

Chamber CONNECTION

CONNECTING BUSINESS, MILITARY & COMMUNITY

Best in Show at the Business Expo!



Best Interactive



Best Newcomer



Best Allround

Our Chamber Staff

Chamber Officials:

Laurette Leagon, President
president@jacksonvilleonline.org

Cindy Edwards, Chair

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operations@jacksonvilleonline.org

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Melissa Maloney

Administrative Services Manager
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Caitlin Diaz

Business Services Manager
businessservices@jacksonvilleonline.org

Rebecca Gamboa

Commerce Center Coordinator
coordinator@jacksonvilleonline.org



The Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce welcomes Rebecca Gamboa as the new Commerce Center Coordinator.

Rebecca received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Management from the East Carolina University College of Business, Greenville NC and worked for several years at Rock Springs Center, The Jockey Club in Greenville NC.

Congratulations to Tricia Purcell.

She has been promoted to the Membership Manager position with the Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce.



910.347.3141

1099 Gum Branch Road, Jacksonville NC 28540

The Jacksonville•Onslow Chamber of Commerce's mission is to be the voice of business in collaborative partnership that work to build and enhance a healthy business climate and a vibrant quality of life.

The Jacksonville•Onslow Chamber of Commerce's vision is to be recognized as a model in building collaborative partnerships that encourage business growth and sustainable community development.



New Members

MARCH

Carolina’s Center for Surgery
2145 Country Club Road
Ms. Liz Hardee @ 910-353-2319
Healthcare Provider

MRM Construction LLC
Chinquapin
Mr. Brian Standridge @ 888-505-0216
Construction Companies
Homebuilders, Commercial & General Contractors

Wade Journey Homes Jacksonville
521 Yopp Rd.
Ms. Stephanie Holland @ 910-408-3595
Home Builders

Embry Riddle Aeronautical University
825 Stone Street, Camp Lejeune
Mr. Ricky J. Cannon @ 910-451-0174
Education Services

Onward to Opportunity - VCTP, IVMF Syracuse University
825 Stone Street ,Camp Lejeune
Mr. Mikeal “Shane” Murray @ 910-547-1775
Non-Profit Organizations

Shining Hearts Home Care Of NC
2064 Hunters Ridge Drive, Midway Park
Ms. Hannah Hunter @ 910-939-0511

York Rite Masons Prince Hall Affiliated of Jacksonville North Carolina Inc.
PO Box 113 Jacksonville NC
Mr. Floyd A. Duhon @ 817-688-3189
Non-Profit Organizations

Ribeyes of Jacksonville
2109 N. Marine Blve, Jacksonville
Ms. Jessica Pierce @ 910-333-0838
Restaurants

Jomi & Dee’s Boutique
1002 Henderson Drive Suite D, Jacksonville
Ms. Jomaira Holden @ 910-238-4427
Retail Clothing

Fresh Blends
347 Jacksonville Mall, Jacksonville
Mr. Robert Ortiz @ 910-353-9500
Health Food

Col BJ (Barry) Fitzpatrick, USMC (Ret)
Individual

BullsEye Advertising
101 VFW Road, Suite 2F, Cedar Pointe
Mr. Eddie Holland @ 910-389-3781
Advertising/Promotions

NABVETS
1009 Commons Dr. North, Jacksonville
Mr. David L. Graves @ 910-346-4234
Non-Profit Organizations

