

Gaylord Herald Times

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New facade 'distinguished'

The new façade improves the first impression that visitors and residents have as they enter town from the east on M-32.



Bradley
Butcher

By Ann Rowland

Special to the Herald Times

GAYLORD — You get just one chance to make a first impression.

Recently, the east end of Gaylord's downtown district received a facelift, enough of one to catch the eye of Keep Michigan Beautiful, Inc., (KMB) a nonprofit organization of volunteers dedicated to beautifying, enhancing, and in some cases

restoring locations within the state — specifically, its downtowns.

On Oct. 16, KMB awarded the Distinguished Service Plaque to Plaza Properties of Gaylord for its recent façade improvement project at Otsego County Abstract and Title Company at 120 E. Main St. KMB honored the project for enhancing not only a downtown business, but

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Courtesy photo

Before

THE BUILDING at 120 E. Main St., owned by Plaza Properties and housing Otsego County Title and Abstract Company before its face-lift.



Courtesy photo

After

HERE IS THE BUILDING after the façade improvements were completed. The project earned designer Butcher and Associates of Gaylord accolades from Keep Michigan Beautiful, Inc.

Project enhances downtown business

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the community of Gaylord as well.

The new façade improves the first impression that visitors and residents have as they enter town from the east on M-32. Such improvements advance the ideals of KMB by providing a welcoming atmosphere that may attract more tourism and thus improve the economic vitality of the community and state.

Such improvements, though desirable, are costly — even more-so in a tough economic climate. Finding funds to make primarily cosmetic changes to buildings requires creativity and tenacity, two things that are not lacking here in the Al-

pine Village.

Plaza Properties' new façade was designed by Bradley J. Butcher and Associates, PC, an architectural firm in Gaylord.

BRADLEY BUTCHER said, "Cathy Simpson, one of our team here, is always on the lookout for ways to market the firm. She 'discovered' Keep Michigan Beautiful and thought it was a good fit."

Butcher and Associates had recently designed the new façade for Plaza Properties, as part of a cooperative effort between them and Gaylord's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) which wrote a grant through MSHDA that ultimately provided matching

funds for façade improvements. Four local downtown buildings were participants in the project: Hogan's Jewelers and the Framery, the Sugar Bowl, Alpine Chocolate Haus and Otsego County Abstract and Title (owned by Plaza Properties, Inc. LLC).

The architectural firm contacted KMB, applied for recognition, sent descriptions and photos of the project and put Gaylord in front of the organization.

"Otsego County Economic Development Coordinator Jeff Ratcliff, Joe Duff and the DDA helped to facilitate the grant process, and they continue to seek opportunities for Gaylord's downtown," said Angela Nelle-Pagel of Butcher and

Associates. "When an award like this is given, it makes the rest of the state aware of the efforts being made here. But it also gives recognition to the business owners for their efforts and willingness to take a step forward."

NELLE-PAGEL was the project manager and the representative who accepted the award at the Mount Pleasant ceremony.

"This isn't our award, it's Plaza Properties' award. But we're happy to be part of it and proud of our role in making Keep Michigan Beautiful aware of Gaylord," Nelle-Pagel said.



Ann Rowland photo

ANGELA NELLE-PAGEL of Butcher and Associates was the project manager for the Plaza Properties project and accepted the award from Keep Michigan Beautiful during a ceremony in Mount Pleasant.

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