

Chamber Connection

Volume 5, No. 2 • February, 2018 • www.kilgorechamber.com

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Morris resigns as president of Kilgore Chamber

James Murphy, Chairman of the Kilgore Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau announced Cindy Morris, Chamber President, has submitted her resignation effective February 15. Morris has accepted the leadership position at the Tahlequah Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce which is only 57 miles from family.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my tenure in Kilgore. It has been an honor to work with our board of directors and Chamber members to create an effective business organization," said Morris. "However, I am very homesick and I am missing out on my grandchildren's escapades. My family is my life and without them I am just not complete. It continues to get harder to be so far away from them.

I need to go closer to home and be a part of their lives."

"Wanting to be with her family just goes to show the great quality and personality of Cindy Morris," said James Murphy, Chamber Chairman. "It is that sense of family that attracted Cindy to assimilate to the City

of Kilgore and its citizens so quickly and why her Kilgore family is so sad to see her leave. Cindy knew the challenges she faced when she took over at the Kilgore Chamber and did not waver, but instead hit the ground running."

During her tenure at Kilgore, Morris is credited with enhancing the financial stability, advancing business



and government advocacy, improving the reputation of the Chamber & Visitors Bureau, substantial increase in tourism program, bolstering internal and external communication strategies, building dynamic member event programming, and adding levels of transparency to the growing organization.

"Change is never easy but she brought many years of experience to Kilgore and the Chamber which legitimized and prepared the organization to move forward," stated Murphy. "We wish Cindy the best as she moves on to her next chapter with hope her next endeavor is everything she envisions."

"It has been a privilege working with so many dedicated business people who care deeply about the community and the Chamber organization. When I arrived in Kilgore in 2013, a commitment was made by board members and staff to grow this Chamber and operate as a stronger business organization. Together, we have made that happen!" said Morris. "I have made lifetime friendships here and have enjoyed being a part of Kilgore. My hope for Kilgore is for everyone to continue to work as partners and make greater things happen!"

Chairman of the Chamber Board, James Murphy (of Republic Services), will lead the Search Committee to select the organization's next President/CEO.

Search underway for President/CEO

On the heels of Cindy Morris' resignation from the Kilgore Chamber, the Kilgore Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors met and determined a plan of search for the new President/CEO to lead the Chamber. James Murphy (of Republic Services), will lead the Search Committee along with other members of the Board of Directors, representative from the City of Kilgore and Kilgore Economic Development Corporation.

In the interim, the current Kilgore Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau staff will oversee specific areas of the organization and report directly to Chairman James Murphy. Ryan Polk, Tourism Manager, will continue to handle his job responsibilities with added duties to fill the void of Morris. Lisa Morgan, Membership Development Manager, will handle her current responsibilities and take over numerous responsibilities managed by Cindy Morris. "Also, Morris has offered long-dis-

tance assistance to the staff and board during the interim," said James Murphy. "And we accepted her offer of assistance!"

"Although I will assist from afar, I am confident that our Chamber staff will run this organization efficiently and effectively," said Morris. "I am proud of our team and believe in them. They are both passionate about Kilgore and the Chamber. I am sad to leave them, however I do know I am leaving the Chamber in great hands. The board and staff will continue to build on the Chamber's strong foundation.

The search for a new President/CEO began this week. The job announcement is posted on various state Chamber sites, Indeed, LinkedIn and posted on a Chamber of Commerce Professionals Facebook page. Resumes will be taken until March 1 and then the process for review, selection of top 5 and interview will begin. The search process is expected to take 2-3 months.



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TEXAS Tea

April 12, 2018
Celebrating Women in Business
6 pm @ The Landing Event Center

**AN EVENING OF JAZZ, CHAMPAGNE & PEARLS
LET'S MISBEHAVE & PARTY LIKE GATSBY!**

For reservation or sponsorship information, go to:
KilgoreChamber.com/Events

SEE RELATED STORIES, PAGE 8

From the Desk of the President

Goodbye, Kilgore!