Member Renewals

MARCH

	Member Since
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority-Tau Omega Omega Chapter	4/8/2009 4:40:30 PM
Anew Hearing Care, LLC	4/8/2015 8:18:19 AM
BullsEye Advertising	9/18/2015 10:10:03 AM
Cabin Creek Campground Inc.	3/19/2008 2:08:35 PM
Candlewood Suites	1/31/2012 10:11:42 AM
Col BJ (Barry) Fitzpatrick, USMC (Ret)	11/17/2016 8:40:01 AM
Col Robert L. Hayes, USMC (Ret)	12/17/2012 10:26:36 AM
Comfort Suites	4/25/1996 12:00:00 AM
Continental Cap City	1/10/2017 2:14:29 PM
Crown Apartments	4/22/2003 12:00:00 AM
Dairy Queen	4/8/2014 12:00:00 AM
Diana’s Dance Academy	1/22/2002 12:00:00 AM
Equine Country USA, Inc.	3/7/2016 12:00:00 AM
Fayetteville Publishing Company	3/16/2015 10:55:30 AM
Feeling Great! Sleep Medical Center	4/14/2005 12:00:00 AM
Foster’s Military Shop	1/27/2010 2:52:22 PM
Holiday Inn Express	9/3/1985 12:00:00 AM
HoneyBaked Ham Co & Cafe	1/15/2013 11:26:05 AM
Jacksonville Dental Care	3/23/1999 12:00:00 AM
Jacksonville Onslow County Crime Stoppers	1/24/2001 12:00:00 AM
Kixx Outfitters	1/21/2011 3:26:06 PM
Lara E. Photography	2/10/2017 12:04:31 PM
Liberty Auto Spa	1/20/2016 9:21:24 AM
Liberty Crossing	8/18/2011 10:25:00 AM
Liberty Tire, Inc.	4/3/2012 9:47:53 AM
Local 360	1/22/2016 10:41:39 AM
Longhorn Steakhouse	3/12/2013 12:40:34 PM
Mainstay Suites	4/3/2013 10:16:28 AM
Marrakesh Mediterranean Cuisine	4/8/2015 4:26:58 PM
MED First Immediate Care & Family Practice	2/25/2013 5:01:03 PM
NABVETS Military Women’s Chapter (NMWC)	3/18/2016 3:24:02 PM
New Beginnings Child Care	1/19/2006 8:47:48 AM
New Life Family Worship Center	1/27/2012 2:19:06 PM
North State Mechanical, Inc.	3/8/2006 1:56:16 PM
Onsite Computer Service, Inc.	1/25/2012 2:46:10 PM
Onslow Shrine Club	2/28/2002 12:00:00 AM
Pelican’s Snowballs	3/10/2017 8:52:22 AM
Pools Patios and Spas, LLC	3/5/1997 12:00:00 AM
Pro-Type Staffing Services	1/29/1986 12:00:00 AM
Rockin Game Party	1/5/2017 3:49:34 PM
Scholastic Dreams	2/28/2011 2:52:08 PM
Servpro of Pender/West Onslow	4/17/2012 4:28:18 PM
SgtMaj Scott T. Booth, USMC (Ret)	4/7/2015 1:39:35 PM
St. Regis HOA of Onslow County	1/27/2015 5:44:02 PM
State Employees’ Credit Union	3/31/2010 8:32:45 AM
Swetang Patel, M.D., P.A.	4/26/2013 3:44:36 PM
The Fuzzy Peach Frozen Yogurt Bar	1/20/2015 9:49:50 PM
Through the Looking Glass	2/29/2012 2:36:35 PM
TownePlace Suites by Marriott	1/3/2008 9:43:32 AM
UNCW Onslow Extension Site	1/1/1997 12:00:00 AM
Walton’s Distillery	4/25/2016 8:21:24 PM
WCTI News Channel 12/ WYDO-FOX TV	9/25/1979 12:00:00 AM



Monday, May 14th, 2018 at 12:00 pm

Duke Energy Citizenship & Service Award Luncheon

Nominations close Friday, April 27th, 2018

Jacksonville Country Club

2201 Country Club Rd

Reservations: \$18.00 per person



FREE Seminars at Small Business Center at Coastal Carolina Community College

Wednesday, 5/16/18 Small Business Roundtable w/ Pete Ellis 6:00-8:00pm

Thursday, 5/17/18 Video Marketing: Increase Your Customer Reach w/ Bob Mackowski 6:00– 7:00pm

Friday, 5/18/18 How Data Breaches Affect Small Business & Ways to Protect Sensitive Information 12:00-2:00pm

To register contact : SBC at 910.938.6322

Friday, May 18th, 2018 at 8:00 am

**First Citizens' Small Business
of the Year Breakfast**

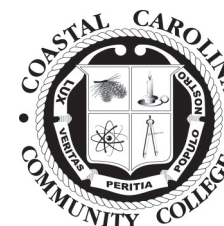
Onslow Memorial Hospital - Cafeteria

Reservations: \$10.00 per person



Limited Seating—Please RSVP to Caitlin Diaz at (910) 347-3141 ext. 251
or BusinessServices@jacksonvilleonline.org by Monday, May 7th, 2017

Tickets available online—Jacksonvilleonline.org—Event Calendar



Sander's Ford

National Dodge Automotive Group

15th Annual Administrative Professionals' Celebration STAND STRONG AND FOLLOW THE SUN



