

DISPATCHES

New Chatham web site connects environmental community

Anyone who loves Nature is bound to be passionate about Chatham. In Chatham, Mother Nature has outdone herself by endowing the 709 square mile county with bucolic landscapes of forests and fields dissected by ribbons of scenic waterways and a stunning lake. It's no wonder, therefore, that natives, newcomers and visitors alike continually express enthusiasm for Chatham and its natural amenities. It also is no surprise that over the years so many people have come together to form organizations dedicated to the appreciation and protection of the unique natural gifts the county offers.

Now in 2012, five of these organizations have collaborated to create the Environmental and Natural Resources Education Network as a means of increasing environmental awareness and appreciation of the natural resources of Chatham and beyond. Through this joint effort, the groups seek to help all citizens connect-the-dots to form a clearer picture of the interdependence of all natural (eco) systems and the need to work cooperatively to conserve, preserve and protect this diversity.

To that end the Network has created a web site, Connect CHATHAM, as a means to further connect people who appreciate Nature with one another and the work of the Network groups. Connect CHATHAM can be thought of as an internet "Eco-Mall" and "Enviro-COOP," a one-stop-shopping site for information about issues and events that impact (for better or worse) the natural world in general and Chatham's environmental and natural resources in particular. Timely articles and

opinions written by local contributors along with articles and stories gleaned from varied media sources appear on the Feature page along with video and audio clips and a photo slideshow of Chatham scenes.

A visit to the Connect CHATHAM site also provides easy links to the web sites of the Network partners: Chatham Citizens for Effective Communities, Friends of the Rocky River, Haw River Assembly, Rocky River Heritage Association and Sierra Club Orange-Chatham Group.

Drop by www.connectchatham.com and get connected.

— Gary Simpson

Workshop to offer insights on living in poverty

If you'd like to see if you could survive a month in poverty and learn how your community can help low-income people become self-sufficient, plan to attend the Circles© Chatham poverty awareness program on July 25.

One of every seven people and one of every five children in Chatham County live below the poverty level, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates. The program by Circles© Chatham – part of the Circles© National Campaign to eradicate poverty – includes two workshops that offer proven tools to change those statistics.

The morning Bridges Out of Poverty session is based on the work of Dr. Ruby Payne and provides insight into the hidden rules of different socio-economic classes. It offers an overview of the issues and highlights ways social service agencies, non-profits, employers and individuals can work together to help families get out of poverty.

The free afternoon COPE (Cost of Poverty

Experience) simulation offers a glimpse into the harsh realities of daily survival for individuals and families living in your community. Participants will assume the roles of people in crisis seeking food, shelter and other basic necessities. As they interact with social service agencies, utilities, police, schools and other resource providers, they will deal with the benefits and challenges those encounters produce.

The Circles© Chatham workshops will provide a fuller understanding of poverty if taken together, but participants may choose to attend just one session. Both will be at Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church, 314 Great Ridge Parkway off Mann's Chapel Road in northern Chatham County.

Bridges Out of Poverty training will be from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., led by nationally certified trainer Annette Snider. The \$20 registration fee per individual or organization includes one copy of the "Bridges Out of Poverty" book.

The COPE session will be from 2 to 4:30 p.m., and is offered at no cost. A minimum of 40 participants is required for the simulation.

To register, go to www.circleschatham.org, call Michelle Morehouse at 919.533.9330, or fill out a copy of the registration form from the website and mail it with your check (if applicable) to Evergreen United Methodist Church, 11098 US 15 501 Highway North Chapel Hill, NC 27517. Checks should be payable to Evergreen UMC, with "Bridges" in the memo line. The registration deadline is July 16.

For more information, visit www.circleschatham.org (Circles© Chatham), www.bridgesoutofpoverty.com/ (Bridges Out of Poverty), and www.thinktank-inc.org/news.html (COPE).

— Michelle Morehouse

BRIEFS

General Store Café to reopen this summer

Greg Lewis, a Cary caterer, has bought the General Store Café and plans on being open for business by the end of the summer. That business will include food and music, just like in the good old days.

Lewis and his wife, Maria Parker-Lewis, were regulars at the General Store Café and both are committed to preserving its community character.

