

Civic volunteers garner accolades

BY ADAM W. RHEW
STAFF WRITER

Local officials agree that volunteer citizens help make area government work.

The importance of those municipal liaisons is being highlighted this week as part of National Volunteer Week.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: MUNICIPAL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS VOLUNTEERS



The first in a three-part series on National Volunteer Week

To celebrate the week, the town of Chapel Hill recognized town residents Tuesday who serve on its 17 advisory boards and commissions.

"People who volunteer their time are in many ways taken for granted," said Mayor Kevin Foy.

With about 40 vacancies on the town's standing boards and commissions, current volunteer members stressed the importance of residents getting involved.

"It takes a lot of input to really go in the right direction," said library trustee Chairman Bob Schreiner.

And Chapel Hill residents are not alone in recognizing the importance of volunteers who serve on boards and commissions.

Monica Evans, assistant to the clerk of the Orange County Board of Commissioners, said community participation is key to the county's success.

"It would be almost impossible for the five commissioners to attend every (board and commission) meeting," she said.

Commissioners adopted a resolution at Tuesday's meeting that praised volunteers for their work on some of the county's almost 60 boards and commissions.

Carrboro Town Clerk Sarah Williamson said there are about

125 citizens serving on her town's 10 permanent advisory boards.

There are vacancies in eight of those groups, including the board of adjustment and the cable television and arts committees, according to the town Web site.

Florry Glasser, program coordinator of the Orange County Democratic Women, said filling such vacancies is no easy task.

"We want to find quality candidates that really believe in good government," she said.

Glasser said it is important to find qualified applicants, regardless of their gender. But she added that increasing the role of women on boards and commissions is an important goal for her organization.

"When policy is made, women, along with men, need a place at the table," she said.

University senior Anup Dashputre, who serves on the town's transportation advisory board, said students also deserve a voice in town discussions.

"It's almost like there are two Chapel Hills: the Chapel Hill of the citizens and the Chapel Hill of the students," he said.

Council member Mark Kleinschmidt said that despite recent pushes for increased student involvement, the changing dynamics of the student body make it difficult for council members to address students' ever-changing concerns.

But he stressed that the sitting council has no objection to appointing students to the various groups.

Dashputre also noted the importance of student and nonstudent involvement.

"Local government impacts your day-to-day life more than just about anything."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

Nonprofits seek town funding

BY EREN TATARAGASI
STAFF WRITER

Two area nonprofit agencies requested support from the Carrboro Board of Aldermen on Tuesday night for future efforts.

The request from Pa'lante and Youth Creating Change, which together form Club Neon, would create an unofficial partnership with the town, using some of the services already offered.

Pa'lante Director Laura Wenzel told the aldermen that the two organizations are not asking for monetary support; instead, they would like help to maintain their computer systems with the aid of town employees or to integrate their programs with the recreation and parks department and the town's wireless initiative.

Wenzel said local groups need the support of their local municipalities because, otherwise, it raises concerns among other contributors who might question the merit of the group's request.

Pa'lante seeks to help integrate Latino youth into the community.

The group also publishes a quarterly Spanish-language magazine and holds art and literacy classes at the club.

Youth Creating Change, directed by Maxecine Mitchell, focuses on teaching leadership and entrepre-

neurial skills to black teenagers by allowing them to run their own store and participate in education and career planning.

Last year, the group received \$1,000 in funding from the town.

Both groups presented a request for \$13,000 to the human services advisory commission Monday night, which will soon determine how much funding, if any, the nonprofits will receive.

Pa'lante received no funding from Carrboro last year, Wenzel said. The group's biggest expense right now is rent, but they also would like to have money to hire a staff, she said.

