



MPE Journal

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Graduate Scholarship Winners**

YOUR MISSISSIPPI PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS ORGANIZATION

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MPE has enhanced its website!

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Join, renew or update your membership! Get the latest MPE news and Educational Resources!

Visit us online at www.mpe.org.



Executive Director
Judy Rhodes

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On the cover:

Janet Paczak, a 28 year veteran teacher and a MPE member since 1984, prepares a praise note for a Venture student's completion of his logic puzzle at Rouse Elementary in Brandon. Ms. Paczak has been teaching at Rouse since the school opened in 1996. The Venture Program is a special program for gifted students.

At left:

2nd grade Venture students are proud of the praise notes they received during the class.

Ms. Paczak's Students:

Hannah Arnold, Taylor Bowlin, Alexis Evans, Shelby Anderson, Lane Shreve, Mary Beth Tharp, John William Ables, Holden Sumrall, and Jamal Anderson.





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DIANNE SELLERS

Summer began with the *Mississippi Rising* Conference the first week of June in Biloxi. There were a variety of sessions that I attended for two days. It was also a great way to get reacquainted with others around the state and meet new educators. At the opening, general session Kimberly Morgan blessed us with the national anthem. She did our profession proud as Miss Mississippi.

Now for an update concerning board duties. When new committees were formed in April, the Scholarship Committee met first and devoted a great deal of their time evaluating the graduate scholarship applications. Granted it was no easy task, but five deserving recipients were chosen. Those scholarships were awarded the first of June. The Planning Committee met in June in Hattiesburg and compiled ideas for future growth. They set a goal of becoming 10,000 strong by the year 2010. The Legislative Committee will meet in September to prepare for the 2009 Legislative Session.

The summer board meeting and planning retreat were held in Hattiesburg this year. A highlight of our summer meeting is meeting area legislators. Considering that a special session was called for the next day, we were fortunate to have several attend our reception. We appreciate our policy leaders' support of education.

I will tackle a new position this year as School Psychometrist for the Quitman School District in Clarke County. After retirement, I returned to school for this endorsement for an interesting change in my educational career. I am looking forward to this new challenge. As I write these notes, school is just beginning. I hope the school year began smoothly for you and will continue until the last day in May. Please keep in mind that you are a shining star to the student. Set a good example and make that student shine as well.



This picture was taken the middle of July. Yes, I have on my MPE jacket that I proudly wore for two weeks in Alaska. I learned a couple of facts about their school system while I was there. One day our bus driver was a retired shop teacher. He told us that the school had recess if the temperature was -19 degrees below, but if the temperature was -20 degrees then recess was inside. I thought our PE teachers would appreciate that story.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE JUDY RHODES



As we approach the November elections, I hope the questionnaire completed by our Senatorial candidates is helpful in assisting you in your voting decisions. The MPE Constitution prohibits the organization from endorsing political candidates. However, it is important that we try to inform our member family as best we can to assist you in making informed decisions. I encourage you to review Governor Musgrove's and Senator Wicker's responses to our questions and to also contact their respective offices should you have other questions you would like addressed. To contact Ronnie Musgrove, you may e-mail info@musgroveforsenate.net or call 601-592-5047. To contact Roger Wicker, you may visit www.wickerforsenate.com/contact-form or call, 601-984-3636.

Most importantly, VOTE, VOTE, VOTE!!!! It is unusual for us to have such a competitive race for the U.S. Senator that will most likely represent Mississippi for many years to come. I am sure you also realize the importance of the Presidential race, as well as local school board elections for many school districts. So make sure you exercise your most precious right to vote in November.

I hope the first month of school has been rewarding for you and has gone smoothly. Please contact us if we can assist you in anyway, or if you have suggestions for moving MPE forward.

Sincerely,

Judy

Don't miss our weekly e-mails with the latest MPE and education news! Update your account and e-mail address online, e-mail mpe@mpe.org or call our office at (800)523-0269. We want to share important MPE news and events with you!

