



# NCCU chancellor to speak at church for men's weekend

*African Methodist Episcopal church  
to host cookout, workshops, services*

**By Katie Reich**

Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

Chancellor Charlie Nelms of North Carolina Central University will be speaking at St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church in Chapel Hill this weekend for its fifth annual Men of Destiny conference.

"I'm going to deliver a message about what we must do as men to raise, nurture and mentor a generation of character-centered, service-oriented boys and girls to become leaders in our communities, our state and in our nation," Nelms said.

The 11 a.m. worship service titled "100 Men in Black" will be held Sunday, April 19, at the church, which is located on the corner of Merritt Mill Road and Franklin Street.

Nelms said he has "given up on giving speeches" and will instead bring a direct message specifically for men.

"I want to zero in on what we teach boys," Nelms said. "This is about men saving men."

Nelms said he hopes his message will not only be clearly understood, but also be carried out.

"We are losing too many young men to gangs, to prisons," Nelms said. "We need to look within ourselves and take personal responsibility."

Nelms said the election of President Obama serves as a "teachable moment."

"The election of President Obama resonates with people," Nelms said.

According to Nelms, if Obama could

break racial and social barriers to become president, then people should realize they have the power to institute change in their own communities.

Burnice Hackney of Chapel Hill is a co-chair of the men's conference. According to Hackney, the Men of Destiny conference is a five-day event that started five years ago with the arrival of the Rev. Thomas O. Nixon.

Nixon implemented his idea for annual Men of Destiny and Women of Destiny conferences as a way for the church to reach out to the community, Hackney said.

"It is important for men to unite to have a positive influence on the community," Hackney said.

A key part of the conference, Hackney said, is the communitywide cookout, which will be held Saturday, April 18, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Hargraves Community Center.

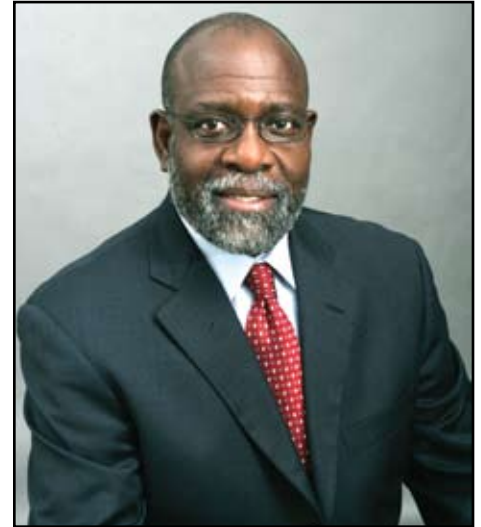
In recent years, the cookout has fed about 500 people.

The meal is provided by members of the church, Hackney said, and each man was asked to donate \$100 to pay for the food.

"These are tough economic times, and there were discussions of whether or not the event would be held," Hackney said.

However, Hackney said, the economic crisis ultimately served as an additional reason to host the cookout.

In the past, church members have noticed a substantial number of participants from the homeless community at the cookouts,



**Chancellor Charlie Nelms received his doctorate in higher education administration from Indiana University in 1977. He is the university's tenth chancellor.**

and Hackney said the church believes it is important to let members of the homeless community know there are others concerned about their welfare.

In preparation for the cookout and Sunday worship service, there have been several nightly workshops at the church, Hackney said. During these workshops, guest speakers from among the congregation, including WRAL-TV's Dr. Allen Mask, led discussions and offered advice concerning financial management, spirituality and men's health.

Guest speakers in years past, Hackney said, have included actor Clifton Davis and attorney and motivational speaker Willie Gary.

This is the first year Nelms will be participating in the conference, Hackney said.

## **The African Methodist Episcopal Church**

For more information about the church's history and mission, please visit:

<http://www.ame-church.com>

# Aldermen see final plans for second fire station

*Construction expected to cost \$3 million*

**By Elisabeth Arriero**

Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

Carrboro residents can soon feel twice as safe when it comes to fires.

The Carrboro Board of Aldermen accepted the final plans for a second fire station in town at its Tuesday night meeting.

Kenneth Newell of Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects, the company that created the design, updated the board on some minor changes to the new station, which will be located at 1411 Homestead Road.

"This is just a stunning plan," said Alderman Randee Haven-O'Donnell after the board heard Newell's update.

The Board of Aldermen plans to budget \$3 million for the new station during the 2009-10 fiscal year.

That figure does not include funding for the estimated 12 new staff positions that the station would create.

Carrboro town manager Steve Stewart said that due to the recent economic downturn, now is the best time to plan for such a construction project.

"Once we see money start hitting the streets again, we're going to see construction prices go up," he said. "This is a really good



Staff photo by Elisabeth Arriero

**Currently, only one fire station, located at 301 W. Main St., serves all of Carrboro. But by next year, Carrboro will have a second fire station at 1411 Homestead Road.**

bidding time."

Newell agreed that this was a good time for the town to move forward with its plans for a second fire station.

"It's a very wise move as long as you have the seed money to build it," he said. "The cost

of construction materials is significantly lower than a couple of years ago."

Following Tuesday's meeting, Newell acknowledged that planning for the fire station, which began in summer 2006, has been challenging at times.

Newell said that the older trees on the proposed site

created some difficulty for the company.

"There are a lot of old specimen trees that we've been trying to work around that are there," he said. "We wanted to save as many as we could."

Newell said that the actual geography of the site was an obstacle as well.

"It's an extremely tight site," he said. "We had to be careful about how we laid things out."

In order to address these hindrances and

*"This is an extremely responsive design to the specific challenges mentioned before. This is not a cookie-cutter project."*

- Kenneth Newell,

*Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects*

the concerns of the community, Newell said that they held several public charrettes around town.

