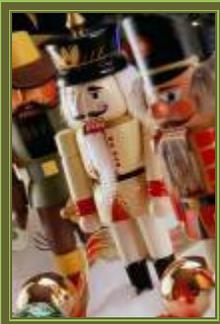


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556 Magic Number for Toys for Tots

The Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce and locally owned and operated Tri-Eagle Sales are pleased to announce the collection of 556 toys for the United States Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. Chamber members, employees of Tri-Eagles Sales, other local businesses and caring members of the community showed their support of the Toys for Tots mission by dropping off new, unwrapped toys to Tri-Eagle Sales November 19 through December 12.

"We were amazed and grateful for the overwhelming generosity of our employees and the people and businesses of Gadsden County in helping spread joy to needy children this holiday season," said Kristen Black, the director of community affairs for Tri-Eagle Sales.

Ron Pickens, the pharmacy manager of Buy-Rite Drugs in Chattahoochee stated, "We welcomed the opportunity to participate in the Toys for Tots drive. We truly believe in this effort, and we'll continue to support it in years to come.

"We were pleased to be asked by the Chamber to participate in the Toys for Tots drive and welcomed the chance to give to our local children," said Henry Gunn, the president of the Gadsden County Men of Action.

After a successful collection in 2007, the Chamber decided to make the Toys for Tots partnership with Tri-Eagle Sales an annual commitment. Buy-Rite Drugs and the Gadsden County Men of Action contributed larger than normal quantities of toys for this year's special event.

"We planned our Holiday Glee member event around the Toys for Tots drive to make it easier for our members to participate," said Michelle Burdick, the Chamber's vice president of membership. "We appreciate every generous donation that will help us create so many smiles on children's faces."

The Marines picked up the toys from Tri-Eagles Sales on December 15. The toys will be distributed to Gadsden County children the week of Christmas.



Members participating in the Chamber's Holiday Glee event gather around toys they helped donate for the Toys for Tots drive.



Jennifer Jennings, the business analyst at Tri-Eagle Sales, who organized this year's collection of toys at Tri-Eagle, pictured with the Marines after loading the truck.

Last Minute Christmas Shopping Announcements

Bell and Bates Home Center in Quincy and Joanie's Gourmet Market in Havana want to remind their fellow Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce members about their last minute gift ideas.

Bell and Bates is offering great prices on the following items:

- Georgia Boots for "Children" and "Men"
- Water Repellant Camouflage Frog Toggs
- Camouflage Jackets
- Radio Flyer Products: Pedal Car, Tricycles, Rockets and Wagons
- Traeger Grills including the new Traeger, Jr. (now for \$399)
- Case Knives
- Poinsettias (on sale now)
- John Deere Dog Collars and Leashes
- Dog Toys

- Advantage Flea Protection products
- Selection of ladies flowered tools
- Four wheelers and go carts

Bell and Bates is located at 10 North Duval Street in Quincy. They will be open Monday and Tuesday from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Bell and Bates will be open on Christmas Eve from 7:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Call (850) 627-6115 for more information.

Drive to Havana to sample and purchase wine and chocolates from Joanie's Gourmet Market. Due to popular demand they will be open every day until Christmas.

Joanie's Gourmet Market offers great gift choices like:

- Variety of domestic wines
- Wine accessories
- Organic coffee and tea
- Gourmet foods like chips and dips, relishes, cookie and hot chocolate
- Truffles
- Aprons
- Picnic baskets
- Stemware



You can find Joanie's Gourmet Market on the corner of 102 West 8th Avenue and NW 2nd Street in Havana. Call (850) 593-4433 for more information.

Go Gadsden! First Meeting of the Year

The Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce is pleased to invite you to participate in our member benefit: the **Go Gadsden!** Leads Group. This leads group was created to give Chamber members access to additional opportunities for building more relationships to obtain new business referrals. The New Year will bring new members to the group. January 14 is the day to attend your first meeting if you've never had a chance to go before.