With Keynote Address by East Carolina University's Women's Head Basketball Coach, *Heather Macy*

Administrative Professionals are the hub of our workplace, all roads leading to them. Most days may seem to breeze by with ease— and some days may not. What stays consistent are the Administrative Professionals working diligently behind the scenes to keep our picture-perfect theatrical performance that we call our workplace— running as smoothly as possible. When stress is headed their way— they continuously outshine others. They cheerfully hold their heads up high and dominate the task-at-hand. *They stand strong, and follow the sun.* Join your colleagues over breakfast to hear the motivational passion and spirit of our keynote speaker— Heather Macy.

Date: April, 24th, 2018

Time: Registration begins at 8:30am, Breakfast begins at 9:00am

Location: Marston Pavilion, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune

Cost: \$19 (includes breakfast)

Deadline to register and receive a base pass is Thursday, April 12th 2018

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Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



Presented By

Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce
Coastal Carolina Community College
Marine Corps Community Services,
Lejeune-New River

Call 910-347-3141 ext. 235 or email
SpecialEvents@JacksonvilleOnline.Org





DUKE ENERGY CITIZENSHIP AND SERVICE AWARD

*Award presentation held at Jacksonville Country Club
May 14, 2018 @ 12:00 pm (\$18.00 per person—please RSVP—limited seating)*

ABOUT THE AWARD

America has a long and proud tradition of volunteer service. Now, more than ever, volunteers are needed to renew their commitment to helping others and creating efforts that bring us closer as a community and as nation. Duke Energy wants to recognize these efforts by honoring citizen(s) with the **Duke Energy Citizenship and Service Award**. This is a tribute to individuals or groups who make a difference in their communities or places of work by using their time, talents, and compassion to positively impact the lives of others. Recipients of the award help foster a culture of citizenship and service that acts as a catalyst for others to become involved in civic and social activities. The award is designed to recognize outstanding volunteer service and civic participation over a twelve month period.

PURPOSE OF THE AWARD

- Recognize and reward leadership and/or involvement in volunteerism and community service
- Encourage a culture of citizenship and service in our communities
- Complement the efforts of those individuals and organizations in our community striving to improve our quality of life

ELIGIBILITY

- The award will recognize individuals, teams and/or work groups within an organization
- Nominations, on the attached nomination form, will be received from Chamber members prior to the Chamber recognition event
- It is *not necessary* for a nominee to be a Chamber member or a Duke Energy customer

If you wish to nominate someone for this award, please, include a brief description of their community involvement on the nomination form below. We will contact the nominee for more details. Nominations must be received by close of business on Friday, April 27, 2018.

Nominee Name: _____

Nominee Address: _____

Nominee Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Citizenship and Service Activity: (Please, type in a brief description of the activity or activities for nomination):

Submitted By: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Return this form to:

Caitlin Diaz, Business Services Manager

Jacksonville • Onslow Chamber of Commerce, 1099 Gum Branch Road, Jacksonville, NC 28540

Phone: 910-347-3141, ext. 251 Email: BusinessServices@jacksonvilleonline.org



FIRST CITIZENS SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

*Award presentation held at Onslow Memorial Hospital (Cafeteria)
May 18, 2018 @ 8:00 am (\$10.00 per person-please RSVP-limited seating)*

In recognition of the achievements and contributions of this local small business owner/manager, I would like to nominate the following person for consideration to the First Citizens and the Small Business Committee's Small Business of the Year

Nominees will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Demonstrates excellence of knowledge and integrity in their business or professional field
- Provides a valuable business / service / profession to the Community
- Is an active Chamber Member and demonstrates the Small Business Committee's Mission of support to our citizens, the military and local business community
- Has been a Chamber Member in good standing for at least five years
- Exhibits initiative, creativity, and a can-do attitude
- Owns or manages a business with 25 employees or less

If you wish to nominate someone for this award, please, include a brief description of their community involvement on the nomination form below. We will contact the nominee for more details. Nominations must be received by close of business on **Friday, April 27, 2018.**

Nominee Name: _____

Nominee Address: _____

Nominee Phone: _____ Email: _____

(Please, type in a brief description of the activity or activities for nomination, if additional space is needed, please attach additional sheet _____

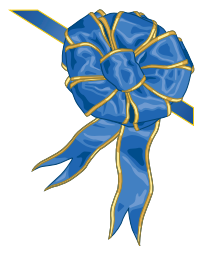
Submitted By: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Return this form to: Caitlin Diaz, Business Services Manager
Jacksonville • Onslow Chamber of Commerce, 1099 Gum Branch Road, Jacksonville, NC 28540
Phone: 910-347-3141, ext. 251 Email: BusinessServices@jacksonvilleonline.org



Ribbon Cutting



March 8th

Carolina Orthopedics
201 Williamsburg Parkway



March 23rd

Animal House Grooming Salon
675 Bell Fork Rd.