One concept that continuously came up at the meetings was sustainability. The idea is that if the station is built with sustainability in mind, Newell said, it will cost less to operate and be better for the environment.

Newell credits the multiple charrettes for creating a station design that everyone was happy with in the end.

"This is an extremely responsive design to the specific challenges mentioned before," he said. "This is not a cookie-cutter project."

Financing for the new fire station must be approved by July 15. After that, the project will be open for construction bids.

Newell said construction will take about 10 months.

## **Fire Station Rundown**

**Cost:** \$3 million

**Completion date:** 2010

**Location:** 1411 Homestead Rd.

**Construction Time:** 10 months

**# of Jobs created:** 12

For information on all developments underway in Carrboro, including the new fire station:  
<http://www.townofcarrboro.org/pzi/PDFs/ActiveProjectReport.pdf>

# April Artwalk draws a crowd

*Despite weather,  
many visitors  
turn out for local  
art showcase*

**By Amelia Black**

Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

Consistent rain did not deter patrons of this month's 2ndFriday Artwalk in Chapel Hill and Carrboro; in fact, April 10 was one of the busiest evenings that many store owners had seen in a while.

On the second Friday of every month, 24 stores in Chapel Hill and Carrboro participate in the Artwalk. The stores open their doors from 6 to 9 p.m. for patrons to view art exhibits that local artists have created. A reception is held where people can meet the artists, and light refreshments are usually served.

The art typically stays in the store throughout the month. Some venues, like the Century Center and Town Hall, hang exhibits for two months.

"I really thought the rain would make more people stay inside," said Erin Schultz, an employee at the Jesse Kalisher Gallery in Carrboro for three months.

"We've been very slow over the last few weekends, even though the weather was nice, but this is the busiest Artwalk I have seen in a while," Schultz said. "I attribute it to people just wanting to get out of the house because the weather has been so nice over the last few days."

The gallery, which features Kalisher's black and white photography, rotates in a new exhibit at every Artwalk.

"It's near-free exposure for artists and gets people in stores they might not normally go to as a patron," Shultz said. "It's kind of like having an open house every month."

Three local business owners, Greg DeWitt, Garry Meldrum and Jackie Helvey, began organizing the 2ndFriday Artwalk in the late 1990s and continue to run the event today.

"I was amazed that so many people came out last Friday with it raining the entire

*"I love it. I think it's fun,  
and it solidifies our reputation as supporters of the local arts community."*

— Terri Turner, Weaver Street Realty business manager



Staff photo by Amelia Black

**Ken Meardon, left, shows off his photo art to Jon Broch, who visited 2ndFriday Artwalk for the first time on April 10. The Artwalk has become a thriving entertainment option for patrons of downtown Carrboro and Chapel Hill, with 24 different venues participating in the event.**

time," DeWitt said. "It's significant for the local business community and probably adds another 20 to 30 percent to the evening crowd downtown."

"I think we have two listings that have come directly from this event," said Terri Turner, business manager for Weaver Street Realty. "I love it. I think it's fun, and it solidifies our reputation as supporters of the local arts community."

Several artists said that they value the opportunity to explain their artwork to consumers and hear direct feedback about the exhibits.

"I enjoy watching people look at the pictures," said Ken Meardon, an artist whose work is hanging at Weaver Street Realty this month. Meardon is an information technology consultant for a company in Research Triangle Park, and as a "business hobby," he does five or six events a year showcasing his three-dimensional photo art.

The free refreshments, which often include crackers, cookies, fruit and wine, are also a draw for patrons looking for Friday night entertainment.

Sipping wine at every venue they visit can occasionally add a little color to the experience for patrons of the Artwalk. "We sometimes lovingly refer to it as the 'art stumble,'" Turner said.

## Check It Out

For a map and list of stores participating in the 2ndFriday Artwalk series, please visit the Artwalk Web site: <http://www.2ndFridayArtwalk.com/>. The next 2ndFriday Artwalk will be on May 8.



Staff photo by Kelsey Kusterer

**Tim Stark, left, farmer and author, signs a copy of his book, *Heirloom: Notes from an Accidental Tomato Farmer*, for Allison Hayes, a Chapel Hill resident and volunteer at the Carrboro Farmers' Market. Stark discussed his book and gave advice on gardening to farmers' market visitors at the season opening of the Wednesday farmers' market on April 8.**

# Midweek farmers' market opens with free seedlings, tomato author

**By Kelsey Kusterer**  
Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

At the spring opening of the Wednesday Carrboro Farmers' Market on April 8, a sizable crowd turned out for free seedlings and advice from Tim Stark, author of *Heirloom: Notes from an Accidental Tomato Farmer*.

Sarah Blacklin, the farmers' market manager and a Carrboro resident, said the midweek market starts each year on the second Wednesday in April when the danger of the last frost passes. The first Wednesday market, located at 301 W. Main St. in Carrboro, was stocked mostly with herbs and baked goods.

"It's a nice way to break up the week," said Blacklin of the midweek market.

Blacklin knew that Stark would be attending a public dinner in Chapel Hill at Lantern Restaurant the evening of April 8. When Blacklin approached Stark about hosting a discussion of his book at the farmers' market, he agreed.

Along with having the chance to speak with Stark, market goers also had the opportunity to get a free seedling at the market entrance. Local farmers donated a variety of seedlings like bok choy and sun gold tomatoes.

Jane Saiers, a medical writer from Chapel Hill, and Anne Jackson, a portrait artist from Carrboro, came to the Wednesday market for the seedlings and a chance to talk to

## When to go:

The Carrboro Farmers' Market is open on Wednesdays from 3:30 - 6:30 p.m., Saturdays from 7 a.m. - noon. Online: [www.carrborofarmers-market.com](http://www.carrborofarmers-market.com)

Stark. They have tried growing tomatoes in the Northside Community Garden, located at 400 Caldwell St. in Chapel Hill.

