

STONE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Let's Kick It Up A Notch Highlights

2007-2008

Business Development Division

Aggressively promoted Stone County's assets as a tourist destination

- Built promotions based on image/brand developed through ad campaign
- Had presence in Mississippi Tourism Association's official fulfillment piece, distributed to over 300,000 people each year
- Redesigned tourism brochure, updated information, expanded distribution
- Introduced cultural Told You So Tours to travel agent and tour operators, began booking/conducting tours
- Partnered with community resources such as Telling Trees to enrich cultural tour experience
- Participated in state's celebration of Tourism Week
- Established plans to conduct Hospitality Week and staff Dizzy Dean Rest Area to welcome visitors during Coast's Cruisin' the Coast event
- Conducted 18 ribbon cuttings and 4 groundbreakings, including providing pre- and post- news releases distributed to regional media outlets
- Supported development of existing business – sponsored booths for first time at Mississippi Development Authority's Mississippi Wholesale Market, connecting Stone County business artisans with buyers from across the country
- Supported efforts of city and county by participating in – dedications of Telling Trees cultural murals, dedication of the Dizzy Dean Rest Area, opening of the Clayton Jones park
- Planned and implemented community functions and events, drawing record attendance at Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting, Mardi Gras Parade, and Pine Hill Festival. Distributed news releases regionally both before and after events
- For county's signature event, Pine Hill Festival, created logo to help brand the event and give it its own identifying graphic. Increased number of vendors and activities with plans to add more in 2009. Partnered with community to achieve success.
- Coordinated with local businesses and community for featured in WLOX-TV's Celebrate Wiggins

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Physical Infrastructure Division

- Produced and distributed informational flyer to educate citizens about the county's \$39 million water and wastewater grant
- Keep MDOT informed of status of Stone County infrastructure – work with government entities and businesses to identify needs
- Support environmental efforts; became the first county in state to Go Green - Sponsor monthly recycling at Wal-Mart
- Initiating new environmental campaign -- Green for Life, with resources, tips on EDP Web site
- Continue beautification projects

Social Infrastructure Division

- Partner with Flint Creek – participated in production of new brochure given to visitors, included information about Stone County and reaffirmed branding, Unique is Normal Here
 - Provided grant to improve ball fields, supporting recreational resources and venues that draw visitors to Stone County
 - Completed new KaBOOM! Playground
 - Sponsored Night Out Against Crime, participated in national event, first-ever for Stone County
 - Supported Fire Department's smoke detector program
 - Supported education, sponsored Explosion of Excellence, recognizing outstanding students (need number of scholarship recipients and total \$\$ amount of scholarships)
 - Support efforts to increase graduation rate
- Sponsored Trash Bash, held just prior to Pine Hill Festival, ensuring our community was in tip-top shape for visitors

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Industrial Development/Workforce Division

- Sponsor quarterly Industrial Leaders' Meetings – networking, speakers with topics of interest to industry leaders
- Partner with regional resources: Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Mississippi Power Company, Mississippi Gulf Coast Alliance, Mississippi Development Authority,
- Welcomed new industries: Piney Woods Pellets, Kojis, Metal Tech, Intrinergy
- Promote Go Zone incentives
- Improved industrial parks – added access road to Magnolia Drive Industrial Park, added lighting, water line to Ten Mile Industrial Park; are in the process of obtaining a signange for Ten Mile Industrial Park
- Thoroughly communicate Stone County's progress to regional audience
- Produce quarterly newsletter – post to Web site
- Continually update and improve Web site
- Offer interactive calendar of events is interactive on Web site, allowing local organizations to post their events
- Foster community pride -- implemented year-long photo contest, inspiring people to notice beauty and character in community and capture those images
- Share Web resource with community partners to effectively and instantly disseminate information – Hurricane Gustav info was posted to site as was 2008 disaster preparedness report
- Communicate with elected officials about Stone County's accomplishments and plans – elected officials visited this year