

C THE CARRBORO CITIZEN

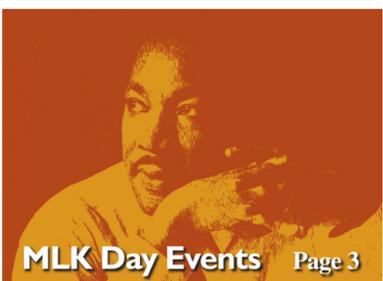


PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

Flower buds of liverleaf signal spring's early emergence in the dead of winter.

FLORA BY KEN MOORE

Four Easy-to Spot Evergreen Wildflowers

I was not alone on the Adams Tract trails this past Saturday; numerous other folks, including moms and dads shepherding their lucky youngsters, I was out trying to photograph four common evergreen wildflowers, specifically: liverwort, *Anemone americana* (formerly *Hepatica americana*); wild gingers, *Hexastylis arifolia*, or *H. virginica* or *H. minor*; spotted wintergreen, *Chimaphila maculata*; rattlesnake plantain, *Goodyera pubescens*. All of them have distinctive leather-textured leaves that most often sport mottled patterns on the leaf surface.

In the dead of winter, I like to anticipate the arrival of the flowers of these plants as the season progresses through spring into mid-summer. I'm accustomed to finding liverwort the very first to flower in early February. I've never before seen them the first week of January, so I was surprised to spot a plant with flower buds exposed, one almost fully opened. Every year there are surprises. Look for the three-lobed leaves on north-facing slopes and in the fertile bottoms of flood plains. If you are lucky, you'll find some vigorous clumps of three to five leaves with as many bluish flowers open on sunny days in early February, this year perhaps earlier.

Three species of evergreen wild ginger, also called heartleaf, are easy to spot; *H. virginica* and *H. minor* have a characteristic round heart-shaped leaf and *H. arifolia* has an arrowhead-shaped leaf. The one that caught my attention had characteristics of all three, possibly an unusual

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Aldermen talk parking improvements

BY SUSAN DICKSON
Staff Writer

CARRBORO — While it might seem difficult to find a parking space in downtown Carrboro, the findings of a recent parking study show that parking is in fact available downtown — just not as close to certain destinations as some might prefer.

Based on findings of the study, which was conducted by students at the Department of City and Regional Planning at UNC in spring 2008,

town transportation staff presented recommendations to the Carrboro Board of Aldermen in a work session Tuesday night.

According to the study, parking demand does not exceed 85 percent occupancy for the entire downtown. However, there is a higher demand for parking in certain zones at certain times of day.

Town transportation planner Adena Messenger offered several strategies to be pursued immediately to improve parking downtown, includ-

ing investigating on-street parking opportunities, improving signage, looking into parking consolidation and sharing opportunities.

Several board members said they would like to improve signage downtown.

Board member Joal Hall Broun said a map in a central location downtown indicating where parking is available could help those in search of a space.

Town Manager Steve Stewart encouraged board members to pursue signage improvements.

"We have an opportunity to not spend a lot of money and do some powerful short-term things with signage," he said. "We really have a fair amount of [parking], but unless you're from here, it's not that obvious."

Messenger said that while improving signage would help improve parking downtown, it was a short-term solution, since the town is continuing to grow and attract visitors.

SEE PARKING PAGE 2

Thorp cancels airport effort

BY KIRK ROSS
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL — Saying he was concerned about the amount of mistrust surrounding the university's intentions to build a new airport, UNC-Chapel Hill Chancellor Holden Thorp canceled plans to ask the UNC Board of Governors to approve an airport authority.

Speaking at a Friday morning briefing for the press and leaders of a coalition opposed to the airport, Thorp said that UNC Health Care's Medical Air operations would move to Raleigh Durham International Airport and that Horace Williams Airport would close once construction was ready to begin for the new UNC Law School, which is planned for a location near the airport runway.

Thorp said that when he took office he thought using the airport authority was the right way to develop plans for the airport and that recently the university and the county were beginning to collaborate on naming members.

He changed his mind, he said, because of the growing concern of residents and distrust raised by airport opponents.

"There's just too much distrust — not of the authority, because they haven't been named yet — but because of the way the authority came to be," Thorp said at the briefing.

He said he read press accounts, comments and posts on OrangePolitics and reviewed the websites of groups critical of the airport and the legislation. He said that after reviewing the concerns, including those pertaining to federal funding and rules for airport facilities, with



PHOTO BY ROBERT DICKSON

Horace Williams Airport from above. Chancellor Holden Thorp's decision means the airport will stay open at least until Carolina North construction starts.

staff lawyers and planners, he concluded that RDU would be the best option for the Area Health Education Centers program.