The official resignation release is on the front page, however I wanted to take a few minutes to express my gratitude to the many people who have touched my life over the past 4-1/2 years

At the beginning of my tenure, we had some big steps to take to improve our reputation, develop new programming and focus on growing and strengthening the Chamber. With the determination, involvement and passion of our board members, staff and Chamber member investors, we have accomplished great things. Today we continue to move toward excellence! Each board member has definitely made an impact in our organization. You are all "Stars" in my eyes. Thank you for your service, patience

and guidance. I am honored to have worked for and with you!

I wish I could write a special message to everyone who has touched my life while in Kilgore, but there are just too many people to mention. However there are four people who I spent all my waking hours with over the past 4-1/2 years that deserve my thanks. Every day I had to wake up without family nearby and this was hard. However once I entered my office each day – I entered a different type of family – my staff family. I am grateful for the team members that have been a part of my life and our memories are forever ingrained in my thoughts and heart. They have worked hard, been loyal to me and the Chamber, and each one has played a huge role in creating an outstanding organization.



Cindy L. Morris

I love their passion, hard work, laughter and most importantly, their friendship.

Thank you to my former/current staff and great friends – Lexi Bass, Sheryl Phillips, Ryan Polk and Lisa Morgan. I am blessed you have been a part of my life and know that we will forever be connected as friends.

I have had an amazing and wonderful journey during my tenure in Kilgore. There have been many challenges, but these have brought forth opportunities and helped our organization and community strengthen. Every challenge and opportunity has helped me grow personally too! But my journey here was best lighted by the amazing people of Kilgore! Thank you and God Bless You!



Pictured above is Cindy Morris with former Chamber staff member Sheryl Phillips. At left is Morris with current staff members Lisa Morgan (left) and Ryan Polk (right).



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Talking Tourism

It's February and winter chill is in the air. Last month brought us snow, but spring will be here before you know it where there will be a plethora of warmer activities planned for Kilgore. First, don't forget to make Valentine's Day dinner reservations for two at your favorite Kilgore restaurant. Dining in and around Kilgore can range from white linen tablecloths to down-home casual, with a variety of cuisines and flavors! Are you looking for something to put on your calendar for February? There are many new events this February including the East Texas Lone Star Shootout presented by World of Outlaws Craftsmen Sprint Car Series and Lone Star Speedway at Lone Star Speedway. If you long for something outside, we suggest fishing at Elder Lake at Synergy Park where Texas Parks & Wildlife has restocked the lake with trout. However, most of February's activities are indoor including the Hollywood classic film "Casablanca" - showing at the Texan Theater with Reel East Texas Film Festival.



Ryan Polk
Tourism Mgr.

Texan Theater. All proceeds from donations of people who watch the movie on Valentine's Day will go toward on-going renovations of the historic theater.

Coming soon! Mark your calendar for March 23 -24 for Kilgogh 2018! Returning for a sixth annual event, the Kilgogh Arts Festival is partnering with Reel East Texas Film Festival to start the month of March with a screening of the hand-painted animated film "Loving Vincent" at the Texan Theater. This year's theme is "Gogh with the Flow" and the Art Exhibition & Wine Tasting will be at the Texan Theater. You can learn more at Facebook.com/KilGogh.

There is a new attraction in town and it's outside for all to

view. A red vintage 1929 Mack Truck used to transport ice is on permanent display outside the East Texas Oil Museum. The East Texas Oil Museum hosted a ribbon cutting with the Kilgore Chamber of Commerce last month to unveil the museum's new exhibit. The truck, which was donated by Mike and Amy Clements is displayed in a weather-proof case built by KK Mobbs builders. The exhibit is perfect for photos and to reflect on the oil boom days. The East Texas Oil Museum is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday thru Saturday and is closed Sunday and Monday.

Welcome future KC Rangers! Kilgore College will host its annual Ranger Preview Day on Saturday, Feb. 24, to give potential students an opportunity to learn more about the educational opportunities KC offers. The day



Ice Truck Ribbon Cutting at East Texas Oil Museum

will begin with registration and check-in at 8 a.m. in Dodson Auditorium, followed by a welcome/overview and an academic and organizations fair.

