

Chamber Chatter

Volume 1, Issue 9

182 Court Square, Blakely, GA (229) 723-3741

August 2013

Upcoming Chamber Meetings:

- Chamber Board Meeting, September 18, 12:00pm, at the First United Methodist Church (small fellowship hall).

Important Updates:

- Please mark your calendars for the following Chamber sponsored events. If you would like to volunteer / participate in any of the events listed below please contact the Chamber at 723-3741.

October 15: BINGO Night

October 24: Pumpkins on the Square

October 25: Trick or Treating on the Square

November 21: Thanksgiving Raffle

December 13: Moonlight Madness

December 14: Holidays on the Square

- As of August 27, 2013, the Chamber of Commerce had 145 members throughout 20 cities and 4 states.

*July/August Businesses of the Week:

Blakely Chicken
Tri-County Jewelry & Pawn
Ms. J's Boutique

*Since last newsletter

Rural Community Development Initiative

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking applications for grants that will be awarded to organizations to help rural businesses create jobs and spur economic development. USDA is making \$5.6 million available through the [Rural Community Development Initiative](#) (RCDI), a program that generates economic activity in rural areas.

Strengthening the rural economy remains a main focus of USDA, despite budget uncertainties. Qualified intermediary organizations receiving the grants will provide financial and technical assistance to re-

ipients to develop their capacity to undertake housing, community facilities, or community and economic development projects. Recipients will be non-profit organizations, low income rural communities, or federally recognized tribes. Intermediary organizations must provide matching funds at least equal to the RCDI grant. Funds are not directly provided to business recipients by USDA under the program.

If your organization is interested in this opportunity please let the Chamber know and we will move forward with discussing the application

process with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

The deadline for submitting RCDI applications is **November 12, 2013**.

Therapy Dogs



Do you have a family pet you would love to share as a therapy dog in a medical setting? If so, contact the Chamber at 723-3741 to find out how to participate!

Proposed Healthcare Tax Credit Regulations

On August 23, 2013, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued proposed regulations that provide guidance on the Internal Revenue Code section 45R tax credit available to small "eligible employers" that offer health insurance coverage to their employees. An eligible employer must have fewer than 25 full-

time equivalent (FTE) employees for a tax year, the average annual wages must be less than \$50,000 per FTE, and the employer must maintain a qualifying arrangement.

Comments are due by **November 25, 2013**.

Proposed Regulations: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-08-26/html/2013-20769.htm>

Submit comments: <http://www.regulations.gov#!/home>

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