Presidents Report, May 9 2023

This is our second monthly newsletter, with a mission of giving you a short update on all the things that have been happening in Innovate Chatham. I welcome your feedback and suggestions about how we can improve this and anything else.

We are building a repository of these newsletters and other articles of interest on our website. Enjoy! Share the links with anyone and everyone! That helps our marketing and communications effort, which ultimately, helps build our network and membership.

Chatham Tech Talk

Information about Tech Talks is on our website, here.

We had a small gathering of folks at Fairgame Beverage in The Plant of Pittsboro on April 20. Have the past few years changed our habits and made us more solitary? That certainly has happened to me. In any case, it was nice seeing some friends and we had a good time.

We have some good Tech Talks coming up.

May 10 we will have "Tick Talk". My idea of cute name, sorry. Dr. Jennifer Platt, a tick-disease expert from UNC that has a few related ventures. I have heard her presentation for the Chatham Partners meeting in April, and it was very interesting and potentially very useful. As I write this, we have 25 folks registered! This will be in the brand new, huge 79°West place in Mosaic.

Tick Talk: Tick-Borne Disease Dangers of Chatham County Tickets, Wed, May 10, 2023 at 5:00 PM | Eventbrite

[Maybe if we record it, it could become the TikTok Tick Talk Tech Talk. Sorry again. Couldn't help it.]

Our small gathering in April also resulted in meeting (again) Kevin Flynn a patent attorney who lives in Chatham. Kevin will speak on **June 8** about the various forms of protection for intellectual property. I have coordinated this session with Stephanie Terry, founder of WEBB Squared, a nonprofit that helps empower Black and Brown entrepreneurs in Chatham County and surrounding areas. Stephanie says that this is an area unfamiliar to her clients and she hopes for a good turnout.

[Protecting Your Intellectual Property: Patents, Copyrights, Trademarks, etc. Tickets, Thu, Jun 8, 2023 at 5:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

And, **July 13**, we will have Tim Steiner presenting about cybercrime prevention as an Ethical Hacker, aka white-hat hacker. Tim has a local business and just reading the outline of his presentation has raised quite a few deep and interesting points.

[Threat Prevention Tips from an Ethical Hacker Tickets, Thu, Jul 13, 2023 at 5:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

I hope you will help me come up with some more presentation recommendations for future Tech Talks! Please!

Digital Inclusion Plan

The County Manager has given a tentative thumbs-up to our Digital Inclusion Plan, which is now going for reviews with the TriangleJ Council of Governments, NC-DIT, and the Institute for Emerging Issues. The IEI folks talked with me last week and they said that they had already browsed our plan and they thought it was very comprehensive and well organized. Our timing seemed to be excellent as the State is gathering information, county-by-county for their own plan that goes back to the Federal Government later this summer.

I'm hoping to share the whole, complete plan with everyone in a month or so.

Digital Inclusion Help

If you remember, last month I said that the county had awarded Randolph Communications (fiber internet provider) work in Goldston to hook up a communications tower. About two weeks ago, Randolph announced that they would sell internet to residents of Goldston starting this summer! I spoke with

Jonathan Hensley, mayor of Goldston at the Chatham Development meeting and congratulated him. That is awesome and I hope we can make similar progress elsewhere in the Chatham.

We are still working with [Conterra Networks](#) and [Insight](#) for other sites around the county. We didn't make much progress over the past month, but we did see some preliminary cost estimates that look favorable for areas where utilities are run on poles. Apparently, that allows fiber installation at a fraction of the cost of trenching. So, that is good news for some of the less wealthy areas.

[Duke Tech Solutions](#) has made a formal offer to the county to assist them in mapping and forecasting costs, which could help the county prioritize grant applications and other projects.

Carl Angel and I had a meeting with Duke Tech Solutions, who is also trying to find a way to help Chatham and other governments with telehealth programs. Rita Van Duinen at the Library mentioned [Cyber Seniors](#), which "provides FREE technology support and training for senior citizens". There website is full of ideas and offers of help, plus a set of webinar recordings. The first one I clicked on sent me down a rabbit hole looking at "[Alexa Together](#)". If you remember the UNC and Duke Tech Solution Tech Talk presentation in December, this Amazon offering is trying to help solve the aging-in-place challenge. **If you have any experience with Amazon Together, please let me know.** I'm doing a bit of research on it.

Rita Van Duinen and I met with some folks from UNC's IT department who are looking for volunteer opportunities. We came up with an idea to run a 'help desk' day at the library later this summer. I think we could add onto what help they will give with flyers and discussions about the Kramden Institute programs and maybe the ACP. Keep this in mind and I'll ask for volunteers when we pick a date.

STEM Education
If you missed it, I wrote [this article on the Congressional App Challenge](#) and my encounter with two amazing young programmers who won for NC. You can read even more about it in the recent [CN+R article.](#)

Erin Denniston has run 4 or 5 sessions of STEM Club at the Pittsboro Boys and Girls Club in the past weeks despite having broken her shoulder!   The B&G Club are happy to have us volunteer with this program. Erin is having a blast with the very enthusiastic kids! She has run 3 sessions of marble rollercoaster, which you might remember, from our STEM Tech Talk in February. I think that this week their STEM project is "Puff Mobiles".

Marketing

Alex Centeno with [Merkados](#), a Pittsboro-based marketing company**, [built Innovate Chatham a brand new website](#)**. I hope you like it.

Alex is also going to try to help us step up our social media game, too.   We are using Facebook, LinkedIn (a page that anyone can see even before they join our LI Group), Google Groups, and Reddit (we will see if that is useful).   We will also post about our events on Nextdoor, the Chatham Chatlist (quite a lot of interaction and interest there). I will also send our event information to pass on to the Chatham Public Library, 79°West, CCCC, Chatham Journal, and CN+R newspaper. **If you think of another mechanism to advertise Innovate Chatham and/or Tech Talks, please let me know.**

Volunteer Opportunities

The Board needs a new Treasurer and Secretary.   Please let me know if you are interested, or if you know anyone who might be interested in helping, particularly if they have relevant experience.

We are always interested in having additional volunteers. In most cases, we prioritize opportunities based on volunteer interest. So, let me know if you would like to help with any of these things (or suggest opportunities):

- Technical topic presentation – we need and topic and presenter suggestions
- STEM Club – we need volunteers to help with our sessions, probably weekdays at the Boys and Girls Club, probably in Siler City, June-July timeframe.
- Instructor's aides for basic computer classes
- Tech Career Fairs – always need a list of people to describe and discuss their tech careers at various high schools
- Science Fairs Judges – needed for fall and spring to judge science and engineering projects while encouraging kids
- Help with an ACP event – we would like to hold a few events to help folks complete Federal discount program for internet access. This requires a couple hours of free online training.

- Congressional App Challenge – we would like to help middle and high schoolers build their own simple software app that they can submit for recognition in a contest
- Search-engine optimization help, social media help

Please let me know and we can chat further about your interests.

You are very welcome to share this newsletter with anyone you like.

Thanks for your membership and participation!

Not a member? If you like the work we are doing at Innovate Chatham, please consider joining as a paid member, which helps us cover the expenses of running a nonprofit.

Burney Waring
Innovate Chatham President