




This Weekend

**FRIDAY**
50% Chance of Precip
68/32 °F

**SATURDAY**
0% Chance of Precip
48/28 °F

**SUNDAY**
0% Chance of Precip
54/32 °F

THE CARRBORO CITIZEN

ELECTIONS
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carrborocitizen.com

FEBRUARY 23, 2012 ♦ LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED ♦ VOLUME V NO. L

FREE



Watercress has deeply lobed leaves typical of the mustard family.

PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

FLORA BY KEN MOORE

Way over there in the watercress patch

Last week down in Saxapahaw during the 30th anniversary celebration of the Haw River Assembly, local musician and songwriter Tim Stambaugh excitedly said to me, “It’s watercress time again.” Tim, an enthusiastic explorer of our local nature, has been an annual visitor to a watercress patch in Battle Forest in the center of Chapel Hill.

Watercress, *Nasturtium officinale*, requires clear running water, something unusual these days. Though watercress is fairly common in parts of Virginia and north, it is only occasionally encountered throughout our state. I’ve seen it in the wild very few times.

Hearing about that watercress patch hidden away at the bottom of one of those Battle Forest slopes set me off searching for it with walking buddies Brian and Tony.

What a treasure to have nearby the 93-acre Battle Park with trails managed by the N.C. Botanical Garden as part of UNC. The forest of Battle Park is further extended via the Chapel Hill Greenway Battle Branch Trail connecting it to the Community Center on Estes Drive. That’s the easiest parking access to the park during weekdays, and that’s where we began our search.

It’s a 10-15 minute easy walk from there through impressive thickets of invasive exotics to arrive at one of the Garden’s helpful information kiosks where Copperhead Curve Trail crosses Battle Branch Creek.

Other entry-point interpretive kiosks are located at the Forest Theater, at the intersection of Gimghoul Road and Glandon Drive and along Park Place.

With interpretive guide and map in hand, it’s easy to marvel

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Landfill closure confirmed

Transfer station site rejected

BY ROSE LAUDICINA
Staff Writer

In a unanimous decision on Tuesday, the Orange County Board of Commissioners set June 30, 2013, as the date to close the county landfill, giving the county and its municipalities 16 months to determine what to do with their trash.

The decision was met with loud cheers and applause from the standing-room-only crowd at the commissioners’ meeting.

The county commissioners decided in October 2011 not to pursue an option that could extend the life of the landfill, thereby ensuring its closure in 2013. But to make it official, they had to pick a date.

The next step for the county is to determine what to do with its trash.

Also on Tuesday, the board voted unanimously to take a proposed site at the northwest corner of the intersection of I-40 and N.C. 86 off the table for consideration as a waste transfer station site.

“It is clear to me and clear to the board that Orange County needs to have a real discussion about what happens with Orange County’s solid waste,” Commissioner Valerie Foushee said.

“We need to engage with the towns and the university and talk about where our trash goes,” she said.

At the assembly of governments meeting in January, commissioners told the Hillsborough, Chapel Hill and Carrboro governing boards of their intention to begin trucking the county’s trash to the Durham waste transfer station as a temporary solu-

tion.

This suggestion was met with fervent opposition from both Chapel Hill and Carrboro, while Hillsborough was in favor of the idea.

Carrboro Mayor Mark Chilton came to the meeting with his own proposal, and asked commissioners to look at siting a waste transfer station in Orange County at the I-40/N.C. 86 site.

Before the commissioners voted to look into this site, they heard from numerous residents voicing their opposition to Chilton’s plan.

“I was shocked to hear Mayor Chilton offering up a site outside of his jurisdiction and in the rural buffer,” Marilee McTigue told the board on Tuesday.

“The rural parts of our county are not vacant lands waiting for the municipalities to come break

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TRACKING TRASH

With the Orange County landfill now officially set to close in June 2013, the Orange County Board of Commissioners has chosen to truck the county’s trash to a waste transfer station in Durham.

Although billed as a temporary solution, Carrboro and Chapel Hill officials are unhappy with the decision, expressing concern about having no control over where the trash is dumped after leaving Durham. The municipalities have not yet decided whether they too will contract with Durham.

Chapel Hill Town Council member Penny Rich said she is concerned that trash trucked outside county lines could be dumped in someone else’s backyard, creating environmental and health hazards Orange

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Yarn bombing hits Carrboro

BY ROSE LAUDICINA
Staff Writer

The term “yarn bombing” invokes images of brightly colored balls of yarn falling from the sky, unraveling over buildings and sidewalks, covering the metal, cement and glass structures of a town in a cozy, comfy knit.

In reality, this is a pretty accurate description.

