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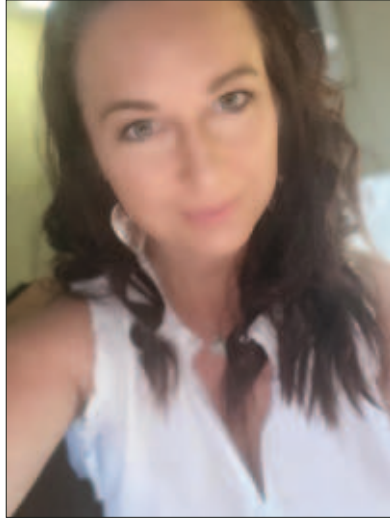
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Barbie Klecka
Outgoing President



Dr. Scott Harper
President



Tiffany Hoops
Executive Director



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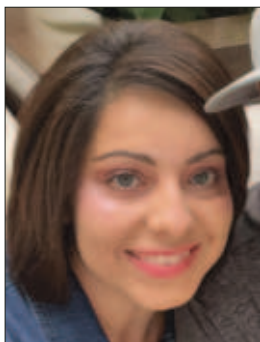
Bill Robinette
Director



Diana Barnett
Director



Mason Matthews
Director



Monica Hinds
Director

It has been my great honor and privilege to be your 2022 Chamber of Commerce president. Last year saw many ups and downs, and lots of changes for the chamber, but I believe we are on the path to much needed growth for 2023. I'm so excited to see what's in store for our community and I'm so excited to see the year ahead with such an amazing board of directors.

Last year, we saw growth with our annual town festival called Shivaree and I know that 2023 will be even bigger and better. Our annual golf tournament in July has quickly become a huge hit and I'm excited to see where the future takes it. Our Corks and Kegs event came back this year in full force and was bigger and better than ever with a huge turnout from our local community.

I whole-heartedly encourage anyone in our community to take just even one year and volunteer on our chamber ambassadors board. You will get to see just exactly all the hard work that goes in behind the scenes to bring people to our community.

Again, thank you so much to the board and to our community for allowing me the great privilege of being your 2022 chamber president.

Barbie Klecka
Outgoing President

The hard work of the past Chamber Board of Directors have put your Chamber of Commerce on a good trajectory. In recent years we brought back the Chamber Golf Scramble. Shivaree has a carnival again. Corks and Kegs is a new addition to downtown.

We maintained the end of the year Christmas parade, even through the pandemic. Your chamber will continue to expand ways to highlight your businesses and services. We want to partner more closely with the city and other organizations to expand our events to multiple days. We want to bring Family Nights to the Depot. We want our neighbors to visit and stay the night in Gatesville.

The Ambassador and Junior Ambassador programs are full of energy and are ready to have fun while helping others. Thank you for this opportunity to be chamber president this next year. We live, work, and raise our families in this great community. Remember to shop local and support our chamber members!

