

2008 Dozen Distinctive Destinations Award Ceremony  
February 7, 2008 – Gibson Inn  
Mayor Van W. Johnson, Sr., Acceptance Speech

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Before I get started, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Anita Grove, with the Chamber of Commerce for nominating the City of Apalachicola for this prestigious award. Anita has a profound admiration for her hometown that rivals none.

Secondly, thanks go out to City Administrator Betty Webb and staff for doing an excellent job leading up to and in coordinating today's activities.

Today is a very good day and a historic moment for the City of Apalachicola.

Since the beginning of this program, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has only named two other Florida cities and a total of 108 communities nationwide to the list of Distinctive Destinations.

The City of Apalachicola will now proudly take its place among this elite group of communities because of you. Because of your sense of community and value, because of your awareness in realizing that the greatness of Apalachicola is found within the historic preservation of Apalachicola.

This award is a tribute to a lot of hardworking men and women, to name only some; Willoughby Marshall, preservation architect and historic consultant; Bill and Lynn Wilson-Spohrer, restorers of the Coombs Inn & Cotton Exchange; Neil and Michael Koun, renovators of the Gibson Inn.

The work of these individuals and others speaks to the very essence of this award. The fact that the City was chosen to receive it, is a call for greater commitment to the standards and conditions which placed the City in consideration.

We must resolve today, to maintain these standards by establishing building codes that reject any development or building that is not in harmony with the character of this community.

Today is certainly a cause for community pride and on behalf of the citizens of Apalachicola I humbly accept this award and as Mayor of the City of Apalachicola, I proclaim February 29, 2008, a day of celebration of this award. – Thank you!