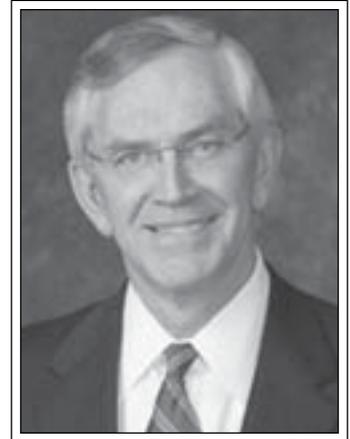
*Discuss educational issues with other
MPE members at www.mpe.org*

Our **new online forum** allows you to discuss educational issues with other MPE members. **Share information, ask questions, find out what your peers are doing!** Issues for discussion include mentoring, leadership, time management, inclusion, teacher pay, teacher benefits and retirement. Simply visit the "**Members Only**" section of our website, log in and then click the "Member Forum" link to join the conversation!



Mississippi IHL News:

**Dr. Thomas C. Meredith,
IHL Commissioner**



Countdown to Kickoff: College Access Website and Outreach Campaign

I always look forward to fall. I love the crispness in the air, the welcome break from the sweltering summer sun, the preparations for rich Southern holidays, and of course football. I can always feel the excitement and passion in the air as high school and college football get underway. This year is no different.

But I'm looking forward to more than the pigskin kick-off this fall. The Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) is counting down to the official kick-off of Mississippi's college access website and college outreach campaign.

In the Spring 2008 edition of *MPE Journal*, IHL brought you news of the construction of a statewide college access website. The website, which has been developed in collaboration with students, parents, teachers, counselors, financial aid administrators, and a host of others, serves as a one-stop shop for all the information a student – or his or her parent – needs to prepare for college, choose a college, apply to college, and pay for college in Mississippi.

The site, accessible at www.mississippi.edu, is already live and functioning quietly, but IHL will announce it to the state during a festive kick-off pep rally on Friday, October 24. The website kick-off event will take place at Northwest Rankin High School, as part of the school's Homecoming pep rally festivities.

I will be joined at the rally by State Superintendent of Education Dr. Hank Bounds, Executive Director of the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges Dr. Eric Clark, and a representative from the state's independent colleges. Rally-goers will see an inspirational video about the importance of postsecondary education. The video will introduce the website and include a first look at the TV ads that are part of Rise Up, the new marketing campaign for students. Parents attending the kick-off will also learn about the corresponding marketing campaign for parents. Media will be invited to the event, which will be simulcast by Mississippi Public Broadcasting for access by other high schools or interested persons. Of course, no pep rally would be complete without a marching band and lots of excitement. This kick-off is sure to have it all!

Other high schools across the state will receive a copy of the video and are encouraged to hold their own "College Day" activities as part of their scheduled Friday pep rallies on October 24.

So, when you're watching football at home on TV this fall, skip the half-time show and come visit the new website. And tell your colleagues, friends, and students about it. This is an opportunity for Mississippi to score big as we pass the next generation into college.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Rogers, IHL Communications and Marketing Associate, at 601.432.6333 or jrogers@mississippi.edu.



Member Spotlight



Former MPE President Wins Tennis Coaching Honors

The Jones County Junior College Bobcats enjoyed a stellar season on the tennis court. The Lady Bobcats posted a 15-2 record, while the men's team went 11-7. Because of the solid performance of both Bobcat teams, both the Mississippi Association of Coaches (MAC) and the Mississippi Association of Community/Junior Colleges (MACJC) named JCJC head coach Mark Easley as Coach of the Year. Mark served as MPE's President in 1998.



(Coach Mark Easley, JCJC)

"It's an honor to win this because your peers, the other coaches, vote on it," Easley said. "It's not necessarily the winner of the region that wins it, it's who the coaches consider who has done a good job of coaching. But, it's up to the players you have. I have to give credit to the kids for going out and playing, competing hard and getting after it."

Tedder Honored as Kiwanis Regional Teacher of the Year

One MPE member's devotion to children and dedication to service have earned her recognition from one of the world's largest service organizations.



(Ginger Tedder, Armstrong Middle)

Ginger Tedder was named Teacher of the Year for the Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District of Kiwanis International at the district's annual convention in Memphis July 31-Aug. 3. Ginger teaches at Armstrong Middle School in Starkville. The Starkville Kiwanis Club nominated Ginger for the award. She volunteers as a co-advisor of the Builders Club, the Kiwanis Club's sponsored youth program at Armstrong Middle. Congratulations, Ginger!

We want to hear from you!

