

Letter from the Chamber Chairman

This past weekend is one that my family looks forward to each year. My girls come home from college, friends come over and as the mom I get to do what I love to do most and that's to be in the kitchen and cook for everyone when they come home. From barbequed ribs, cheese potatoes, green bean casserole, rice, and homemade bread for Sunday's dinner to baking cookies for the girls to take back up to school. What is this weekend that's so special in my family you may ask? Well it's the beginning of the NASCAR season with the Daytona 500. Every TV in the house is on the same station, so no matter what room you may be in you don't miss a moment. I know – we are a little crazy, but it's something we all enjoy and we are all together, and in today's day world, that doesn't happen very often. The girls were talking about their plans for spring break as at least one of them gets to head south for a little warmer weather for a week. With the Daytona 500 and talk of spring breaks that's a sure sign that warm weather is soon to follow.

With Spring hopefully just around the corner, the Downtown Committee has been busy trying to finalize their plans for some downtown beautification. With the help of not only the Chamber, but also City Council members and the Master Gardeners we are working hard to get this project completed. Come springtime: planters, and banners, along with some landscape will help to change the look of the downtown.

Another project the Downtown Committee is also working on is trying to help to fill some of the empty buildings. The announcement this past week of another downtown business closing its door is another hard hit for the retail businesses. At one of our Downtown Committee meetings, we brainstormed on what type of businesses we would like to see brought to Napoleon. We came up with several ideas and would like to pursue some of those ideas. We are in the process of forming a subgroup of our Downtown Committee that is strictly working on filling the empty buildings which will help make the downtown more viable. We could use your help - if you are interested in offering your assistance, please contact Joel or myself, we would love you have you on the project.

You've seen this topic mentioned quite often in the newspapers this past week. The downtown was also discussed at a City Council committee meeting with many of the downtown merchants in attendance. With the size of this project, it just can't be a handful of people working on it, we need your help, we need your support and we need your ideas. So we are asking to hear from you. Lend us a hand, and help us to make downtown Napoleon, once again a viable place to shop and do business. What we learn from this project can only expand to the entire county. Help us to take Henry County a step ahead into the future. **Heartland Values, Flowing Opportunities.**

- Chairman Cheryl Bostelman