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Paige Green Named President of Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce

The Board of Directors of the Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce has named Paige Green, an experienced chamber of commerce and marketing professional, to serve as president of the 560 member organization.

“Paige is an excellent choice for this position and will serve the membership of the chamber well,” according to Melinda Hadden, chair of the organization and owner of Century 21 in the Mountains. “Her experience in tourism and marketing were huge factors in our decision-making process.”

Ms. Green is currently serving as Associate Director of Sponsorship Fulfillment with BASS/ESPN Outdoors near Orlando, Florida. Her responsibilities include working with a diverse sponsor roster to promote and preserve the outdoor lifestyle she enjoys herself.

Prior to joining BASS in 2003, Ms. Green served as Tourism Director for the Eufaula-Barbour County Chamber of Commerce in Alabama. She earned a Travel Marketing Professional certification from the Southeast Tourism Society while with the chamber. Her primary roles with the organization included sales and marketing for group tours,



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building and managing media relationships, and organizing a volunteer-based tourism council.

“Gilmer County is like a dream come true for me,” according to Ms. Green. “I have traveled the area for many years, both as an adult and child. Now I will have an opportunity to work with the businesses and community to promote a product and area that I truly enjoy and appreciate.”

Thirty candidates applied for the president’s position. The candidates were from Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Washington. Contacts and leads for the candidates were generated from the chamber’s search consultant, American Chamber of Commerce Executives Association, and local contacts. The experience level of the candidates ranged from volunteers to more than 25 years in the chamber field.

“The Gilmer Chamber is at a high point right now due to two factors,” according to Hadden. “First and foremost, Alan May moved the organization to a new level of respect and value over the past two years. His level of confidence and experience has made a tremendous difference in our membership and the community as a whole.”

The second factor Hadden mentions as a reason for success is the commitment and leadership of the chamber board. Board members have taken “ownership” in the programs, issues and total image of the chamber in order to build a well rounded organization, she says.

Ms. Green’s philosophies relating to the key components of a successful chamber of commerce are straight forward. “A strong business advocate, a community leader, and an effective communicator are the key criteria for individuals and the organization as a whole,” she says. “The Gilmer Chamber must be positioned to take full advantage of the evolving opportunities within the service industry while continuing to support and recognize the importance of our existing businesses. Recognizing tourism as the economic driver of the area is a part of the sustainable growth that will continue to lift Gilmer above other communities.”

After serving nearly two years as president of the chamber, May has resigned to return to a position in the banking industry. He has pledged to continue supporting the chamber and its programs as well as assist Green in the transition process.

Hadden and the Board of Directors moved quickly to appoint a search committee in June to begin the process of selecting a new president. Members of the committee in addition to



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Hadden included: Will Beattie, ETC; Greg Burrell, Gilmer County School System; Scott Evans, Bank of Ellijay; Ellen Grant, Overland Trails Log Homes; Max Holstein, Overland Trails Realty; Ron Ingram, Georgia Power; Sidney Mahan, John Mahan Attorney; Paula Plumley, United Community; Gary Rogers, Genesis Behavioral Health Care Services; and Kent Sanford, New Horizons Bank.

Early in the search process, the committee identified the experience and character traits that were important to the position. Using those criteria, the group identified candidates who possessed those skill sets. The analysis of the candidates' resumes and a detailed application were used to narrow the field.

"Our search process was extremely inclusive," Hadden says. "Stakeholder interviews were held with many local leaders in order to establish the character traits and experience level we were looking for in a candidate. This search process was just as much Gilmer County selling our attributes to the candidates as it was the candidates convincing the committee they were the right person for the position."

Ms. Green, a graduate of Troy University with a Bachelor of Science/Business Management and a Masters of Business Administration, will start with the chamber on October 1.

The Chason Group, based in Cartersville, Georgia, assisted the committee with the search.

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