

# TOWNtalk

NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 1 • OCTOBER 2023



## On the Front Burner

From Town Manager  
**Chris Blue**

Every day, you do great work. Whether you're providing direct customer service, planning projects, coordinating programs, managing budgets, supervising staff, or the many other functions of your job – you are delivering on our mission of working, learning, and serving together. We, me included, can sometimes forget to stop and recognize all this good and important work.

That's why I am so pleased that we are in the midst of our first-ever Employee Appreciation Month. I asked a team of folks from across our departments to get together and think about what it would mean to up our employee appreciation game. Thanks to your input, I think they knocked it out of the park.

I saw many of you at Hargraves Center on Monday and served some of you falafel from our friends at Med Deli. I enjoyed seeing many of you at Wednesday's Cal Horton Award ceremony, where I was honored to recognize all the nominees and present the award to Richard Terrell. It was delightful to have Cal Horton with us for that and he sends his warm wishes to all of you.

Next week, I look forward to serving – and eating – tacos with you for Taco Tuesday. Read about all the events, discounts, prizes, and more on the [Employee Appreciation page](#) of the Town's website.

And all month long, our friends at WCHL will be featuring Town employees in their Hometown Heroes segments. Tune in starting next week and you'll hear me, Mary Jane, and Loryn talking about all the good work you do every day.

My goal for the month is to tell every employee that I see a simple, yet powerful, thing. "Thank you for what you do every day!"



Town employees ate the heck out of fantastic food from Mediterranean Deli at Mediterranean Monday at Hargraves Center. For more feature food events, see p2.



## Congratulations to Richard Terrell, Cal Horton Service Award Winner!

Richard Terrell (Public Works) has been chosen to receive the 2023 Cal Horton Service Award, the highest honor for Town employees. Richard is Assistant Director of the Public Works. With 47 years of service, he's the longest-serving Town employee.

Richard has served in many roles in Public Works. He's been instrumental in major projects, including the Town Operations Center and Rosemary Street improvements. He's helped with the planning and response for Halloweens, hurricanes, and basketball celebrations. Terrell has also hired, mentored, and encouraged many employees who went on to have distinguished careers.

Public Works Director Lance Norris nominated Terrell for the award. He highlighted several of his attributes, including his willingness to help others and his care for the community. Norris shared one specific example that occurred during Winter Storm Jonas. "A resident called Public Works because a plow had blocked her car with snow and she was unable to get to her job as a nurse. Richard went to inspect the issue, saw the need, and personally dug her car out of the snow himself."

## Employee Appreciation: Now with More Food!

This is our first-ever Employee Appreciation Month! An interdepartmental team put together a great slate of events in addition to departmental happenings. The Employee Appreciation Team designed everything with employees in mind by including multiple events, hoping everyone has a chance to participate in some way.

The month continues with more prize drawings, discounts at local restaurants and businesses, and more. Enjoy several days of food, fun, and fellowship. From fresh tacos to Halloween treats, we hope you'll enjoy the array of food and fun offerings!

Find a calendar of events at [townofchapelhill.org/ea-events](http://townofchapelhill.org/ea-events)

### Taco Tuesday

Tuesday, Oct. 10

11 a.m.–2 p.m. at Eubanks Park & Ride

Ta Contento will bring their famous and fresh food for a pop-up fiesta of appreciation! A variety of menu items will be on offer, from street tacos to burritos to guacamole. We'll have the playlist going, yardgames, and interdepartmental swag swap. And BINGO will return for this event!

### Trick or Treat Thursday

Thursday, Oct. 26

All Day Long at Town Facilities

Department Heads will stuff bags of sweet treats and deliver them to all Town departments throughout the day! We'll have a variety of allergy-friendly options.

### Wake Up Wednesday

Wednesday, Oct. 18

7–9:30 a.m. at Chapel Hill Public Library

Drive through and get a coffee and bagel or muffin—or come inside for a relaxing coffee shop vibe and hot breakfast buffet. B3 Coffee will provide a variety of caffeinated and non-caffeinated options, and Brandwein's Bagels will provide bagels and a hot buffet. We'll have music playing, a swag swap, and Town Trivia!

### Frozen Friday

Friday, Oct. 27

1–4 p.m. at Town Facilities

Alsie's will bring their trucks and delicious ice cream offerings to various Town facilities—and leave plenty behind for Town team members who work different shifts.