Kilgore is a unique and dynamic destination with so many interesting attractions and experiences! Don't forget to use #VisitKilgore or #KilgoreTX when using Instagram, Facebook

and Twitter and we may just repost your image on our Visit Kilgore social media sites. For more information on happenings and events in Kilgore, visit our website www.visitkilgore.com, and stay up-to-date on current events by liking us on Facebook and following us on Instagram and Twitter at VisitKilgore.



Speaking of Reel East Texas Film Festival, they have partnered with the City of Kilgore, and have invested a lot of time volunteering as well as proceeds from their events to renovate and bring awareness to the historic Texan Theater and Old U.S. Post Office in downtown Kilgore. The festival will be hosting a Valentine's Day filming of Casablanca at 6 and 8 pm at the



Snowy Trail at Synergy Park by Cindy Dragisic



ARPCO
VALVES & CONTROLS

<p>Corporate Office 120 Marvin A Smith Road Kilgore, TX 75662</p>	<p>903-834-7007</p>	<p>Midland Field Office 1508 W. Montgomery Ave. Midland, TX 79701</p>
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UNVEILING OF NEW MUSEUM EXHIBIT

The Kilgore Chamber officiated at the unveiling of a new exhibit on the grounds of East Texas Oil Museum located on the Kilgore College campus. The vintage 1929 Mack Ice Truck is reminiscent of the type of ice truck that made deliveries during the 1920 discovery of oil in East Texas. The truck was donated by Mike & Amy Clements. Dr. Brenda Kays, College President, Merlyn Holmes, Director of ETOM, and Mike Clements took part in cutting the ribbon to commemorate the placement of the new outdoor display.

SAVE THE DATE

KILGORE
STARS & SCARS
MUD RUN

THE RUN RETURNS
SATURDAY
MAY 19, 2018

WE'LL SEE YOU AT RABBIT CREEK

LOG ON TO STARSANDSCARSMUDRUN.COM

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING



Morning Brew – All Star Ford

A great Morning Brew was held at All Star Ford on January 31 with a record attendance. Many business connections were made and everyone seemed interested in the featured showroom car – especially Mark Robinson, External Affairs Manager for AEP/Swepco. Join us at the next Morning Brew (and Cindy Morris' last event) on February 15 @ Regions Bank at 8 am!

2017-18 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE BOARD

James Murphy, Chairman (Republic Services)
 Dr. Chris Gratton, Chair Elect (Gratton Chiropractic)
 John Ben Blackburn, Vice Chair (Martin Resource Management Corp.)
 Billie Mims, Treasurer (Austin Bank)
 Reece Nichols, Immediate Past Chair (Edward Jones)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tim Capps, Gabriel/Jordan GMC Buick
 Pam DeCeault, Citizens National Bank
 Bobbie Guinn, Arpco Valves & Controls
 Dennis McFadin, D&D Industrial Welding Supply

Joe Stephens, Brookshire's
 James Wright, Halliburton Energy Services

EX-OFFICIO

Cara Cooke, KISD
 Dr. Brenda Kays, Kilgore College
 Amanda Nobles, KEDC
 Josh Selleck, City of Kilgore

STAFF

Cindy Morris, President
 Lisa Morgan, Member Services Manager
 Ryan Polk, Tourism Manager

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Member Investor RENEWALS

Thank you to our member investors for their continual belief and support of the important work of the Kilgore Chamber of Commerce. We recognize and thank each member for their investment commitment made January 11 - February 10.

1st Choice Personnel
AEP/Southwestern Electric Power
Alford-Pace A/C & Heating, Inc.
Austin Bank
Bittick, Bobby & Wanda
Brigitta's Hungarian Restaurant
Cricket Wireless
East Texas Area Council Boy Scouts
East Texas Christian School
East Texas Hardware
East Texas Regional Airport

Enerflex Energy Systems, Inc.
KHPF
Laird Insurance Agency
Leading Edge Medical Associates
Martin Resource Mgmt. Corp.
Phillips, Watson & Gilchrist, LLP
Regions Bank
Rusk County Well Service Co., Inc.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Tucker, Wilora
Waste Connections, Inc.