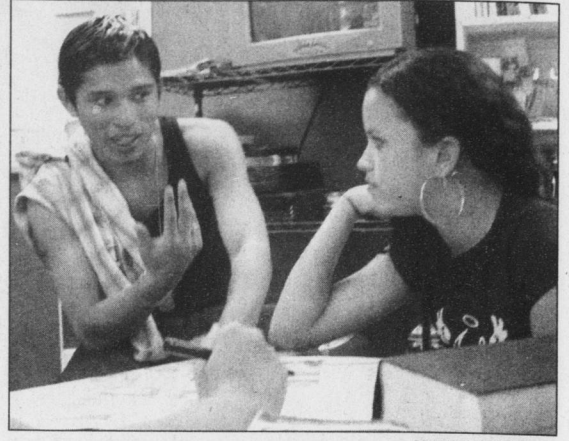
Last year, Pa'lante requested \$15,000 from the town to help fund its magazine.

"We don't give \$15,000 to anyone," said James Harris, community and economic development director.

Harris said the largest amount of money given to an organization by the town last year — \$8,000 — went to the Inter-Faith Council.

Harris said funding is allocated according to an evaluation of the agencies that focuses on their plans in past years and what they have been able to accomplish.

He said the town's recommendation for the two groups is to go back to the human services board because it is more fair to other groups who only present before the board.



DTH/ALEX MONTEALEGRE

Juan Perez (left) converses with Nathaly Betancur as the two work to translate the Pa'lante newspaper from Spanish to English on Tuesday.

Carrboro Assistant Town Manager Bing Roenigk said the town has allocated \$112,000 for nonprofits for the 2005-06 fiscal year — up from last year's \$110,360.

Pa'lante received funding last year from the town of Chapel Hill, which has been criticized in budget talks for contributing too much to human service organizations.

Chapel Hill Town Manager Cal Horton said the town's health and

human services advisory board has recommended raising the amount of funding it allocates to nonprofits.

In the 2004-05 fiscal year, the town spent \$206,000 on nonprofits. The town funds 20 to 25 agencies.

"The council believes that contributions to agencies that provide services is a value," Horton said.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

POLICE LOG

FROM STAFF REPORTS

■ An at-large assailant assaulted a female jogger on the Bolin Creek Trail on Thursday afternoon, according to a Chapel Hill police release.

According to the release, the woman jogged past a man — described as a 5-foot-9-inch black man, between 200 and 230 pounds with a stocky build — who turned and followed her.

He ran up behind her and tackled her to the ground, reports

state. He covered her mouth with his hand.

The victim kicked him off, and he got up and walked off, reports state. The jogger went to a residence off the trail for assistance.

The assault is not related to the three sexual assaults reported in the last six weeks.

Anyone with information

related to Thursday's assault or the other unsolved assault cases should contact the Chapel Hill Police Department at 968-2760 or Crime Stoppers at 942-7515.

■ A man whose identity has not yet been revealed was arrested Tuesday for peeping outside a house on East Franklin Street, Chapel Hill police reports state.

The man — known only now as John Doe and who also gave police the alias of Braima Guru — is being held in Orange County Jail until he can be identified.

He was caught peeping at 219 E. Franklin St. about 12:30 a.m. Tuesday. He was arrested shortly after the incident on the 200 block of East Rosemary Street.

He is being held on a \$300 secured bond and is scheduled to appear May 30 in Orange County District Criminal Court

in Hillsborough.

■ A UNC student was the victim of breaking and entering with force Monday morning, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, an unknown suspect entered the victim's home at 210 Stuart St. around 8:15 a.m. by removing the window air-conditioning unit.

More than \$500 in electronic equipment was taken in the incident, reports state.

CORRECTION

■ The April 19 article "Council talks all relative" paraphrases Chapel Hill Town Council member Ed Harrison as stating that "many college students move off campus and cram together in duplexes." Harrison did not mention college students during his comments at Monday's council meeting.

To report corrections, contact Managing Editor Chris Coletta at cchetto@unc.edu.

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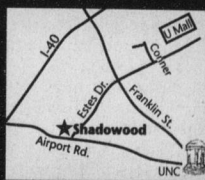
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