

**Chattahoochee Main Street – Monthly Meeting**  
**January 26, 2016**  
**6:30 pm**

**Executive Director's Report**

1. January 4 – **WCTV (Ch. 6) Promotional Interview for Galvanizing Gadsden.** Robert Nixon (Business Retention & Expansion Consultant to the Gadsden County Development Council and Chief Program Executive for the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Service Center) and CMS Executive Director, Ben Chandler, were interviewed for WCTV's Midday program to promote the upcoming Galvanizing Gadsden Business Resource Symposium.
2. January 11 – **WTXL (Ch. 27) Promotional Interview for Galvanizing Gadsden.** Robert Nixon and Ben Chandler were interviewed for WTXL's noon time news program to promote the upcoming Galvanizing Gadsden Business Resource Symposium.
3. January 13 – **Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce "Go Gadsden" Meeting.** John Thrasher, President of Florida State University, was the guest speaker. Rob Nixon and I had an opportunity to speak to the group about *Galvanizing Gadsden*.
4. January 14-15 – **Galvanizing Gadsden Business Resource Symposium.** The inaugural **Galvanizing Gadsden** Business Resource Symposium was held at the restored historic Apalachicola Arsenal Museum & Conference Center at the Florida State Hospital. All countywide entrepreneurs and business owners in attendance were directly connected with access to readily available information and business resources that will enable them to grow their respective ventures, create jobs in the community and increase capital investment.

Initiated and hosted by Chattahoochee Main Street, and widely advertised locally and regionally, **Galvanizing Gadsden** was sponsored and promoted by the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, the Gadsden County Development Council, Talquin Electric Cooperative, FOCUS Credit Union, Envision Credit Union, Gadsden County Tourist Development Council, Florida First Capital Finance Corporation, and Quincy Main Street.

The first day of the event featured a keynote address from Cissy Proctor, the newly appointed Executive Director for the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, to kick off the second year of Gadsden County's participation in the Competitive Florida Partnership Program. The second day was highlighted by a keynote address by Michael Myhre, CEO and Network State Director for the Florida Small Business Development Centers (SBDC).

Attendees were given special insight from a panel of experts representing Florida First Capital Finance Corporation, Centennial Bank, FOCUS Credit Union and Envision Credit Union pertaining to business financing options and valuable recommendations and counsel for being properly prepared when applying for a business loan.

In addition, the availability of workforce training services was presented by CareerSource Florida Capital Region, work training and educational opportunities provided by Gadsden Technical Institute, and important steps to take when starting a business was offered by L&L Business Resource Center.

Small business resources and incentives were presented by panelists representing the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development program, CareerSource Florida Capital Region, Talquin Electric Cooperative, and the United States Small Business Administration.

Additional presentations were provided by Opportunity Florida's Executive Director, Jim Brook, on the state of Gadsden County's economy in comparison to the surrounding rural counties in Northwest Florida, as well as showcase presentations of economic and community development initiatives taking place through Chattahoochee Main Street and Quincy Main Street.

The final panel discussion consisted of a group of local business owners sharing their experiences of starting and running a diversity of successful businesses in Gadsden County.

The two-day event was capped off with the **Galvanizing Gadsden** Awards Presentation to honor local businesses and individuals making significant contributions to the economic development efforts in Gadsden County. The list of distinguished recipients included:

**Emerging Businesses of the Year:** Sicamu and Lamb Pallet Company

**Hospitality Business of the Year:** WB's Sports Bar & Grill

**Tech Business of the Year:** Applied Fiber

**Manufacturer of the Year:** CDS Manufacturing

**Family-Owned Businesses of the Year:** May Nursery and Padgett's Jewelry

**Small Business of the Year:** Corry Cabinets

Community Champions

- Kim Gay (Talquin Electric Cooperative)
- Pastor Bob Wells (ChristTown Ministries)
- Roy Moore (Piggly Wiggly)