Send us your MPE member news and events -
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or mail: P.O. Box 22550
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Murphy Serves on Sea Turtle Expedition

Caledonia Elementary School fourth-grade teacher Sandra Murphy left the classroom behind in search of environmental adventures this past summer. Murphy, a MPE member since 1996, served on an expedition for ten days in June to track the Baja's Black Sea Turtle in Mexico's San Ignacio Lagoon. As part of an Earthwatch Institute team of concerned volunteers, she spent two weeks assisting with field research she hopes will help preserve the sea turtle population and gathering numerous lessons to bring back to her students.

"I love science. I enjoy traveling and sharing what I learn with my students and colleagues when I return – the more I experience and see, makes teaching easier for me," said Murphy, one of eight Mississippi teachers awarded an expedition grant by The Phil Hardin Foundation in partnership with the S.A. Rosenbaum Fellows Program. Murphy worked each day with a team to capture turtles and bring them aboard a research vessel where they were measured and tagged with GPS tracking devices before being released.

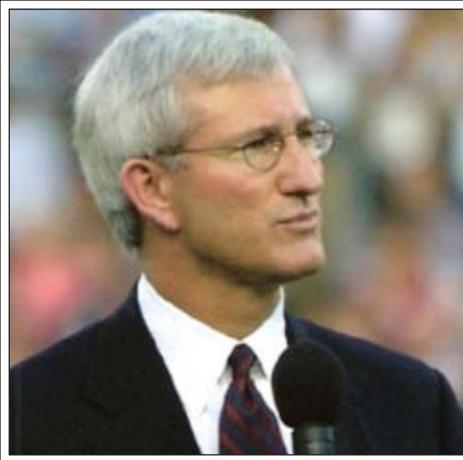
Murphy strongly encourages more educators to contact The Phil Hardin Foundation (www.philhardin.org) and learn how to apply for scholarships to participate in expeditions. "There is no experience necessary. There are hundreds of teams worldwide that need support to do their research."



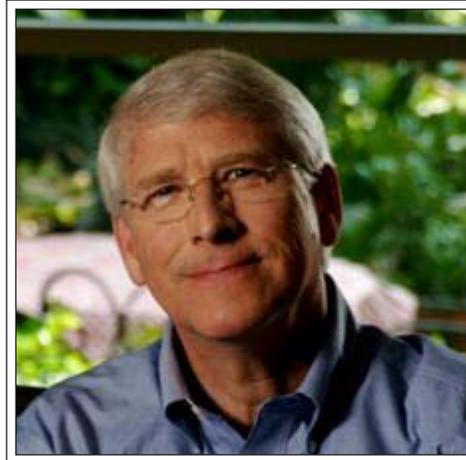
(Sandra Murphy, Caledonia Elementary)

Mississippi Professional Educators

U.S. Senate Candidate Questionnaire



Ronnie Musgrove



Roger Wicker

QUESTION

Will you vote for the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind? If yes, what, if any, substantial changes should be made to the program?

CANDIDATE'S ANSWER

Public education is critical to promoting a better quality of life. That's why I worked hard to increase teacher pay. I would reauthorize NCLB and make some changes, including increased funding and less emphasis on arbitrary test results. We should also consider the growth model projects being implemented around the country.

CANDIDATE'S ANSWER

I support providing parents with information and choices for their child's education. However, I have concerns about how it has been implemented. Any reauthorization bill should include provisions that address problems with the way Adequate Yearly Progress is calculated and ensure that physical activity is worked into the school day.

The cost of educating children with disabilities is approximately twice the average cost of educating other students. For this reason, Congress determined that the federal government would pay up to 40% of this additional cost. IDEA (Part B) is currently funded at approximately 14%, rather than the intended 40%. What would you do to increase Part B funding to the 40% that was promised over 30 years ago?

The federal government has woefully under-funded special education. As governor, I cut spending while increasing education funding. We must provide resources to meet the needs of students with disabilities. My wife is a former special education teacher and state director of special education. I will fight for full funding of IDEA.

I have long supported bringing the federal share of IDEA funding to the promised level. As a member of the House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee, I supported efforts that brought funding from 7% to 18%. We must continue to scrutinize the budget to find ways to fully fund this federal promise.

More than 400,000 Mississippi adults over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Reauthorization can aid community colleges in their efforts to build bridges between adult basic education and postsecondary education. What will you do to ensure the WIA Reauthorization will benefit community colleges and the one in five Mississippi adults who don't have the education or skills to be gainfully employed?

