



Mayor Lists Town's Top Goals for 2010

The Town of Clayton had a solid year last year despite the economic downturn that created problems all over the country, including here. In fact, you could call it a *top 10* year.

Part of the reason for that is the solid financial standing the town has enjoyed over the last few years. Maintaining and even building on that standing was one of last year's top goals, and it remains a top goal this year. Despite the downturn, we intend to continue taking the steps that keep our financial standing strong.

And we intend to continue working to make our community one of the most desirable places in the nation to live and raise a family. Making the nation's top ten was thrilling, but we have no intention of being a one-year wonder. Here's a quick look at a few of the projects we'll be working on in 2010 that we believe will help keep us at the top.

MOUNTAINS-TO-SEA TRAIL: We'll be working with a \$3.6 million state grant this year that will speed up construction of the part of the Trail that comes through here. We'll be linking with greenways and other parts of the Trail much sooner than originally expected. The dream of being able to walk across the County—and the state—surrounded by the beauty of nature is quickly becoming a reality.

MORE AND BETTER PARKS: Work will begin later this year on Phase One construction of East



We're a growing town, and we're very excited about 2010.

Clayton Community Park on Glen Laurel Road and on upgrades to All-Star Park on Front Street. The faith you showed in us by approving a multi-million-dollar bond issue for parks and streets will show some fantastic results. We're also going to be working to acquire land for more parks.

NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER: Work will begin later this year on our new downtown \$6 million Law Enforcement Center. We have a top-notch Police Department—one of the few in the nation to achieve full accreditation—and we want them to have top-notch facilities. We've concentrated over the last few years on making the Department as professional as it can be, and now it's time to concentrate on providing them the facilities they need.

MORE PUBLIC ART: We unveiled our first public art project last year—a mural at the Clayton Center, and we want to unveil a second one—a mural at the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library—this summer. We still have some

details to work out, but I'm excited to see the town take another large step toward becoming known as an arts community. Our support for the arts has been growing over the last few years, and I'm happy to see it continue.

DOWNTOWN PUBLIC SQUARE: Our efforts to help revitalize downtown will take a huge step forward later this year with the construction of an aesthetic Centerpiece on the vacant lot at Lombard and Main Streets. In addition to adding to the beauty of downtown, the Square will provide a new home for the Clayton Farmers Market.

STREETS AND SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS: Streets and sidewalks all over town will get an upgrade this year thanks to the bond issue.

INCREASED SEWER CAPACITY: It's no secret that Clayton is growing—and fast. And it's no secret that growth requires more and more sewer capacity, something that we've been working on for the last few years and plan to continue working on this year. We have new projects underway and in the planning stages, plus one involving the City of Raleigh that should help us provide for both the industrial and residential expansions we expect to see.

We're a growing town, and we're very excited about 2010.

We wish you the very best in the new year.

The Clayton Center
111 East Second Street
P.O. Box 879
Clayton, NC 27528
(919) 553-5002

www.townofclaytonnc.org
E-mail: citizen@townofclaytonnc.org

Mayor Jody McLeod
406 S. Fayetteville Street
Clayton, NC 27520
919.553.7197
Mayor@townofclaytonnc.org

Mayor Pro-Tem Michael Grannis
507 East Second Street
Clayton, NC 27520
919.550.8547
mgrannis@townofclaytonnc.org

Councilman Bob Satterfield
2045 Walden Way
Clayton, NC 27527
919.553.2273
bsatterfield@townofclaytonnc.org

Councilman R.S. "Butch" Lawter, Jr.
467 E. Second Street
Clayton, NC 27520
919.553.4466
blawter@townofclaytonnc.org

Councilman Alex Harding
310 Parkridge Drive
Clayton, NC 27527
919.274.9032
aharding@townofclaytonnc.org

Councilman Art Holder
16 Oakmont Court
Clayton, NC 27527
H-919.550.2693 C-919.320.4900
aholder@townofclaytonnc.org

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I-T Technician Named 2009 Employee of the Year



I-T Technician Tommy Roy won the Town of Clayton 2009 Employee of the Year title. He was among several other town employees nominated for the

I-T Technician Tommy Roy, who helps keep the town's computer systems up and working, has been named the Town of Clayton 2009 "Employee of the Year."

The 31-year-old computer expert has been a town employee for nearly two years. He was nominated for the honor by a co-worker and won the support of the town's department heads.

"It was an honor to be nominated, but then to actually be chosen was really a surprise," Tommy said.

A North Carolina resident for the last 16 years, Tommy has spent the last six working with computer technology. Since joining the town's staff, he's been on the go, working with town employees to keep their computers operating properly, as well as helping keep the town's expanding computer services

online.

"We recognize the good job that Tommy's done," said Town Manager Steve Biggs. "His easygoing manner and expertise has won him a lot of friends—and respect."

Tommy, whose father Michael is a town Meter Reader, just bought a new guitar and hopes to record classical music someday.

"Away from computers, music and guitar is my passion," he said. He enjoys all sorts of classical music, especially the work of Beethoven and Chopin.

Tommy, who plans to marry in April of next year, also plays a strong game of chess, though he quickly attained a healthy respect for the high level of play across the country when he joined a national chess organization a few years ago. "I thought I was a good player, but got taught differently real quick," he said.

Joining the town's staff was the best move of his professional life, he said, following a series of work experiences that left him feeling unfulfilled.

"Working for the town has changed my outlook, and I truly am grateful to be able to work with such a close-knit and caring group," Tommy said. "I feel really at home here and that I can make a difference."



Above: Art Holder is sworn in by Register of Deeds Craig Olive for his first term as Councilman while wife Frankie watches the proceedings.