In honor of the late Nancy Gee, Chairperson of Quincy Main Street's Economic Restructuring Committee, the **Galvanizing Gadsden** Economic Development Champions are:

- Preble-Rish Consulting Engineers
- Bill Enfinger (President & CEO, FOCUS Credit Union)
- Steve Hittinger (S & S Investments)
- Frank Holcomb (TDS Telecom)

**Galvanizing Gadsden** was developed to support all business retention and expansion efforts in operation throughout Gadsden County. This unprecedented countywide event to bolster economic development was organized with the understanding that a strong existing local business base is the best business recruitment tool. It is planned to be an annual event, with the venue moved each year to a different location within the County.

5. January 14 – **Blountstown Main Street Visioning Public Workshop.** Blountstown Main Street invited representatives from neighboring Main Street programs to come to their visioning workshop to share challenges, goals and experiences since being designated as a Main Street community. Charlotte Bruner from Marianna Main Street and Ben Chandler from Chattahoochee Main Street served as panelists.
6. January 15 – **Outlook 2016.** The Havana Herald is preparing to publish its 10<sup>th</sup> annual progress report entitled “Outlook 2016” for the end of January. The publication showcases countywide accomplishments, future plans, upcoming projects and events. Chattahoochee Main Street prepared an article for inclusion in this publication.
7. January 18 – **MLK Breakfast.** This annual event was held at the cafeteria at Chattahoochee Elementary School. It was an important opportunity to promote unity in the community in celebration of the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Organization of the event was spearheaded by Ira Daniels and Major Sean Wood, of the Gadsden County Sheriff’s Department gave the keynote address.
8. January 19 – **Florida Main Street Quarterly Report.** The CMS quarterly report was submitted to Florida Main Street for the reporting period October 1 – December 31, 2015.
9. January 21 – **Step Up for Gadsden.** This is a countywide initiative championed by Talquin Electric to collaborate, communicate and connect with the community. So far, there are over 35 organizations involved. There were breakout sessions to discuss and brainstorm several community issues of concern: economic development, education, health, safer communities, and lifting lives.
10. January 25-26 – **Florida Main Street Quarterly Meeting.** The next Florida Main Street will be held in Apalachicola.

#### **UPCOMING CALENDAR NOTES**

11. January 31 – **Chattahoochee Main Street Start-Up Funding Assistance.** In January CMS will be submitting a final invoice to the State’s Division of Historical Resources to receive the final \$7,500.00 for **Grant S1602** (Chattahoochee Main Street Start-Up Funding Assistance). This will be the remaining payout of CMS’s \$10,000.00 Main Street Start-Up Funding Assistance.
12. February 8 - **VisitFlorida 2016/17 Grant Application Cycle.** The 2016-17 VISIT FLORIDA grant application cycle is now open and applications are due by February 8, 2016. These are matching grants up to \$5,000.00. The grant categories being considered by CMS includes:
  - Advertising Matching Grant Program
  - Cultural, Heritage, Rural & Nature Tourism Grant Program
  - Small Business Grant Program
13. February 13 – **Chattahoochee Smoochie 5K Run.** Planning is underway for the annual Chattahoochee Smoochie 5K Run. The race starts at 10:00am and will start and finish at the

Chattahoochee Landing on River Landing Road. This year a portion of the proceeds will be used for beautification projects of the downtown historic district. The event is for runners and walkers of all abilities.

14. **CMS Façade Grant Program.** Based on technical assistance guidance received from Florida Main Street, Chattahoochee Main Street is developing an application process to use 2015/2016 county funding, along with our matching funds, to initiate a new Building Façade Enhancement Matching Grant Program. Up to three (3) projects are planned to be initiated (approximately \$2,500.00 for each project). The awarding of these projects to property owners along US 90 in the Main Street Local Program Area would be on a matching dollar for dollar basis. Additional funding will be used from the Chattahoochee Main Street Downtown Beautification Fund. This project is planned to commence in the Spring 2016.