

FOR THE RECORD

The election comes to a close on Tuesday evening. The polls, open since early voting began on Oct. 15, close at 7:30 p.m. We'll know shortly thereafter who the next mayor of Chapel Hill is and the changes the voters approved in the composition of the town council and the Carrboro Board of Aldermen. We'll know whether the incumbents in Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, Pittsboro and Carrboro kept their jobs. These are the things we don't know.

What we do know is that, judging from the early vote totals, it'll be another year of anemic turnout. Most of the voters, including those who very enthusiastically showed up to cast their ballots last year, are likely to stay home.

Sadly, the fervor we see for the democratic process doesn't seem to make it into the odd-year elections. It's also likely that without a presidential race at the top of the ticket, next year's federal elections are also going to be lackluster.

We can't make you vote. It's still a voluntary act with no downside for non-participation. Even the old adage that if you don't vote you can't complain doesn't apply. We've met plenty of people over the years who feel quite comfortable cursing a blue streak over local government while acknowledging that they had no role in its selection.

Nonchalance about voting is a terrible legacy to pass on to your children, especially since they will be the ones inheriting whatever future the officials ushered in by a single-digit percentage of the populace decide they should have.

We chalk much of this steady erosion of the value we place on enfranchisement as a damning indictment of the decline of civic education. Remember when citizenship was vigorously taught rather than passed on from one generation to another without comment?

Small wonder that we have such a high percentage of cranky, ill-mannered and woefully under-informed non-participants. For more than two decades, they've been spoon-fed Ronald Reagan's toxic tonic that government is inherently bad — always the problem and not the solution. All along, there's been almost nothing offered to counter that argument, because it's just not cool to point out that things like roads, public transit, schools and institutions like the university and its hospital came about because of a belief in the idea of government, and that by working together we could make a better world.

Now, as a people, we seem to lack the collective knowledge to even discuss the once-sacred social compact like adults. It's why some people can get away with blaming the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression on sub-prime mortgages rather than an unregulated casino culture on Wall Street. It's why our health care debate focuses not on the growing ranks of the uninsured, but on preserving the highly profitable insurance companies that enjoy exemption from anti-trust regulations and whose lobbyists basically write the laws that govern them.

We need better civic education here, there and everywhere in this country or we will continue to reap this bitter harvest of ignorance, cynicism and greed.

THE CARRBORO
CITIZEN

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WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

ELECTION LETTERS

Vote for Kleinschmidt

I am writing to support Mark Kleinschmidt for mayor of Chapel Hill. I served with Mark on the Justice in Action committee for our town, where I had the pleasure to work with him on issues of justice, equality and sustainability.

I am a teacher at Chapel Hill High School, where in the past Mark has graciously come to speak to and support our students. He understands the importance of education and the next generations' collective stake in local-government decisions, where he has offered encouragement and authentic support to any student on their educational path. He lives courageously as an openly gay leader and worked with the CHHS Gay-Straight Alliance to encourage students to serve the public in an effort to make our community sustainable for the future. Our young people need leaders like Mark to support their optimistic efforts to manifest real change.

As a teacher, I know I have an authentic advocate for my interests as an educator and town resident in Mark Kleinschmidt. I know Mark will lead Chapel Hill to new heights, leading the country on the forefront as a green town. I know as mayor, Mark will be the fierce supporter of public programs to ensure our public services are fully funded and government services are getting the resources they need. I don't guess where Mark stands; his record is clear. I don't guess how Mark will lead; he is already leading. I want the best to lead our town, and it's evident Mark Kleinschmidt, through his current leadership, is not merely a sensible choice, but the best choice.

TOM GREENE
Chapel Hill

For McElveen

As a lifelong resident of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro community, a proud graduate of Chapel Hill High School and a parent of two sons who received an excellent education in this school district, it is important to me that education remains a priority here. And because education is the "great leveler" in providing opportunity to every child, it becomes increasingly important that dedicated and committed individuals are charged with its governance. For this reason, I support Gregory McElveen for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro board of education.

I have known Greg for about 10 years. During this time, I have had the opportunity and pleasure of working with him in our church and community. I have been particularly impressed with how he works with the youth at our church and his desire to see that all of our youth are successful. Greg has been a Blue Ribbon Mentor Advocate with the district since 2005, giving his personal time and talent to help enrich a young person's life. Since his appointment to the school board last year, he has hit the ground running to ensure equal opportunity and access for every child.

