



**FRIDAY**  
Partly Cloudy  
43/37



**SATURDAY**  
Clear  
50/29



**SUNDAY**  
Partly Cloudy  
55/32



Burgundy red twigs characterize sourwood trees. PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

FLORA BY KEN MOORE

Making tree friends in the winter

Participants in winter plant identification classes at Sarah P. Duke Gardens and the N.C. Botanical Garden are making friends with numerous trees that are easily recognized when they are bare and leafless. Twig color is one of several easy-to-spot clues to the identification of some trees at this time of year. The burgundy reds of sourwood twigs are an immediate marker for that tree. To verify your identification, scrape a bit of the thin bark near the end of the twig and give it a sniff. A fresh, pungent smell will confirm that you are correct. To further verify your identification, step back a bit to view the entire plant. The dark bark of sourwoods displays a pattern of deep vertical fissures that meet to form arrow-like points up and down along the trunk. The sourwood has another striking characteristic that you are unlikely to associate with other trees. In the wild, this understory tree seems incapable of growing straight. It has a most curious habit of leaning to one side or another as it grows upward, eventually making twists and turns that give it a truly bizarre personality. Near sourwoods, you may spot the glossy yellow-green twigs of sweetgum saplings or stump sprouts. These twigs may be accompanied by corky growths along their sides. Such corky ridges can be quite pronounced on some of the larger specimens. Look around for the

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County approves legislative package

Unsatisfied with Orange/Alamance line

BY SUSAN DICKSON  
Staff Writer

The Orange County Board of Commissioners voted on Tuesday to approve the county's legislative package for the 2011 North Carolina General Assembly Session, requesting approval of bills that would prohibit deer hunting with dogs in Orange County and establish 91 percent of the disputed Orange County/Alamance County line. The counties have been working to resolve the disputed boundary since 2008, when the line was resurveyed. The commissioners also voted to send a letter to Alamance County officials requesting their cooperation

in resolving concerns involving the Morrow Mill Road and Mill Creek neighborhoods in Mebane. Residents of the Morrow Mill Road area want to remain in Orange County, while residents of the Mill Creek neighborhood have expressed a desire to move to Alamance County. However, the agreed-upon portion of the line leaves Mill Creek in Orange County and moves Morrow Mill Road to Alamance County. "People in the Morrow Mill neighborhood continue to be concerned about this," said Carol Ann McCormick, a Morrow Mill Road resident. "We continue to want to remain part of Orange County, and I'm disappointed that we haven't been able to convince anyone that

we should remain." County Manager Frank Clifton said the portion of the county line that affects the Morrow Mill and Mill Creek areas could be addressed in a separate bill in a future legislative session. "One side wants to be in Alamance, one side wants to be in Orange – you'd think it would be simple," he said. Commissioners said they hoped to find a way to resolve the residents' concerns. "I just do not feel that we have upheld our commitment to the Morrow Mill Road people," Vice Chair Steve Yuhasz said.

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Council retreat to focus on plan rewrite

BY KIRK ROSS  
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL — The Chapel Hill Town Council goes into its annual retreat this weekend with a big decision looming on the potential for moving the town library and the beginning of a yearlong effort to revise its comprehensive plan. The major focus at the retreat will be developing a process for public involvement in the rewrite of the town's comprehensive plan. Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt said the council wants to make sure there is meaningful citizen involvement in shaping the plan. The recently completed process for gathering feedback and increasing community participation in the town's negotiations with UNC on the Carolina North project provided a lot of lessons in that area, he said. UNC School of Government professor David Owens, who worked with the town in developing the Carolina North Development Agreement, will discuss that process and offer suggestions for improving involvement. Also scheduled at the retreat is a review of the council's goals set last year, a discussion of economic-development strategies and preliminary discussion on the 2011-12 budget. The retreat will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday and from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, at 523 E. Franklin St. Materials for the retreat are available at the town's website at townofchapel-hill.org/index.aspx?page=958. Although it's not on the retreat agenda, what to do about the library – and its impact on the town budget – will no doubt be in the air.

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Linda Saah, an outreach instructor with the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences, shows Frank Porter Graham Elementary School students an American alligator at the school's Read-a-thon Night on Monday, part of the school's 13th annual Read-a-thon. For this year's theme, "Read with Me Under the Sea," FPG staff and students created an undersea reading area, fisherman's wharf, beach scene and tiki hut in the school's media center. From left: Landon Rosanbalm, Kayak Hencke, Madeline Brooks, Emma Weinberg, Heri Ongechi, Becca Gwynne (background) and Linda Saah. PHOTO BY CHRIS MCDANIELS