March 27th

Children's Palace
251 Northwest Circle

Economic Indicators & Other Charts

How to read the Charts:
The Airport Passengers Chart, Tax Reports, Healthcare Stats and Utilities Connect and Disconnects are shown as monthly or quarterly comparisons on the specific rows. The totals shown at the bottom are the Year to Date totals for each year and does not include the numbers shown in Italics.

Tax Reports				
MONTHLY TAXABLE SALES: SOURCE: NC DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE				
OCCUPANCY TAX: SOURCE: ONSLOW COUNTY				
Monthly Report of Taxable Sales				
16-17	Taxable Sales	17-18	Taxable Sales	% Change
Jul-16	\$173,654,795	Jul-17	\$176,001,283	1.35%
Aug-16	\$171,787,640	Aug-17	\$175,923,030	2.41%
Sep-16	\$172,438,330	Sep-17	\$170,773,046	-0.97%
Oct-16	\$157,979,134	Oct-17	\$166,205,341	5.21%
Nov-16	\$149,558,400	Nov-17	\$158,839,850	6.21%
Dec-16	\$159,084,149	Dec-17	\$166,147,995	4.44%
Jan-17	\$188,820,250	Jan-18	\$190,951,446	1.13%
Feb-17	<i>\$142,931,810</i>	Feb-18		6.25%
Mar-17	<i>\$152,227,168</i>	Mar-18		4.26%
Apr-17	<i>\$183,028,780</i>	Apr-18		7.43%
May-17	<i>\$167,072,441</i>	May-18		6.88%
Jun-17	<i>\$163,332,351</i>	Jun-18		2.11%
YTD Total	\$1,173,322,698	YTD Total	\$1,204,841,991	2.69%
*YTD Total does not include numbers in <i>Italic</i>				

Occupancy Tax Report			
	<u>2016-2017</u>	<u>2017-2018</u>	%
July	\$402,706.74	\$391,718.29	-2.7%
August	\$284,130.83	\$345,186.90	17.6%
September	\$157,461.01	\$184,118.54	14.4%
October	<i>\$120,219.03</i>	\$121,179.13	.7%
November	\$83,262.30	\$95,052.77	14.4%
December	\$64,805.58	\$69,237.21	6.4%
January	\$67,525.27	\$81,149.42	16.7%
February	<i>\$71,982.00</i>		
March	<i>\$92,556.64</i>		
April	<i>\$110,117.39</i>		
May	<i>\$154,642.07</i>		
June	<i>\$247,486.99</i>		
Total:	\$1,180,110.76	\$1,287,642.26	8.3%
*YTD Total does not include numbers in <i>Italic</i>			

UTILITIES				
UTILITIES: SOURCES: CITY OF JACKSONVILLE & ONWASA				
City of Jacksonville & ONWASA Water				
	Connects		Disconnects	
	2017	2018	2017	2018
1st Qtr	4,753	3,282	3,193	2,979
2nd Qtr	5,185		3,194	
3rd Qtr	5,311		4,713	
4th Qtr	4,284		4,077	
YTD Total		3,282	15,177	2,979
*YTD Total does not include numbers in <i>Italic</i>				

HEALTHCARE	
OMH ER: SOURCE: ONSLOW MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	
OMH BIRTH: SOURCE: ONSLOW MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	
NAVAL HOSPITAL ER: SOURCE: NAVAL HOSPITAL, CAMP LEJEUNE	
NAVAL HOSP BIRTHS: SOURCE: NAVAL HOSPITAL CAMP LEJEUNE	

Onslow Memorial Hospital Emergency Room Visits		
	2017	2018
1 st Quarter	15,609	10,120
2 nd Quarter	14,779	
3 rd Quarter	15,124	
4 th Quarter	15,124	
YTD Total		10,120
Onslow Memorial Hospital Live Births		
	2017	2018
1 st Quarter	365	199
2 nd Quarter	325	
3 rd Quarter	388	
4 th Quarter	358	
YTD Total		199
*YTD Total does not include numbers in <i>Italic</i>		

Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune Emergency Room Visits		
	2017	2018
1 st Quarter	13,326	8,375
2 nd Quarter	11,538	
3 rd Quarter	13,686	
4 th Quarter	13,925	
YTD Total		8,375
Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune Live Births		
	2017	2018
1 st Quarter	514	329
2 nd Quarter	483	
3 rd Quarter	542	
4 th Quarter	350	
YTD Total		329
*YTD Total does not include numbers in <i>Italic</i>		

TRANSPORTATION		
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: SOURCE: OUTS, JTS		
ONSLow NEW VECh SALES: SOURCE: ONSLOW COUNTY		
ALBERT ELLIS AIRPORT: SOURCE: ALBERT J ELLIS AIRPORT		
Public Transportation Riders - 2017-18		
System	February	Fiscal YTD
Onslow United Transit System	7,910	59,074
Jacksonville Transit System	9,540	80,496
Military Express	1484	9,124
Total	18,934	148,694
Onslow County New Vehicle Sales		
	DEC 17	JAN 18
Cars	329	378
Trucks	471	566
Total	800	944
Year to Date		
Cars	3,999	378
Trucks	5,669	566
Total	9,668	944

Albert J Ellis Airport Total Passengers			
	2017	2018	% Change
January	22,039	19,905	-9.6%
February	22,607	21,064	-6.8%
March	25,629		%
April	26,552		%
May	28,701		%
June	27,385		%
July	28,753		%
August	29,818		%
September	25,210		%
October	27,400		%
November	25,138		%
December	24,586		%
YTD Total	22,039	40,969	-8.3%
*YTD Total does not include numbers in <i>Italic</i>			

HOUSING	
ONSLow ABSORPTION RATES: SOURCE: JACKSONVILLE NC MARKET CENTER	
Onslow County Absorption Rates 2018	
Information provided by Coldwell Banker Fountain Realty, William Sanders. As of 1/31/18, info obtained from the Jacksonville Board of Realtors MLS. These numbers do not include: REO, Short Sales, & Townhomes.	

Price of Home	# of Months	# Sold	Sales Rate Per Month	# Currently Active*	# of Month's Of Inventory
≤ \$150,000	2	126	63.00	205	3.25
\$150,001 - \$200,000	2	80	40.00	153	3.83
\$200,001 - \$250,000	2	35	17.50	98	5.60
\$251,001 - \$300,000	2	13	6.50	36	5.54
\$300,001 +	2	24	12.00	109	9.08
TOTAL		278		601	
New Construction Price	# of Months	# Sold	Sales Rate Per Month	# Currently Active*	# of Month's Of Inventory
≤ \$150,000	2	2	1.00	6	3.00
\$150,001 - \$200,000	2	33	16.50	114	6.94
\$200,001 - \$250,000	2	36	18.00	112	7.93
\$251,001 - \$300,000	2	13	6.50	50	20.00
\$300,001 +	2	6	3.00	36	12.67
TOTAL		90		318	

BUSINESS STATS

COUNTY PERMITS: SOURCE: ONSLOW COUNTY

CITY PERMITS: SOURCE: CITY OF JACKSONVILLE

City of Jacksonville Building Permits

February 2018	#	Value
Residential	20	\$656,618
Commercial	69	\$1,606,543
Other	220	\$592,569
Total	309	\$2,855,730

County Building Permits

FY2017-18	Res BPs	Com BPs	Total Value
1st Qtr Totals	678	174	\$31,124,290
2nd Qtr Totals	697	123	\$40,257,582
3rd Qtr Totals	638	109	\$22,128,908
4th Qtr Totals			
FY Totals	2,013	406	\$93,510,780
FY2018-19	Res BPs	Com BPs	Total Value
1st Qtr Totals			
2nd Qtr Totals			
3rd Qtr Totals			
4th Qtr Totals			
FY Totals			

CAMP LEJEUNE & MCAS

NR GOVERNMENT AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS (GER) CAMP LEJEUNE, NC.