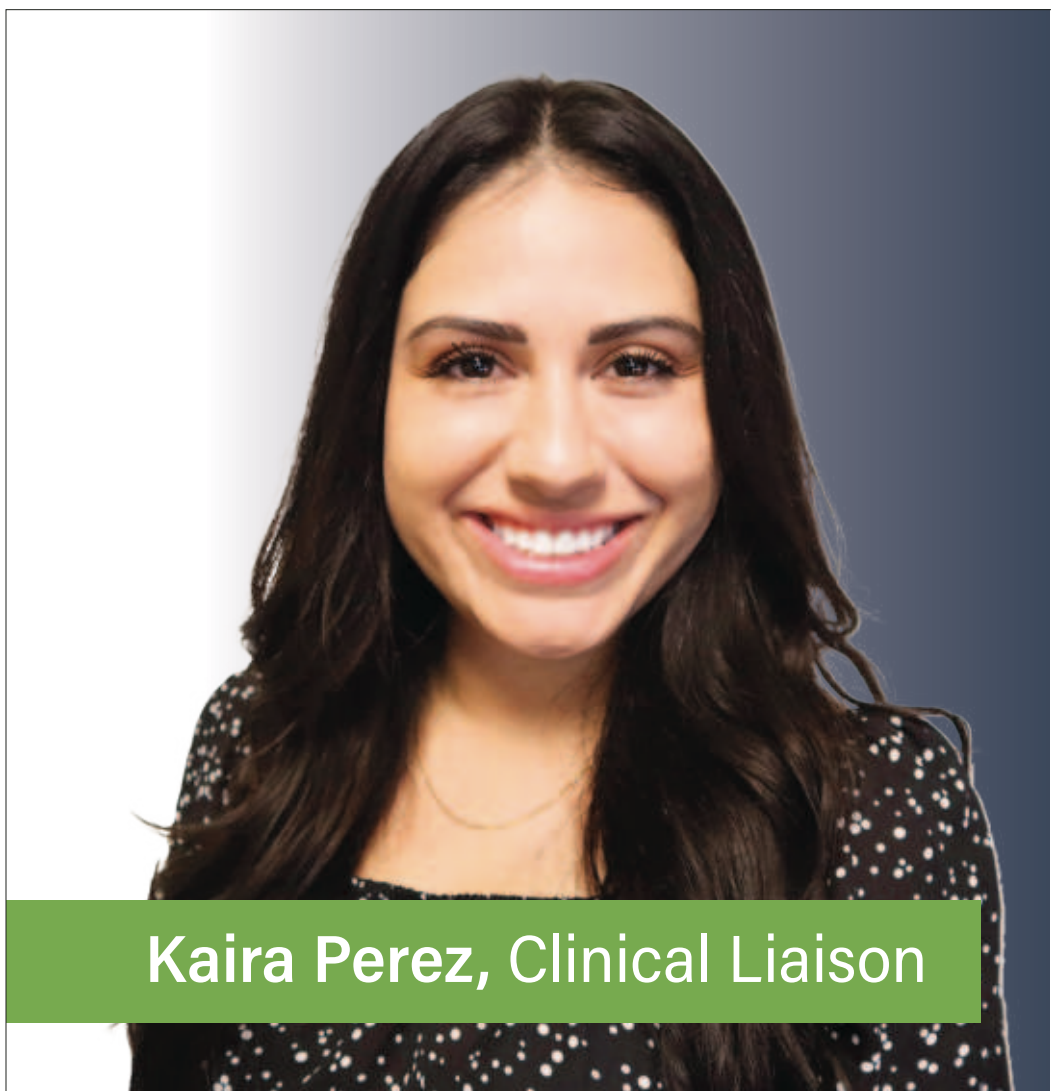
Dr. Scott Harper
President

Its been an exciting and challenging job here at the chamber! I have been working on so many great community ideas and look forward to making all the ideas come to life.

So happy to get to share my experiences with my husband Jake and my kids Reese and Ryan, who all volunteer for all the events we have here in Gatesville. My daughter Reese has really enjoyed her experiences here as a Chamber of Commerce Junior Ambassador that really helps these young adults learn responsibility and how to give back to their community.

I continue to learn something new everyday from all the amazing businesses here in Gatesville and how to put my time and energy into making a great partnership with them all.

Tiffany Hoops
Executive Director



Kaira Perez, Clinical Liaison

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Although they will no longer carry a role at the chamber, they will both continue to serve our community by volunteering in other capacities.

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AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR

Being a part of the Gatesville community means everything

Being a part of the local community and supporting neighbors is very important to this year's Chamber of Commerce Ambassador of the Year, Diana Barnett.

More than twenty years ago when her employer asked Diana Barnett to transfer to Gatesville to become the Internet Sales Manager at the local Ford dealership, she was excited about the opportunity, but she had no idea what the local community would be like. As the single mother of four boys, one of them with special needs, she was anxious to see if her new home would be a good place to raise her children and if her family would fit in.

Before she committed to the transfer, she drove to town to see what Gatesville was all about. When she stopped at a local restaurant the waitress who served her made a big first impression.

"She was friendly and outgoing and just as sweet as she could be," Barnett said, "She told me the entire

town supported the schools and the kids. Her enthusiasm and friendliness made a big impression on me."

Barnett moved to Gatesville from Killeen and found everything the waitress had told her about her new home was truthful. At work, she would meet customers, transact business, and become friends. Then the customer would send their friend or family member to do business. Her children transitioned well into school, and she found support and kindness everywhere she turned.

Eventually, Barnett got remarried to Ronald "Cowboy" Barnett and started the Cowboy Real Estate Team. Unfortunately, Diana's mother developed some serious health issues, which caused her to be away from home and her business for periods of time, but her neighbors and friends

were always there to help.

