



PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release
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941/306-0105**

**Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida
To Hold Grand Opening “Family Fun Day” on November 1st at
Manatee Avenue Location**

Bank to Raffle off \$500.00 Gasoline Card at Event

October 27, 2008 – (Bradenton, Florida) – Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida has announced the kick off of the bank’s entry into Manatee County with a “Family Fun Day” event at the Manatee Avenue West location. The event, scheduled to begin at 10:00 am, will feature a number of family activities and offers local residents the opportunity to meet Gateway Bank officers and staff in an informal atmosphere.

According to Gateway Bank President, Shaun P. Merriman, “We are enthused to be opening our first Manatee County location and are eager to meet our new neighbors and prospective customers. We felt the best way to do this was to invite everyone to our ‘house’ to get acquainted.”

Gateway Family Fun Day will include an on-site disc jockey, a classic car display, organized by the Braden Street Cruisers Car Club, a barbecue and fun activities for children, including face painting. Various prizes will be awarded throughout the day and all attending will receive a free gift compliments of Gateway Bank.

Everyone attending will have the opportunity to register for a drawing for a Grand Prize of a \$500.00 gasoline gift card. Merriman commented, “Although the price of gas has come down a bit in the past several weeks, gasoline is still a major expense for most families. We felt this is a very practical and attractive prize to offer our new neighbors.” There is no obligation to register for the drawing, which is open to anyone attending the event.

The bank will also be offering a special incentive to open youth savings accounts. During the Grand Opening and for a limited time thereafter, savings accounts opened for minors will be enhanced with a match by Gateway Bank up to \$10.00 deposited into the new customer's account.

The Manatee Avenue branch is located at the intersection of Manatee Avenue West and 21 Street West, at 2100 Manatee Avenue West. Retail banking is managed by Group Vice President Cindy Denison. Commercial Banking and business development is under the direction of Manatee County market Executive W. Roy Owen.

About Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida: Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida is an independent community bank serving business and consumer banking customers in Sarasota and Manatee counties.

The newly opened Manatee Avenue location is the second Gateway Bank location on the central west coast. The Manatee Avenue banking center is located on the northwest corner of 21st Street West and Manatee Avenue West. Gateway Bank operates a full service banking location in the Center Pointe Plaza at 2033 Main Street in downtown Sarasota, one block east of South Washington Boulevard. The bank will open a third location at 6204 North Lockwood Ridge Road and University Parkway this winter.

The shareholders and directors of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida are primarily residents of Sarasota and Manatee counties. The Board of Directors includes: Charles J. Bartlett – Icard, Merrill, Cullis, Timm, Furen and Ginsburg, PA; Dr. Gary K. Bockhold – Center for Sight; Dr. P.T. “Bud” Fleuchaus – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; David J. Grain – Grain Capital, LLC; David K. Maholias – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; Shaun P. Merriman – Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida; Gavin W. Meshad – JWM Management, Inc.; Katherine K. Moulton – The Colony Beach & Tennis Resort; Wayne M. Ruben – Ruben-Holland Development, LLC; David E. Sessions, Willis A. Smith Construction Inc.; and Jan E. Smith – Jan Smith and Company.

Further information regarding Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida may be obtained by contacting Shaun P. Merriman, President and CEO at 941-306-0105.

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