**Camp Lejeune Area Active Duty
USN/USMC Statistics**

Location	1/15/2017	10/15/2017
Camp Lejeune	29,426	29,896
MARSOC	2,209	2,255
New River	6,728	6,454
TECOM Schools	6,412	4,748
Total	44,775	43,353
USMC Deployed Total	3,021	4,338

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**Unemployment rates from NC Works
- NC Dept of Commerce**

Area Name	Onslow County
Year	2018
Month	January
Labor Force	64,005
Employed	60,634
Unemployed	3,371
Unemployment Rates	5.3%

ONSLow COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS

ASSUMED BUSINESS NAMES, DEATHS, BIRTHS AND MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES FOR THE PREVIOUS 3 YEARS. SOURCE: ONSLOW COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS

Register of Deeds

Assumed Names		Deaths	
2015	568	2015	786
2016	560	2016	812
2017	580	2017	804

Births		Marriages	
2015	3,718	2015	2,584
2016	3,519	2016	2,677
2017	3,535	2017	2,629

EDUCATION

SOURCE: ONSLOW COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

**Onslow County: Child Care Snapshot
Jan 2018** (State Regulated for children birth to 12)

License Type	# facilities	# slots	# enrolled	Capacity	# staff
NC 5 star	21	2,575	2,631	97%	403
NC 4 star	8	218	177	81%	28
NC 3 star	21	565	525	92%	82
NC 2 star	2	13	9	69%	2
NC 1 star	10	123	102	83%	16
NC Religious	5	459	419	91%	66
NC Temporary	2	207	4	2%	2
NC Provisional					
NC Probationary					
Totals	69	4,304	3,867	90.0%	599



March Ambassador of the Month Terri Bock

When we select our Ambassador of the Month, some of the things we look at are Planning Ambassador activities and/or volunteering during events, attending ribbon cutting ceremonies, and Operation Thank You!

Terri Bock is enthusiastic and up beat in everything she does. She goes above and beyond to support the Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce. Her support is seen through her attendance to all Ribbon Cuttings, weekly Operation Thank You, and Volunteering for Chamber of Commerce Signature Events. Never will you see Terri without a smile on her face and a heartfelt welcome. She portrays what an Ambassador is about and we are lucky to have her on the Ambassador Committee and as a Member of the Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce. Keep up the great work!



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where you live*

MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Committee's purpose is to maintain and continually improve the relationship between the military and civilian communities.

February's Service Member of the Month Sergeant Andrew C. Meltz

Sgt Andrew C. Meltz is distinguished as the Service Member of the Month (SMOM) for the month of February by the Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee.

Sgt Meltz grew up in Pearl River, LA and following graduation from high school in 2009, enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 2011. Upon completion of Recruit Training, School of Infantry – West, the Basic Reconnaissance Course, the Basic Airborne Course, SERE school, and the Marine Combatant Diver Course, he was assigned to Company B, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion as a Radio Operator.

From August 2012 to August 2014, Sergeant Meltz deployed in support of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, responsibility from June 2013 to June 2014. Sergeant Meltz was assigned to Company C, 2d Reconnaissance Battalion in August 2014 and was promoted to his current rank in January 2016. As an Assistant Team Leader in Company C, Sgt Meltz deployed with the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit in support of Operation Odyssey Lightning from June 2016 to February 2017. Upon return from this deployment, he was assigned as an Assistant Team Leader in Force Company, 2d Reconnaissance Battalion. In November 2017, he was assigned to his current billet of Team Leader, 1st Platoon, Company C, 2d Reconnaissance Battalion.

Sgt Meltz's leadership state that his was chosen to be the February Service Member of the Month due to less than a week after transferring to Company C, Sgt Meltz led his 9 man team through a week long diving package, in which his insight from his past diving experience was critical to refining the company's diving procedures and effectively communication them to the young Marines of the company, most of whom just recently gradated the Marine Combatant Diver Course. They go on to state that immediately after that, he led his team in a three week deployment for training to Fort Stewart, Georgia, consisting of two 48 hour reconnaissance and surveillance patrols, a blank-fire platoon raid, and four days of dynamic day and night live fire and maneuver training, throughout which Sgt Meltz's mentorship and guidance provided his Marines the baseline of competency required to safely conduct this aggressive training and get the most value out of it. He is also described that despite his proficiency and experience, he maintains a humility that sets him apart from many of his peers. He is a humble mission-focused professional whose eagerness to pass on what he knows to those around him is matched only by his willingness to listen to them when seeking out innovative new solutions.

