

News Briefs

Transit in Orange County tweaked

Chapel Hill Transit (CHT) will implement schedule changes this Monday. Time adjustments will be made to weekday routes F, G, NS and V to improve schedule reliability and better reflect actual travel times. Time adjustments will also be made to Saturday routes CM, CW, DM, FG and JN. While the service hours for Saturday will not change, many routes will operate fewer trips. New schedules are available at [www.ci.chapel-hill.nc.us/index.aspx?page=1176](http://www.ci.chapel-hill.nc.us/index.aspx?page=1176) and will be provided on buses starting Friday.

Public forum on solar energy

UNC's Solar Energy Research Center will hold a public forum and information session to explore the crucial energy issues of the coming decades. The free event, "A Sustainable Energy Future-Mapping the Way," will be Friday, Jan. 15, at the William and Ida Friday Center in Chapel Hill. It begins at 5 p.m. with interactive displays and videos, followed by an open-discussion panel at 7 p.m. The panel will feature experts on current and developing energy sources, conservation and efficiency and politics and public policy. Panel members will include leaders from the environmental, scientific and business communities. For more information, visit [serc.unc.edu/outreach.pdf](http://serc.unc.edu/outreach.pdf)

Chapel Hill Rec programs coming soon

Registration has begun for Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation winter-spring programs. Residents of Chapel Hill and Orange County may register now; non-residents may register beginning Monday, Jan. 18. Camp registration begins on Feb. 1 for Chapel Hill residents, Feb. 8 for Orange County residents and Feb. 15 for non-residents. Pick up a brochure of parks and recreation programs or visit [townofchapelhill.org/register](http://townofchapelhill.org/register) to browse and register.

Saturation patrol

Carrboro police were on saturation patrol in downtown Carrboro from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. on New Year's Eve. There were 28 charges, including DWI arrests, speeders, reckless drivers and a man carrying a concealed weapon. A saturation patrol involves a large number of officers concentrated in a small geographic area.

Transit plan input sought

There will be a public-information session on the final draft of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro 2035 Long Range Transit Plan on Tuesday, Jan. 12 from 7 to 8 p.m. in the Council Chamber of Chapel Hill Town Hall. The plan may be viewed at [townofchapelhill.org/index.aspx?page=1284](http://townofchapelhill.org/index.aspx?page=1284) If you are unable to attend the information session, you may submit comments by email to [chtransit@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:chtransit@townofchapelhill.org), by phone at 969-4900 or faxed to 968-2840.

Tar Heel Temps to shutter operations this month

BY KIRK ROSS  
Staff Writer

UNC CAMPUS — Tar Heel Temps, the university's temporary staffing service that has operated for 17 years, will close at the end of the month, officials announced this week. In an email to department heads and senior staff, Brenda Malone, vice chancellor for human resources, said the decision was a difficult one and "made with a heavy heart." In addition to being one of the largest local sources of tempo-

rary work, for many the service has proved an informal route to permanent jobs on campus. Malone cited a drop in temporary hiring, tight budgets and an increase in administrative overhead as the key reasons for the closure. In an interview Tuesday, she said her department is working on long-term plans and strategies for handling temporary staffing. She said the number of employees in the Tar Heel Temp system has dropped considerably in the past two years as a budget squeeze led to a decrease in hiring. Only about 125 temps are employed under the system — down from about 200 this time last year and far below normal levels. The number of university departments and other units using the service has declined as well. "It boils down to economics," Malone said. "Our business is down." Malone said once the decision to close the service was made, the task became designing a new system for departments who rely on temporary labor. "We wanted to minimize the disruption to university units that employ temporary workers," she said. At the end of the month, current Tar Heel Temps employees will be converted to department payrolls and each department will take over hiring its own temporary workers either directly or through other temp services. Malone said she is hoping that by reallocating and reassigning roles within her department she can avoid layoffs for the eight human resources staff members who administered the temps program.



Chilly weather hasn't stopped work on downtown Carrboro's newest public parking lot. Manuel Turner and Chad Dusenberry work on marking off some of the roughly 90 spaces soon to be available at the corner of Roberson and Greensboro streets.

PHOTO BY KIRK ROSS

CHAMBER  
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Calls made by the U.S. chamber in support of candidates, Nelson said, are not often clear about which chamber is calling. With the U.S. chamber's rising profile in opposition to a public option in the recent health care reform debate, more

complaints to the locals have been lodged. Nelson has occasionally tried to point out the difference between the national and local groups, and last month he and his board of directors took the unusual step of including a note about it in its annual membership reminder. "Lately, the U.S. chamber has taken positions on health care and gas emissions that are getting lots of publicity, and we wanted to be clear about the relationship between our organizations," Joanne Fiore, chair of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro chamber's board of directors said in a recent email response to The Citizen. "We are a separate, autonomous organization and set our own agenda with our own local members' needs in mind." Nelson said he and the board have become increasingly comfortable with distancing themselves from the national organization. "We want to make that real clear to everybody," he said. There's been no formal split as yet, he said, but local officials recently sent at least one indication of their displeasure. When dues time recently rolled around, Nelson said, instead of the usual check for about \$600 he wrote one out for \$1.

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