Find a Chamber Member in the Business Directory at www.KilgoreChamber.com.

E⁴ Leadership Class learns what it takes to create favorable business environment

The Kilgore Economic Development Corporation and Kilgore Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau partnered to prepare E4 Leadership class members as to the importance of creating and

maintaining a vibrant business environment.

Cindy Morris, Chamber President, shared the message of the Chamber plays an important role in the business community, while

Tourism Manager Ryan Polk discussed the impact of tourism on the economy.

The next E4 Leadership session is slated for April 6 and will cover County Government.



Eric Davis, Development Services Manager for KSA Engineers (Austin, TX) facilitated the "Hat Game" during the E4 Leadership session. The "Hat Game" is an interactive presentation designed to demonstrate how money moves in a community.



Panel Discussion on Economic Development - Pictured L to R: Amanda Nobles, Executive Director - Kilgore Economic Development Corp.; Ricardo Viloria, President - Freedom Communication Technologies; Vic Price, Vice President Distribution, Southwest Region - Orgill; Mayor Ronnie Spradlin

THE NEW TAX LAW & SMALL BUSINESSES

MARCH 9, 2018

LONGVIEW UNIVERSITY CENTER
11:30AM - 1:10PM | LUNCH INCLUDED

TOPICS INCLUDE

- CORPORATE TAX RATES
- DEDUCTION FOR PASS-THROUGH INCOME
- INTEREST DEDUCTION LIMITATIONS
- CHOICE OF BUSINESS ENTITY
- TAX PLANNING OPPORTUNITIES
- INDIVIDUAL TAXATION CHANGES



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RSVP by March 1st



Morning Brew

Coffee + Conversation = Connections

Thursday, February 15, 2018 ~ 8:00—9:00 A.M.

910 N. Kilgore Street



REGIONS

Attending Morning Brew is a great WAY to make business connections!

Join us and take advantage of meeting potential customers, share your promotional message with other businesses, make a business announcement, and learn more about the host business. Door prizes and breakfast refreshments top off the morning.

What's not to like about making new business friends?

A Member Program of the Kilgore Chamber of Commerce

INVESTING IN THE CHAMBER MEANS INVESTING IN YOUR BUSINESS

[BECOME A CHAMBER AMBASSADOR]

The Kilgore Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors act as the official goodwill greeters and volunteer liaisons between the Chamber and its current and prospective members. Joining this team is a great option members can exercise to increase their commitment to the Chamber while gaining additional exposure for themselves and their business... and have fun doing it! Chamber Ambassadors work to exhibit the goals and ideals of the Chamber while promoting their business mis-

sion within the arena of Chamber events. Ambassadors make member goodwill visits throughout the year, welcome new businesses and new members, recruit new members to the Chamber, assist the Chamber staff at chamber/community functions and serve as personal representatives of the Chamber throughout the community.

INTERESTED? Contact the Chamber to find out more at info@kilgorechamber.com or 903-984-5022.



CALENDAR



Chamber Meetings & Events - February/March

Feb 15	Morning Brew	8:00 am	Regions Bank
Feb 15	Executive Committee	12 Noon	Chamber Office
Feb 19	Board Meeting — DELAYED UNTIL MARCH		
Mar 01	E4 Leadership Steering Comm.	11:30 am	Chamber Office
Mar 07	Relationship Climate Comm.	11:30 am	Chamber Office
Mar 13	Ambassador Meeting	12 Noon	Chamber Office

Community Events - February/March

Feb 14	"Casablanca" at the Texan Theater with Reel East Texas Film Festival	6:00 pm	Texan Theater
Feb 17	Ambush Live at The Back Porch	8:00 pm	The Back Porch
Feb 24	East Texas Lone Star Shootout	6:00 pm	Lone Star Speedway
Feb 24	Ranger Preview Day 2018	8:00 am	Kilgore College
Feb 24	Kilgore Community Concerts presents Kilgore Chamber Orchestra	7:00 pm	Kilgore College — Dodson Auditorium
Mar 1	Sweets & Cinema: Loving Vincent Special Screening	6:00 pm	Texan Theater
Mar 4	Kilgore College Camerata Concert	8:00 pm	First Presbyterian Church
Mar 7	Gary Patrick Live at The Back Porch	8:00 pm	The Back Porch

Go to KilgoreChamber.com or VisitKilgore.com for more event information.

