

# ‘You could see the pride on people’s faces’

Obama sworn in as community, world bear witness

BY KIRK ROSS, SUSAN DICKSON, TAYLOR SISK, MARGOT LESTER AND JASMINA NOGO  
Staff Writers

Barack Obama took the oath of office Tuesday morning before a crowd on the National Mall estimated at more than two million and with many thousands here in the community watching on TVs and computers. At noon, Obama, who won more than 72 percent of the vote in Orange County, became the 44th president of the United States and the first African-American to win the office. For those who made the trip to Washington D.C. and

those here who tuned in at home or crowded around televisions in downtown businesses, the historical importance of the moment was clear. Eugene Farrar, president of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro chapter of the NAACP, was on a rise on the mall near the Washington Monument. Farrar boarded a bus to the event right after services at First Baptist Church in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. ended on Monday. On Wednesday morning, after a long bus ride home, he was exhausted and inspired.

SEE OBAMA PAGE 9



PHOTO BY KIRK ROSS  
After speeches and songs Monday in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, marchers head up Franklin Street to services at First Baptist Church. Many of those who attended then boarded buses to Washington D.C. for the inaugural.



PHOTO BY ROBERT DICKSON  
Pat Garavaglia from Balloons and Tunes delivers one of several red, white and blue bundles on a chilly, snowy Tuesday morning.



PHOTO BY KEN MOORE  
The 200-year-old persimmon tree on UNC Polk Place is well worth a hug.

## FLORA BY KEN MOORE

UNC’s noble trees  
Most folks are familiar with the 200-plus-year-old tulip poplar, *Liriodendron tuliperifera*, affectionately known as “Davie Poplar.” It’s still in the center of UNC’s McCorkle Place, the campus quad between Franklin Street and South Building. Beneath this tree, in 1793, legend credits the founding fathers with having determined that the state’s university would be sited on this hilltop. When horticultural columnist and lecturer William Lanier Hunt began his annual winter walk of the campus landscape 20 years ago, it began a growing appreciation of many more noble specimens on the university grounds. “Billy” Hunt was a UNC alumnus, founder of the Botanical Garden Foundation and donor of the Botanical Garden’s Hunt Arboretum Morgan Creek natural area. In addition to Chapel Hill’s surrounding forests, he loved the campus and enjoyed describing its botanical and horticultural treasures.

SEE FLORA PAGE 8

## Big snow shuts down services, schools

BY SUSAN DICKSON  
Staff Writer

As two inches of snow blanketed Carrboro and Chapel Hill on Tuesday, schools, offices and businesses closed and local officials urged residents to stay off the roads. The snow started late Monday night and continued until around lunchtime Tuesday, creating a playground for those with sleds but treacherous conditions for drivers on the roads. Carrboro Police reported several traffic accidents on Tuesday, while Chapel Hill Police responded to 16 traffic accidents in which motorists lost control of their vehicles. Both Chapel Hill and Carrboro public works departments worked diligently around the clock to clear the roads and make them safe for driving. By the time *The Citizen* went to press Wednesday night, most local services were scheduled to operate on a regular schedule on Thursday. In Carrboro, Town of Carrboro offices closed early on Tuesday, reopening at 10 a.m. on Wednesday. Police, fire and public works operated on a normal schedule. Carrboro Public Works was unable to complete Monday and Tuesday’s trash collection as scheduled on Tuesday. According to the town, Monday and Tuesday’s trash collection was completed on Wednesday or will be completed on Thursday, and residents should leave trash out until collected.

