



# TALK OF THE TOWN

Town of Hillsborough Newsletter: April 2024

## What's It Like to Be a Firefighter?

In February, Lead for North Carolina Fellow Marshall Grayson attended Orange Rural Fire Department's live burn training. For eight hours, firefighters trained on a donated house that was severely damaged by a lightning strike. Grayson reflected on the experience:

After we entered the house, Fire Chief Jeff Cabe taught us about the science behind fire and how fast it can spread. He started by lighting a small pile of hay, which quickly ignited a stack of plywood. It was amazing to see how the room immediately filled with flames, ash and smoke.

The flames spread throughout the room and began to reach across the ceiling. For something so destructive,



Marshall Grayson suited up and entered a live burn with firefighters.

it was beautiful to see up close. We exited the building before the flames became too intense. It was alarming how little visibility I had as we navigated down the stairs.

As I exited the house, I left with a much stronger appreciation for the sacrifice firefighters make when entering burning buildings to rescue those in need. Thank you to the entire Orange Rural Fire Department for the opportunity to see a glimpse of the amazing work of a firefighter.

Read more about Grayson's experience and the Orange Rural Fire Department on the town's website.

## Meet Hillsborough's Communications Manager

Meet Catherine Wright, Hillsborough's first communications professional. Wright manages the Communications Division, comprised now of three full-time employees.

### What did you do before joining the town?

I worked for daily newspapers on the copy desk and as an editor before having kids. After kids, I continued freelancing for newspapers and magazines. I continued some of this freelance work while working part time for the town.

### When did you join the town?

I started working with the town on a contract basis in 2004 to teach writing classes to employees and to

write a justification that led to a grant from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund to help build Riverwalk. In June 2006, I came on board as a very part-time employee.

### What has been your favorite part of the job?

It's challenging. Every day is different, with constant deadlines and the opportunity to keep on learning and meeting people. It's been a great nearly 18 years.

Read the full Q&A on the town's website.



Communications Manager  
Catherine Wright

## Celebrate National Volunteer Month



Tom Darling

Tom Darling has volunteered with the “Greenway Gang” — as he likes to call it — since fall of 2021.

The team meets weekly to remove invasive plants from Hillsborough’s public spaces as part of a program of the Hillsborough Tree Board. Recently, their work has focused on the Riverwalk greenway.

The volunteer work has become cyclical, planting native plants in the winter and removing invasive plants the rest of the year.

“Once we got into the groove of removing the invasive species, we

realized we needed to replace them with native species because it’s important for the ecosystem,” Darling said.

The team gathers on Wednesdays for two hours in the afternoon in the cooler months and in the morning during the summer.

If it’s removal season, they bring loppers and shears to remove plants such as the fast-growing Chinese privet. If it’s planting season, they bring shovels and trowels.

“It’s fun!” Darling said. “Get down in the river and play around a little bit.”

## Hillsborough Climate Challenge

Earth Day is coming up, but caring about our planet is more than a once-a-year activity.

The town is sponsoring the Hillsborough Climate Challenge, a community-organized series of events that highlight sustainable activities and habits in April. Participants will earn a stamp for attending an event. Those with the most stamps will win a prize at the challenge’s celebration day on April 21.

Learn more the events and activities at [linktr.ee/hillsboroughclimatechallenge](https://linktr.ee/hillsboroughclimatechallenge).

### STATE OF THE TOWN ADDRESS

7 p.m. April 22  
Town Hall Annex  
105 E. Corbin St.

Attend or view it live on our YouTube channel.



## Briefly

**Bulk items** — Bulk items are collected April 15-19. See the town’s Garbage Collection page.

**Garden workdays** — Join volunteers at 8 a.m. the first Saturday monthly in Gold Park.

**Invasive plants** — To help remove invasive plants, contact Administrative Support Specialist Lindsay Rhew at 919-296-9600 or [lindsay.rhew@hillsboroughnc.gov](mailto:lindsay.rhew@hillsboroughnc.gov).

**Call 811** — Spring is a great time for gardening and other outside projects. Call 811 to have utilities marked before you dig.

**Pet reminders** — Please remember to keep your pet leashed and remove pet waste.

**Congratulations** — Marshall Grayson, the town’s Lead for North Carolina fellow, will continue working for the town as management analyst for the Police Department, beginning in May.

**Job opportunities** — Join the town! See current job opportunities at [governmentjobs.com/careers/hillsboroughnc](https://governmentjobs.com/careers/hillsboroughnc).

**Litter** — Join the North Carolina Department of Transportation for litter cleanup. Learn more at [ncdot.gov/littersweep](https://ncdot.gov/littersweep).

**Got irrigation?** — Limit to 1 inch before 9 a.m. or after 8 p.m. Even-numbered properties can irrigate on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Odd-numbered properties can on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

**Opioid settlement** — Orange County will host a community meeting April 27 to discuss proposed uses of opioid settlement funds.