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First Southwest Bank Announces New Additions to Board of Directors

Joining the First Southwest Bank Board of Directors are William Gerli Spears, Jr., Bryan W Dear, John Smith, John Barlow "Barry" Spear.

ALAMOSA, COLO., (September 26, 2017) – First Southwest Bank is happy to announce the recent appointment of four new board members to the team. Joining the First Southwest Bank Board of Directors are William Gerli Spears, Jr., Bryan W Dear, John Smith, John Barlow "Barry" Spear.

"All four of our new Board Members embody the spirit of rural Colorado and bring a keen expertise and energy to the table," says Kent Curtis, Chief Executive Officer. "As we are focused on cultivating valuable relationships, investing in economic and social doers, and fostering a well-lived rural culture, we are very fortunate to have our new Board members by our side as we continue to strengthen our rural Colorado community."

William Gerli Spears, Jr.

William Gerli Spears, Jr. and his wife Christie have lived in Pagosa Springs since 1999, where they own radio stations, KWUF, KZBR, and KALQ/KGIW – Wolf Creek Broadcasting – in Pagosa and Alamosa. After attending Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, and then the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University, Spears continued his career with American Exploration, a publicly-traded company that built oil and gas reserves through the formation of public and retail partnerships. Later, as a financial analyst for Occidental Petroleum in Westwood, California, Spears modeled, negotiated and consummated mergers and acquisitions of oil, gas and chemical businesses, all while he and his wife attended radio sales and audio engineering night classes at UCLA, visited radio stations, and met with various owners for industry education. Spears is on the Colorado State University Extension/4H Advisory board, is an active member of Rotary and served on the Pagosa Springs Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, becoming President in 2004. Recently, Christie was elected to that board.

"Our family [two daughters and a son] and business are very satisfied customers of First Southwest Bank and we are basically living the dream here in paradise," says Spears. "First Southwest Bank can truly help you get there and they work hard to do just that."

Bryan W Dear

Bryan W Dear was raised in western Kentucky and graduated from the University of Colorado with a B.S. in Accounting. Dear then worked his first three years as a CPA for Fox and Company in Casper, Wyoming, before moving to Durango. In October, 1993 Dear started The Payroll Department, which currently employs 12 Durango residents and serves 750 employers in La Plata County. Most recently, Dear served on the board of the Community Foundation serving Southwest Colorado, and continues to serve on the finance committee of this organization.

"As a director, I have found it fascinating to see how a well-run bank works, and am proud that, as a true community bank, FSWB has made a commitment to their CDFI designation. It is my sincere hope I can actually be a helpful part of the process as a director to FSWB, and to our community," says Dear.

Dear and his wife Jacquelyn are celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary this year and have two children. "As so many do in our town, I love the outdoors for mountain biking, hiking, running, and cross country skiing."

John Smith

After growing up in Alamosa and graduating from Alamosa High School, John Smith attended the University of Colorado, Boulder, where he attained a BS in Applied Mathematics. Smith then moved to Houston, Texas to work for Texas Instruments, which was the beginning of a 40+ year career in high-tech. Having worked for both

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large corporations (TI, American Microsystems, Simpletech), as well as several start-ups, serving on the Board for corporations and non-profits, Smith is now the President of the Board of Directors for Tucson Botanical Gardens. Smith has been married to his wife Carolyn for 26 years, and they have 5 lovely daughters and 2 grand-kids.

"It is a privilege to be associated with this organization, which is so supportive of the business and people in the San Luis Valley and southwestern Colorado," says Smith.

John Barlow "Barry" Spear

Having graduated from the University of Northern California in 1975, John Barlow "Barry" Spear has lived in Durango since 1977, where he was first working as a news reports for the *Durango Herald*. In 1980, Spear began law school at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. After graduating with honors, he returned to Durango and began working for Shand, McLachlan and Newbold (which became Shand, McLachlan, Newbold and Spear in 1990), concentrating on litigation and insurance defense. In 1993 Spear took his practice to Maynes Bradford Shipp & Sheftel to provide it with a banking/civil litigation section, in addition to its nationally renowned Native law practice. In 1994 Spear became a partner at MBSS and in the mid-2000s, First Southwest Bank became a client of MBSS. In addition to FSWB, FNBD, and Region 9, MBSS' clients include Four Corners Community Bank, Citizens Bank and the Regional Housing Alliance, La Plata Electric Association, Empire Electric Association, Dolores Water Conservancy District and other water districts, where Spear has been the counsel for their board of directors. Over the 36 years Spear has lived in Durango, he has served on many boards of directors for non-profits, including the Durango Film Festival, Durango Art Center, Durango Adult Education Center, and Music in the Mountains. Spear's leisure focuses include "gardening his greenhouse dome, exploring in his 4WD camper, reading/writing, tennis, skiing, and slowing down life with my beautiful wife," says Spear. "My wife, Holly, and I hold 4,668 shares of stock in FSWB." "Having served as general counsel for a number of banks in southwest Colorado over my 30-plus career as a lawyer, I am excited to bring my experience to the professional team and forward-thinking board of directors at FSWB."

About First Southwest Bank

Serving the San Luis Valley and rural Colorado for more than 100 years, First Southwest Bank offers personal and business banking at their seven branches, with an emphasis on businesses supporting rural communities. First Southwest Bank and their employees actively live-in and give back to our communities, volunteering with more than 40 local organizations, and donating to 115. As a CDFI bank, First Southwest Bank is focused on cultivating valuable relationships, investing in economic and social doers, and fostering a well-lived rural culture. More information about First Southwest Bank is available at fswb.com.



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