



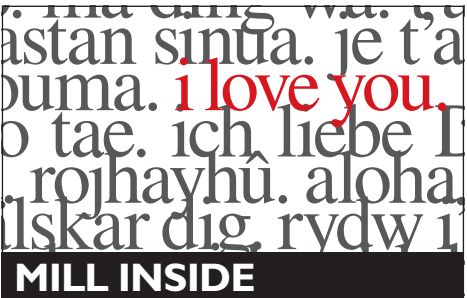
FRIDAY
0% Chance of Precip
59/38 °F



SATURDAY
50% Chance of Precip
56/45 °F



SUNDAY
40% Chance of Precip
56/41 °F



A carpet of roadside mulleins
PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

FLORA BY KEN MOORE

Roadside carpet of mullein

Flora’s focus this week is wooly mullein, *Verbascum thapsus*, also called velvet-leaf, flannel-leaf, Jacob’s staff and Quaker rouge. It’s in abandoned fields, on roadsides and even in pavement openings, single or clustered in patches.

Last week a *Citizen* reader urged me to describe the extensive carpet of mullein on that sloping, south-facing roadside adjacent to the on-ramp from Columbia Street to the N.C. 54 Bypass going west toward Carrboro. I’ve been enjoying that growing roadside population of mullein for years, and this year hundreds of mullein rosettes are effectively carpeting the hillside. It’s also notable that interspersed within that shaggy carpet of mullein are numerous fire-ant hills, definitely to be avoided.

Generally described as a biennial, mullein grows one year, then flowers, produces seed and dies the second year. Studies have determined that some plants will germinate, grow, flower, produce seed and die in one year, and other plants may continue this short lifecycle into a third year or more. That’s quite a survival strategy.

What may seem limiting is it requires open ground to survive, so you won’t find it in forests or competing with vigorous perennials. However, its seed remains viable for up to 100 years, so it is ready to take advantage of disturbance on any site – another good survival strategy.

We have the Quakers to thank for one of the humorous common names. Not allowed to use makeup, these settlers rubbed wooly mullein leaves on the face for a long-lasting ruby blush. Quaker rouge was an effective makeup without breaking Quaker rules.

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Council says no independent Yates investigator

BY SUSAN DICKSON
Staff Writer

Opting not to pursue an independent investigation of the Nov. 13 raid of the former Yates Motor Co. building, the Chapel Hill Town Council on Monday voted 7-1 to have town staff collect information from those with first-hand knowledge of the events via an input website, to be referred to the town’s Community Policing Advisory Committee.

On Jan. 9, the council referred Town Manager Roger Stancil’s internal review to the CPAC, having voted not to consider a measure proposing an independent review of the events.

But last week, the CPAC submitted a

petition to the town council requesting the assistance of an independent investigator. CPAC members said they felt they needed the assistance of an outside investigator to adequately review the incident, noting the extensive time involved in interviewing involved parties.

The committee’s request did not include a cost estimate of hiring an investigator, and council members had said they wanted more information before making a decision. But town staff did not provide the council with an estimate, instead outlining remaining concerns regarding the Yates incident and related action plans, including the input website.

The approved strategy, which also stipulates that the police department

should publicly answer questions posed by the CPAC, was recommended by Stancil. The plans will be reviewed by the CPAC.

“We certainly would not want to proceed with this critically important work without the confidence of the committee,” Stancil said, suggesting that the committee use the information gathered to determine what police department policies need review.

Stancil identified policing in situations with many bystanders as one particular area in need of improvement.

“We are exploring additional approaches for bystander safety,” he said.

Stancil also noted the trust that was lost in the community following the event and the need for the town to find

ways for the police department to engage with residents.

“Rebuilding trust after such a traumatic event requires us to know each other,” he said.

Concerns have been raised about the police’s response to the occupation of the building, which began the night of Nov. 12 – led, reportedly, by attendees of the Carrboro Anarchist Bookfair – and resulted in a dramatic encounter with police the afternoon of Nov. 13, with eight arrests.

Residents have questioned the police’s failure to communicate with those inside the building prior to the raid, in which a police Special Emergency

SEE **YATES** PAGE 4



The cast sings and kicks their way through the grand finale of *Amendment One: The Musical!*. They performed the play at the conclusion of the Orange County Human Relations Month Forum at the Carrboro Century Center on Sunday.
PHOTO BY ALICIA STEMPER

Fighting for rights with song and dance

BY ROSE LAUDICINA
Staff Writer

When Rachel Kaplan found out that a group of North Carolina citizens could have their rights taken away due to a constitutional amendment on the May ballot, she decided to do something about it.

She chose to put pen to paper, enlist some help from friends and a founding father and sing about it.

“This is pretty much the civil rights movement of our generation, and I want to be somebody who takes part in that and not a bystander,” said Kaplan, a sophomore at UNC.

