

As the Georgetown Chamber President, I have seen firsthand what has been happening in Georgetown.

Revelation Brewery who purchased the Old 16 Mile Brewery has opened their Beer Garden on the weekends as they begin the process of renovating the tap room.

A new apartment development The Oaks at Georgetown with 1, 2 & 3 bedroom apartments was completed and has been completely rented.

Sun Behavioral and the VA Hospital opened to great fanfare and have been used to capacity so that each are looking at what they can do to expand.

The Town of Georgetown has actively pursued efforts to bring an Emergency Hospital to town, first attempt was denied, but the Mayor and Council still continue efforts

The Redner's Plaza is now fully rented and the new Tru By Hilton Hotel has opened. The developers have now turned to their efforts behind and the Plaza and Beebe Hospital to begin construction on the residential units planned

In an effort to free up property for the new family court, Caruso's Restaurant has moved to a new location at the corner of Race and Market Streets, which allows them a large facility

The Old Upper Crust has become Café on the Circle and it is amazing what great food and specials come from that small space. The owner had a patio put in next to the restaurant with picnic tables and has received plenty of traffic

In 2018 The Counting House at the Brick Hotel opened. The owners fully renovated the inside of the restaurant and began over the next couple of years to hold more events on their rooftop.

They now have weekly entertainment and trivia nights through the summer and have begun specialty dinners. Chef/Owner William Clifton made National headlines in 2019 when he competed in the Food Network Show – Beat Bobby Flay, although he lost, he and his restaurant gained a new set of devotees

Things were going along well in Georgetown, maybe growth was not as diverse or busy as neighboring Millsboro, but things still continue to happen. Then 2 things occurred, 1<sup>st</sup> Del Dot completed their studies and preliminary meetings regarding the intersections at 113 and Bedford Street and 113 and Route 9 and the results were hard to take. At the intersection of 113 & Bedford, it resulted in the need for future new locations for Royal Farms, Boulevard Auto and the newly renovated & opened Fisher/NAPA Auto Parts. At the intersection of 113 & Rt 9, the need came for future locations for Community Auto Repair & Baker Exxon. When all these relocations will take place is unknown, however Royal Farms did purchase property across from First State Chevrolet and will be constructed on the corner of Arrow Safety Road and Rt 113. The Town is currently helping Preston/Boulevard Auto look for a new location.

Over the last few years the Town of Georgetown has been working hard to help growth in their downtown area. They became part the Main Street program and then was one of the few towns to receive from the State of Delaware a Downtown Development District designation, what this means for the town and its businesses is access to funding in the areas that are within that DDD area. The first business to take advantage were Enrique and Veronica Nunez who owned Splash Laundromat in Milford and wanting to move and expand their laundromat

business in Georgetown, were able to apply and be approved for funding to purchase property and construct a new building in one of the DDD areas. Splash Laundromat in Georgetown opened its doors August, 2020.

More recently, news has been received of the potential of a WAWA coming to Georgetown, although they initially wanted the location at the intersection of Rt 113 and Arrow Safety, they have been able to secure another location and will most likely start construction in the next year

At the airport, the new industrial park off Park Avenue has finally been moving tenants in, 1<sup>st</sup> with Atlantic Manufacturing and 2 new businesses beginning the process of constructing their buildings. Finally, the old industrial park and the industrial park has been linked and you are able to enter and exit from 2 entrances off Park Avenue

Then Covid 19 hit in 2020. The effects were far reaching especially for the Town's small businesses. Most restaurants had to close for short periods but re-opened to a very different world – not being able to be at 100%, no dining in, take out and curbside only. What the Town did was to rally around its businesses, especially downtown to allow for outside dining and relaxing of the sign regulations to allow the restaurants to put up signage to attract diners. Things are beginning to come back but no way near where they once were, the Courts have not fully opened, Delaware continues to be on and off the travel advisory list with neighboring states.

The hotels suffered because the sport tournaments at Sports at the Beach were on hold until later in the summer. These now are starting up, but at a much reduced season, however a new player is set to open in September – Sandhill Fields, off of Sandhill Road. These will house soccer, lacross and pickle ball fields as well as hiking/running trails and is much anticipated.

Like most other Towns that host festivals and events to bring locals and tourists alike to Georgetown, Covid 19 has resulted in the cancelling of Wings & Wheels, the inability to open local museums and other changes. A new favorite as the result of Covid has been drive in church services held at the Marvel Museum which is very well attended. The Town was able to hold it's summer concerts at the Marvel Museum and allowed for drive in service if people were nervous about getting out of their cars.

Georgetown continues to look for growth and development as well as ways to assist the businesses in Town to ensure we keep all our businesses moving forward ....together

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