Blacklin hoped the free seedlings would encourage visitors to plant their own gardens, and give visitors the opportunity to ask Stark and other farmers for gardening advice.

Andrea Baxter, a UNC-Chapel Hill senior biology major from Louisville, Ky., waited in line for a chance to speak with Stark. This is her first time growing tomatoes, and she's interested in finding out how to fertilize them organically.

In Baxter's home, tomato plants line the living room window sill and are also warmed by a thermal solar floor. However, three beds of tomato seedlings take a great deal of care and space.

"I can't wait to have my living room back," Baxter said.

Still, not everyone showed confidence in their gardening abilities.

"I would get a seedling, but I'm afraid it

wouldn't survive in my dorm," said Rachael Mossey, a UNC-Chapel Hill junior international studies major from Burke, Va.

Stark actually got his start gardening indoors. The author's book explains how over a decade ago he planted 3,000 tomato seeds in his brownstone in Brooklyn, N.Y. Formerly a management consultant, Stark decided on an impulse to start his own tomato garden.

When his plants outgrew the apartment, Stark took them to his family farm in Lenhartsville, Pa. Although he plants chile peppers, potatoes and other vegetables, Stark is best known for his flavorful heirloom tomatoes. He said that tomatoes are the "only thing I seem to know how to grow well."

A steady flow of farmers' market visitors lined up at Stark's table Wednesday to get his expert advice on growing tomatoes.

Stark stresses the importance of being careful not to overwater tomato plants because the wetness can breed fungi. Compost returns natural minerals to the soil, and gardeners can grow more flavorful tomatoes by liming the soil, which adds calcium and magnesium, nutrients that are essential to plant growth, to the soil. Stark also encourages gardeners to prune back tomato plant branches to give the vegetables enough access to sunlight.

"Too much heat and nitrogen (means) lush, lush leaves and not too many tomatoes," said Stark.

# People with disabilities find work in Chapel Hill

By Sarah Shah

Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

Every Wednesday morning, Luke Glatz collects raffle tickets from people attending a business leaders meeting. Later, he reads out ticket numbers to announce the lucky winners.

Despite having a developmental disability, the 20-year-old Glatz is one of the few young adults who are employed at Extraordinary Ventures.

The Arc, the world's largest community based organization for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, estimates that the unemployment rate for people with developmental disabilities is nearly 75 percent.

Extraordinary Ventures is no ordinary place. The Chapel Hill non-profit's primary mission is to provide employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities ages 15 years and up.

"It's important for them to have a sense of accomplishment, and know that they are worth something," director of Extraordinary Ventures, Marc Roth said.

Roth said he rents out a 3,000 square foot conference center in Chapel Hill at which businesses and organizations can conduct meetings. The proceeds go directly to the employment of young adults with disabilities, who work at the center by helping to set up and clean up for events.

"I knew at the time [2007] there wasn't a quality affordable meeting space in Chapel Hill," he said. "This way we're also providing a service to the community and making it a better place to live."

Roth said the non-profit organization also helps provide employment to at-risk



Staff photo by Sarah Shah

**Luke Glatz, 20, collects a raffle ticket from Margaret Cannell, executive director of the Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce, at Extraordinary Ventures. Luke is one of 18 people with disabilities employed by Extraordinary Ventures, located at 200 S. Elliot Road in Chapel Hill.**

kids, such as those in foster care or students who have been suspended from school.

In addition to working at the conference center, Roth said employees often do work contracted with other local businesses. Every month employees can help pack copies of the Southern Neighbor newspaper and deliver them around the community.

"This kind of venture can't work in isolation, and the only way for this to work is to collaborate," Roth said. "I've found that the support of the community has been tremendous."

Roth said the school districts have also been phenomenal, and will often times bring classes with special needs students over to Extraordinary Ventures.

Jamie Bittner is a founder of Enabling Opportunities, a non-profit organization that coordinates activities between schools and job training facilities like Extraordinary Ventures for special needs populations.

"We work at the high school level to

work on life skills, job readiness skills and community inclusion," she said. "At [Extraordinary Ventures], the students come clean a bit, help pack newspapers, and then cook lunch."

Bittner said the students themselves have to buy the food used to make the lunch from the grocery store earlier in the week. She also said that after the work is done, the students get to partake in recreational activities at Extraordinary Ventures.

Extraordinary Ventures has a large recreational center with video and arcade games, as well as a karaoke machine. Twice a month, the center hosts a game night called "Friday Night Live."

Roth said that there's a feeling of empowerment that comes out of everything for the employees, and that an at-risk young adult once told him how incredible the opportunity to work had been.

"If I weren't here working, I'd be out on the streets," he told Roth.

## Extraordinary Adventures Links

- 1) [www.extraordinaryventures.org](http://www.extraordinaryventures.org)
- 2) <http://www.artscenterlive.org/>
- 3) <http://www.thearc.org>

# Fate of graduation project is undecided for CHCCS juniors

*State Board of Education votes to delay project until 2011, allows districts to vote on making project a local requirement*

**By Virginia Mcllwain**

Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools high school juniors who had thought they had won a reprieve from the upcoming high school graduation project requirement, might want to think twice before tossing away their project proposals.

Despite voting earlier this month to delay the implementation of the North Carolina Graduation Project requirement by one year, the North Carolina State Board of Education agreed to let individual school districts decide whether to leave the plans in place for the class of 2010.

"Many schools and districts across North Carolina have had a graduation project in some form or fashion for a decade or more," State Board of Education Chairman Bill Harrison said in a statement. "By giving the entire state more time to implement the North Carolina Graduation Project, we can ensure its success in every school and community."

