



From Chamber Executive Director Craig Hill

To the residents of Kinston and Lenoir County, Since the founding of the very first Chamber of Commerce in 1599, Chambers have strived to build and support their local businesses and communities. Now, in the time of a global pandemic, the local Chambers of Eastern North Carolina are working collaboratively to help their members survive and thrive during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on businesses has been well-documented. Seemingly, no one has been spared from a certain degree of discomfort or hardship, and it has been especially burdensome on businesses that rely on regular contact and personal engagement with their customers. These businesses are at the heart of every local Chamber of Commerce: organizations dedicated exclusively to building markets and communities where these businesses have a chance to succeed.

Since the outset of this crisis, Chambers of Commerce have assumed visible leadership

roles in their communities, looked upon for messages of hope, optimism, and resilience. While steering local businesses to accurate and useful assistance, they've also been calling on action from elected officials, and encouraging commerce that complies with public health guidance. Their work will be even more important in the future, as all of our markets rebound from the economic challenges that await.

The collective missions of Eastern North Carolina Chambers share a common ambition for sustained prosperity in our communities and region, built on thriving employers. It is through the generous support of our members that we have been able to support our communities in various ways throughout our histories. Now, during this trying time, the support of our members is vitally important and appreciated as it ensures the viability of our organizations.

Now, more than ever before, your Chambers are trumpeting the needs of our members and communities throughout the halls of Congress and

in Raleigh. Every step of the way, Chamber staff are diligently monitoring and, as needed, influencing policy so that the needs of our Region are addressed with the urgency and authority that this pandemic warrants. Know that the collective voice of our Chambers carries the weight of our 4,000 member organizations and we're doing everything in our power to support our business communities.

Let's take heart in knowing we will all get through this. And when we do, Eastern North Carolina Chambers will be there to assist our members and communities in the post-pandemic era. When the time is right, we'll reengage our in-person networking events and reconnect our members with their peers and partners so that recovery can gain momentum.

While this pandemic poses new challenges, our commitment to our communities during times of need is not. Whether it was Hurricane Florence, Mathew, or Floyd, each of our communities have experienced some form of disaster in recent



years. And, like disasters in the past, our collaboration will again be the catalyst that carries us forward. It won't be easy. But we will get through this. As a community and as a Region. Together.

Sincerely,
Your Eastern N.C. Chambers:

Tom Kies, Carteret County Chamber of Commerce

Kate Teel, Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce

Craig Hill, Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce

Kevin Roberts, New Bern Chamber of Commerce

Tina Foreman, Pamlico County Chamber of Commerce

David Farris, Rocky Mount Chamber of Commerce

Catherine Glover, Washington-Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce

Kate M. Daniels, Wayne County Chamber of Commerce

Ryan Simons, Wilson Chamber of Commerce

Denise Nowell, Zebulon Chamber of Commerce

Local business and event updates

Advanced Office Solutions is shipping supply orders directly and attempting to resolve service-related issues over the phone to the greatest extent possible. Call 888-553-4208 or email support@advosi.com for more information

The 21st annual **Caswell Center Foundation Golf Tournament**, scheduled for Thursday, April 30, has been postponed; the new date is Thursday, Sept. 24, at Falling Creek Country Club. We look forward to a beautiful day to play golf and support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at Caswell Developmental Center and 38 Eastern NC counties. For more information, contact Danielle Howell at 252-208-3790

DataGroup Technologies is working very hard to ensure business continuity in the ease of access to and the quality of service delivery while taking great care of our families and communities

Down East Protection Systems (DEPS) is staying open as much as possible to help customers with security system issues as well as new sales opportunities

Duke Energy is suspending disconnect services for nonpayment and is remaining committed to working with all customers who need assistance with their energy bills to avoid creating additional hardships for customers

GOECO Inc. is offering to all clients continued service on all its office equipment products. GOECO is attempting to handle any service-related issues over the phone that it can to help limit interactions with the public to do its part in social distancing. Any supply orders will be shipped directly to the client. For more information, call 252-286-5354

Historical Harmony Hall Museum, 109 East King St., Kinston, is closed. The manager at Harmony Hall continues to conduct business from home and can be reached by leaving a message at 252-521-4888. Messages at Harmony Hall at 252-522-0421 are checked periodically. The Southern Brunch scheduled for April 26 is postponed; makeup date to be determined. Sponsorship for this event is still needed

Kinston Community Health Center Behavioral Health: All appointments will be telephonic. There will be telephonic services available at the Behavioral Health Center for patients that are scheduled to come in the office to speak with their provider. Patients will be contacted by the Behavioral Health Patient Relations Specialist regarding the time to come in the office to speak with their provider. Medication Assisted Treatment services will continue to be provided to patients. All patients are encouraged to have at least a 30-day supply of medications. If one needs refills on medications, please call 252-522-9800 or send a message through your patient portal

Kinston Community Health Center Dental Division is only accepting emergencies, which will be evaluated at the time of the visit. The dental staff is working diligently to contact all

patients with non-emergent appointments to reschedule at a later date. The dental department is closed on Fridays

Kinston Community Health Center Family Medicine: If you are sick with flu-like symptoms, such as fever or cough, please stay home and self-quarantine. This means avoiding direct contact with everyone, including family members, close friends, and the general public. If you would like to speak with a nurse or feel that you are in need of medical evaluation, please call KCHC at 252-522-9800 before coming to the center. Certain visits may be eligible for a telephone consultation or a telemedicine visit with your provider versus coming into the clinic

Kinston Community Health Center OB/GYN: No changes in service delivery

Lazy Gator Hemp Farm has changed its store hours due to the COVID-19 virus. The Farm Store, 3376 Hwy 55W, is closed until further notice. The Warehouse Store, 4168 Berkley Ave. (next to Lions Industries for the Blind and Lowes), remains open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. A 20 percent discount is being offered on all products. Orders can be placed on-line at lazygatorshempfarm.com and will be shipped for free the same day. Orders can also be called in and picked up at the warehouse location's pick up window. To place an order or for more information, please call 252-286-7396.