Board reiterates focus on local businesses

BY KIRK ROSS  
Staff Writer

CARRBORO — As Carrboro leaders ponder the town's participation in a new Orange County economic-development collaboration, they're underlining support for a focus on growing local businesses. At their retreat last weekend at the Orange Water and Sewer Authority headquarters, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen reviewed its own economic-development efforts, including an update on the replacement for the town's economic and community development director James Harris, who retired at the first of this month. Town Manager Steve Stewart told

the board he had narrowed down a pool of about 70 applicants and would begin face-to-face interviews with a small group of candidates next week. Stewart said he was looking for an individual to take on the priorities of the board, particularly the focus on supporting and growing locally owned businesses. Board member Dan Coleman said while the hiring process continues, the town's elected leaders' commitment to local ought to be clear to whomever Stewart names to the job. Coleman said that at the retreat, the board reached a consensus on the need to follow through on three priorities: building on the town's

revolving loan program, the launch of a Think Local First campaign and attracting more "green jobs" to Carrboro. He said the town will try to bolster the funds in its loan program by pursuing state and federal grants, including Community Development Block Grants. Right now, Coleman said, the town has enough in the revolving loan fund to assist in the start-up or expansion of two or three businesses. One strategy to expand that number would be to try to target a grant proposal. "There's the belief that if we had a project attached to a grant, there might be federal support available," Coleman said.

The Think Local First campaign, a top priority of the town's recent Local Living Economy Task Force, aims to build more business-to-business ties and encourage greater use of local products and services by consumers and businesses. Mayor Mark Chilton said that though there's been disagreement over specifics, thinking local is a long-running policy in Carrboro. He said the retreat provided a contrast to a recent meeting he attended of county, business and municipal leaders on a proposed economic-development collaboration.

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Fired workers receive unemployment benefits

BY TAYLOR SISK  
Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL — Two Chapel Hill Public Works Department employees who were fired in October have been awarded unemployment benefits by the state Employment Security Commission. The two men, Kerry Bigelow and Clyde Clark, had been denied

benefits after the town claimed they had violated its detrimental conduct policy. The ESC decision states that Bigelow and Clark were fired for allegedly threatening and intimidating behavior toward supervisors, team leaders and residents and refusing to perform their duties. Clark also allegedly took unauthorized pictures of his crew leader.

But according to the decision, the town failed to "provide any first hand testimony regarding any of the alleged incidents related to the claimant's termination." Bigelow and Clark had been denied benefits in a prior decision. Bigelow is now eligible for \$341 a week, with a maximum benefit of \$8,866; Clark will receive \$337, with a maximum of \$8,762.

After being fired from their jobs, the men filed a grievance against the town and a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. They say they were targeted for having filed grievances in the past alleging racial bias in job placements and promotions and unsafe working conditions.

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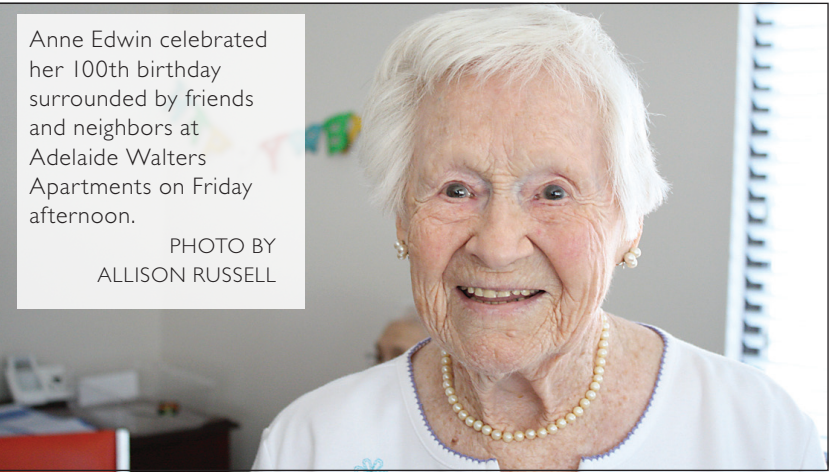
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Her day is far from done

BY WILL BRYANT  
Staff Writer

When Anne Edwin was born on Jan. 28, 1911, William Taft was president of the United States, the town of Carrboro was little more than a textile mill and some railroad tracks and the Titanic was one year away from embarking on its fateful journey. Edwin, who celebrated a century of life at a birthday party in the community room of Adelaide Walters Apartments last Friday, is considered past her prime by most people's standards. But as her fellow residents will tell you, at 100 years old, Edwin might be the youngest person living in Chapel Hill. "Anne has got a youthful attitude ... it's like everything is fresh and new," said 88-year-old Don Matthias, Edwin's neighbor of nearly 10 years. "She looks at the best side of things – and for a person of 100 years, that's unusual."

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Anne Edwin celebrated her 100th birthday surrounded by friends and neighbors at Adelaide Walters Apartments on Friday afternoon. PHOTO BY ALLISON RUSSELL