Kaplan wrote the play *N.C.*

Amendment One: The Musical!, inspired by the celebrity-made video “Prop 8: The Musical!,” in which Jack Black as Jesus reminds California lawmakers that America was built on the separation of church and state, prompting them to realize they’d made a mistake in placing the matter on the ballot.

In Kaplan’s musical, which she also directed, produced and acted in, she replaces Jesus with George Washington, who returns from the past to scold lawmakers and wave a giant rainbow around the stage.

“To decree who you can love is

SEE **AMENDMENT I** PAGE 5



Rachel Kaplan, author of *Amendment One: The Musical!*, thanks the audience for its rousing support and invites attendees to request a performance of the play for their church or civic groups.
PHOTO BY ALICIA STEMPER

Chapel Hill OKs food trucks

BY SUSAN DICKSON
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL – Clearing the way for food trucks in Chapel Hill, the Town Council voted unanimously on Monday to approve a fee schedule for an ordinance that will allow the trucks within town limits.

The discussion stems from a 2011 petition by Lex Alexander, owner of 3Cups café on Elliott Road, that the town change regulations to allow food trucks. The council held a series of public hearings late last year, hearing little opposition to allowing food trucks in town.

Council members had previously expressed concern about funding the regulation of the trucks. On Monday, town planner Kendal Brown presented a fee schedule for the trucks, which would require a \$118 zoning permit for both owners of property where food trucks park and the food-truck owners, as well as a \$600 annual fee to truck owners to offset inspections and regulatory costs.

Under the regulations, the vendors will also be required to pay sales tax on sales made in Orange County.

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce had previously expressed concerns about the trucks’ effects on downtown restaurants, but chamber CEO Aaron Nelson said he felt the concerns were addressed in the planning process.

“We look forward to welcoming food trucks to Chapel Hill, but will continue to monitor their impact on existing local businesses,” he said.

The ordinance will allow food trucks or trailers on private, commercially zoned lots, subject to approval

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Assessing the needs of the homeless

BY TAYLOR SISK
Staff Writer

“Morning,” Crister Brady calls out. “Anybody home?”

It’s 4:30 a.m., and a pack of eight visitors, led by Brady, a UNC graduate and soon-to-be medical student, and Emily Clark, a social worker, has arrived at a campsite unannounced.

They’re volunteers with the United Way’s national 100,000 Homes Campaign, organized to place 100,000 homeless people in housing by July 2013. In Orange County, the campaign was co-sponsored by the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness. Volunteers were also out in Wake County.

In the early-morning hours of Tuesday and Wednesday of last week, five teams of volunteers visited camps, cars and alleyways throughout the county, asking the occupants a series of questions to determine their needs – attempting, essentially, to learn the

names and faces, and a few words of the stories, of those who remain on the streets through the night.

The group led by Brady and Clark had been assigned Carrboro, and Mayor Mark Chilton was along. Chapel Hill Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt and Hillsborough Mayor Tom Stevens were out with teams in their own towns.

In some cases, the visitors’ arrival had been prearranged. Advance work was done in the previous days to inform as many folks as possible that a team of surveyors would be stopping by armed with homemade muffins, hot coffee and McDonald’s coupons.

In other cases, it was a matter of following up on tips. A Carrboro police officer and an emergency medical technician accompanied the team as guides.

In all cases, Brady and Clark made certain not to surprise, calling out

SEE **HOMELESS** PAGE 2

Council rejects Charterwood

BY SUSAN DICKSON
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL – After more than four years of consideration and six meetings regarding the proposed Charterwood development, the Chapel Hill Town Council rejected the project on Monday.

The six-building, 278,000-square-foot project was proposed to include up to 154 residential units – nine townhomes and 145 apartments – and up to 73,000 square feet of office and retail space on 9.3 acres of a 15.7-acre property at 1641 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., just south of Weaver Dairy Road.

The council voted 5-3 to approve the project, but because neighbors had submitted a valid protest petition, supermajority approval was required. Council member Donna Bell was absent due to illness, so six of eight votes were needed for approval instead of seven of nine. Council members Laurin Easthom, Ed Harrison and Lee Storrow voted against the project.

The applicant, Bill Christian of WCA Associates, had made a number of changes to the project over the

years, reducing its overall size, moving buildings to preserve additional trees and increase buffers and removing plans for a 100-room hotel.

Easthom said she was concerned about the affordability of the residential units in the project. The applicant proposed renting two-bedroom townhomes for \$1,200 to \$1,600 a month and one-bedroom apartments starting at \$850 a month.

Harrison noted the perspective of the neighbors who would view the project looking up a hill, making the buildings appear much larger.

Other council members said they would support the project.

Council member Gene Pease said the project was in line with the goals of the town’s Northern Area Plan Task Force, citing its placement of residential and commercial development on the bus line, “which we need in this town.”

A number of residents of Northwood V, which neighbors the property, expressed opposition to the project, citing concerns about buffers, building

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Leaders talk trash

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