If you have a community event you wish to have listed on the Kilgore Calendar please send your information via email to info@kilgorechamber.com, drop it by the Chamber office at 813 N. Kilgore Street. We will be happy to share your event information on the community calendar and via Facebook at KilgoreChamber and VisitKilgore.

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RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The Kilgore Chamber of Commerce announced the date of April 12 as the day to recognize Women in Business during the annual Texas Tea event. This year's Gatsby theme will be a celebration in a 1920's environment when women made an impact on the world. In 1920, women earned the Right to Vote through hard work and determination and changed the course of politics and more. Now 97 years later, life is very different for women and the Kilgore Chamber embraces and recognizes the positive impact women continue to make on our business community.

On April 12, the Chamber will recognize three outstand-

ing business women in Kilgore, Texas at the annual Texas Tea event. The Women in Business Awards acknowledges unique women who approach community and business needs with strong leadership, collaboration and intentionality to affect change and influence their surroundings.

The three award categories include: **The Rising Star, The Shining Star and Lifetime Star Achiever.** (Go to KilgoreChamber.com/Events and click Texas Tea for award criteria). We encourage you and your company to utilize this prestigious award program to recognize outstanding business women from your business or others that you be-

lieve are outstanding business women. You may nominate an employee, yourself, a friend or an acquaintance.

The process is simple. Access KilgoreChamber.com/Events and click on Texas Tea for more information on the event, tickets, sponsorships or nominations. Print an award nomination form and submit to the Kilgore Chamber by February 19, 2018.

The nomination forms may be submitted by:
Mail/Deliver to: Kilgore Chamber of Commerce,
813 N. Kilgore Street, Kilgore TX 75662
Scan & Email to: info@kilgorechamber.com

KILGORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BizConnectLuncheon

NEW TAX LAWS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Topics Include

- Limit on interest deduction
- Deductibility of business entertainment expenses
- Temporary 100% expensing of certain business assets and modifications to expensing of automobiles and other personal-use property

Dr. Lirely is the Chair of the Department of Accounting, Finance and Business Law and a Professor of Accounting in the College of Business and Technology at The University of Texas at Tyler since 2010.

FEATURED SPEAKER



Dr. Roger Lirely
Professor of Accounting
University of Texas—Tyler

Meadowbrook Golf & Event Center

1306 Houston Street, Kilgore, TX

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

11:30 am—1:00 pm

For more information or to register, click here for online registration or call 903-984-5022.

You may also email your reservation to info@kilgorechamber.com

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 Reece Nichols, Financial Advisor



REGISTRATION

\$20 per Member
\$25 per Non-Member

**Add \$10 per ticket if after reservation deadline*

Seating is limited, so make your reservation(s) today.

Reservation deadline
March 13, 2018



SHOWCASE YOUR BUSINESS GATSBY STYLE

The Kilgore Chamber is seeking sponsors and vendors to participate in the upcoming Texas Tea – Women in Business event. Over 150 women are expected to attend this year's event so this is a great opportunity to showcase your business.

The Gatsby themed evening of champagne, jazz and pearls will take place on April 12 at The Landing Event Center beginning at 6:00 pm. The evening starts with a social and shopping segment including vendors selling jewelry, purses, clothing, cosmetics and many other items. If interested in selling a product or service at this event, contact the Chamber. Dinner and Women in Business Awards program will follow the social and shopping segment.

The Chamber is also seeking business sponsors. Your sponsorship of this event is a great way to support the recognition of outstanding women in business. In addition, it is a great way to market your business to numerous women in business.

For details on sponsorship levels and/or vendor information, call 903-984-5022, email your interest to info@kilgorechamber.com or go to kilgorechamber.com/marketing-opportunities