"I would be out of town for a day or two to take care of my mother, and a real estate customer would call me to see a house and I would have to explain why I was gone," Barnett said. "People would never complain and would simply tell me to take care of my mom, and to let them know when I got back. They understood and would wait on me. I had friends and members of the community who would reach out to me, check on me, and make sure I was making it ok. It is the best part of a small town. Here, everyone knows you, where you go and what you do. They want to support and help."

Being part of the Chamber Ambassador Program is simply an opportunity for Barnett to give back to the community and to help local business grow and prosper.

"I know what Gatesville means to me and the support they have given me. I love being able to do the same for others," Barnett said.



JEFF OSBORNE | GATESVILLE MESSENGER
Gatesville Chamber of Commerce President Barbie Klecka stands with 2023 Ambassador of the Year Diana Barnett of Cowboy Real Estate Team.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Katrina Lee Pelkey and Gerald Pelkey, center, with Studebakers Pizza received the People's Choice Award for 2023 during the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce banquet. Standing with them are Barbie Klecka, chamber board president, and Scott Harper, future president.

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JUNIOR AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR

Chamber Jr. Ambassador of the Year has a bright future

When she was a freshman, one of Gracie Penrod's school mates invited her to go to a meeting and become a part of the Chamber Junior Ambassador program.

"I did not really know what the Junior Ambassador program was all about, I just tagged along with my friend. But I am sure glad I joined," Penrod said.

Little did she know she would eventually be selected as the Chamber Junior Ambassador of the Year. The daughter of Suzy and Eric Penrod, Gracie has been in the Gatesville school system since the 5th grade.

"Last year I was Vice President of the Junior Ambassadors, and this year I am the President. I love how the program has gotten me involved working in the community and given me opportunities I would not otherwise have had," Penrod said. "I loved working at Dancing with the Stars, helping with the banquets and the parades. It gives me a chance to be out in the community and serve."

She is also quick to point out and give credit to Dr. Scott Harper, for his mentorship and guidance as she has

participated in the Junior Program.

"Dr. Harper has been great and really has given me a lot of advice and support," Penrod said.

Gracie is very enthusiastic about the chamber and being part of Junior Ambassadors.

"I have gotten to serve my community and that is what I like about Gatesville, it is a small town and every time I worked, I got to see people I knew. It made me feel like I was part of a great group of people," Penrod said.

Having applied for and been accepted to Texas Tech, Penrod is also waiting to hear back on her application to Texas A & M. She states: "I want to go to college and major in business, though I have not decided on what career my future will hold."

No matter what career path Penrod ultimately takes, her experiences in service with the Junior Ambassadors will be a stepping stone to the world which awaits her.



Grace Penrod, center, was named Gatesville Chamber of Commerce Junior Ambassador of the Year. Standing with her are Barbie Klecka, chamber board president, and Scott Harper, future president.

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Part of the Chamber Banquet was a murder mystery, and after a rousing presentation, the actors and actresses paused for a photo.

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NEW BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Coffee Saloon off to a great start as New Business of the Year

When the Coffee Saloon opened six months ago, the young owners never imagined they would receive the New Business of the Year award from the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce.

Jennifer Considine had worked as a barista while attending college, and the love of being part of a coffee shop stuck with her. When she and her husband Robert were quarantined at home due to the COVID epidemic they began talking about different business possibilities and their discussion eventually evolved into the possibility of opening a mobile coffee shop. Soon, "The Coffee Saloon" was born.

"I always wanted to open a coffee shop and when we began looking, a coffee trailer sort of fell into our laps at a really good price. It had been set up as a coffee shop for another company. Sometimes, things just seem to work out," Considine said.

Jennifer's husband Robert had grown up in Gatesville, and the young couple and their two children had confidence the community would embrace their new business.

"Our business is Veteran-owned as my husband is a member of the National Guard and has been deployed to the border," Considine said. "Robert graduated from Gatesville High and his mother taught school here. The community response has been awesome with people writing reviews and encouraging us, telling us we were doing a good job."

So how does it feel to win such a prestigious award from the Chamber?

"It told me the path we

were taking was working and it was the right path," Considine said. "We are so grateful for everything the chamber has done for us. They advertised and promoted us, helped us find events to work, and gave us the opportunity to be a part of the community. This community has embraced our business and we could not ask for a better community to be a part of."

