



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Contact: Shaun P. Merriman
941/306-0105

Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida Announces Opening of First Manatee County Banking Center

New Bank Location Expected to Bring 10 Jobs to Downtown Bradenton

September 8, 2008 – (Sarasota, Florida) – Shaun P. Merriman, President and CEO of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida announced today that the bank has expanded into Manatee County by opening an office in West Bradenton. The new office marks the second banking center opening for the newly formed independent community bank.

Gateway Bank received charter approval from state and federal regulators in early 2008 and opened their first location at 2033 Main Street in downtown Sarasota on May 19th.

The new banking center is located at 2100 Manatee Avenue West, at the northwest corner of 21st Street West and Manatee Avenue West. The newly renovated site features a full service banking lobby, three drive thru banking lanes and a drive thru ATM. This location also serves as headquarters for the Manatee County Operations headed by W. Roy Owen, Senior Vice President and Manatee County Area Executive. In addition, certain administrative functions will also be located at this site. The bank expects to have 10 full-time employees at the location.

Retail banking operations will be led by Group Vice President and Banking Center Team Leader, Cindy S. Denison. In addition to her day-to-day responsibilities at the new location, she also heads the two county retail banking effort for Gateway Bank.

In making the announcement, Merriman stated, “We are looking forward to bringing our brand of personal and business banking to the Manatee County market area.” He continued, “We

believe we offer a unique combination of services to our prospective customers, including consumer and business banking, residential and commercial lending and wealth management.”

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 fall.

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.

--(###)--