As of now, the school district requires next year's senior class to successfully complete the project. At the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools school board's next meeting on Thursday, April 23, the board could vote to maintain the statewide project as a local requirement for the class of 2010, or delay the project until it is required by the state in 2011.

The change caught local teachers and administrators by surprise, at a time when many were moving forward with plans to get students' projects off the ground in order to meet swiftly approaching project proposal deadlines.

"I didn't know of the delay until I heard about it on the news," said Peggy Haythorn, Carrboro High School's Graduation Project coordinator. "It came as quite a surprise."

The decision to delay the project's start comes as legislation to eliminate the requirement altogether has been making its way through the North Carolina General Assembly. Many of the project's critics claim that it forces students to give up already limited school and homework time, while other argue that student's were not given enough time and instruction.

Frustrated students have created petitions and have even taken to Facebook, a popular social networking site, to air their grievances. More than 8,000 young Facebook users have joined a group entitled "Support NC House bill 223, ditch the graduation project," created by Hall Liu, a junior at East Chapel Hill High School.

"Our schools have been scrambling to accommodate the require-



Staff photo by Virginia Mcllwain  
**Peggy Haythorn, Carrboro High School's Graduation Project coordinator, serves as a resource for students as they work to fulfill new state graduation requirements. She believes the statewide project, which has been delayed until 2011, provides a valuable opportunity for students to gain the real-world skills they need in order to be successful after high school.**

ments, and it simply does not work out well," Liu wrote in the group's description. "I support this bill because the project was not implemented correctly, not because I'm lazy and don't want to do it."

While Haythorn said recognizes the apprehension that many students may feel as graduation project "pioneers," she argues that the experience can be a valuable one for each individual student.

"Anytime something new arises, there's opposition by certain people used to doing things a certain way," Haythorn said.

Students work alongside faculty and community mentors while completing the project, which can be started and finished at any time during their high school careers. Students don't receive a letter grade for their projects, but must achieve either a "satisfac-

tory" or "exemplary" status.

Supporters of the project argue that it helps students develop valuable time management techniques and collaborative abilities.

"I'm a believer that this is a practical opportunity for students to gain skills that will be of use to them after high school," Haythorn said. "They learn these skills in advance and gain a wealth of real-world experience in the process."

Haythorn said it is her hope that others, including the school board, will recognize how the graduation project sets students up for success from the beginning.

"Students can't fail this project," Haythorn said. "They're offered opportunities to learn and keep working, even when some aspect of their work falls short. Our main goal is for them to not only successfully complete the project, but also be successful out in the world."

## The N.C. Graduation Project

The project requires students to write a paper, produce a product and portfolio and give an oral presentation.

# Getting the message across

## *Library art exhibit aims to instill respect for animal habitats*

**By Tom Nading**

Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

The Carrboro Branch Library unveiled its second art exhibition in the "Global Perspectives" series on April 4 with over 60 pieces of artwork that portray animals from all seven continents.

"Animals Without Borders" will be on display until June 9 at the Carrboro Branch Library at McDougle Middle School on Old Fayetteville Road. The show is presented and funded by the Friends of the Carrboro Branch Library and the Orange County Arts Commission.

Featuring work from 23 local artists, the exhibit displays a wide variety of styles that use different artistic media, like oil and acrylic paintings, sketches, photography, mixed-media watercolors and textile collages. Through its display of different animals in their natural habitats, the exhibit strives to encourage respect for animals' habitats and increase awareness that those habitats are shrinking, according to Carrboro Branch Art Committee chairwoman Nerys Levy, who is also an artist in the show.

"Animals have no borders," Levy said. "We really wanted to give a sense of animals being pretty expansive and needing space."

Originally from Wales, Levy said she understood this concept at an early age. When she was three years old, she saw a polar bear for the first time and was fascinated by it, she said. One of Levy's paintings in the exhibition prominently displays a polar bear. It is titled "Polar Bear on Sea

Ice, Arctic Region" and is a work of mixed-media watercolor.

In particular, polar bears illustrate that animals' habitats are spread across political boundaries, Levy said. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that there are about 22,000 to 25,000 wild polar bears across the globe, but these bears are not confined to any specific territory. As a species, polar bears live in eight different countries on two continents.

"Animals live everywhere," Levy said. "They live in communities, and they are part of our responsibility."

Because the Carrboro Branch is located within McDougle Middle School, the children enrolled in the middle school and McDougle Elementary School get the opportunity to see the art every day, Levy said. It also exposes them to different ideas and opinions that can go along with what they are learning in their classes, Levy added.

"It's great to see the kids' reactions," said McDougle Elementary librarian Nancy Margolin.

"The students get the benefit of having an in-house museum."

Margolin has worked with the Carrboro

Branch Library for 11 years. Working around the artwork is exciting and uplifting, she said. The children seem to enjoy this show in particular because they have a connection with animals, she added.

Branch head Anne Pusey, a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill's School of Information and Library Science, said the library's symbiotic relationship with the school can make it difficult for the library to provide programs for adults. Through its shows, the art committee provides the adult programming that the library needs, she said.

"It's another way to encourage the public to visit our library," Pusey said. "It provides another reason to get patrons involved."

At the same time, hanging art around the library changes the environment of the space, Pusey added. If the art is informative, it can help support the library's purpose to provide books

for the public.

"Art, if it's used effectively, is very powerful," Levy said. "It's often more effective than politics in getting the message over."

After "Animals Without Borders" ends on June 9, "Faces of the Earth," the third exhibit in the "Global Perspectives" series, will be on display starting June 10.