Above right: With wife Betsy at his side, Councilman Michael Grannis is sworn in for his second term by Clerk of Superior Court Will Crocker.

Right: Clerk of Superior Court Will Crocker administers the oath of office to Councilman Bob Satterfield for his fourth term, as wife Debbie watches.



Three Take Oath of Office for Town Council

Newly-elected Councilman Art Holder took his seat on the Clayton Town Council Monday, joining incumbents Michael Grannis and Bob Satterfield who won re-election.

All three will serve four-year terms. For Satterfield, it's his fourth term of office and the second for Grannis, who was named Mayor Pro Tem and will lead the Council in Mayor Jody McLeod's absence.

Register of Deeds Craig Olive administered the oath of office for Holder, while Clerk of Superior Court Will Crocker provided a similar service for Grannis and Satterfield.

It was the last meeting after 12 years of service for Councilman Bob Ahlert, who lost his seat to Holder in the recent town election.

The longtime Councilman, generally considered one of the greatest in the town's history, recalled the town's rise during his time in office to its position as one of the state's brightest up-and-coming municipalities.

"I'm proud of have been part of this," he told the crowd before relinquishing his seat.

Ahlert was highly praised by the group he has worked with for so long.

"I only hope I can do half as good as he has," said Grannis. "That man has done probably more than any other councilman ever has."

Satterfield said he will miss Ahlert's strong leadership. "I really hate that Bob Ahlert is not here," he said.

Ahlert will continue to be the town's Delegate with ElectriCities, the town's power

supplier, and Mayor McLeod will be his alternate.

Holder's first Council assignment is liaison to the Library Board.

Mayor McLeod appointed Grannis to serve as liaison to the Downtown Development Association, Satterfield to serve as liaison to the Fire Advisory Board and the Planning Board, Alex Harding as Delegate to the Triangle J Council of Governments and R.S. "Butch" Lawter to serve as liaison to the Recreation Advisory Committee and as an alternate Delegate to the Council of Governments.

The Mayor will serve as liaison to the Public Art Advisory Board, as Delegate to the NC League of Municipalities and as liaison to the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Short Circuit Traveling Film Festival Returns To Clayton



The Southern Arts Federation's third annual Short Circuit Traveling Film Festival will screen at The Clayton Center on Saturday, Feb. 6, beginning at 1 PM.

The festival spotlights short films created by filmmakers living and working in the Southeast and presents a dozen short films selected for their artistic merit by a panel of media arts professionals. The 2009-2010 selections range from fiction and animation to experimental and documentary by filmmakers from Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and Tennessee.

The Clayton Center and the Ava Gardner Museum in Smithfield are collaborating to present the Short Circuit Film Festival.

The three-hour film festival has been traveling the region since November. Tickets for The Clayton Center screening are \$2.50, plus service fee. Tickets may be purchased at The Clayton Center Box Office located at 111 E. Second Street in downtown Clayton, by calling 919-553-1737, ext. 2, or online at www.theclaytoncenter.com.

For a complete list of films and the festival schedule visit the Short Circuit Traveling Film Festival at www.southarts.org/shortfilms.

America's Got Talent Finalists To Perform

"Voices of Glory" Headline Benefit Concert for Kids Café of Clayton

"Voices of Glory," the popular trio who were among the top 10 finalists on *America's Got Talent*, perform at The Clayton Center, Saturday, January 16, in a fund raiser to benefit the local Kids Café of Clayton program.

The *Voices of Glory*—Michael, Avery, and Nadia of Highland, NY—are the siblings whose unique style of singing harmonies won America over during their run to the finals during season four of the popular television talent show.

The group started singing together in 2007 after their mother was seriously injured in a head-on car collision. She was in a coma for months, and the three children serenaded her while she was hospitalized. Their mother eventually came out of the coma, started rehabilitation and is doing well.

Kids' Cafe is an after-school program for students at Cooper Elementary School that provides local students with hot meals, tutoring, mentoring and workshops for parents.

The benefit concert also will feature gospel recording artists C3 Chozen. Tickets for the 7 PM show are \$15, plus service fees in advance; \$20 plus service fees at the door.



Michael, Avery, and Nadia are siblings who began singing together in 2007 after their mother was seriously injured. They serenaded her while she was hospitalized.

Mountains-to-Sea Trail Through Here Soon

The segment of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail that comes through Clayton will be put together much quicker than originally expected thanks to a \$3.6 million state grant, most of which is federal stimulus funds.

Work on the four miles of trail, which begins at the Wake County line and parallels the Neuse River all the way to Sam's Branch, could begin this spring.

"This gives us an opportunity to accomplish about 10 years worth of work in about two years," said Planning Director Skip Browder, who has led efforts to bring the trail through Clayton and Johnston County. "We've been working on this pretty diligently for close to

two years."

The town's portion of the cost will total about \$14,000, which might be paid for through funding from other grants. This section of the Trail will be maintained by the town.

The work includes a pedestrian bridge that will link the Trail with a greenway that extends all the way to O'Neil Street. Greenways that would allow residents to safely walk across Clayton have long been part of the planning process here. The Mountains-to-Sea Trail will fit right in.

The 1,000 miles of paths and bike trails that make up the Trail will wind from Clingman's Dome in the Great Smokey

Mountains National Park to Jockey's Ridge State Park at the Atlantic Ocean. It wanders through 37 counties, three national parks, two national forests, several state parks, two national wildlife refuges, two wilderness areas, a number of swamps, several major rivers, and hundreds of lakes. The mainline distance is between 935 and 945 miles, but with ferry rides, spur trails to scenic overlooks and side trails to campsites, the actual journey will fall just short of 1,000 miles.

Spurred on by volunteers who spend weekends clearing the way, the Trail, a dream that began in the 1970s, is nearly half completed.