



NEWS RELEASE

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Cleveland Better Home Town's Board Appoints 2008 Committee Chairs to Lead Revitalization

February 12, 2008 – Cleveland, Georgia – The Cleveland Better Home Town Board of Directors is proud to announce the appointments of the 2008 Committee Chairs to lead the organization revitalization of downtown Cleveland. The committee chairs include Julie Poulson, VP with United Community Bank, Chairing the Promotion Committee, City Councilman Rush Mauney, Chairing the Design Committee, Jeff Hunt who is the White County Division President for Community Bank & Trust is Chairing the Economic Restructuring Committee and Judge Garrison Baker has been appointed as Chair for the Historic Preservation Committee. “These community leaders were selected for their leadership skills, enthusiasm and genuine desire to work together to produce a comprehensive approach to Cleveland’s downtown revitalization,” said Charlie Thomas, Chairman of the Board for Cleveland Better Home Town.

Julie Poulson has been in banking for 21 years and has been with United Community Bank since 1996. As Assistant Vice President and Marketing Officer for UCB, Julie has shown exemplary achievement in her personal commitments. She has served as a board member of United Way, Enota CASA, White County Chamber of Commerce and served on the White County Sesquicentennial Committee. She has also worked with the American Cancer Society Relay for Life and the March of Dimes. Julie attended Piedmont College and is married to Walt Poulson, together they have two children, Alex and Ty. “Julie is a remarkable woman whose dynamic personality and commitment to her volunteer work, make her the perfect choice for Chairwoman of our Promotions Committee,” said Maria Jurado-Flynn, Manager of Cleveland Better Home Town.

Rush Mauney was raised in Cleveland, where he has lived most of his life. He grew up in the family grocery store business, along with an older sister and two younger brothers. Rush attended public school in White County and later attended Truett-McConnell College. He graduated from the University of Georgia in 1976 and began his work career by managing the family store. In 1981 Rush married Sharon Turner, together they operated Chattahoochee Gallery, The Lagniappe and Eatery Restaurants in downtown Cleveland and the RuSharon Bed & Breakfast Inn until their daughter Jessamine was born in 1991. Rush was elected to the Cleveland City Council in 1996, where he continues to serve today. He is a board member of Cleveland Better Home Town, the White County Historical Society and White County Family Connections. He is a partner and CEO of GlobalTech Industries and Habersham Candle Company in Cornelia, a national manufacturer of candles and home fragrance products. As the Design Chairman, Rush brings years of experience as a native resident, businessman and a city leader to the table.

Without a doubt, one of the key roles to a successful revitalization program is Economic Development. Jeff Hunt was selected as the Chair of this Committee because of his extensive background in the financial arena and his love for Cleveland. Jeff is a life-long resident of White County, a graduate of White County High School, University of Georgia and the University of Wisconsin (school of bank operations). He is a Georgia Real Estate Broker and has been employed in all phases of banking for the past 30 years and is currently the White County Division President for Community Bank & Trust, a position he has held for 4 years. Jeff is a respected member of White County Rotary, White County FFA Alumni, Director of Northeast Georgia Council of Boy Scouts of America, North Georgia Chapter of American Truck Historical Society and serves on the Allocations Committee of the United Way of White County. His wife's name is Holly and together they have 4 children and attend the Mossy Creek United Methodist Church.

In an unprecedented step not mandated by the National Trust, Cleveland Better Home Town has created the first of its kind Historic Preservation Committee. With such rich history in this community, the formation of such a committee will help to ensure the preservation of our local history. Judge Garrison Baker, who serves on the Board of Directors for the White County Historical Society was asked to be Chairman because of his knowledge and commitment to preservation. Garrison has served as White County's Probate Judge for the past 25 years. He also serves as the Municipal Court Judge for the City of Cleveland and as an on-call Magistrate for the White County Magistrate Court. In addition, he represents White County on a number of local and regional boards, and serves as

Chairman of Ninth District Opportunity, Inc., a regional Community Action Agency that operates federal and state programs in 32 north Georgia counties. A life-long resident of White County, Garrison is keenly interested in the conservation and preservation of the local area's history and cultural heritage. He is the author of two books - *A History of Crescent Hill Church* and *In the Shadow of Yonah - A History of White County, Georgia*, and has also written a number of essays and articles on local history for area publications. Garrison and his wife, Susan have a son, Cody, son and daughter-in-law, Joe and Karen, and brand-new grandson, Luke. They make their home in the Blue Creek community of White County.

Each of these incredible leaders will play a key role in the Cleveland Better Home Town revitalization program. "Before the end of February we'll be scheduling our first meeting for ALL committee members to come together and learn how the Better Home Town program works. Each committee will then draft its own work plan with 2-3 projects and in March will submit that to Better Home Town. This will then become Cleveland Better Home Town's comprehensive work plan for our downtown revitalization," said Jurado-Flynn. Although the committee chairs will pave the way for change in our downtown, we need some dedicated volunteers who are willing to put in some hard work to make our downtown a special place. If you are interested in serving on one of these committees, please contact Cleveland Better Home Town at 706-969-3336.

Cleveland Better Home Town, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 charitable organization. In 2007, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs official designated Cleveland as a, "***Georgia Better Home Town.***" Cleveland Better Home Town is a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and works to promote the 4-Point Approach to downtown revitalization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law and help to support the Cleveland revitalization program.

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