and he will serve as principal for at least the remainder of the school year.

Scroggs retired as assistant superintendent for support services last May after eight years working in the district's central office. Prior to his work as assistant superintendent, he served

as principal of McDougle Elementary School. He has more than 30 years of experience in education.

Scroggs holds a bachelor's degree from Appalachian State University and a master's degree in education from East Carolina University.

"Mr. Scroggs is an outstanding leader who will provide the support and direction that Chapel Hill High School needs to complete its year successfully," Superintendent Neil Pedersen said.

Scroggs will serve as interim principal until a replacement is found. District officials hope to have a new principal in place for the start of the 2009-10 school year.

—STAFF REPORTS

ICE

FROM PAGE 1

The Chatham Conservative Voice (CCV) has actively opposed that resolution, saying that, the overwhelming preponderance of supporters at the board meeting notwithstanding, it doesn't reflect the views of a majority of Chatham citizens and that it was passed with insufficient public input.

Many, perhaps most, among the approximately 75 attendees Thursday evening arrived aware there would be no debate.

Earlier in the week, commission chair Lucier had declined to attend, stating in a letter to CCV communications chair Heather Johnson that, "several outside groups not affiliated with CCV have actively promoted this meeting with their own fliers and email lists, using inflammatory language ..." but that he would be "happy to talk with local residents individually or in other local groups, using a format that is not dominated and emotionally charged by outside influences."

One such flier had been circulated by NC FIRE, a Cumberland County-based group that, according to its website, seeks to "educate American citizens who turn a blind eye to the many costly and

destructive aspects of illegal immigration," including the "8 Ways Illegals Make You Sick." That flier implored recipients to "Fight Back Against Chatham County" and urged members of such groups as the N.C. Minuteman Patriots and the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps to attend.

Representatives of William Gheen's Americans for Legal

"No one looks dangerous to me, if you are dangerous, you can leave now."

—Brian Bock

Chatham County Republican Party

Immigration Political Action Committee (ALIPAC) were also expected to arrive. ALIPAC's platform states that it "supports those that legally immigrate, but we DO NOT support any amnesty, visa expansion, or 'Guest Worker' program designed to reward illegal aliens or legalize their presence in the US." Gheen spoke at a rally in Pittsboro in late January.

Outsiders not welcome

But in the days leading up to the forum, CCV began circulating the message that outsiders would be turned away and, according to Johnson, a communication was sent to NC FIRE saying their representatives would not be welcomed.

In an interview this week, Johnson said that, "In my naiveté, it never occurred to me [when I said], 'OK, Mr. Gheen, I'll give you the floor to talk about this issue,' what kind of a guy he would be."

Johnson said that it became clear to her that Gheen was "trying to use our local issue to advance his agenda," one that she personally finds "horrible." When Gheen's language on the Chatham County Online Bulletin Board became what Johnson characterized as "ugly," and he subsequently sent her "a very intimidating email ... we

made it clear we wanted absolutely nothing to do with these groups."

"They're here," in the county, she added, "but not by my invitation."

In fact, says Johnson, members of such groups most probably were in attendance on Thursday night. Nonetheless, a show of hands indicated an overwhelming majority of Chathamites.

"No one looks dangerous to me," Bock said from the dais. "If you are dangerous, you can leave now." And, for the most part, the evening proceeded in a civil manner.

Winters said that he believed "we all share a common goal of having a safe place to live, work and raise a family."

And while the CCV doesn't

take a position on whether the county should adopt 287(g), both Winters and Bock declared that in passing the resolution Chatham County was now a "sanctuary county." Winters later identified a website that listed the county as such.

"I don't know anyone in Chatham County who is anti-immigration," Winters told the crowd. "The Chatham Conservative Voice is in favor of diversity."

In a subsequent interview, he said, "No one is advocating going into people's homes." Rather, he said, the CCV's objective is to have the issue debated in a fair, civil and open forum.

But when the floor was opened to Q&A, the atmosphere grew increasingly vitriolic.

Speakers from the audience weren't asked to identify themselves. When a man made reference to Lucier's statement about whether the county should be building schools or jails, a woman shouted in response, "A jail."

Another man, who later identified himself as Bill Brooks of Pittsboro, said, "This is our home. This is our county. We've got to take it back," and offered to put down the first \$100 to bring 287(g) to the county. He later again rose to suggest putting up road signs with directions to the commissioners' homes.

Johnson then immediately called an end to the proceedings.

THE CARRBORO CITIZEN

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