Go Gadsden! meets each month on the second and fourth Wednesday morning from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. at the Gadsden Historical Society at 304 West King Street in Quincy. The Gadsden Arts Center will present on January 14. The **Go Gadsden!** Leads Group will also discuss possible changes for 2009. These changes will be voted on by current group members at the January 28 meeting.

The Chamber requests RSVPs to michelleburdick@tds.net or by calling (850) 627-9231. Additional information can be found on our events calendar at www.gadsdenfla.com.

WORKFORCE plus: 2009 Let's Make a Deal Job Fair

WORKFORCE plus, a member of the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, is excited to present the 2009 Let's Make A Deal Job Fair on Wednesday, January 14 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Leon County Civic Center located at 505 West Pensacola Street in Tallahassee.

The job fair is a professional exposition for the career-minded individuals of the Big Bend Area. This year's event marks **WORKFORCE plus**'s sixth annual job fair!

The **WORKFORCE plus** staff is dedicated to making this year's Job Fair a successful recruitment tool for the business community. They encourage you and your business/organization to be a part of this occasion. There is no cost for this event, however, pre-registration is required. If you are interested in joining them, please click here (<http://www.gadsdenfla.com/pdf/377011708025715.pdf>) to download and complete the registration form and fax it to (850) 922-6747 or call (850) 413-0315/Toll Free (866) WFP-JOB1.

Additional information can be obtained by visiting www.wfplus.org or emailing wfp@wfplus.org.



Second Quincy Farms Resource Fair Scheduled

Kimberly Moore, the chief executive officer for **WORKFORCE plus**, expressed thanks Friday, after the success of the first Quincy Farms Resource Fair held at the **WORKFORCE plus** office in Quincy on Thursday, December 17.

"I am very encouraged by the level of support and commitment demonstrated," said Moore. "Thank you, again, for caring enough to help those most in need."

The next Quincy Farms Resource Fair will take place on January 21st from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. **WORKFORCE plus** is currently working out the issue regarding facility space since they anticipate the crowd being much larger at this session as most of the layoffs would have already taken place. Just as in the past, registration forms will be sent in advance to secure your participation.

Click here (<http://www.gadsdenfla.com/pdfs/Quincy%20Farms%20Resource%20Listing%20-%20December%202008.pdf>) for the partner services document that will be provided to individuals attending the resource fairs as well as those who contact **WORKFORCE plus** directly. **WORKFORCE plus** offers special thanks to their partners at PAEC who have agreed to translate this document into Spanish.

Call (850) 617-4620 to register or obtain more information.

Identity Theft Awareness Workshop - FREE Seminar

Business owners and managers, as well as individuals in the community, are encouraged to attend this free seminar. Not only will participants receive tips on preventing their own identity from being stolen but business owners will be given refreshers on laws requiring them to protect their customers' private information.

Workshop participants will be informed about how to decrease individual exposure to identity theft and minimize a company's risk of violating federal identity theft legislation. The seminar will also clarify how businesses can avoid becoming recipients of fines up to one million dollars and ten years in jail.

Each workshop has limited space to allow time for a personalized question and answer sessions. Individuals can attend the workshop scheduled for January 21 from 11:00 am to noon. Pre-registration is required by January 16. Companies can schedule an in-house seminar at their place of business or at the Chamber. Call (850) 627-9231 or email michelleburdick@tds.net.

Enjoy a Night on the Nile

The Gadsden Arts Center, a member of the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, invites you to join them for A Night on the Nile - a GAC fundraiser. Go back in time with them for an elegant and fun evening in Ancient Egypt. Enjoy a live auction featuring works of original art by some of the region's most acclaimed artists, including Dean Mitchell, Eluster Richardson, Julie Barody, Denise Choppin, Dawn McMillan, William McKeown, and Kathy Wilcox. Shop for bargains in the fabulous silent auction offering weekend getaways, fine jewelry, fine art, and more! Share fine dining, exciting entertainment, and an evening of fun in support of Gadsden Arts.