WIA is vital to helping Mississippi's community colleges provide an affordable, high quality education that opens doors to opportunity. I will fight to ensure that WIA directs funding to help strengthen our community colleges' ability to expand access to education, and work closely with the business community to supply a strong, qualified workforce.

Because of the integral role community colleges play in Mississippi, I co-chair the Senate Community College Caucus and founded the House's counterpart. Any WIA reauthorization must provide community colleges the flexibility they need to continue to innovatively partner in their local communities to identify and meet the workforce.

Ronnie Musgrove

Roger Wicker

QUESTION

CANDIDATE'S ANSWER

CANDIDATE'S ANSWER

What is your position on moving expeditiously to reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965 and, specifically, how will you ensure that Mississippi's community colleges and universities benefit from this reauthorization?

The Higher Education Act is responsible for giving many Mississippians, including myself, an opportunity to attend college. Though it has been reauthorized, we must work to provide opportunity by further increasing Pell Grants, closing the digital divide, improving math and science skills and ensuring we meet the needs of Mississippi's students and schools.

I voted for the HEA Reauthorization Act, which President Bush recently signed into law. I was glad that it included an important provision that I was working on to continue disaster programs for our institutions in Mississippi who are still facing enrollment problems in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

What legislation would you propose to ensure affordable housing and insurance on the Mississippi Gulf Coast as the area continues to recover from Katrina?

We must stand up for homeowners on the coast whose homes and workplaces were destroyed by Katrina. They are trying to rebuild, yet Washington has failed to give them the tools they need. I will fight to ensure they have access to multi peril insurance and funding for affordable housing.

I have introduced legislation (S.3427) providing tax credits to help lower the cost of home insurance on the Coast. Recently, the President signed into law a provision I authored extending GO Zone tax incentives. This will help ensure important projects, like the rebuilding of apartment complexes, can move forward.

If you could implement but one measure to control the spiraling cost of healthcare, what would it be?

Our healthcare system will collapse without changes. Washington's bickering has halted progress. We can work within the existing system by bringing healthcare providers and other stakeholders together to find ways to improve access and cost. As governor, we worked with pharmaceutical companies and created a formula for prescription drugs. It helped keep costs down.

I believe we can provide coverage to every American without creating a government-run system. I recently introduced legislation (S.3072) that ties together six core reforms that provide Congress with a starting point for meaningful health care reform.

What is your plan for addressing the escalating price of gas?

We need a comprehensive plan that drives down gas prices and leads to energy independence. That means drilling, releasing oil from strategic reserves, cracking down on speculators, holding big oil accountable, and investing in alternative energy, and increased clean refining capacity. Strong leaders making tough choices can help lower prices.

I strongly advocate a comprehensive plan to combat high gas prices that includes increased domestic exploration and energy conservation, increased use of renewable and alternative fuels, and stepped-up oversight of oil speculators. I have cosponsored Gas Price Reduction Act (S. 3202) and the American Energy Production Act (S. 2958).

What role should the federal government play in stabilizing America's financial markets?

A large factor causing turbulence in our financial markets is the astronomical amount of money our nation has borrowed in recent years, creating our largest debt ever. We must restore fiscal responsibility, control spending and balance the budget so our dollar is stronger, and people have confidence in our economy again.

While our nation was founded on the principles of freedom and independence, I believe it is important for the federal government to provide regulatory oversight of our financial systems. Congress must ensure that these federal entities have the authority and flexibility to provide adequate oversight of our increasingly global economy.



Member Spotlight Continued



MPE Members Honored as Teachers of the Year



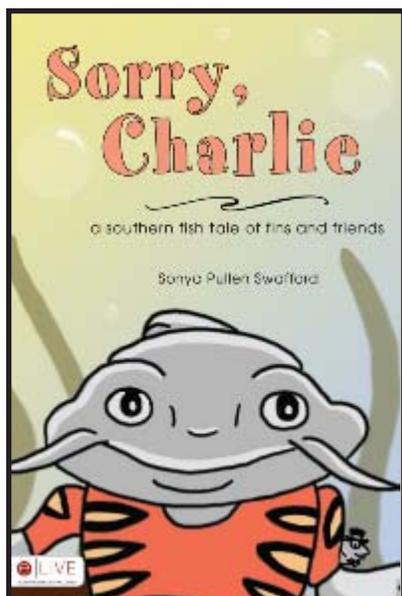
LeAnn McEwen was selected as Enterprise Attendance Center's 2008 Teacher of the Year. LeAnn teaches 5th grade Language Arts and Social Studies. She joined MPE in 2002.