SEE SNOW PAGE 3



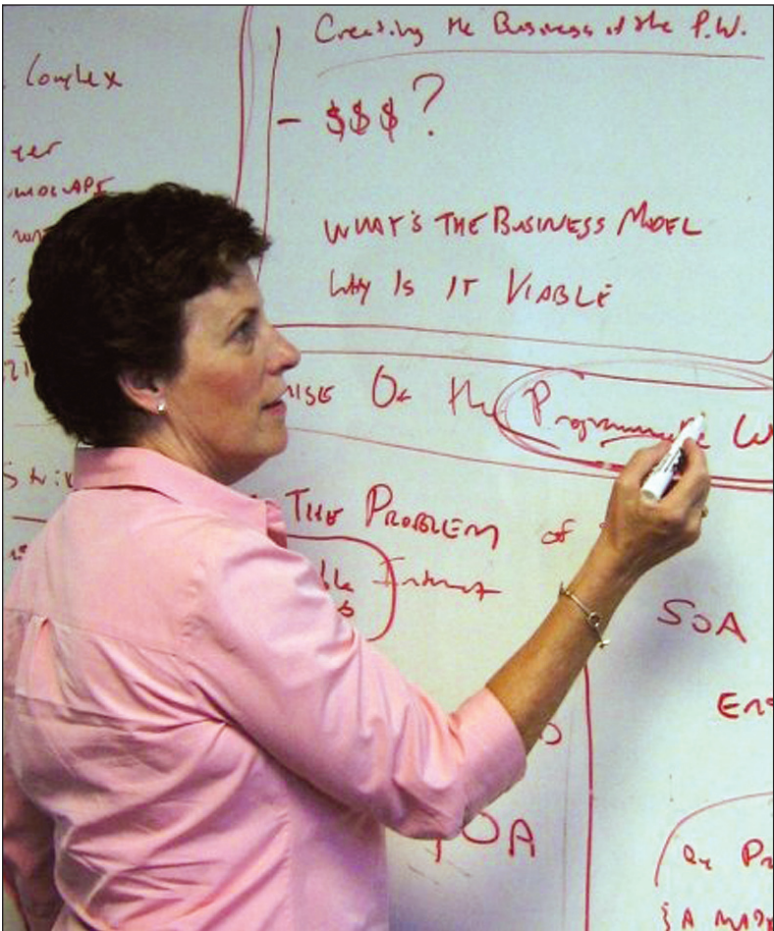
PHOTO BY BUDDY KELLY  
Stafford and Bridget Kelly make their way back up a hill at Southern Community Park after a toboggan run on Tuesday.

## How not to lay off employees

BY MARGOT C. LESTER  
Staff Writer

**Editor’s Note:** These stories are the final installments in our series about jobs and the local economy. The entire series can be read on our website: [www.carrborocitizen.com/main/](http://www.carrborocitizen.com/main/)

Outlasting the traditional shotgun blasts that rang out the old year here in the South was the din of business owners and managers wondering out loud about the fate of their enterprises and employees. Though layoff statistics for 2008 won’t be available till later this month, thousands of employers across the nation and in our own backyard are closing up shop or cutting head counts, putting many more people out of work. Yet some business owners are managing to avoid such dramatic actions. Which begs the question, how? A study by H.R. Chally looked at the history of recessions and the differences between winners and losers coming out of them. “To net it out at the highest level, losers tend to knee-jerk react,” says Dave Roberts, adjunct assistant professor of sales discipline at the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School. “They go very tactical and tend to make rapid reactionary decisions which are not always the right things to do.” The key, Roberts says, is to remain strategic, even though every



Robbie Hardy works on a business plan.

bone in your business body may be telling you otherwise. That means: **Tend to core business:** According to the research, losers typically react to bad economic times by slashing expenses and employees. But winners, it turns out, do the exact opposite. They look for opportunities to

increase business strategically. “Now is the time to be objective and think through what your growth strategy should be. You need to get brutal about prioritizing activities,” Roberts asserts. “Ask yourself what you’re in business to do – what’s at your core – and find ways to maintain or de-

velop your ability to deliver around that core. Where are the customers or markets that are most promising? What products and services will you rely on to serve them? And how can you efficiently get them to market? **Identify money wasters:** To find better ways of cutting costs, dig into internal systems and identify cost “sinks” – places where economies and efficiencies can be improved, suggests Robbie Hardy, a Chapel Hill-based serial entrepreneur who’s had to lay employees off herself. “Look at your numbers every day and ask employees how to reduce costs and increase margins. Make them a part of the solution,” says Hardy. For example, when investment brokerage Charles Schwab was in turnaround, it created a team of insiders to look for cost-cutting opportunities that would improve operations and service. The result? Costs were shaved by \$600 million. **Right-size clients and offerings:** Instead of chasing any potential client with a pulse, prune your prospects and customers down to those who are truly valuable to your core business, Roberts advises. And rather than slashing prices to increase sales volume, consider this tidbit: The Chally study shows that companies who survive bad economies best actually raise prices during tough times.

SEE EMPLOYEES PAGE 7

INSIDE

Excerpts from Obama’s speech See Page 6

INDEX

Music .....	2
News .....	3
Community .....	4
Land & Table .....	5
Opinion .....	6
Business .....	7
Schools .....	8
Classifieds .....	9
Almanac .....	10