

This Weekend

- Friday**  
Sunny and Clear  
38/24
- Saturday**  
20% Chance of Rain  
47/30
- Sunday**  
Partly Cloudy  
54/32

THE CARRBORO CITIZEN

News

Fight has high school looking for answers



PHOTO BY KEN MOORE  
American Beech leaves glistening gold everywhere.

Robert Frost moments in the Adams Tract

FLORA

By Ken Moore

A small group of us were rewarded with some beautiful and dramatic surprises during our woods walk on the Adams Tract this past Saturday afternoon. It was very cold, the rain began to fall, and it was two hours before the Tar Heel basketball game. It's hard to believe that a small group of 11 adults and two lively youngsters would set off into the woods at the edge of Wilson Park at such a moment. But we did, and we were rewarded.

At the beginning of our adventure, I asked the two youngsters, Flora and Jasper, to serve as junior naturalists and lead us forward. Flora immediately initiated a game called "Find that Tree." She beat us all to the base of the biggest of several sycamores and explained that she could find it because of the bark. We all admired the brilliant white upper trunks of the big trees brightening the dark gray day.

We left the big white trees behind down on the low ground as Flora ran ahead up hill into the piney woods to find leaves of different trees to show us. Young Jasper was proud to find a cone of one of the three different common pines, and that discovery was so important that it did not matter what pine it was.

As we walked from the top of the gently sloped pine forest to the steeper slopes of older deciduous trees, the sight of a distant lone sycamore down on Bolin Creek made us pause. A few steps beyond, we were stopped in our tracks by a thicket of young American Beech trees. They characteristically hold onto their leaves through the winter season. I don't believe any of us were properly prepared for the Lilliputian forest of copper brown leaves glistening gold everywhere at eye level. A memorable moment, indeed.

SEE **FLORA**, PAGE 5

Town's taco trucks in jeopardy

Property owners asked to evict taquerias after anonymous complaint

By Kirk Ross  
Staff Writer

After receiving an anonymous complaint, Carrboro officials notified three property owners that so-called "taco trucks" parked on their properties are not in compliance with local zoning rules and will need to cease operations.

The owners of Fitch Lumber, Cliff's Meat Market and Johnny's Sporting Goods were notified by letter last week that allowing the trucks to operate on their property puts them in violation of the town's zoning ordinances. They were given seven days to shut down the trucks or face action from the town. The letter, dated January 17, stated that the businesses could appeal the decision through the town's board of adjustment, a process that requires a \$250 filing fee.

Marty Roupe, the town's development review administrator, said typically investigations of zoning compliance are driven by complaints from the public. Recently, he said, the town received a voice message complaining about the trucks, which offer a range of traditional taqueria fare such as tacos, tamales, sopas and enchiladas along with some more exotic specialties such as beef tongue.

The trucks, which operate mainly on weekend evenings, have grown in popularity and have won the praises of food writers for their authenticity.

Roupe said it was unfortunate that the person who called in the complain did not leave a number where they could be reached, but that since it was a formal complaint the town was required to follow up on it.

Carrboro Mayor Mark Chilton said he only recently became aware of the complaint with the trucks and the request by the town that they be shut down. He said he hoped that a solution could be found to keep them thriving.

SEE **TACOS** PAGE 10



PHOTO BY KIRK ROSS  
Closed for the winter, it's quiet around Univerity Lake these days. Though not nearly as drawn down as Cane Creek Reservoir, Assistant Lake Warden Robert Glosson says "you could harvest a lot of hay around here."

OWASA to hold water supply forum

The Orange Water and Sewer Authority will hold a public forum tonight (Thursday) regarding "The State of Our Local Water Supply," to provide information and receive customers' questions and feedback.

The forum will be held at 7 p.m. at the Chapel Hill Town Hall and will be televised live on local cable channel 18.

The forum will cover local water supply and demand and weather forecasts for coming months along with the short and long-term financial impli-

cations and the options, costs and timetable for addressing the worst-case drought scenario.

At the forum there will also be a review of proposed changes in OWASA's water conservation standards and ordinances to further limit outdoor irrigation in Stage Two and Stage Three water shortages.

Stage Two restrictions are now in effect. The proposed changes would generally prohibit irrigation with hand-held hoses, soaker hoses, drip irrigation and micro-spray systems

in Stage Two and prohibit all irrigation with OWASA drinking water in Stage Three. Stage Three restrictions have previously allowed outdoor watering with hand-carried watering cans or buckets.

Under the changes, Stage Two restrictions would mandate that OWASA-supplied potable water could only be used outdoors for irrigation purposes only by hand-carried watering cans or buckets, limited to a maximum of one-half inch of water applied to plant material in any given week.