Shelly Scott was named Tate County School District's 2008 Teacher of the Year. Shelly teaches Chemistry and Science Skills at Independence High School. She is also the Cheer Coach and Beta Club Sponsor. Shelly has been a MPE member since 2001.

MPE Board Member has Book Published

MPE Board of Directors District 3 Representative Sonya Swafford is now a published author. Sonya's first book, *Sorry, Charlie*, is a Southern fish tale of fins and friends:

"Join author Sonya Swafford for a whale of a tale on the Mississippi River as Charlie the catfish spends the day looking for someone to play with. No one seems to have time for the whiskered fish today, and Charlie begins to wonder what has happened to his faithful friends. Little does Charlie know that he's in for a big surprise!"



Sonya wrote the draft for the book in the summer of 2006, but wasn't sure what to do with it, so she put it in a drawer for two years. Her daughters kept insisting that she pursue having it published. "As fate would have it, one of my student's mothers told me about a friend being published and she put us in touch with each other. Her publisher - Tate Publishing- is a Christian publisher, so it was a good fit for my moral based /values story," reports Sonya. *Sorry, Charlie* is strong on acceptance of diversity and special needs. As to her publishing experience, Sonya responds, "It's not about me – it's about sharing the story of acceptance."



Sonya Pullen Swafford,
author of *Sorry, Charlie*

The 24-page book is available in paperback from Tate Publishing (www.tatepublishing.com) and should soon be available on Amazon. Sonya has been invited to participate as a local author in Cleveland's OctoberFest and she will also have some book signings later this Fall.

2008 MPE GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

MPE awarded \$1,000 scholarships in June to the following five MPE members who are pursuing graduate level studies at a college or university in the State of Mississippi.



Jana Chao
Raymond Elementary
Delta State University



Rita Hill
Pontotoc Junior High School
University of Mississippi



Karen Leffler
Purvis High School
William Carey University



Sharon Prescott
Sherard Elementary School
University of Mississippi



Christie Rowcliff
Harris Complex
Mississippi State University

This was MPE's first year to offer graduate scholarships. Forty-three members submitted applications. The scholarship is available to any teacher that:

- Is a member of MPE
- Will be under contract as a full-time teacher in Mississippi during the upcoming school year
- Is accepted and enrolled in graduate course work at a Mississippi college or university OR who intends to enroll in such coursework if awarded a scholarship

2008-2009 MPE Graduate Scholarship applications will be posted on the MPE website (www.mpe.org) in January

Community College News:

Dr. Eric Clark,

SBCJC Executive Director



Mississippi's community and junior colleges continue to play a vital role in the future of our state. During the 2006-2007 school year, approximately 70,000 students were enrolled in community college courses for credit. Another 160,000 people took workforce training classes to prepare them for specific high-tech jobs. Added to those are students in adult basic education, GED prep and other types of classes, for a total of nearly 280,000 Mississippians. That's nearly 10 percent of Mississippi's entire population that took a community college class in 2006-2007!

For the fall 2008 semester, classes are being offered by the state's 15 community colleges at more than 175 locations. Students are also given the opportunity to take advantage of the Mississippi Virtual Community College. The nationally recognized leader in online higher education offers 1,800 courses taught by more than 950 instructors. No matter where you are in the state, a community college is right around the corner!

In the upcoming school year, the average annual cost of tuition and required fees at one of our community colleges is only \$1,766. National studies tell us that on average a community college graduate earns \$9,100 a year more than a high school graduate. Mississippi's community colleges provide a great return on investment.

Our community colleges offer customized, on-demand workforce training to business, industry, and individuals throughout our state in such fields as welding, advanced robotics and healthcare. Businesses consistently report that this workforce training increases salaries, creates jobs, retains jobs, and helps in the attraction and expansion of companies in our state.