**Want to go?**  
**What:** "Animals Without Borders"  
**Where:** Carrboro Branch Library, located at McDougle Middle School  
**When:** April 4 to June 9  
**How much:** Free to the public

Look! 4 corners!  
Everyday moments can be learning moments with your kids. For more tips, visit [bornlearning.org](http://bornlearning.org)



Make a difference right at work with Earth Share, bringing the leading environmental groups together. How? Please visit our web site at [www.earthshare.org](http://www.earthshare.org).



# Calling all sweet teeth!

*Thirty area chefs will showcase savory treats for homelessness benefit*

**By Corey Inscoe**

Carrboro Commons co-editor

Think chocolate éclair cake, strawberry balsamic tiramisu, New-Orleans bread pudding, Mama's coconut pie and Cinnamon-Toast-Crunch cupcakes. Is your mouth watering yet?

Then satisfy your sweet tooth Friday at the ArtsCenter's latest benefit, "A Taste of Home," which will feature wine, appetizers, live music, a silent auction and tasty treats courtesy of 30 area chefs.

The benefit supports Hidden Voices, a group created in 2003 and based in Cedar, N.C., which aims to "challenge, strengthen, and connect our diverse communities through the transformative power of the individual voice," as stated on the group's Web site.

Proceeds from "A Taste of Home" will go directly to Hidden Voices' latest project, "Home is Not One Story," which focuses on homelessness.

"We have been working with folks around North Carolina who are dealing with or have dealt with homelessness," said Lynden Harris, director of Hidden Voices. For months, Hidden Voices has worked with local shelters and organizations to raise awareness and work to overcome the stereotypes and shame associated with homelessness.

For example, Harris said that most people think of an older white male when they think of a homeless person. But in reality, white males only make up a minority of the population, she said. The average homeless person is nine years old.

For the event, "A Taste of Home," Harris asked 30 area chefs — her "dream team" — to create desserts that remind them of home.

The team includes Mark Day, the 2007 National Association Catering Executives' "Caterer of the Year," Karen Barker from Magnolia Grill in Durham, Chris Holloway from A Southern Season as well as Dorette Snover, the owner of Chapel Hill cooking school C'est Si Bon.

Katrina Ryan, the executive chef and owner of Sugarland on Franklin Street plans to make a wild-berry crostata with buttermilk gelato for the event.

"They asked for a dessert that reminded me of home," Ryan said. "When I was growing up, all the dessert was pie."



**Katrina Ryan, owner and executive chef of Sugarland in Chapel Hill, is making a wild berry crostata with buttermilk gelato for the "A Taste of Home," event at The ArtsCenter.**  
Staff photo by Corey Inscoe

**When:** 8 p.m., Friday, April 17

**Where:** The ArtsCenter, 300-G East Main Street

**Tickets:** one for \$50, two for \$75

**8:00 to 8:45 p.m.** Wine, appetizers, food, silent auction

**8:45 to 9:15 p.m.** Chefs and desserts introduced

**9:15 to 9:45 p.m.** Dessert tastings, music, final bids

**9:45 to 10 p.m.** Auction winners announced

Ryan said the event's cause resonated in her childhood memories. Her father died when she was young, so her mother worked extra hard to provide food and shelter for the family. "The safety net of staying in one place is important," she said.

The issue of homelessness also struck a chord in some of the chefs' personal lives. One chef was forced to relocate after Hurricane Katrina, and another battled with homelessness after escaping domestic violence. Hidden Voices also focuses on domestic violence — an issue addressed by another one of the group's current projects

The admission proceeds will go directly to Hidden Voices to help fund their work over the summer and an exhibit that will showcase photography, music, graffiti art

and an audio tour featuring personal stories of homeless people. The exhibit is slated to open in April 2010.

Hidden Voices has used the ArtsCenter's gallery and public performing spaces on several occasions to debut exhibits and performances. Artistic director of the ArtsCenter stage, Emily Ranii, said the ArtsCenter and Hidden Voices make a fantastic partnership. Harris agreed:

"The ArtsCenter has been very supportive and a great venue," she said.

With the struggling economy and a rise in unemployment, Harris said homelessness is becoming an even greater concern.

"It's timely," she said. "Unfortunately, it's very timely that we're doing this."





Staff photo by Becky Wessels

**Richard Watts enjoys collecting odd and unusual things to sell in his store, Oddities and Such, like this singing toy rabbit. Watts' collection includes five singing Billy Bass fish, some discontinued laserdiscs and a flag portraying Elvis, among other objects. To find items for his store, Watts travels outside of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, with South Carolina being one of his favorite places he goes to find antiques to sell to his customers. Watts runs his store out of his family-owned building that has served many different purposes for the community over the years.**

# Store still selling antiques after 13 years of business

**By Becky Wessels**  
Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

There is no big sign on the street marking its location. The front entrance is actually on the side of the building and can be driven past without notice. However, Oddities and Such, an antique store owned and operated by Richard Watts, is about to celebrate its 13th anniversary on July 4.

At Oddities and Such, located at 501 W. Main St., Watts has been selling all sorts of antiques, used furniture and unusual items for the past 13 years in the store that his father built in 1948. The other half of the building is occupied by Ink Spot Copy Shop.

"I've been doing this about 18 years," Watts said. For five years, he would sell antiques at a flea market where Carolina Fitness is located. He decided to move into the store property since his family owned the space.

Watts said he prefers to sell "items from the 1950s, lamps and waterfall furniture."

Watts does not stock the store with extremely expensive items but with things he thinks are reasonably priced. "I have fair prices on fair things. I look for different, unusual things," Watts said.

Watts, who has lived in Carrboro his entire life, can't believe he has been operating Oddities and Such for so long. "I'm just surprised that I've been here 13 years," Watts said. "My life revolved around three years, and then things would change."