New downtown project said to be short on parking

By Kirk Ross  
Staff Writer

A new five-story mixed-use development slated for the site of the old Andrews-Riggsbee hardware store won't provide enough parking and will exacerbate a growing downtown parking crunch, residents and business owners told the Carrboro Board of Aldermen Tuesday night.

The comments came as the board opened a public hearing on the proposed Roberson Square project on North Greensboro Street that would span the block between Carr, Roberson and Maple streets. The project includes two floors of commercial space, with the ground level dedicated to retail and restaurants and the second floor office space, and three floors of residential space with 18 condominiums.

With the restaurants included in the plan, town rules require the development to include 104 parking spaces, but the design provides for a 65-space underground garage and eight on-street parking spaces.

Architect David Ripperton, the project's designer, has asked the town to consider a number of factors that could reduce the amount of parking required.

Ripperton said that one reason there is less parking is that the developers decided not to jam everything together and

provide an open-air courtyard that would serve the space similar to the way the Weaver Street Market lawn serves Carr Mill Mall.

He asked that the board take that concept into consideration when looking at the parking issue. He also said that the rules for the restaurants could be crafted so that they could be more along the deli and sandwich shop variety, with fewer tables and less sit-down service.

Ripperton also said that in looking at traffic impacts, the board should consider that people living at Roberson Square are more likely to run errands on foot since drugstores, grocery stores and other destinations are nearby. It is also more likely that people living in the complex will use public transportation and bicycles, he said.

Representatives of town advisory boards said that while the project seems to match the vision for downtown, it should include more parking.

Daniel Amoni, speaking for the town's Transportation Advisory Board, said he would like to see the developer add seven more on-street spaces that were originally considered for the project, but not on the final plan.

SEE **ALDERMEN** PAGE 10

Leaders committed to providing the extra help needed

By Susan Dickson  
Staff Writer

Ten years ago, Bishop Gene Hatley started thinking about a program run through the church to help educate the members of the African-American community.

The program would reach out to children and adults who needed help with reading, math or other skills.

Although Hatley – who serves as pastor of Barbee's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church – tried to launch such a program several years ago, it was too small to succeed. But about a year ago, Hatley and other volunteers started work on a new program, Barbee's

Chapel Harvest Word Community Resource and Enrichment Centers, which will launch next month.

On Monday – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Hatley invited community members to the church to learn about the program.

"I'm just so excited," Hatley said. "I'm trying to contain myself."

Hatley announced the launch of the program at a meeting of school and community leaders earlier this month, where Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP and Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance leaders called for changed and improved achievement for black students in Chapel Hill-Carrboro schools.

Prior to the meeting, the groups distributed a report card to school officials outlining failures in 11 categories, including eliminating the minority achievement gap, decreasing the dropout rate of black students and more.

According to Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, about 44 percent of black elementary school students passed both reading and math End of Grade tests, compared with 93 percent of white elementary school students.

Closing the minority achievement gap has been a repeated goal of school board members,

SEE **EDUCATE**, PAGE 8



PHOTO BY KIRK ROSS  
After a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day tour of Barbee's Chapel's new education assistance center, Rev. Gene Hatley reflected on the need to do something within the community to address the achievement gap.

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INSIDE

Reality sets in for Heels

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Friends hope to see a freestanding library for Carrboro

RECENTLY...

By Valerie Schwartz

Having a library within walking distance of my childhood home fed my growing mind and kept me out of trouble. It even provided a safe place to break up with my first serious boyfriend. Throughout life, my local library was the place to go when bored or needing a lift — where there's always something new waiting to be found.

Members of Friends of the Carrboro Branch Library know such facts about libraries. They knew it 20 years ago when they first started petitioning for one and have kept the knowledge fresh through the years since 1995, when the Carrboro Branch Library opened up inside McDougle Middle School.

They have been grateful for the library there, but they will not be satisfied until Carrboro lives down the statistic of being

the largest town in North Carolina without a freestanding library.

"Our books are locked up and un-useable most of the week," said Nerys Levy. The library at McDougle is shared by the schools there, so patron hours begin after school lets out: from 3:30 to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday; Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m. It's closed on Fridays. Making it even harder to use, parking is difficult on school days — and on any day, it's quite a walk for people with limited physical abilities.

The mailing list of Friends of the Carrboro Library contains about 140 names, but the heavy lifting has fallen mostly to a core group: Levy, Martha Tyson, Dolores Triantafillou, Linda Browner, Barbara Dewey, Heidi Perry, Catherine Devine and Karla Reed, who, despite discouragement from town and county politicians, continue to fight for money and a space to build a library where the people of Carrboro can

*"There's hope, but people need to come forward and be a part of it."*

— Nerys Levy, on the possibility of a freestanding library in Carrboro

easily gather seven days a week to open their minds, do homework, use a computer, enjoy community.

"As a retired teacher, I see it as a meeting place for all ages, from pre-school to senior citizens," said Triantafillou. "I see it as a

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