Greg is level-headed and a consensus builder. He is respectful, selfless, a good listener, has good judgment and will be able to discern how best to serve the district's constituents. His experience in marketing research and his problem-solving experience are additional assets for consideration. For these reasons, I urge you to keep Greg McElveen on the Chapel Hill-Carrboro board of education.

STANLEY FOUSHEE
Chapel Hill

For Slade

I am a senior citizen living in Chapel Hill. I have been here for over 25 years. In my young adult years, I was active in the 1960s when social consciousness was a very big part of all of my friends' lives.

I am so happy that I met and have enjoyed the company of a young man

with that kind of spirit and belief in our mission here on Earth. I hope Sammy Slade will continue to give to his community in ways he has already and will do even more as an alderman on the Carrboro Board of Aldermen.

JULIE R. COLEMAN
Former Chapel Hill
planning board member

Vote Lee

Please join me in voting for Christine Lee for school board. Christine wants all children to reach their potential, seeks to recruit high-quality teachers and encourages parental involvement.

You may have already crossed paths with Christine. She has served on school improvement teams, governance and strategic planning committees and parent booster clubs. Her children attend Chapel Hill schools. In addition to serving the school district, Christine is a practicing physician.

Please vote for Christine on Nov. 3. Her dedication to our community will cultivate a top-notch school district that serves every child.

BARBARA GITTLEMAN
Chapel Hill

Vote Czajkowski

Rising taxes and the questionable financial decisions of our town government make us uncertain about our ability to afford Chapel Hill in the long term. We need a pragmatic approach to governing Chapel Hill. Our elected officials need to measure the long-term impact of their decisions, be faithful stewards of our very hard-earned tax dollars and prioritize the needs of this community. Lofty ideals are great, but please address them after you fix the potholes that are half the size of my car at Cedar Falls Park.

Join us in supporting Matt Czajkowski as our next mayor for Chapel Hill.

MONICA AND JOSE GULISANO
Chapel Hill

Vote for Matt

I think Matt Czajkowski's ideas for the re-birth of our downtown are some of the most exciting I have heard. They are both achievable and will also greatly benefit our local arts community.

MICHAEL BROWN
Chapel Hill

Gist for alderman

We urge everyone to get out to vote and re-elect Jacquie Gist for Carrboro alderman. Jacquie is passionate about Carrboro and has dedicated 20 years of service to our town. She is committed to finding ways to grow and develop our town with policies and practices that are sustainable, inclusive and collaborative. She has demonstrated time and time again that she is not afraid to speak her mind and share her ideas about how to ensure that Carrboro remains a unique and special small town. As residents of one of the downtown neighborhoods, we have appreciated how hard Jacquie has worked to balance downtown growth and development with the interests of residents who want the downtown area to be walkable, livable and vibrant, while protecting our unique history and the charm of our old mill town. She truly listens to community concerns and finds a creative way to represent all the diverse interests of the town. When so much is at stake, we need Jacquie's wisdom and vision on the town board. You can count on her to invest her time and talents for Carrboro!

MICHELE RIVEST
AND JOHN ALDERSON
Carrboro

Vote for Randee

I am writing to support the re-election of Randee Haven-O'Donnell to the

Carrboro Board of Aldermen. When I left the board of aldermen in 2005 and Randee joined the board, I knew that my former colleagues would be welcoming a new member who would give the time and dedication that is required to make good decisions in the face of difficult choices. She has an impressive list of accomplishments in her first term, focusing on all aspects of sustainability (economic, environmental and social justice). I have observed the studied, listening and thoughtful approach she brings to every decision of the board and the committees, from the Orange County Library Taskforce to the Local Living Economy taskforce.

In addition to hours of study and meeting participation, Randee solicits community input and creates mechanisms for community building. She tries to find the best combination of what is good for the individual and good for the community. If this wasn't enough, she brings forth some very creative ideas for sustainability and the leadership ability to implement them.

Randee has deep roots and long-standing relationships in this community, developed through her years of teaching environmental science to our community's youth. She is a natural community builder who has demonstrated this ability in her first term on the board. Carrboro citizens will be well-served by re-electing Randee Haven O'Donnell.

