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Greater Mulberry Chamber of Commerce

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MESSAGE FROM OUR VICE-PRESIDENT CLARKE FREED

WE'RE BACK!

A memorable line from the big screen is Arnold Schwarzenegger, exclaiming in the 1984 film *The Terminator*, "I'll be back"! Our return may not be as dramatic as Arnold coming through the police station window, but....**WE'RE BACK!**

After 15 months of not meeting due to COVID, the Chamber had a box office hit with *Denim and Diamonds* at the Gem on Friday night, April 30. It was great to see many of us gather together for a festival of film, showing off the beautifully renovated Gem Theater in Downtown Mulberry. The evening included dinner out in the street on a beautiful Florida evening, music, dancing and live entertainment. See the pictures and read more about this event in this issue. **WE'RE BACK**

We followed this up with getting back to our regularly scheduled monthly chamber breakfasts, returning to some semblance of normal, with our first in person breakfast on May 19. We have had a good crowd at our breakfast, but this is an opportunity for those who have been sitting on the sidelines to come on in and get involved. As we look towards a full return to normalcy (or the new normal), it's a great time to evaluate new opportunities for networking and friendship. Come join us the third Wednesday of each month as we connect with each other over breakfast. **WE'RE BACK!**

After a most challenging year for many of our businesses, we are putting 2020 behind us and looking to the future of the Chamber and our mission to support and celebrate the business community in the greater Mulberry area. In 2020 we saw many businesses pivot their marketing, sales, customer service and service delivery strategies. Now we can all look back to see what we learned that will make each of our businesses stronger. At the Chamber, we are asking the same question: What can we do to make the Chamber stronger and increase the value to our members?

As we move forward, you will see a return towards some normalcy as we will celebrate events such as the Monster Mash 5k, a business focused trivia night, our traditional Fossils and Frost Mixer as well as other events being planned for the fall. You will also see a renewed focus on promotion of our member businesses through social media, greater support for ribbon cuttings, celebrating successes together and welcoming new member businesses in our community.

As we look to the future, we say a sad goodbye to our interim Director, Sandi Simpson. Sandi came out of retirement in February 2020 to serve our Chamber and was scheduled to be with us for 3 months while we searched for a new Director. Then COVID hit... Over the past 17 months, Sandi's amazing work kept the Chamber running and prepared us for our new Director. Please join me in a big "Thank you" to Sandi and in welcoming Lilyan Robbins as our new Director. Lilyan started on July 12. Please read her bio in this issue of the newsletter and stop by and welcome her.

2021 is certainly shaping up to be a breakout year. WE'RE BACK!

Denim & DIAMONDS

The Greater Mulberry Chamber of Commerce was unable to hold its traditional awards and annual dinner due to Covid concerns. However, a new event which allowed for more distance and space, but still tons of fun, was created -

Denim & Diamonds at the Gem!!

Guests were welcomed to the newly restored **Gem Theater**, clothed in their best jeans and sparkling bling. As guests arrived, drinks were provided and fantastic raffle prizes were admired. Vice President Clarke Freed, created an engaging presentation of classic movie musical clips and important chamber recognitions from the past year. After the presentation, the event kicked into high gear with live music from **Joe's Garage Band** and delicious fare from **Jimmy's Seafood** and **Got Candy**. It was wonderful to see our amazing chamber members in person again after a tough year.



THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ATTENDED, OUR INCREDIBLE SPONSORS, AND THE EVENT COMMITTEE FOR THEIR HARD WORK! A ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR OUR SPONSORS: THE CITY OF MULBERRY, ACT ENVIRONMENTAL & INFRASTRUCTURE, CLARK ENVIRONMENTAL, BADCOCK HOME FURNITURE & MORE, PRESS EXPRESS, DOSS FLOWERS AND GIFT SHOP, CITIZENS BANK & TRUST, AND TRACIE CARLEY WITH MARY KAY!

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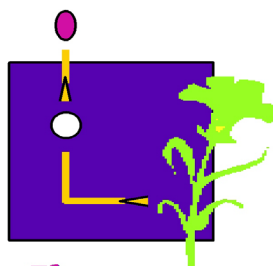


Lilyan Robbins

Lilyan (Lil), a native Floridian, was born in Lake Park, Florida and spent much of her childhood in the southwest Miami area. She relocated to Long Island, New York as a teenager where she lived until returning to Florida (Lakeland) in 2018. Lilyan completed a long and satisfying career at New York Institute of Technology with her last position being Director of Extended Education and Conference Services. She comes to the Chamber with a vast array of experience and skills in communications, networking, vendor management, finance, and budgeting. Lil was drawn to the Mulberry Chamber position by the diversity of responsibilities, working with a group of people toward a common goal, and an opportunity to give back to the community. Lil has traveled extensively both within the US and abroad and is an avid student of the American Civil War.

Please stop in a welcome our new Director.

The chamber office hours are 10am-4pm, Monday through Thursday.



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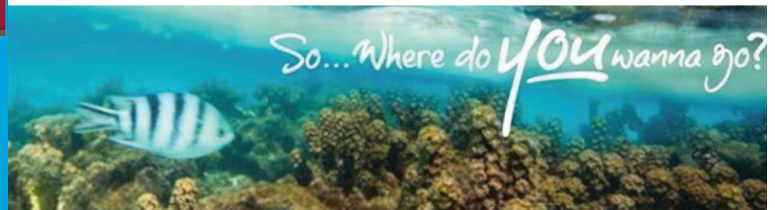
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meanwhile, **AT CITY HALL**



The city pool opened for the summer with a pirate-themed “Summer Splash” celebration. The local pool is open for the summer months annually.

Stay up to date with all the city’s events and new via social media, the city website, and its monthly e-newsletter. From everyone at City Hall, have a great summer!



Summer has been a blast for the city! The Mulberry Public Library is all about tales and tails with a large amount of interactive programs for all ages.

The Mulberry Phosphate Museum is hosting a “month of sharks”. Its traditional “Shark Week Comes Ashore” was held virtually last year, as

a result this year’s celebration is full of onsite activities the whole month of July.

The Mulberry Cultural Center hosted a gorgeous exhibit of a print series, “You are what you Eat”, created by Stacy Tabb. The artwork featured intricate, ornamental outlines of animals composed of the ingredients they consume.

The Gem Theater is off and rolling with a wide variety of events. In June the theater partnered with Just Write Lakeland to present the comedic play Land of the Greedy Mouse. The following week the theater presented “Peace of Woodstock”, a 90 minute live concert featuring the music of Woodstock.





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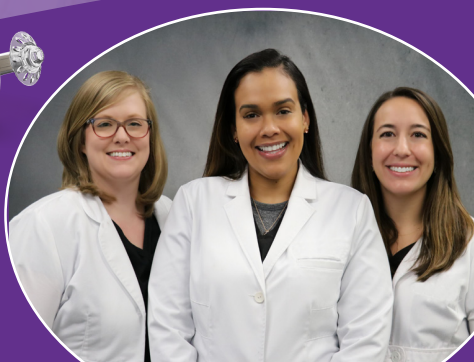
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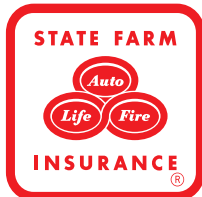
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