

Would like to share the following with you:

I've spent about 36 hours this weekend making contacts of some kind with many people, most of whom live in Harrison County.

With our members, we've written letters to newspapers (each letter went to ten of the dailies). Hopefully they'll get printed.

We've also done "Women for Musgrove" postcards and will continue to do them every day/evening this week.

We have an AFT Einstein postcard that we are using as well, with a handwritten message, the gist of which is - It doesn't take a genius to realize we need to reelect Governor Musgrove, the man who has done so very much for education and educators. (For your information, Einstein was an AFT member.)

We have also placed Musgrove and Blackmon signs all over the outside of our building on Pass Road in Gulfport. (You'd be surprised how many people stopped by to argue with us about this support.)

I spoke to several groups of nonmember citizens of Harrison County.

We've started a countdown email program.

We have two mail outs to members going out this week.

Now the insights: (All of which are sent to inform you of what I'm running into.)

1. While I understand the psychology of negative advertising, it is turning off many of our members. Several we can usually count on to work, and had started at the beginning, are now refusing to help because of the ads. "Musgrove's ads mentioned Haley Barbour more times than they mention Musgrove." "Why doesn't Musgrove tell us why we should vote for him, what he's done, why it's important to be elected to a second term?" These members, and I suspect a lot of nonmembers, want to vote for Musgrove not against Barbour.

2. Very few voters have gone to the website to see Musgrove's accomplishments so they don't know much of what he has accomplished. This insight came mostly from nonmembers who do not have access to a computer.

3. Many who have gone to the website don't link the accomplishments to Harrison County. Think in terms of the questions/comments I got -

- Many of the coast have good jobs and insurance. So how does CHIPS effect us? Of course this program is great in the poverty areas, but that's not us. How many children on the coast have benefited by being included in CHIPS? (You may want to have an ad that links CHIPS to all parts of the state, showing parents and children who have been helped, and how Musgrove got that done.)

- So we got Internet in all the classrooms, how does that help us? We already have good schools, plenty of resources, good achievement (You may want to have an ad that shows Mississippi children linked with Smithsonian, other schools, expanded subjects, show how Musgrove got that done, include the lady from Desoto County who spearheaded the program, comments from the committees that got funds to put it in the schools, high school kids building the computers, Musgrove shaking hands with everybody on the celebration date, etc.)

- "What has Musgrove done for south Mississippi - nothing." OK they'll give you Northrop Grumman - but that's in Jackson County and they don't connect to how that affects them in Harrison. And don't even mention the Nissan deal because as far as these folks were concerned that is in north Mississippi. How has building Nissan helped the coast? (You may want to come up with an ad that links all the subgroups in every part of the state that have grown or started because of Nissan - parts makers, florists, builders, food workers, etc. You might even do something about stressing Musgrove has not pushed just for any jobs, but for good paying jobs.)

These are not my personal criticisms. I'm just sharing what I'm running into. I can answer all of the above, but I can't reach everyone here just by talking. People have to be reached in their homes and worksites. Something has to be done to connect the accomplishments to real lives. That's it for now. Have a good day.

Maryann Graczyk
MAFT President