Tickets are \$85 or two for \$150; table reservations available for groups of six or eight. For more information, call (850) 875-4866.

Help Needed for Gadsden County's Abused Children

Due to impending state budget cuts, many local children may be without courtroom and community advocates. Regrettably, this action is occurring at a time when abuse and the need for social services are rising.

By becoming a volunteer with the Guardian ad Litem Program, you can make a difference. Please see the information provided below.

Guardian ad Litem Volunteer Training

Where: Department of Transportation (DOT) Burns Auditorium
605 Suwannee St., Tallahassee, Fl. 32399

When:	January 8	6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
	January 12	5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
	January 13	5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
	January 15	5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
	January 20	5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
	January 22	5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Total of 30 hours required, which may include Reading, Interview, Court Observation and Practice Activities. Download an application: www.guardianadlitembigbend.org.

Contact: Leigh Merritt, Assistant Circuit Director
Leigh.Merritt@gal.fl.gov or (850) 606-1200

2008 Best of Gadsden County Awarded to Chamber Member Holiday Inn Express & Suites

The Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites of Quincy, a current member of the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, was selected for the 2008 Best of Gadsden County Award in the Hotels & Motels category by the United States Local Business Association (USLBA) on Friday, December 19, 2008.

The USLBA "Best of Local Business" Award Program recognizes outstanding local businesses throughout the country. Each year, the USLBA identifies companies that they believe have achieved exceptional marketing success, and guest satisfaction as well as contributions in their local community in their local community and business category. These are local companies that enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and community. Hemant Patel, the owner and manager of the Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites of Quincy, has done a remarkable job of demonstrating just what community involvement and guest satisfaction really means.

Various sources of information were gathered and analyzed to choose the winners in each category. The 2008 USLBA Award Program focused on quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the information gathered both internally by the USLBA and data provided by third parties.

About the USLBA

The USLBA is a Washington D.C. based organization funded by local businesses operating in towns, large and small, across America. The purpose of USLBA is to promote local business through public relations, marketing and advertising.

The USLBA was established to recognize the best of local businesses in their community. Our organization works exclusively with local business owners, trade groups, professional associations, chambers of commerce and other business advertising and marketing groups. Our mission is to be an advocate for small and medium size businesses and business entrepreneurs across America.

For more information, contact the USLBA via email: PublicRelations@USLBA.net or visit their website at www.USLBA.net.

Win an Original Dean Mitchell Painting



Brighter Days

Dean Mitchell, the talented, internationally acclaimed painter who stunned audiences with his Dean Mitchell's New Orleans exhibition at the Gadsden Arts Center earlier this year, is also a great philanthropist. Dean supports many good causes in his hometown of Quincy, Florida, most recently contributing proceeds from a "giveaway" of his 2008 watercolor painting, *Brighter Days for New Orleans*, in support of the Gadsden Arts Center's fine art and art education programs for children.

Dean Mitchell has won over 400 awards for his painting. "After 400, I stopped counting", he says. He graduated from the Columbus College of Art and Design, worked as a leading designer for Hallmark Cards in Kansas City, Missouri, and then left that profession to pursue what he

called "real art". In 1990, Dean Mitchell began to win major art competitions, first being the only recognized black artist in the Hubbard exhibit in Ruidoso, New Mexico. He was commissioned to design a series of Jazz themed stamps for the U.S. Postal Service in 1995, won the gold medal in the Annual International Exhibition of the American Watercolor Society in 1997, grand prize for the Arts for the Parks juried competition in 1999, and in 2002, was called a "modern day Vermeer" in the New York Times by art critic Michael Kimmelman. Today, Mitchell continues to collect awards while exhibiting his works in solo and group exhibitions across the country.

To buy your chance(s) to win Dean Mitchell's painting, *Brighter Days for New Orleans*, call the Gadsden Arts Center at (850) 875-4866. The winner will be announced at the Gadsden Arts Center's winter gala, A Night on the Nile, the evening of Saturday, January 24. You do not need to be present to win. Office and gallery hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