The General Store Café, which had been a Chevy dealership until 1979, served as a restaurant, musical venue and cultural center until it closed in January. The previous owners were forced to declare bankruptcy after an ill-timed expansion.

The new owners decided to buy it in May with the goal of continuity. Greg Lewis is the proprietor of Catering by Design.

Abundance Foundation hosts July fundraiser

Abundance Foundation's next big fundraising party is a Sunday, July 29 fundraiser called Harvest Abundance to benefit Chatham Mills Farmer's Market and The Abundance Foundation.

Brendan and his talented staff at Oakleaf restaurant in Pittsboro will be generously providing the ambiance for the event and all food served will be created from fresh ingredients found at Chatham Mills Farmer's Market.

Come as you wish between 4-9 p.m.

at Oakleaf Restaurant in Pittsboro's Chatham Mills \$40 per ticket until July 28 \$45 at the door

Admission to the event includes: Local food reception of heavy hors d'oeuvres and dessert; beer, wine, specialty cocktail and Non-alcoholic drinks; Live music from local musicians.

Snow Camp Outdoor Drama begins 39th season

The Snow Camp Historical Drama Society now in its 39th season is offering a variety of Productions. This year, the society is presenting *Li'l Abner*, *Puss In Boots*, *The Real Story of the Three Little Pigs*, and two historical dramas that are mainstays of the non-profit organization, *The Sword of Peace* and *Pathway to Freedom*.

The *Sword of Peace*, written by William Hardy is in its 39th year, and *Pathway to Freedom*, which opened in 1994, and is the only outdoor drama in the United States that historically portrays the Underground Railroad. In addition to producing annual professional summer theatre, the society is a year-round, multi-purpose organization that hosts a farmers market, festivals and community activities throughout the year. The Society hosts annual Youth Drama Camps and maintains the historical grounds and buildings of Snow Camp.

For more information, call 336-376-6948 or 800-726-5115, email snowcampot@aol.com or visit www.snowcampdrama.com.

Carolina Meadows offers grants money

Carolina Meadows, a not-for-profit continuing care retirement community in Chatham County, announces the fifth year of their Community Grants Program. Grants in the range of \$2,000 – \$20,000 will be awarded from a pool of \$110,100. Agencies that serve Chatham County are eligible to apply, and agencies that have received funding from Carolina Meadows in the past are eligible to apply. Priority this year will be given to programs that provide basic needs — food, clothing, shelter and social wellbeing. Applications must be submitted by September 5, 2012.

Please contact marthahutt@carolinameadows.net to request a copy of the RFP and application.

Carrboro Film Festival seeks entries

Professional, amateur and K-12 filmmakers are invited to submit short films for the seventh annual Carrboro Film Festival, which takes place November 18 at the Carrboro Century Center. It is one of the largest festivals of its kind in the Southeast. Submissions are open to any filmmaker who has "breathed the good air of North Carolina" sometime in their lives. Works must be under 20 minutes run time, including titles and end credits.

Films received by August 20 carry a \$10 entry fee; after that, the fee goes to \$15 per film. Online and DVD submissions close September 30. Details

for submitting can be found at www.carrborofilmfestival.com. For more information, email filmfest@carrboro.com. Previous festival award-winners include Wiggle Room, an animated short by local writer/director Joe Schenkenberg, that has qualified for Oscar® consideration.

Have a Great Summer!

See you in September

— CCL Staff

CHATHAM COUNTY LINE

"where all voices are heard"

ESTABLISHED IN 1999

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Chatham County Line is a community newspaper serving all of Chatham County as well as the southern part of Orange. Our mission is to inform our community by providing a forum "where all voices are heard." We seek all views and ideas about our community, and we report on important matters — including our cultural life — comprehensively and in-depth. Our commitment is to create the best-written, best-edited and most stylish community newspaper anywhere.

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www.chathamcountyline.org

WAKE UP WEDNESDAYS

LOOKING FOR NEW BUSINESS OR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS?

Come network with a variety of local businesses and organizations. Wake-up Wednesday meets every 3rd Wednesday of the month from 8 am–9:30 am at the **Carolina Brewery, Pittsboro.** Admission: \$5; includes breakfast!

Call (919) 542-1808 for more information.

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