DIANA MCDUFFEE
Former member of
Carrboro Board of Aldermen

Support Raymond

A person who knows the issues and the effects they have on policymaking in local government, Will Raymond has and will advocate for social and environmental justice. Will is one who sees the importance of citizens' voices and will be the voice of those who are not at the table where decisions are made that affect them. We are at a critical point in planning for the future of our town. Construction will soon begin in the Chapel Hill planning district and a waste transfer station is part of the development that must be addressed. Will Raymond knows our roads, schools, housing and rights to basic amenities will be on the minds of citizens. Local and political education, accountability, honesty and democracy are the keys to transparency in government. A vote for Will Raymond is a vote for green initiatives and sustainability. We need new visionaries on our town boards. Make the right decision and vote for Will Raymond, a man who sees from within and not from without, one who has been at the meetings and has seen and heard the voice of the people.

I call for all friends, family members, church members, citizens and veterans to vote for community service and experience. Vote for Will Raymond.

ROBERT CAMPBELL
Chapel Hill

Vote for Cook

As I vote for, Sharon Cook for Carrboro alderman, her qualities of solid integrity, persistence, fair-mindedness, common sense, intolerance of injustice and environmental awareness come to mind.

As a planning board member, she knows that the decisions made by our town boards ultimately affect each of our neighborhoods, as well as our schools. As a proponent of the construction of a traffic light and sidewalks along Homestead Road, she worked for years with government officials for its completion.

When Sharon advocated with Rogers Road residents against the placement of yet another garbage facility next to them, she showed herself to be a community

LETTERS POLICY

Letters should be no more than 425 words in length and must be accompanied by the author's name, address and contact information. Lengthy letters written in longhand will become mysteriously lost. That said, send your letters to:

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activist in the best sense of the word. Carrboro needs Sharon Cook, who seeks office not for personal political gain, but rather for the betterment of all of Carrboro.

YOLANDA HEISER
Carrboro

Vote for Czajkowski

We chose to move to Chapel Hill for the quality of life here; it is an amazing place that we are fortunate to call home. But Chapel Hill has some fundamental problems right now that will determine our future.

Our tax base is unsustainably lopsided. Our government is gridlocked when it comes to clear vision and execution for our future. And our beautiful collegiate downtown (with the potential to be one of the best downtowns in the nation) is dysfunctional.

I encourage everyone to visit Matt-forMayor.org to learn more about Matt Czajkowski and his vision and passion for Chapel Hill – he will truly make a difference in our now and, more importantly, our future.

A. CARTER LINSTEAD
Chapel Hill

Council picks

Easthom, Harrison, Raymond and Rich. Why?

Incumbents, Laurin and Ed, have most notably provided an open door for help and questions to their constituents, have served us well and have demonstrated critically needed stewardship for our environment.

Candidates Will and Penny are both willing to challenge assumptions, ask the questions that need to be asked and will be able to hit the ground running when elected.

Together, these four knowledgeable council members will listen to our concerns, ask our questions and protect our environment, neighborhoods and town.

DEL SNOW
Chapel Hill

For Green

When I first heard that Dr. Joseph M. Green was running for a position on the school board, I was elated. Though I am neither a governor nor mayor, nor administrator nor teacher, I feel what I have to say is significant, seeing that I am one of Green's protégés. In this regard, I am a product of his devout commitment to students. Having been educated and advised by Green, I can honestly say that one of the major reasons I am currently pursuing my doctorate degree is in large part due to his unwavering mentorship.

During the time that I have known Green, he has consistently reinforced several timeless and valuable tenets. Green taught me that I must not settle for mediocrity; that although life presents its own set of challenges, I must persevere if I am to truly make my life purposeful. He taught me to never allow someone's opinion of me to influence the way that I see myself; that is, I am only as great as I think I am, and not necessarily how others perceive me.

During my academic toils, Green reiterated that education is important, and in order to progress I must be tenacious as well as educated. Even to this day, Green's mantra is "You can do this!" By "this," he means anything that I set forth to do – suggesting the world is my playground and my opportunities are limitless. Surprisingly, I am no anomaly in this regard, as Green shares these tenets with all of his students.

In my opinion, if you want someone you can trust, a person who views truthfulness as a necessity and who refuses to be sideswiped by politics, Green can be your representative. He has been, and continues to be, these things for others, as well as myself. Frankly, I could not recommend anyone better to lead the Chapel-Hill-Carrboro school district other than my mentor, the incomparable, Dr. Joseph M. Green.

BETTIE RAY BUTLER, M.A.
College Station, Texas