Send your business info to Linda Whittington at lindaw@kinstonchamber.com so it can be included in our daily (Monday-Friday) e-blast to Chamber members and bi-weekly on this page in *The Free Press*. There is no charge for this service to businesses while we are going through this critical time in Lenoir County. Please visit the [Chamber's Facebook page](#) to see restaurant updates.

All sites of **Lenoir County Council on Aging** in Kinston, Pink Hill and LaGrange are closed for activities. Staff is working and can be reached by phone

Lenoir Tire and Appliance is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-noon. For sales and service, call 252-523-2135. Visit the website at lenoirtireandappliance.com

The Mother Earth Tap Room is closed and all brewery events are cancelled until further notice. Local retail outlets are stocked with Mother Earth products as long as those outlets remain open and operational

All public libraries in the **Neuse Regional Library System** are closed until further notice. Library staff continue to work while libraries are closed; reference staff is available from 9

a.m.-5 p.m. each weekday by phone (252-527-7066, Ext. 134) and email (nrl@neuselibrary.org). During the closure, library patrons are asked to keep items currently checked out until Neuse Regional Libraries reopen or until further notice. All late fees during this time will be waived

RADD - Raising Awareness for the Developmentally Disabled - continues to work and serve the community. The office is open a limited amount of hours until school starts back. If you need to reach someone, call 252-522-2814 or email radd.lenoir@gmail.com. Email is the best and quickest option at this time

ServiceMaster Emergency Services is currently pre-planning and conducting small/large facility disinfecting procedures for the community. For any emergency services that arise (water restoration, fire restoration, proactive facility disinfecting), call 252-939-1259

Servpro of Lenoir, Duplin and Jones counties are open for the foreseeable future. For all your water, fire, reconstruction and bioremediation needs, Servpro of Lenoir, Duplin and Jones Counties - as well as Servpro of Wayne County - are here to help. Call 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 252-208-7888 or 919-751-5353

State Employees Credit Union (SECU) branches have temporarily transitioned to drive-through only service for the majority of our services. Members who need to access safe deposit boxes, drop off tax return information, or inquire about a loan should call the branch to schedule an appointment. While SECU is closing branch lobby access for branches with a drive-through to help protect the community, SECU remains open for business to make loans, take deposits and provide other financial services to its members during this time of uncertainty. From applying for a loan to depositing a check, members can conduct most SECU business via other service channels that do not require a visit to the branch. Members are asked to utilize these channels, which include online Member Access through the SECU website, ncsecu.org; the SECU mobile app (available for download from the Apple App and Google Play stores); 24-7 member services support via phone at 1-888-732-8562; ASK-SECU voice response services at 1-800-275-7328; and over 1,100 CashPoints ATMs located across North Carolina

The Walk to De-Feet Dementia has been rescheduled for Saturday, Sept. 12

Wheeler Exterminating is continuing to service this community's food production facilities, grocery stores, medical institutions, multifamily housing units, warehouses, homes and businesses. We recognize the restaurant industry is especially hard hit and struggling to remain open to serve our community. To assist with these requirements while they are facing uncertain income Wheeler has implemented the following: Restaurants who are current customers will maintain service for the month of April at no charge. Additionally, any restaurant requesting new service in the month of April will be charged half-price for the initial service

PRESIDENT'S CLUB

These members choose to make a higher-level financial investment in the Chamber. The support of these businesses helps the Chamber realize its vision.

PLATINUM LEVEL MEMBER:
Crown

GOLD LEVEL MEMBERS:
Down East Protection Systems (DEPS)
Duke Energy
Electrolux
UNC Lenoir Health Care

SILVER LEVEL MEMBERS:
Cherry Energy
City of Kinston
First Citizens Bank & Trust Co.
Harvey Fertilizer & Gas
Heritage Elite Estates
Lenoir Community College
Lions Industries for the Blind
Minges Bottling Group, Inc.
Perry Management
Spirit AeroSystems
State Employees Credit Union
State Farm Insurance, Judy Jones
Union Bank
Wells Fargo

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White & Allen, P.A. remains prepared and dedicated to servicing all your legal needs while also acting as a prudent community partner in limiting the potential spread of any illness during the performance of our services. However, for clients with ongoing needs that require in-person contact (i.e., real estate closings), White & Allen is and will continue to accommodate those needs from its physical office locations but with certain precautions to limit any potential exposure to or the unintended spread of infection. For those clients with current or future court dates and other scheduled proceedings, White & Allen will directly update on all closings, continuances and postponements. Clients are welcome to communicate through various social media accounts and to use the website at whiteandallen.com to pay invoices as they are received