Sgt Meltz's future plans include obtaining a college degree in business via distance education program, re-enlisting at the end of his current contract, and remaining I the Reconnaissance Community. Following his upcoming deployment, he intends to obtain orders to the Reconnaissance Training Company, Advanced Infantry Training Battalion, SOI-West, in order to shape the next generation of Reconnaissance Marines as an instructor at the Basic Reconnaissance Course.

Sgt Meltz's awards include the National Defense Service Medal, the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (Third Award), the Humanitarian Service Medal, the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal (Second Award), the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.

Congratulations to the Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee February Service Member of the Month, Sgt Andrew C. Meltz, USMC.



March's Service Member of the Month Sergeant Benjamin E. Knight

Sgt Benjamin E. Knight is distinguished as the Service Member of the Month (SMOM) for the month of March by the Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee.

Sgt Knight was born in Pontiac, Michigan to Joseph and Diane Knight. He graduated from Lake Orion High School in 2006. From there Sgt Knight earned an associate degree in fire science from Oakland Community College. In 2015, Sgt Knight went to boot camp and graduated in November from Parris Island. After graduation from boot camp, he attended MCT with India Company abroad Camp Geiger. For superior performance during MCT, Sgt Knight was named Honor Graduate for India Company in December 2015. Upon graduation from MCT, Sgt Knight was reported to Camp Johnson, North Carolina for MOS School as a Basic Landing Support Specialist. While waiting to pick up class at MOS school, Sgt Knight went on recruiter assistance duty and was meritoriously promoted to Lance Corporal in March 2016 and received a Meritorious Mast for going above and beyond the call of duty. When MOS picked up, Sgt Knight received orders to Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB) 6 on Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

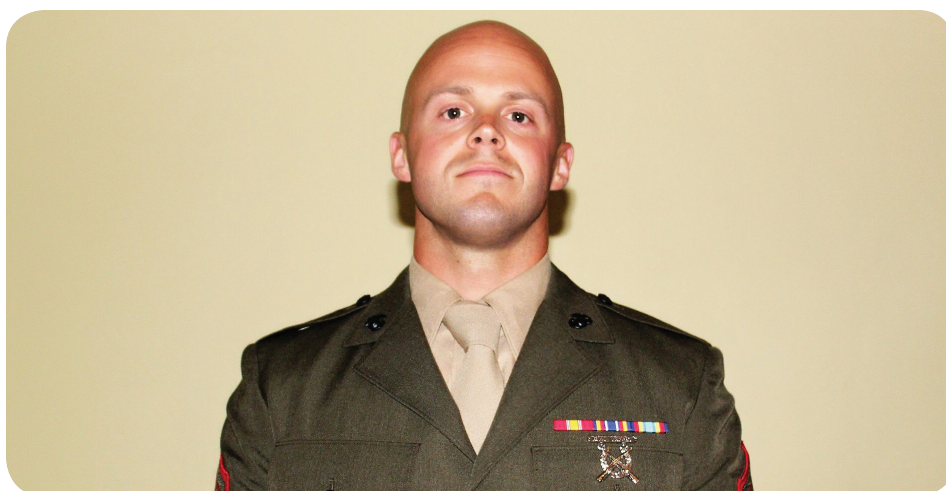
While at CLB 6, Sgt Knight set himself apart from his peers and won Battalion and Regimental Meritorious Corporal Boards. On December 2016, Sgt Knight was meritoriously promoted to the rank of Corporal by the hand of Combat Logistics Battalion 8. In January 2017, Sgt Knight deployed to Spain in support of the SPMAGTF. During that deployment, Sgt Knight supported flight line operations while assisting with 2 Helicopter Support Team missions in support of MV-22's, as well as the planning process that goes into moving Marines and supplies as a landing support specialist. Before and after working hours, Sgt Knight initiative and hard work earned him his Green, Brown, and Black belts in MCMAP while in a Deployed environment. He won a Gung-Ho award by his peers in his Black Belt course. Sgt Knight returned to America In July 2017. Once back at CLB 6, Sgt Knight perused a path of excellence and earned a Gung-Ho award as he graduated the Martial Arts Instructors Course. While back home, Sgt knight volunteered in our community as he gave his time to help kindergarten students in Jacksonville. Sgt Knight was then assigned to the Intermediate Landing Support Course where he graduated as class leader. Sgt Knight's superior performance and in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corp, Corporal Knight was announced as Non-Commissioned Officer of the quarter.