### All This, and Prizes Too!

Drawings are being held every day for an assortment of fantastic prizes!

The winners (so far) are:

- James Nuneviller (Public Works): \$50 gift card to Stretch Zone

- Mike Rempson (Public Works): \$20 gift card from Flyleaf Books
- Zach Strickland (Public Works): \$25 gift card from Brandwein Bagels
- Nakia Jones (Transit): 2 tickets to Nov. 11 UNC-Duke football game



## A Sustainable Approach to Employee Food Events

We're making a difference! The more we compost, the less we throw in the landfill. **John Richardson** (Sustainability Manager's Office) shows how much we reduced trash at Mediterranean Monday (left) by using compostable supplies (right). To find out how to do this in your department, contact John Richardson, Community Sustainability Manager, at 919-969-5075.

### October Discounts

Save at local restaurants and businesses with discounts for the whole month of October!

- Brandwein's Bagels: 5% off your order
- Roots Natural Kitchen: 20% off your order
- The Frame Shop: 20% off custom frames
- My Muses Card Shop: 20% off merchandise

See the full list of discounts at [townofchapelhill.org/ea-discounts](http://townofchapelhill.org/ea-discounts)



# Interdepartmental SHOUTOUTS

The Library appreciates the **Crisis Unit** for their help with library users who are experiencing difficulties. The Crisis Unit folks are always helpful, understanding, and caring with library staff and patrons.

Community Arts & Culture gives a shout-out to all the departments who provide support for special events – **Transit, Police, Fire, Emergency Management, Parks & Rec, Communications**, and everybody else that lends a helping hand!

Governance Services gives a shout-out to all those folks in **Building and Development Services, BMD, HRD, Planning, Fire, PD, Transit, Public Works, Communications** – and all other departments that help with our public records responses. All of you rock!

Building and Development Services would like to thank the **Managers, Legal and Planning** teams for their guidance and expertise with recent development related obstacles.

The Fire Department appreciates the **TS Division**. The assistance you all provided 24/7 is awesome!

The Fire Department appreciates the hard work of the mechanics and leadership in the **Public Works Fleet division** to keep our apparatus and other vehicles serviced and safe!

Public Housing shouts out **Transit** and the **Police Department** for all of their stellar assistance in helping the volunteers, staff and participants every Wednesday at the Chapel Hill Food Bank at Eubanks Road.

Library appreciates **PW Facilities Maintenance** for all they do every day to keep things running smoothly.

Emergency Management gives a huge shout out to our Public Safety partners at **Police and Fire!** We are so fortunate to be a part of this incredible team and supports each other! As a small department, having partners to help with projects, provide advice, and lend additional bandwidth is absolutely invaluable!

Emergency Preparedness and Risk Management would like to shout out to **Technology Solutions!** So many of our initiatives have a touch point with TS or require some sort of TS support and their team is always willing and ready to help! From leading our Cyber Security initiative to upgrading our phone system to rolling out digital signage boards and so many projects in between ... our TS partners rock!!

The Employee Appreciation Planning Team thanks the **Sustainability Office** for covering the costs for compostable plates, forks, cups, etc at ALL the events!

Planning would like to thank our **Ombuds, Community Relations and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff** for always being available and willing to help us prepare for and have those tough conversations!



Library appreciates **Landscaping** for their expertise and cheerful assistance in maintaining Pritchard Park and all of our beautiful parks and greenways.

Communications appreciates **communicators in other departments** who work with us on cross-departmental initiatives. Your collaboration and flexibility make our team more effective and efficient! Thank you!

The Sustainability Office greatly appreciates the **Fleet Division of Public Works** for all that they are doing to help the Town electrify our fleet.

The Sustainability Office gives a shout-out to **Parks & Recreation** for all the many ways they are helping the Town model sustainability, including park lighting and turf upgrades, leaving our leaves for the birds and the bugs, and new all-electric landscaping equipment!



Risk Management would like to shout out to **BMD** for supporting numerous processes! From helping to cross training staff on insurance allocation payments to processing invoice payments – and always being willing to answer our questions about Munis – we APPRECIATE you!!!

Parks and Recreation would like to extend our gratitude to the **Sustainability Office** for always being willing to collaborate and brainstorm on ways that we can provide a more sustainable and resilient experience for our patrons.

