Meeting Notes – Jan. 24, 2023

The LaFayette Rotary Club met on Tuesday, January 24, 2023. DeAnna Hand brought as her guest, Trisha Black, the assistant state coordinator of Main Street Alabama. Trisha spoke briefly to Rotary members, extending her welcome to the city of LaFayette as one of the most recent communities to be accepted into the Main Street program. Trisha is working with the local LaFayette Main Street committee. The LaFayette Main Street Committee is currently putting together a strategic plan program. and interviewing stakeholders. There will be a public meeting tonight to ascertain the community's desires for what they want the revitalization of downtown to look like. The next step will be for the committee to give back some recommendations. Ms. Black emphasized the importance of the role the LaFayette Rotary Club could play in this revitalization effort.

Rotarian Faye Seroyer introduced her guest speaker, Carrie Royster, executive director of Chambers County Chamber of Commerce. Carrie provided the club with updates from the Chamber. The Chamber has brought back quarterly events, such as Lunch 'N' Learn, Business After Hours, and Catch Up and Coffee. The topic for this year's Lunch 'N' Learn series is The State of Education. They have completed the Lunch 'N' Learn program for Chambers County public schools and will host one for Chambers Academy on February 8. Those interested can go to the website to register.

In the area of Community Development, Carrie reported they currently have 15 ambassadors. There are 37 high school students enrolled in Junior Ambassadors. The Junior Ambassadors have adopted Co. Rd. 289 as part of a litter campaign and recently completed the Fall Clean Up where they collected almost 20 bags of trash. They will have another clean up in the spring.

Carrie recounted some of their more recent past events, including Rockingfest on the Square. Rockingfest on the Square was held November 19 and 106 vendors participated. In addition to the vendors, there was Touch-a-Truck, the ice-skating rink, the Everest Climb and Slide, a rock wall, Snowzilla Jr. (standing 40' tall and 90' long), and, of course, Santa. This event is always free to the public and continues to grow each year.

In addition to past events, she mentioned several upcoming events that the Chamber is sponsoring. There are two upcoming ribbon cuttings for new businesses, a blood drive, and on February 9, 2023, a Fishing University Seminar to be held at Valley High. Fishing University is an award-winning television program that has aired for well over 30 years on the Outdoor Channel and the World Fishing Network. In addition to this seminar, from February 9-12, Fishing University will film their show to include a professional bass fisherman on West Point Lake and a 90-second tourism commercial to highlight attractions in our area. In the seminar, Fishing University will stress the importance of further education and careers in the outdoors.

The Chamber of Commerce will also be hosting Real Life 101 for students in Acts Academy, Chambers Academy, Inspire Academy, LaFayette High School, Lanett High School, Springwood School and Valley High School. Sessions will include: Social Media, Technical and Workforce, Interview Skills/Workplace Behavior, FAFSA, Financial Planning, Dual Enrollment, Reality After High School, Military Options, College Admissions (2 Year) and College Admissions (4 Year).

Carrie ended her time with us with a trivia game on LaFayette history.

Diane Sherriff