The Coffee Saloon is open from 6:30 a.m. until noon, Monday through Friday, and is located in front of Vintage Royalty on Highway 36. They offer lemonades, a wide variety of teas and coffees, both hot and iced as well as numerous flavors. No one will ever get bored with the menu as Jennifer states: "We change the menu monthly and soon we will begin selling food."

The Considines also bring their Coffee Saloon to private parties, festivals and all



Jennifer Considine, center, of Coffee Saloon received the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce 2023 New Business of the Year Award. Standing with her are board president Barbie Klecka and future president Scott Harper.

JEFF OSBORNE | GATESVILLE MESSENGER

sorts of other community events in Gatesville and the surrounding area.

Considine is optimistic about the future of the Coffee Saloon.

"I hope this upcoming year we do twice as much business," Considine said.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR



Kyle Matthews, third from left, was named Gatesville Citizen of the Year for 2023 during the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce banquet. Standing with him from left are Gatesville Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors President Barbie Klecka, Chamber Director Mason Matthews, and Chamber Board Future President Scott Harper.

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BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

First National Bank: Service and community service



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Gatesville Chamber of Commerce Board President Barbie Klecka, left, and Future President Scott Harper, right, stand with representatives of First National Bank of Gatesville, which was named the 2023 Business of the Year.

A heritage of over 100 years, and excellent customer and community service has led First National Bank to be recognized as Gatesville's 2023 Business of the Year by the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce.

First National Bank CEO/Chairman Ronnie Sullins said it was an honor to receive the award.

"It says something about the type of service we provide to the community."

Sullins added the bank is well rooted in Gatesville and Coryell County.

"We have three branches within Coryell County," Sullins said. "We have a location in Evant and Oglesby in addition to Gatesville."

Last year, they celebrated 110 years of service to the community.

"Our bank takes great pride in having served our community and the surrounding area since 1912," he added.

Sullins said they take pride in their local staff and the great job they have, which contributes to great customer service. In addition, community service is emphasized at First National Bank.

As a result, it's not uncommon to see their employees take part in civic and community groups.

The bank's mission is to meet and exceed the needs of their customers by providing quality financial services. Their financial services include competitive loan and deposit rates, free Visa ATM/Debit cards, telephone banking, internet banking, mobile banking, merchant services, safety deposit boxes, and ATM services. First National Bank aims to provide everything their customers need combined with a goal of service to their community.

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Jessie Jonasson, center, with Spur Nutrition received the Best Customer Service Award. Pictured with her are Barbie Klecka, president of the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, and Scott Harper, future board president.

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DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

Kaira Perez Director of the Year

Kaira Perez was raised, and has spent her entire life, living in Evant and even though Gatesville was right down the road, she was never aware of the community events which took place in the city. When she went to work at Coryell Health, she also continued her education, eventually rose through the ranks to become a clinical liaison working in the marketing program. Her supervisors suggested it would be an important part of her work responsibilities to be engaged in the community, and soon she was introduced to the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce.

"Once I joined the chamber, it was a real eye opener, learning how much work the chamber did in the community supporting events for families," Perez said. "As I worked and participated in chamber activities, I really enjoyed it."

Perez became a Chamber Ambassador and eventually a Chamber Director.

"I love the Chamber staff and the other directors," Perez said. "We are like one big happy family. I look forward to our meetings and our upcoming events."

When asked about a special chamber memory,

she remarked how Coryell Health sponsors the 5K Color Run during the Shivarree.

"It was my first major event and I had so much fun seeing young parents with their kids and other members of the community participating and supporting the event and thinking about their health," Perez said.

Being a wife and the young mother of a two-month and a three-year-old keeps her on her toes, but Perez loves to take her family to local events and enjoys working for the chamber to expand the business imprint in

Gatesville.

"I enjoy it when the chamber helps our community get engaged and come together," Perez said. "I love when I can take my family to local events with local vendors, local music and live entertainment."

It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to make a Chamber of Commerce effective. Because of her enthusiasm and dedication, it is easy to see why Kaira Perez was selected as the Chamber of Commerce Director of the Year.



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Center, Kaira Perez of Coryell Health was named Gatesville Chamber of Commerce Director of the Year for 2023. Standing with her are Barbie Klecka, board president, and Scott Harper, future president.

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