Building and Development Services appreciates the invaluable collaboration efforts and creative thinking with **HRD staff** with advertising and recruitment. Tom and Cliff are the best!

Everybody appreciates the **Wellness @ Work team**! From free flu shots to lunch & learns to our amazing clinic, they really make this a great place to work.

The Police Department thanks our on-call teammates at **Public Housing, Transit, and Public Works** who always answer our phone calls and respond to help, even in the middle of the night, on weekends, and holidays.

The Police Department appreciates the **Traffic Engineering, Streets and Construction, and Landscaping** divisions for helping with storm-related damage and power outages by providing generators, cones, road barriers, and cleaning up debris.

The Police Department is grateful to the **Fleet Services Division** for helping officers with countless vehicle-related needs. No matter how minor the issue, Fleet staff will drop what they are doing to fix it and get us back out on the road safely.



## About the Cal Horton Service Award

Named for a former Town Manager, the Cal Horton Service Award is the Town's highest honor, given to an employee who provides exceptional service to the Town and community.

Employees are nominated by their peers. A committee of previous recipients selects the award winner. This year, there were 15 nominees from 11 departments.

The Cal Horton Service Award started in 2007 with funding raised by the community. The Foundation for a Sustainable Community Inc., a not-for-profit charitable corporation under the auspices of the Chapel Hill–Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, manages the funds. It was the request of former Town Manager Horton that these funds be used to award Town employees for distinguished service of at least ten years.



## Appreciating the Employee Appreciation Planning Team

Anita Badrock, Ombuds  
Cheonna Boyd, Transit  
Ashley Brooks, Fire  
Susan Brown, Library  
Jeannette Coffin, HRD  
Megan Culp, Affordable Housing  
Tanner Deisch, Parks & Rec  
Matt DeBellis, Governance  
Matt Glasgo, Public Works  
April Hoke, Police  
LaTonya McNair, BMD  
Bernadine O'Connor, Public Housing  
Emily Powell, Transit  
Antwuan Riggsbee, Public Works  
Omar Roque, Library  
Alexandria Rudd, Police  
Samantha Slayer, Manager's Office  
Shay Stevens, Manager's Office

## The Nominees

**Zakia Alam**, Purchasing and Contracts Manager, BMD

**Carla Burnette**, Administrative Coordinator, Technology Solutions

**Lizzie Burrill**, Senior Recreation Supervisor, Parks and Recreation

**Tom Clark**, Learning and Development Manager, HRD

**Nigel Frank**, Training and Safety Specialist, Chapel Hill Transit

**Angela Gerald**, Housing Officer, Public Housing

**Judy Johnson**, Assistant Planning Director

**Don Marsh**, Parks and Recreation

**Shanika Nickerson**, Senior Street Supervisor, Chapel Hill Transit

**Derrick Parrish**, Senior Mechanic, Public Housing

**Akalema Pheribo**, Transit Operator, Chapel Hill Transit

**John Richardson**, Community Sustainability Manager, Manager's Office

**Jeff Stevens**, Fire Captain, Fire Department

**Richard Terrell**, Assistant Director of Public Works

**Steve Wright**, Public Arts Coordinator, Community Arts & Culture



## Interdepartmental Shoutouts

*(continued from p3)*

The Police Department's Crisis Unit thanks the **Recreation Division of Parks & Recreation** for arranging and leading a fun staff retreat that included archery, rock climbing, and kayaking!

The Police Department appreciates Chapel Hill **Wellness@Work** for providing welcoming and accessible health care, informative Lunch and Learns, and creative wellness activities.

The Police Department thanks the **Fire Department** for letting us borrow its burn building and equipment for trainings. They also lead CPR training for our staff. Plus, we really appreciate when they let us borrow their kitchens for our officers to cook shift meals!

The **PW Garage** folks should be highly praised for the timely work they do to keep our vehicles working so we can work. Thank you!!! –B&DS

The Police Department is grateful for the **Facilities Management** division for always responding quickly – and with a friendly smile – to all our building needs, no matter how big or small!

Building and Development Services is thankful for the technical expertise of the awesome **TS Team**. We appreciate your support with our software & hardware, your work with vendors as well as the stakeholder groups around wireless projects

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Town of Chapel Hill  
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
[info@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:info@townofchapelhill.org) or (919) 968-2743

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Staff Writers: Alex Carrasquillo,  
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