Workforce training skills are in higher demand than ever before. In 1950, about 60 percent of the United States' workforce was unskilled, 20 percent was skilled and the final 20 percent held professional jobs. Compare that to 2000. We still had 20 percent of our workers in professional positions, but the other figures were reversed, as 65 percent of the country's workforce was skilled versus 15 percent that was unskilled. The state's community colleges provide the necessary training that keeps Mississippi's business and industry competitive not only on a national level, but also world wide.

Mississippi's community college system has a national reputation of providing excellent educational services. In January 2006, the National Center for Higher Education Management System ranked Mississippi's community college system second only to South Dakota. This past May, the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government ranked Mississippi as having one of the top four community college systems in the nation based on a number of measures. Reputable organizations outside of Mississippi know the tremendous services our community colleges provide.

Mississippi's community colleges serve many purposes. They allow students to receive affordable, quality education at a multitude of locations across our state. They also help business and industry by preparing the workforce they will employ. Please contact your local community college or the state board office if you have any questions about how our colleges can help you!



MS Department of Education News:
Dr. Hank M. Bounds,
State Superintendent of Education

Teachers Hold Key to Success

The beginning of this school year marks a new day in Mississippi. We are raising expectations to help all of our students to be college and career ready. Our children are just as bright as children in any other state. As a Mississippi teacher, you know this better than anyone.

The Mississippi Board of Education has set three bold goals:

- Reducing the dropout rate to 13% by 2013;
- Reaching the national average on national assessments by 2013; and
- Ensuring that all students exit third grade reading on grade level by 2020.

These are very ambitious goals and we know that it all begins with you and what you do each day in the classroom. As a teacher, you see children rise to your expectations every day and you know that, as a state, we have not expected enough of our boys and girls. Our new, more rigorous curriculum and assessment system raises our expectations of students tremendously. It also requires that the rigor of teaching and learning increases accordingly.

We know that the quality of the teacher in the classroom matters more than anything else when improving student achievement. We also understand that requiring more of students places greater demand on teachers, who hold the keys to success for all students. However, I hope you will agree with me that expecting more of students today is necessary for them to be successful tomorrow. When they become adults, our children will be competing against more than just their classmates today. They will be competing against the best and brightest from every state and many countries around the world. We want them to be ready to compete against anyone in the future and it all begins with what you are doing in the classroom today. Asking them to work harder and smarter today will create a brighter future for them tomorrow.

We are counting on you for success. We are counting on you individually to move your students forward and counting on you collectively to move the state forward. We certainly cannot achieve the State Board's goals without your help. However, we also know that we cannot expect your help without providing the necessary support. The Mississippi Department of Education stands ready to provide schools and teachers with the professional development, technical assistance and programs needed to implement the new curriculum successfully.

I hope this year will be the most invigorating, challenging and rewarding year of your teaching career and that your students will exceed all of your expectations!