For outstanding effort and dedication, Sgt Knight set himself apart from his peers and won the Battalion and Regimental Meritorious Sergeant boards. In February 2018, Sgt Knight was meritoriously promoted to the rank of Sergeant by the hand of Combat Logistics Battalion 6. Sgt Knight is currently acting as a squad leader in TS Companies Landing Support Platoon.

Sgt Knight's leadership state that he is constantly displayed an eagerness to accomplish any mission assigned to him and has displayed extremely high levels of proficiency while executing his duties. They continue to state that he truly displays the Corps' most notable leadership traits of integrity, enthusiasm, dependability, initiative, and loyalty.

Sgt Knight future plans include submitting for the Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Education Program in order to complete his bachelor's degree and continue to serve the Marine Corps as an officer.

Congratulations to the Jacksonville Onslow Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee March Service Member of the Month, Sgt Benjamin E. Knight, USMC.



From the desk of Kristen Loftin



In January of 2016, my husband and I moved our things from Georgia to Onslow County. That March, I received the opportunity to continue my career in a new position. Now, just over two years later, I find myself prepping to hand over a program. Every month, I make the comment that time flies by. However, this month, I truly mean it. Hard to believe that I am sitting here writing my goodbyes to those who listen to me ramble every newsletter.

As many of you may know, my husband received orders to Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans in Belle Chasse, Louisiana. Therefore, my last day with Onslow County Tourism will be May 4th. Have no fear, I am leaving the program in the very capable hands of Donna Hammonds! In May, you will have the opportunity to meet Donna. So, I wanted to take this month's article to reflect on my two years here.

I will freely admit that I knew very little about Coastal North Carolina, Jacksonville, and Onslow County when I

stepped into this position. But, I was quickly amazed by her story. Often overshadowed by bigger areas, there is a sense of discovery. In my two years, I strived to give Onslow County a new voice. With the adoption of new marketing campaigns, public relations, and new collateral, we have been able to take steps of giving our area a fresh look. In addition, I am proud to have been a part of major collaboration between several economic development partners. I believe the increase in occupancy numbers, direct visitor spending, and awareness is a sign of those efforts. After all, occupancy tax collection has increased about 16% over the last two years.

Thank you to Laurette, my co-workers and the Chamber board for giving me a chance. Y'all let me come in here and turn some things upside down to give the program a new feel. Y'all are free of my cowboy boots and quirkiness...for now!

Thank you to the County Commissioners and other stakeholders for your continued to support with this

program. I hope y'all continue to be advocates for tourism and all that it brings to an area.

Thank you to my many hotel and attraction partners throughout the county. Without the rooms and things to do, I wouldn't have a product to promote! I am extremely appreciative of your faith in me. I truly believe things are moving in the right direction. I hope y'all give Donna the same support.

A huge thank you to my partners located here in the Commerce Center and at City Hall. It's a blessing to have such power players supporting your efforts. Thank you for the advice, listening to my crazy ideas, the collaboration, and more. There is so much to be thankful for that it's hard to list everything.

Lastly, thank you to the people of Onslow County. Whether this is your permanent home or just temporary, know that you are part of the tourism voice. I urge all to continue your education of the area. Purge the negativity and open yourself up to exploring. Be a tourist in your own backyard. You are the ones that visitors converse with regularly. Together, the area can continue to put Onslow County on the destination map.

I am sure there are many that I have missed in this article but please know that you are appreciated.

With the Marine Corps, I may be back in three years and I hope to see where tourism has progressed. Don't worry, I will be checking in on the area from time to time. With all that said, one last THANK YOU and you are now officially done with my rambling!

Service Rewards

A community is only as good as the citizens that live and work within its borders. This month we celebrate the frontline employees that go the extra mile to make your visits an above average experience in Swansboro, Sneads Ferry, Richlands, and Jacksonville! The five individuals, representing five area businesses; have performed their duties with a positive outlook, a kind word, and valued information for our visitors and citizens - they went the extra mile! Onslow County Tourism and the Jacksonville•Onslow Chamber of Commerce want to thank them for their efforts and encourage you to do the same. Good service is good business!



Alex Greene
Hilton Garden Inn-Mad Boar



Jo Basbas
Sonic Freedom Hwy



Khaliq Spencer
Belk



Meghan Manning
Courtyard