At one point, Watts, who had spent three years in the army at Fort Bragg, was training to become a law enforcement agent. He

stayed in the program until the last course, which dealt with stress.

"I took all these tests, and the teachers came back and said, 'Don't go into law enforcement,'" Watts said. "It was for the best; I enjoy this much more."

Watts likes to travel outside the area to shop for antiques. "I try not to do yard sales or local thrift shops," Watts said. He said South Carolina is one of his favorite spots, and he has nicknames for the places he frequently visits. "One place, they started calling me Chapel Hill," Watts said, smiling.

Before becoming Oddities and Such, the building Watts' father built over 60 years ago had been a fast food restaurant, a laundry mat and a self-service gas station in 1969. For a while, only half of the building was occupied by Ink Spot Copy Shop, until Watts moved in.

Except for Mondays and Tuesdays when Oddities and Such is closed, Watts is always at his store.

"This year, two weekends ago was the first time I had to call in sick," Watts said. "I was really disappointed, but I couldn't get up. I try to be here all the time."

Watts has enjoyed running his shop.

"You have some place to go. That's so important for me, having someplace to go and to do something with my hands," Watts said. He repairs the antiques he buys.

Watts doesn't plan on closing his store anytime soon.

"People change, and people move. I'm one of the few things that have stayed the same," Watts said. "And I'll be here until it's time to leave."

*"I have fair prices on fair things. I look for different, unusual things."*

**--Richard Watts, Oddities and Such owner**

# The Power of Pictures

By Carly Brantmeyer

Carrboro Commons Photo Editor

"I have lived through Hell," said documentary photojournalist Donn Young, while recounting his experiences as a survivor of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the storm that has been deemed one of the nation's worst natural disasters.

Young moved to Carrboro in August 2008, and recently moved to Chapel Hill last month, after living in New Orleans since the early 1980s.

Last month, he shared with UNC-Chapel Hill Professor Jock Lauterer's introductory photojournalism class his journey and mission to archive, restore and preserve his photography and the artwork of other New Orleans artists, for the state of Louisiana and for future generations.

The storm hit on Aug. 29, 2005. Young and his family evacuated on Aug. 27. Despite a sense of hopelessness and destruction after the storm hit, Young said he felt called back to New Orleans.

For years, Young documented human rights, housing projects and jazz musicians.

After Katrina struck, he proposed to the state of Louisiana a vision for a project that would document the face of Hurricane Katrina and the destruction that flooded over the city. Young, who became the director and curator for the project, called it "40 Days and 40 Nights."

In response to his frustration with big names like National Geographic and Time Magazine cashing in on stories of New Orleans as "parachute journalists" for only a few days, Young said, "Let's tell the stories ourselves."

Because of his vision, Young was mandated "an essential employee of the state" and returned to New Orleans a few days after the storm.

"I had three mandates for myself that I was adamant about," Young said. "First, I wanted to support local Louisiana artists. Secondly, I believed if you gave them [the artists and their artwork] a home, they would come back to New Orleans. And lastly, I wanted to create a photo archive that would preserve photos for future generations, so they could understand what it was like."

Young, who had been photographing for decades, tragically lost more than 1, 350,000 prints and images in the storm. He approximates that he lost over a million dollars in assets and potential stock value of his images, although he can't put a calculable price on his loss.

He, like most other residents, thought he was going to be able go back to New Orleans to recover his belongings. But he said no



Staff photo by Carly Brantmeyer  
**Hurricane Katrina survivor Donn Young created the photo project "40 Days and 40 Nights" to tell the emotional narrative of New Orleans after the storm and to preserve Louisiana artists' work. Young now lives in Chapel Hill.**

one knew the Army Corp of Engineers had built the levee system so weak, nor the extent of the hurricane's strength.

When he evacuated, Young grabbed the important stuff: his family, his dogs and a

couple of external hard drives.

He left behind the rest: a lifetime of negatives and prints.

"All of us in New Orleans were really fractured," Young said. "We had no idea of what

[tomorrow] or each day would bring."

"40 Days and 40 Nights" has two focuses. The first aimed to capture the devastation that both the city of New Orleans and Young faced after Katrina. The second part aimed to preserve and collect original artwork of New Orleans locals.

Upon returning to New Orleans to begin his project, Young found his house submerged under a water level that had risen to 6.5 feet. The water damage to artwork and photos that hung on his walls at eye-level serves as evidence to the high waters.

Young shared stories of devastation and tragedy with Lauterer's class, using his own photographs to show and tell the emotional narrative.

For part of "40 days and 40 nights," Young followed a woman named Gloria who lived in a FEMA trailer. Everyone was expected to live in trailers.

"For your long life, hard work, and all that you've done for the community, they [state and national officials] said, 'We're going to give you a trailer,'" Young said.

Young said he found it his responsibility to document history. Teaming up with

Louisiana State University, Young rescued his files to stop further deterioration by placing them in a freezer the size of a garage.

Like other natives to New Orleans, Young was homeless. He lived in New Orleans as a vagabond for 18 months, sending money to his family who moved to Tuscaloosa, Ala. He spent as little on himself as possible, until he was finally able to get an apartment for the next two years.

In an interview a few months ago, Louisiana Secretary of State Jay Dardenne said the preservation project would not be happening without Young approaching the state with his idea and figuring out how to translate that idea into action.

"We're in charge of securing the treasures of the states, in both good times and bad times," Dardenne said.

Not only did Young have to seek out exhibit space for the project, the artists and the work, but he also had to advertise and publicize his project, which he turned into an official non-profit organization.

More than 100 New Orleans artists' work was represented in "40 Days and 40 Nights,"

a collection that will forever remain as a part of the Louisiana's state archives. The artwork includes original pieces of literature, porcelain, painting, clay, music, film, jewelry, glass and sculpture.

