A look ahead and a glance back

By Tara Lytal, Main Street Clinton Director

In so many ways, this is the best time of the year: a time to tie up loose ends and reflect on accomplishments. A fresh start full of potential for a better year, and a time to plan and visualize what 2016 should look like. At Main Street, it is a time to catch up, plan and breathe for a few weeks before jumping back on the roller coaster.

We had a terrific 2015, and, in many ways, possibly the best year since the Main Street Clinton program began in 2007. We continue to have amazing leadership on the non-profit board and wonderful community support for our many projects and events. Our program membership has continued to increase, which means we have more funds to accomplish our goals. Thank you for supporting us!

2015 saw the completion of several community improvement/beautification projects. Main Street Clinton partnered with Mississippi College to sponsor a mural at the east entrance to the Boulevard District on the west side of the Cook Lawn and Pest building. The mural was designed by Mississippi College Professor Albert Smathers. Smathers and several senior level art students worked on the mural, which was completed and dedicated in the early spring.

Main Street Clinton’s Design Committee envisioned a public art project using the Main Street Clinton program’s logo, a cruiser bike. In May, to coincide with National Bike Month, the committee rolled out the Bikes of Olde Towne, featuring the artwork of local artists. The bikes were installed by the committee throughout the Olde Towne district. The feedback from the community has been positive, and the committee plans to “roll out” a second phase of the program in 2016.

One final beautification project came together late fall, the landscaping and wind sculpture installation at the triangle intersection of College Street and Clinton Boulevard. The wind sculptures were purchased with funds donated by the Clinton Junior Civic League.

In 2015, our established events continued to thrive. We had the largest attendance at our Olde Towne Markets that we have even experienced. Our Dinner and Movies, Just the Girls, Fresh at Five Farmers Markets and Olde Towne After Dark experienced growth. Back to the Bricks and Cruzin’ Clinton were wonderful events with tremendous community and business support. We were able to make lemonade from lemons when, in June, the Firefly Festival was rained out. The rescheduled date was August 29, which was a much better date than the original one. So great, in fact, that we will be moving the festival to that weekend in 2016. If you missed out this fall, be sure to put it on your calendar for next year.

In October, we added one new event, Olde Towne After Dark- the Sidewalk Sessions. Held on a Thursday evening, the event featured local musicians along the sidewalks throughout Olde Towne. Our plans are to continue the Sidewalk Sessions with more dates in 2016.

The Clinton Boulevard Business District saw some important progress this year due to the commitment of the Boulevard Steering Committee. In May, the committee