



FRIDAY
Clear
47/23



SATURDAY
Partly Cloudy
52/31



SUNDAY
30% Chance of Rain
40/23

C THE CARRBORO CITIZEN



PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

Grancy graybeard (fringe tree), a popular small tree collected from the woods for African-American gardens, is often seen in Carrboro front yards.

FLORA BY KEN MOORE

Influenced by African-American gardens

Talking about the upcoming “African-American Gardening” presentation by University of Georgia professor emeritus Richard Westmacott, gardening friend Juel Duke and I discovered that we share a similar Southern gardening heritage. Juel grew up near Norlina remembering seeing all the interesting and colorful plants and yard ornaments throughout rural Warren County. At the age of 3, I began spending my summers in Warren County with my widowed aunt who shared her small tobacco farm with two African-American tenant families.

As Westmacott describes in his book, the term “garden” in the rural South referred to an area away from the house managed for the production of vegetables. Flowers were grown in the “yard,” generally in front of the house where, when there was time, families enjoyed sitting on the porch welcoming passers-by.

Backyards were generally used for practical activities, such as washing clothes, feeding the chickens and harvesting and processing vegetables. The yards were swept clean to prevent the growth of weeds and grass. There was generally a shade tree or two beneath which occurred the daily chores.

SEE **FLORA** PAGE 10

Transit, schools to benefit from stimulus

BY KIRK ROSS
Staff Writer

STATE — Back in the district after six weeks focusing on the recently passed and signed stimulus package, Fourth District U.S. Congressman David Price said since his return he has heard a good number of stories of how the economy has reshaped the lives of constituents.

That was clear a few minutes into a conversation at Cup of Joe at Timberlyne in Chapel Hill, when a recent state government retiree approached him to ask if she should worry about the state retirement plan.

While noting that the pension plan is in the hands of the state government, Price tried to be reassuring. He said the stimulus package was designed in part to help states meet the challenge of flagging revenues and growing demand for services and provide relief for those hit by layoffs and cutbacks.

The link between the recent stimulus bill and state and local governments has been the theme of a series of town hall meetings Price is holding throughout the Fourth District, which includes all of Orange and Durham counties and portions of Chatham and Wake

counties. In an hour-long discussion with *The Citizen*, the congressman discussed the potential effects of the bill, along with what’s next on the agenda for Congress and the Obama administration.

According to Price, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, signed into law by President Obama on Tuesday, means additional transportation and school funding at the local level as well as a sizeable contribution toward plugging the hole in the state budget.

School districts will receive direct payments for renovation and repairs through a formula based on

their Title One student populations. The bill also includes provisions to improve the marketability of state and local government bonds for infrastructure projects and a new bond-financing program for school construction, rehabilitation and repair. Many local governments and school systems in the state, including the Town of Chapel Hill and Chatham County Schools, have backed off construction plans in the past year because of concerns about the bond market.

SEE **PRICE** PAGE 8



Lenore Yarger and Joan Walsh stand in support of the Chatham County Commissioners’ resolution not to participate in the federal ICE 287(g) policing program.
PHOTO BY TAYLOR SISK

Chatham rallies against ICE

BY TAYLOR SISK
Staff Writer

PITTSBORO — Gary Phillips recalls a march held in 2006 in support of granting citizenship to illegal immigrants. The march began as a group of some 2,000, he said, and as they moved through neighborhoods toward the courthouse that number had doubled as Latinos gathered the courage to join, coming out of “basements and businesses.”

“They were invisible people made visible,” said Phillips, a Silk Hope resident and former Chatham County commissioner. “It was one of the most powerful experiences of my life.”

Last Monday evening was a similar such occasion.

That evening, as the Chatham County Board of Commissioners meeting was called to order, it was announced that due to the fact that 35 people had signed up to speak, the customary 30-minute public

input session held at the beginning of each commissioners’ meeting would be extended to 90.

The large upstairs room in the superior courthouse was filled to capacity, the walls lined to their length. What had brought the majority of these folks out was an announcement that the commissioners would hear comments concerning a resolution they had

SEE **CHATHAM** PAGE 7

Chapel Hill native an ‘Idol’ finalist

BY SUSAN DICKSON
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL — Anoop Desai, a graduate student at UNC and a graduate of East Chapel Hill High School, has made it past the judges to the top 36 of the “American Idol” competition.

Desai performed with 11 other finalists Tuesday night, hoping to receive enough votes to put him in the top three of his group to go to the next round of the competition. Judges said his rendition of Monica’s “Angel of Mine” was not his best performance, but said he has a “massive likeability factor” working in his favor.



PHOTO BY JASMINA NOGO

SEE **ANOOP** PAGE 7
Excitement was in the air as Anoops fan gathered at Players Tuesday night.

Garden entering a new phase in a long history

RECENTLY . . .

By Valerie Schwartz

The struggles to begin the N.C. Botanical Garden were as troublesome for C. Ritchie Bell as the exotic invasives that now strangle many Southern gardens, but many of the details have burrowed as deeply as kudzu roots. Still, Bell was able to provide an oral history on Feb. 1 in the garden’s Totten Center for members of the N.C. Native Plant Society.

“We had the garden as an idea,” Bell said as he addressed several dozen in attendance. Bell was hired into the botany department in 1951 and served as the garden’s founding director until his retirement in 1986. He said that Dr. W.C. Coker, who in 1903 became the first professor of botany at UNC, generated the idea.

Land south of the campus was dedicated for development of a botanical garden in 1952, and though “money was hard to come by,” Bell said, the trustees passed a resolution to start a garden.

When it came to legislation, Bell had a hard time cutting through the red tape. In 1966, he presented a plan to Chancellor J. Carlyle Sitterson asking for \$70-80,000, but “the university, as always, was tight for money,” Bell explained.

His funding request was turned down — but he and the future garden had a friend in William Lanier Hunt, who had “a friend in the state Legislature,” and the bottom line, which Bell spelled out in detail, is that the university’s budget for that year passed because money for the garden was included in it.

“That’s how we lucked out and got the botanical garden started — political power and one telephone

call,” Bell said before he thanked everyone in attendance for supporting the garden and sat down.

But the history lesson continued as Ken Moore, the first employee of the garden, hired in 1971, shared his early memories of the garden before Bell’s successor, Peter White, led everyone on a tour of the Education Center projected for completion in June.

White’s enthusiasm for the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) platinum building in the UNC system spread through the group even after traversing a muddy trench to stand in chilly breezeways that one of these days will sport rocking chairs and tea trolleys along with a view of the sycamore-studded nature trail.

SEE **RECENTLY** PAGE 7

INSIDE

McDougle and Phillips Honor Rolls
page 5

INDEX

Music	2
News	3
Community	4
Schools	5
Opinion	6
Business	8
Land and Table	9
Classifieds	9
Almanac	10