Young said he was tired of being "the devastation photographer," and in August 2008, Young moved to Carrboro because he said he wanted a place that had earth to it.

"Since the Hurricane, I've seen a dedication in him that I have never seen before. There are positive things that come from it, and the drive he had showed since the tragedy is so strong," said Max Young, the photographer's 25-year-old daughter, who is a nutritionist in Denver, Colo.

Now when Young looks out his window, he sees beauty instead of the destruction he faced every day for 18 months in New Orleans after the storm.

Young is in the process of putting together a DVD with the final project that he hopes to distribute to all of the artists, the partners that helped with funding and the state officials involved with archiving in "40 Days and 40 Nights."



Sunrise 9th Ward New Orleans

© DYM

Photo by Donn Young  
**"Sunrise 9th Ward" is the signature print of Young's project, which includes more than 100 New Orleans artists.**

# Poetry at lunchtime?

*Peaceful.  
Crashing. Ivory  
tower. Tortured.  
Poets and their ilk  
have a new home  
in Carrboro for the  
next three weeks.*

**By Allison Miller**  
Carrboro Commons Co-Editor

April may bring flowers, but at the Carrboro Cybrary it also brings a celebration of national poetry month.

"Poetry on Your Plate" is a series of weekly poetry recitations at noon in the Carrboro Century Center.

Poets will read from their works and discuss their careers on April 16, 23 and 30.

"It's an opportunity to feature local poets who have been published in a sort of meet and greet type venue," said Laura Dallas, branch librarian at the Cybrary.

During each hour-long event at the Cybrary, Open Eye Café will provide free coffee and participants are invited to bring their lunches, Dallas said.

Dana Hughes, recreation supervisor for the town of Carrboro, said the three poets selected to present—Kim Holzer, Gilbert Neal and Lizz—were chosen after they performed at West End Poet's weekend. Holzer performs April 16, Lizz on April 23 and Neal on April 30.

"If people are sitting politely and quietly during one of my presentations, then I don't feel like I'm doing my job very well," said Holzer, an English teacher



Staff photo by Allison Miller

**Branch librarian Laura Davis knows where to find recordings of poetry in the Carrboro Cybrary.**

at Carrboro High School.

Holzer said she became a published poet in 1993 and has since turned her poetry into two one-woman plays and performed in several countries.

"Mundane things that people take for granted—take those horribly written instructions that you get with household appliances—you can rework those to where they sound really twisted," she said in an e-mail. "That's what, and how, I write. I write about what happens when you put a Barbie doll in the oven

and make Ken watch."

Gilbert Neal, a musician who performs in the Triangle, said he plans to tell a few stories and talk about the lyrics on his CDs.

"Conventional poetry bores

**"I write about what happens when you put a Barbie doll in the oven and make Ken watch."**

—Kim Holzer, poet

me," he said in an e-mail. "I consider the best poets people like Leonard Cohen, Phil Ochs, Andy Partridge. I like to sing my poems."

being written and the poets living in their community.

Allison Miller is a senior journalism and history major.

She really enjoys features writing and likes getting to learn about new people and places through journalism. In her spare time she goes running and contemplates the amazing cuteness of cows. Feel free to contact her at [afm@email.unc.edu](mailto:afm@email.unc.edu).

He added that he hopes he gets people to laugh during his performance.

The sessions are for adults and older teens, said Dallas, noting that the poets aren't asked to censor themselves. Some of the topics last year included death and childbirth, she said.

"Poetry kind of gets forgotten," said Dallas. "I think it's important to highlight that it's alive and active."

Last year the events drew a total of 21 people. Dallas said many of them were also writers or aspiring writers and the event gave them a place to connect and support one another.

"It's encouraging for people that want to start writing," she said.

Dallas said the series is one of her favorite events held by the Cybrary and that she is looking forward to hearing the performances this year.

She said she hopes participants will leave the events having learned more about the poetry

The Carrboro Cybrary is located at 100 N. Greensboro St.

# New coffee shop and boutique supports artists, environment

*Carrboro café seeks to create welcoming place for customers to shop, mingle and drink coffee*

**By Kafi Robinson**

Carrboro Commons Staff Writer

If you're driving around Carrboro and you need a place to buy coffee, sip on some jasmine pearl green tea, or a buy a skateboard, you can do it all in one spot.

Carolyn Griggs, 24, is the owner of Looking Glass Café and Boutique, one of the town's newest coffee shops. The coffee shop is located at 601 W. Main St. in Carrboro. She has had the basic plan for the shop for about 10 years and has always wanted to have a store of her own.

"I think I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade when I decided I wanted to have my own little business," she said. She took her prior experience in retail and the coffee business and

*"People here are all about the small pleasures during this time. A small cup of coffee and a place to relax is all you need."*

-Carolyn Griggs, Looking Glass Café and Boutique owner

used them to create a unique shop.

Looking Glass Café and Boutique, which officially opened on April 3, is all about creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for such a diverse community. Not only will customers find the usual coffees and teas here, but they will also have the chance to hear local bands, view local artists' work and buy fun souvenirs from the boutique.

"I don't think there's any place in the area where you can get a skateboard and buy a cup of coffee at the same time," said Griggs.

The café offers regular coffee and lots of high-quality, loose leaf teas. In the morning, the menu includes pastries and breakfast cereals, with panini sandwiches served during lunch.

While customers enjoy their meals, they can appreciate the local art showcase on the café walls. Since opening a couple of



Staff photo by Kafi Robinson

**Looking Glass Café and Boutique is the only place in town where you can buy a skateboard and a cup of coffee at the same time. Carolyn Griggs opened the shop April 3 and has been welcomed by her neighbors.**

weeks ago, artists have eagerly submitted pieces of their work. "I put an ad on Craig's List and got over 60 responses in less than an hour... and now that number is well over 100," she said.

