

**Ashford Area Chamber of Commerce**  
**PO Box 463**  
**Ashford, AL 36312**

On October 10, 2018 an event happened that would change a lot of people's lives and leave a memory most will want to forget. Hurricane Michael caused devastating destruction across our community but it has shown us that our community comes together when we are needed the most. The Ashford Area Chamber of Commerce was able to not only help the Ashford area but our neighbors as well. Between donations made by individuals/companies and the Chamber, we distributed approximately \$4,000 in supplies. This would not be possible without key volunteers and organizations that move quickly and get things in place where they are needed. I, Kimberly Vann President of the Ashford area Chamber of Commerce, would like to thank a few people for the excellent work done for our community.

Mayor Carol Barfield: Ms. Barfield kept in contact with us and directed phone calls for us to facilitate where needed supplies should go. She provided much strength that is needed. No one in our area has ever seen or experienced an event like this and she remained calm and collected to get things done how they should be done.

Councilman Gary Gibson: Mr. Gibson provided the Ashford works, police and fire lunch on Thursday October 11<sup>th</sup>. This was important since no one had electric and was very much appreciated.

Chief Posey: Chief Posey did an excellent job directing and organizing staff during and after the storm. Without his leadership and training, there wouldn't be that needed communication.

Chief Vann: Chief Vann also provided excellent leadership during and after the storm. His leadership helped open streets quickly that would facilitate the electric company on the quick response.

David Duke with 211: Mr. Duke kept in contact with the Chamber after the storm to help facilitate families in need and with meals for those who did not have electric. Mr. Duke also helped with family that lost their homes in our community as well as people who were forced to move here from other communities and make sure they received the services needed.

Gary Griffin with Houston County VOAD: Mr. Griffin was a key in contacting us for the Salvation Army, Red Cross, and Alabama Power Meals. Mr. Griffin assisted in providing supplies to Cottonwood, Gordon, Pansey, Lucy and Ashford. Mr. Griffin would contact me regarding left over meals that needed to be distributed and the Chamber would deliver them to whoever was in need.

Krispy Crème: Krispy Crème delivered 125 dozen donuts to the Ashford Depot on October 12<sup>th</sup> to help efforts for not only first responders and lineman but those who just needed a warm breakfast. The Chamber was able to deliver to those who were not able to drive in our Ashford Community as well as deliver to Gordon.

Ms. Corrine Winters: Ashford Chamber Treasurer. Mr. Winters stepped up to help lead the charge with supplies in Cottonwood and also helped deliver to our neighboring communities.

Ms. Cammy Mixon: Ms. Mixon worked with the Ashford Chamber and went above and beyond delivering food to not only our community in Ashford but our neighbors. She was able to have groceries donated to those who lost all their food during the power outage. The Ashford Chamber cannot thank her enough for her efforts to make sure our community needs were met.

Ms. Melanie McNeil: Ms. McNeil helped in our efforts to deliver food and supplies to those who were not able. The Chamber is very thankful for her time and effort to take care of our community.

Ms. Laurel Tolar Ashford Chamber Vice President: Ms. Tolar assisted with delivering supplies and food to our community and helped set up some key points for pick-up areas.

Mr. Brad Rice and Alfa Insurance: The Ashford Chamber would like to thank Alfa Insurance for allowing us to utilize their parking lot as we distributed food, water and ice on Friday October 12<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Leigh Martin EMA: Ms. Martin stayed in contact with me during this time and made sure all my questions were answered and directed to me resources that were needed for our area.

Mr. Louis Edmondson Ashford Park Director: Mr. Edmondson organized the park as a feeding point that fed so many people as well as first responders and linemen. The chamber asked Mr. Edmondson if he could feed the linemen again that night and he did not hesitate. Both power companies utilized the Chamber as a point of contact to make sure their guys were fed during the key times of the storm. We were happy to assist and grateful for Mr. Edmondson to provide a place for this.

Mary Sandwich Shop: Mary put together multiple meals to help us deliver and didn't hesitate to jump in help when we needed it. She also helped store the cold groceries for Cammy to deliver.

David's Pizza: David didn't hesitate to contact the Chamber to donate pizza that helped feed the first responders and linemen as well as volunteers.

Officer Lilies and his family: Officer Lilies assisted during the storm, clean-up efforts and helped pick-up the pallet of milk and deliver to the Ashford community and his wife helped distribute it.

Officer Anderson and his family: Officer Anderson not only assisted during the storm, clean-up efforts after the storm but continues to make sure the citizens have what they need. Officer Anderson helped a family that lost their home and belongs in Mexico Beach and were relocated here. Officer Anderson truly cares for the citizen of Ashford.

Melissa Elmore: Ms. Elmore provided lunch for the linemen when it was most needed. The empathy she gave to her customers and some that weren't hers speaks volumes for the service she provides.

Watermark Church: Under the leadership of Todd Thorpe. The church provided multiple services for our community from laundry, food, hugs and clean-up. The emotional and physical support the church provided to not only our area but multiple areas shows that God is GREAT!

Chasity McArdle: Chasity didn't hesitate when I said, let's go to jail! (A small joke). She jumped up and went to jail with me. We loaded 1500lbs of ice that was graciously donated to us and distributed to everyone on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

Dothan Boots and Saddle Club for organizing the needs for not only cats and dogs but livestock.

And of Course, Alabama Power and Wiregrass Electric!! WE love our power companies!!

There are many more people that need to be given recognition but I think this speaks volume. The Chamber would like to recognize some of the surrounding communities as well because we all pooled our resources and worked together.

Mayor Hamilton of Cottonwood

Chief Jim Mock of Gordon PD

Chief Givens of Pansy VFD

Chief Watford of Lucy VFD

Chief McAllister of Gordon VFD

There were literally hundreds of people that offered support, services and assistance. The City of Ashford needs to be proud of everyone and how they all came together in a crucial time. The Ashford Chamber of Commerce is blessed to have such an active membership list and we can only get stronger.

Thank you to everyone again!

Kimberly Vann

Ashford Area Chamber of Commerce President