

News Briefs

Easter trash collection

The Town of Carrboro will be closed on Friday, March 21. There will be no garbage collection that day; Friday's garbage will be collected one day earlier. There will be no change in the curbside recycling schedule.

OWASA considers delaying surcharges

Because water supplies have reached 57 percent due to recent rainfall, the OWASA board of directors will meet at 3:30 p.m. today (Thursday) to discuss delaying the rate surcharges associated with the stage three water shortage declared on Feb. 28.

If not delayed, the surcharges for water use would go into effect on March 17. At the Feb. 28 meeting, OWASA staff recommended that stage three restrictions be removed if lakes are 60 percent full by April 1.

District fights form

UNC's Wesley Foundation was criticized when it unveiled plans to build a 70,000-square-foot five-story Methodist dorm where its current building stands now on Pittsboro Street. Residents of the Cameron-McCauley historic district opposed the move to a bigger building. The current building is only 17,000 square feet now.

Alternative plans were presented Monday and suggested either a smaller, four-story building or a property swap with the Office of Undergraduate Education and academic advising offices at 223 E. Franklin St. — which would then be bulldozed and replaced with either the five- or four-story building.

UNC director honored

John Sanders, former director of the Institute of Government at UNC, was honored Feb. 21 by the North Carolina Bar Association as the 2008 recipient of the John McNeill Smith Jr. Constitutional Rights and Responsibilities Section Award.

The award honors a person who has demonstrated extraordinary commitment to the ideals embodied in the constitutions of the United States and the state of North Carolina. Sanders was the principal staff person for the 1968 North Carolina State Constitution Study Commission, which produced the state's present Constitution.

Michael Crowell, a professor at the school, presented the award and had submitted the nomination. Crowell said of Sanders, "For decades he has been recognized as one of the most knowledgeable people in the state on the history and meaning of the state Constitution."

Local economy

The Orange County Economic Development Commission will host its annual "State of the Local Economy" event at the Carolina Club in Chapel Hill on Wednesday, April 9 from noon to 1:30 p.m. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. The guest speaker is Charles Hayes, president and CEO of the Research Triangle Partnership. Tickets are \$30, a table is \$275.

For more information, visit www.co.orange.nc.us/ecodev or contact Yvonne Scarlet at 245-2325 or yscarlett@co.orange.nc.us.

Registrations can be mailed to Yvonne Scarlet, Orange County Economic Development, PO Box 1177, Hillsborough NC 27278 and must include name, company name, address, phone or fax number, email and any special dietary requests. Checks are payable to Orange County Economic Development. Registrations must be received no later than April 3.

Special education night

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools will host an Exceptional Children District Parent Night, "Navigating the Special Education Process," on March 13 at 6:30 p.m. at the Carolina Center for Educational Excellence on the Smith Middle School campus.

To register or for more information, visit www.chccs.k12.nc.us or call Karen Patillo at 967-8211, ext. 234.

Grieving parents find comfort in Compassionate Friends

By Emily Burns
Staff Writer

Four and a half years have passed since Olivia Royal Petty, then 25, was killed in an automobile accident, but her mother Daphne Hill said that it sometimes feels like it has been just four and a half weeks.

For parents who have lost a child, Hill said, the grieving process never stops.

"We are always thinking about our child in the back of our minds," said Hill, co-founder of the Chapel Hill Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, an international self-help support group for adults dealing with the loss of a child or sibling.

"We just want to say, 'Talk about it,'" she said.

With nearly 600 chapters across the nation, TCF strives to create small, close-knit communities in which grieving adults can come together to remember their loved ones, share coping skills and develop lasting friendships with others who have experienced similar loss.

"I think The Compassionate Friends is still a new idea for many people," said Julie Coleman, who co-founded the Chapel Hill chapter with Hill in 2005. "We want people who need the help to know that we are here."

"We try to let everyone speak. We learn from every member, and every member learns from us," said Coleman, whose son Justin Lord Coleman died in 2003 at the age of 27.

At most monthly meetings, the first hour is reserved for group discussion of a single topic, such as what coping skills have been most effective. The last half-hour is reserved for more intimate, one-on-one conversations between members.

Through their experiences with the organization, Hill and Coleman have learned that many adults who have lost children find it difficult to express their emotions, especially as time passes and their friends and family assume the grieving process is over.

Both Coleman and Hill said they have found acceptance and comfort through their involvement with TCF, and the organization has offered the type of support they need.

For Hill, TCF meetings offer an opportunity



PHOTO BY EMILY BURNS

Julie Coleman, left, sits with Daphne Hill and pictures of their children. The two founded the Chapel Hill chapter of The Compassionate Friends, which helps parents cope with losing a child.

to keep memories of her daughter alive. She is able to show the same pictures and tell the same stories over and over, and someone is always there to listen.

"People have to have this because it hurts too much not to," Hill said.

"I can be in a bad mood or a good mood or no mood, and I can feel total acceptance," Coleman said.

Coleman also said she has gained an extended family through her involvement with the organization.

"We've all been through the same things," she said.

Hill first learned of TCF through a fellow teacher at Pittsboro Elementary School. Soon after, she learned that Coleman was also interested in forming a local chapter.

Hill called Coleman in the spring of 2005 to ask if she would like to meet to discuss the possibility of forming a chapter together.

That same afternoon, they met for the first time in Coleman's kitchen, talked about their children and began to make plans for their own chapter. The first meeting of the

Chapel Hill Area Chapter was held Oct. 17, 2005 — exactly two years after Justin Coleman passed away.

In addition to providing a local support network, the organization offers other opportunities for its members from across the nation and the world to come together.

TCF hosts a Worldwide Candle Lighting and regional and national conferences each year. This year's national conference will take place in Nashville, July 18-20.

The Chapel Hill Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month at Evergreen United Methodist Church, 11098 Hwy. 15-501. The next meeting will be held Monday, March 17.

Any adult who has lost a child or sibling is invited to attend the meeting and to participate or listen, and there are no membership dues or obligations.

For more information, visit www.chapel-hilltcf.org or contact Julie Coleman at 967-3221.

OBITUARIES

Hazel Felker Kiser

Hazel Felker Kiser, 83, died Friday at Duke Hospice in Hillsborough.

She was born in China Grove, N.C. on September 14, 1924 and moved to Kannapolis as a child. She graduated from Canon High School in 1942. In 1952, she moved to Chapel Hill with her husband. She was formerly employed by Village Family Medicine as the office manager. She also worked for Central Carolina Bank and was a former church secretary for Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Chapel Hill, where she was a member for over 50 years.

She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Barbara and

Richard Bryson of Yadkinville; and her son and daughter-in-law, Dale and Margaret Kiser of Pittsboro.

Funeral Services were held at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church


on East Rosemary Street in Chapel Hill Tuesday.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Duke Hospice at the Meadowslands (<http://dhch.dukehealth.org>) or to the US Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Arrangements by Walkers Funeral Home.

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