Yarn bombing, also known as guerrilla knitting or graffiti knitting, is the art of taking objects in public spaces, from trees to bike racks, and covering them in knitted yarn creations.

While this is an international movement – Magda Sayeg of Houston is said to have been the founder, in 2005, and June 11 of last year marked the first international yarn bombing day – it has only just now found its way to Carrboro on a large scale.

Carrboro residents woke up Saturday morning to find a bit more color and yarn around town, encasing water fountains, pillars at Carrboro Town Hall and even a knitted sign on a bench proclaiming, “I love knitting.”

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Yarn bombs took over downtown Carrboro on Saturday, with colorful creations covering everything from benches and columns to water fountains and handrails. Here, yarn bombs dress up a crepe myrtle and a sculpture near the intersection of Greensboro and Weaver streets.

PHOTO BY ALICIA STEMPER

CH to consider cell phone law

BY SUSAN DICKSON
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL – Furthering its consideration of a ban on cell phone use while driving, the Chapel Hill Town Council on Monday voted 7-2 to schedule possible action for March 12.

Council members Matt Czajkowski and Gene Pease cast the dissenting votes, expressing concerns about preemption and the enforceability of such an ordinance.

The ordinance, which was drafted by Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos, would prohibit the use of cell phones or any additional technology, like cameras or music players, while operating a car. The ordinance proposes a \$25 fine for violation.

Under the ordinance as drafted, a driver could not be cited for violating the ordinance unless an officer had cause to stop the driver for a violation of another law. For example, a driver could not be stopped simply for using

a cell phone while driving, but a driver who ran a stop sign while using a cell phone could be cited for both the traffic violation and using a phone while driving.

The ordinance would not apply to drivers using a phone to communicate with emergency officials in an emergency situation or to drivers communicating with their parents, children, legal guardians or spouses.

Karpinos said he included the exceptions in the proposed ordinance because he felt they would give it a better chance of being upheld if challenged. At issue is whether the ordinance could be preempted by state law, Karpinos said, adding that he felt he could make a reasonable argument against preemption.

Karen Turner, an Asheville resident whose brother was killed in an accident involving a driver who was texting, traveled to Chapel Hill to

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Aldermen, Friends spar over library site

BY SUSAN DICKSON
Staff Writer

CARRBORO – Discussion grew heated Tuesday night between members of the Carrboro Board of Aldermen and the Friends of the Carrboro Branch Library as the groups squared off on criteria for siting a library in Carrboro.

The Orange County Board of Commissioners have asked the board of aldermen to review criteria for siting a southwest Orange County library in Carrboro. Carrboro has a county library within the McDougle School, but community members have long advocated for a freestanding library, citing concerns with the visibility of the library and limited hours of operation.

Members of the board of aldermen have said their top priorities for a library site are accessibility via public transit, walkability and bikeability, and that they would like to solicit community input earlier in the process than proposed by the county.

The county’s proposed criteria stipulate that proposed library sites go through three phases of screening to ensure selection of the best possible site. Phase one considers visibility, long-term functionality and accessibility; phase two, centrality/direct benefits, site conditions/sustainability and reasonable cost; and phase three, critique of the site by stakeholders, lease vs. purchase and the possibility of partnerships.

Alex Brown, president of the Friends, said that too many changes to the county’s proposed criteria could be seen as obstructive to the process and urged the board to move quickly.

“This will be a county project paid for by county taxpayers, but you will have plenty of input,” she said. “If you want the county to build a library in Carrboro, please, tell them you’re fine with their criteria.”

Mayor Mark Chilton said he strongly disagreed with what the

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Student-housing development proposed

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Increased need, decreased support

RECENTLY ...
BY VALARIE SCHWARTZ

According to the N.C. Center for Nonprofits, Chapel Hill and Carrboro support 75 nonprofit agencies. A few of them are foundations that provide funding, and some are entertainment-based, but many were established to meet serious needs that might otherwise go unmet.

Those agencies rely heavily upon state and federal

funding to keep their doors open. With the recession, funding has been cut as the need for services has increased.

Among the 500,000-plus government jobs cut since the recession began in 2007 are grant managers who handle the money that goes to nonprofits. Many agencies are paid on a reimbursement plan, where they are promised money to be used for specific needs after they submit paperwork proving proper usage. But the remaining grant managers are overburdened. Executive directors calling to inquire about late compensa-

tion are frequently and repeatedly told their report has been lost and asked to resubmit.

Some funders have developed roadblocks to payment in the form of excessive oversight, including site visits, monthly and quarterly reports, mandatory trainings throughout the year for staff and the board of directors, required audits and a full review of an agency’s accounting files. There are also demands for collaboration with other agencies.

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