He did not rule out pursuing an airport in Orange County in the future, but said the county would be fully involved in the process and that the university would approach the planning in a collaborative spirit.

Thorp acknowledged that the legislation took many residents of Orange County by surprise, which ratcheted up ill will toward the idea.

"I can promise you that if we do something big that affects the county, we won't use the same strategy that the Baltimore Colts used when they moved to Indianapolis," he said.

Tom Schopler, a member of Preserve Rural Orange and a vocal opponent of the airport, attended the briefing.

"We appreciate this direction," he told the chancellor. "It does represent the university that we all know and love. I think that's the right way to go."

SEE AIRPORT PAGE 2

University, town hashing out differences on Carolina North

BY KIRK ROSS
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL — Housing, transportation and stormwater fees were among the topics discussed at a weekend Carolina North retreat by the Chapel Hill Town Council and town planners.

During the four-hour briefing and policy discussion at the town's Operations Center Saturday, council members reviewed negotiations with university planners and officials, fleshing out concerns as the two sides continue to hammer out a development plan for the roughly 630 acres in Chapel Hill's jurisdiction. (A joint meeting on the plans was due to begin Wednesday night as *The Citizen* went to press.)

In its discussions on the next phase of negotiations, council members discussed how to draft

an ordinance to handle as much as three million square feet of new buildings on the site. The two sides are scheduled to have a development agreement before the council by summer.

Highlights from the discussions included:

- Housing — After reviewing housing plans, council members explored but ultimately rejected a proposal by council member Matt Czajkowski to ask the university to consider undergraduate housing at Carolina North. Council member Jim Ward said housing for employees, including service employees, should be included.
- Land preservation — Council members discussed requiring that certain key natural areas be put under preservation or that permitted uses for those lands be very limited.
- Energy — Council members wanted to see more information

from the university on building standards, how energy would be generated and where utility lines would run. Czajkowski said the university's plans to use methane from the landfill should be encouraged. Ward and others said they want to make sure that the university doesn't convert a power generation station to coal once that source runs out.

• Transportation — The council agreed to insist that no northern access road be built on the site. University officials have said they may want to reserve a route for a northern connection with Weaver Dairy Road Extension.

• Stormwater — Council member Bill Strom said the university should pay fees into the town's stormwater utility just as any other developer would.

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Manger says savings plan staying on track

BY KIRK ROSS
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL — Chapel Hill Town Manager Roger Stancil reported that town departments are just shy of a 5 percent budget reduction target set last fall as economic conditions worsened.

In a monthly update at a meeting of the town council on Monday night at Town Hall, Stancil said that about 2.2 million in savings has been set aside — close to the goal of 2.4 million.

The funds have been moved to a special line item in department budgets that will require the town manager's approval to be spent.

Stancil said saving money this year will be important as the next fiscal year budget is drafted. He projects a 3.3 million shortfall, and any savings from this year will be a useful cushion.

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Holding on while letting go

RECENTLY . . .
BY VALARIE SCHWARTZ

Artists don't hold things in much, but they do hold onto things.

Looking carefully at the art displayed in the yard of Hunter Levinsohn, a longtime Chapel Hill artist, one sees that the materials used to make them are things she could not throw away, like the "Coat of Many Colors" made of plastic spoons, cut up chip bags and plastic newspaper wrappers.

As she says on her website (hunterlevinsohn.com), she feels one of her "prime responsibilities as an artist is to point out when the emperor is wearing no clothes."

Therefore, when Election Day 2004 ended without hope for change, Levinsohn knew she had to find a way to release the pain she felt for our country.

"I was so heartbroken when Bush was

re-elected," she said. "Four more years of that kind of policy made me ashamed to be an American. I was always a liberal but I was always very patriotic."

She wanted to do something positive with her despair and by the time of Bush's second inaugural on Jan. 20, 2005, she had determined what it would be. From that date until Jan. 20 of this year, she has taken the full front page of the *New York Times* and folded it into an origami crane. From inside the paper, she has cut out the box that includes Americans lost in the wars, written the names of the dead on the wings and tucked the printed version inside the folds along with any editorials about the Bush administration. So great was her fear that documentation of his misdeeds would be lost, she also folded disclosing stories into cranes.



PHOTO BY VALARIE SCHWARTZ

Chapel Hill artist Hunter Levinsohn with one of 1,461 cranes made of the front pages of the *New York Times* during the second term of President George W. Bush.

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