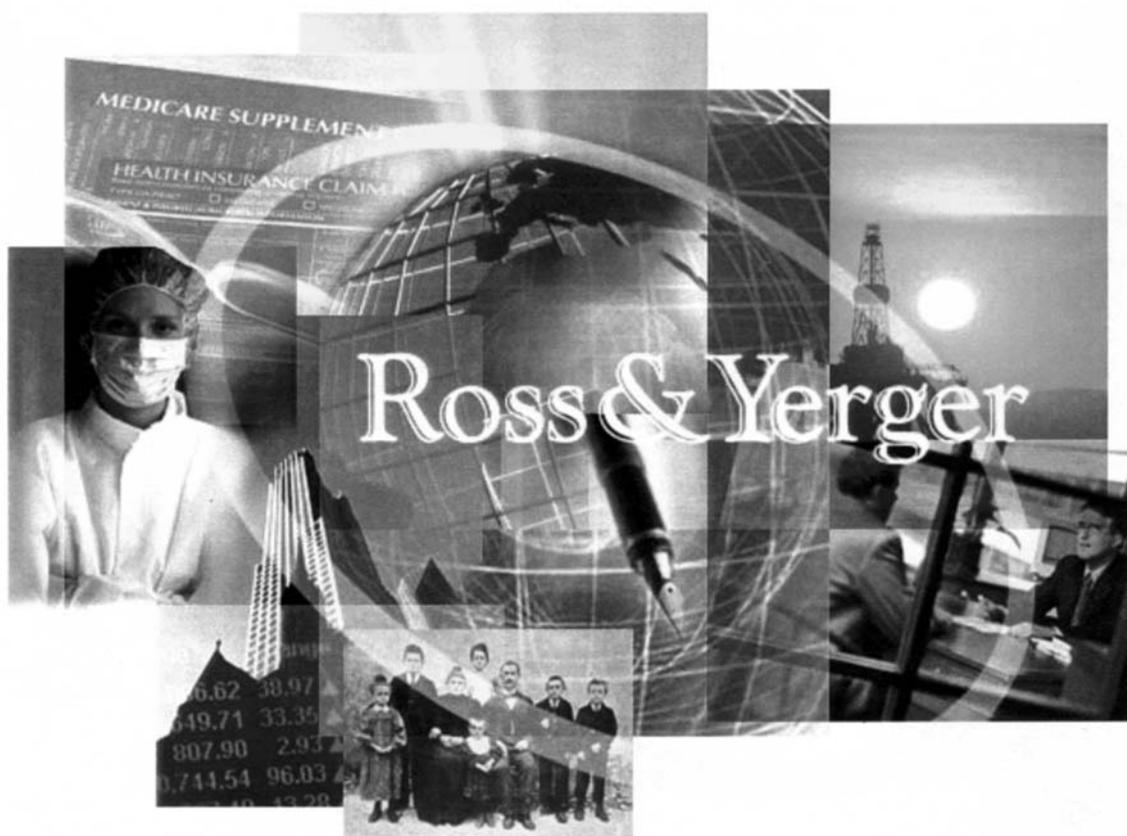
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This is a lot to ask from anyone, but you should anyway. And expect to receive it. Particularly from the company you entrust with your risk management. Ross & Yerger has provided these ABC's and much more since 1860. Whatever you own that might encounter risk, we have a product with a plan to protect your interests. You expect no less from us, and we intend to give you more as time goes by.

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MPE Board of Directors Sets Goal of “10,000 Members by 2010” During Annual Planning Retreat

Your MPE Board of Directors held its annual planning retreat June 25-27 in Hattiesburg to set the next steps for our organization. The board hosted a reception and dinner for local educators and legislators Wednesday evening. Representative Larry Byrd; Senator Joey Fillingane; Representative Herb Frierson; Dr. James Hutto, Superintendent of the Petal School District; and, Dr. Marsha Walters of the University of Southern Mississippi enjoyed visiting with MPE board members.



Dr. David Daves of USM discusses the potential influence of the BRC on Teacher Preparation’s work.

The work of the Blue Ribbon Committees for the Redesign of Teacher Preparation and Administrative Leadership was a focus of retreat discussions on Thursday and Friday. MPE Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Barry Morris, a member of the Blue Ribbon Committee for the Redesign of Teacher Preparation Programs, briefed fellow MPE board members on the status of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Teacher Preparation’s work. Mississippi Board of Education member Hal Jones, chairman of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Administrative Leadership, summarized his committee’s work-to-date. Dr. Wanda Maulding, Interim Dean of USM’s College of Education and Psychology, and Dr. David Daves, Chairman of USM’s Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Special Education, spoke to the Board as to the Blue Ribbon Committee on Teacher Preparation’s potential influence on teacher preparation programs. The MPE Board is committed to MPE taking a supportive role of both committees’ endeavors.

A highlight of the retreat was the board’s adoption of new recruiting goals and incentives for MPE. The board set a goal of “10,000 members by 2010.” With approximately 8,000 current members, we have a growth goal of 2,000 members over the next two years. The board approved the following new recruiting scale as an incentive for our reaching “10,000 members by 2010”:

- Recruit five new members = one year’s free membership
- Recruit 6-9 new members = one year’s free membership + \$10 per member
- Recruit 10-14 members = one year’s free membership + \$15 per member
- Recruit 15 or more new members = one year’s free membership + \$20 per member

The MPE Board of Directors are true professionals and outstanding leaders. They continue to give much of their time and efforts in advancing MPE.



MPE board members plan for MPE’s growth.

You can now access your MPE account online. Log onto our website - go to members only - enter in your ID# (located on the back of this journal, membership card or your latest invoice) - select "locate your password." Once you have logged in with your temporary password, you can select your permanent password by updating your account.

MPE HAS NEW RECRUITMENT INCENTIVES!

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