The boutique, located in the back of the café, is filled with incense, scarves, skateboards and organically made jewelry. Her menu and boutique items fit perfectly into Carrboro's "go green" mindset. Customers who bring their own mugs or bags for boutique shopping receive a discount on their purchase. "Carrboro seems like an environmentally conscious place... people here are more aware of the impact they have on the planet and supporting the environment," she said.

Right now, there are only three workers, and Griggs is the only one who is full time. "I'm in here about 14 hours a day... but it's OK because this is my baby."

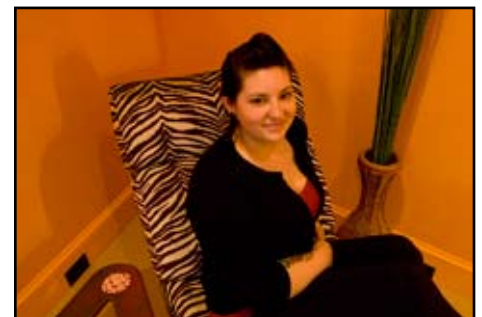
Looking Glass is a creative outlet for local artists, including painters and live bands. The shop has provided Griggs a place to express her artistic side as well. All of the interior designing was her idea. "I hand sponge-painted the walls and tables myself, and I got the furniture from local shops and thrift stores." She also made T-shirts and

jewelry.

After living in the area for 17 years, Griggs says that there was no better location for her shop than Carrboro.

"I absolutely love Carrboro. If [Looking Glass] does well, I might expand, but for now I'm content with where I am in Carrboro."

Griggs feels that Carrboro's strong sense of community is what will keep her business successful. "People here are all about the small pleasures during this time. A small cup of coffee and a place to relax is all you need."



**Carolyn Griggs, owner of Looking Glass Café and Boutique, said she always wanted her own business.**

# Alternative bikes hit Main St.

By Kelly Esposito

Spanish-Language Coverage Team

Leave it to two scientists to shake up the bicycle business in Carrboro.

Co-owners Morgan and Elise Giddings opened Cycle 9 bike shop, located at 601 W. Main St., in December. The store sells electric, cargo and folding bikes that are intended for practical uses instead of just recreation.

Elise Giddings worked as a biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. And Morgan Giddings is a professor at UNC-Chapel Hill, where she teaches microbiology and immunology, biomedical engineering and computer science.

Morgan Giddings said she has always been a bike aficionado, and she first started using an electric bike in 1994. She said she was disappointed that the idea never seemed to take off.

## Beyond the bicycle

"I realized a few years ago that one of the biggest barriers is that the standard bike shops just don't promote them," she said. "They're mostly interested in the recreational market."

But the need for a different type of bike shop was not the only impetus for starting the business. Both Elise and Morgan Giddings have concerns about oil dependency and want to promote greener forms of transportation.

"We can take the bike beyond what it is now," Elise Giddings said. "People could use it more readily for shorter trips and use their cars less."

Cycle 9 was originally an online store that began last spring. The pair opened a retail location in May 2008 in nearby White Cross, N.C. Elise Giddings said they thought Carrboro was a good place to move the store because of the town's bike-friendly reputation.

"There are a lot of bikers here, and the town itself is encouraging of biking," she said. "We thought it was a really good fit with the theme of the business."

And that theme makes Cycle 9 different from other local bike shops. Cycle 9 offers alternative types of bikes that are not usually found in recreational bike shops.

## Practical options

The focus is on "practical, commuter-oriented bikes," said employee Kristen Scheckelhoff. "It's the practical side of biking."

She thinks electric bikes, cargo bikes and folding bikes might encourage more people to bike.



Staff photo by Kelly Esposito

Kristen Scheckelhoff, a Cycle 9 bike shop employee, demonstrates one use of a cargo bike that can carry people, groceries and luggage. "A cargo bike can work as a car replacement," she said.

## EFFICIENT TRAVEL

Electric assist motors fit directly onto the hub of a bike wheel. Riders can use the assist as much or as little as they choose, and a spring-loaded throttle allows the rider to control the motor.

Electric bikes enable riders to travel longer distances and over more challenging terrain. An electric bike is not like a scooter, Scheckelhoff explained, because the rider is still pedaling while using the motor.

"You can ride it like a scooter, but it's lots more efficient if you're pedaling," she said. "You can use as much or as little assist as you want, and get as much or as little exercise as you want."

As long as the speed of the motor alone does not exceed 20 mph, an electric bike is considered equal to a regular bike by law, Scheckelhoff said. All of the laws that apply to regular bikes apply to electric bikes, such as using hand signals and not riding on the sidewalk.

Electric bikes and standard bikes can be combined with cargo features by adding an extra frame. Cycle 9 also has complete cargo bike frames that can carry up to 400 pounds, Scheckelhoff said.

Folding bikes are another practical option because they can fit into small spaces,

Scheckelhoff said. They are ideal for travel and useful for someone living in a small apartment.

## Sustainability

Morgan Giddings said she hopes the store will help people realize that bikes can be used for more than just recreation. The long-term goal of the business is to do more bicycle manufacturing locally, instead of relying on overseas suppliers.

"Bikes are really a legitimate form of transportation, even if you have kids or groceries or other things to carry around," she said. "Our business is a sustainable one over the long haul."

Elise Giddings said she hopes the alternative form of transportation will become more popular as people become more familiar with electric and cargo bikes.

"We want to show people that, hey, this is something that you could do too," she said. "It's very accessible, and it could really make a difference in people's lives."