
**OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

TO: FIRST LADY MELANIE MUSGROVE
FROM: KELLY RILEY
SUBJECT: NOTES FROM 5/16/00 MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HUMANITIES COUNCIL,
THE LIBRARY COMMISSION AND THE CENTER FOR THE BOOK
DATE: MAY 17, 2000
CC: ROSEMARY MAXEY

Following are programs/activities of the Mississippi Humanities Council and/or the Mississippi Library Commission discussed at yesterday's meeting. You informed the group that you are focusing your initiative, which you plan to kick off in September, on the continuation of the development of reading skills in 4th-7th graders. Representatives of both groups offered the following programs as potential means of assistance for your reading initiative.

The Center for the Book: John Pritchard and Thurman Boykin invited you to serve as Chair of the Center's 13-member Board of Directors. The Board will consist of one member from each Congressional District and eight other at-large members (Dr. Carpenter, Nevada Barr, Dr. Segars, and Celia Emmerich have already accepted memberships.) The Center is still under development, so neither Pritchard nor Boykin could provide detailed responsibilities of the Chair, but they did discuss the following programs that are under consideration for development:

- Establishing a 501 © (3) for individuals to establish endowment series
- Creating a bookmobile to travel the state promoting reading and Mississippi's literacy heritage. Funding for the bookmobile will be through the AmeriCorps.
- Establishing a museum-type exhibit on Mississippi's literary heritage.

Library Commission: Mississippi will be the first state to offer the Plato courseware statewide in its public libraries. The software, which focuses on reading and also offers individual GED tutorials, should be available in all libraries by the end of June. Funding for this initiative is from the Harden Foundation, federal funds, and the North Mississippi Regional Center.

The Library Commission also operates a summer reading program to encourage the continued development of reading skills during the summer months when children are not in school. The point was made that there needs to be more coordination among local teachers and public libraries to ensure that the teachers provide summer reading lists to the libraries so that the libraries can most effectively assist students. I inquired as to efforts to train teachers on the resources of their school libraries, as well as their local

libraries. Mr. Pritchard said that the Library Commission is hindered due to school libraries being under the oversight of the Department of Education.

Several libraries in the state have reached out to daycare centers to encourage storytelling and reading. The group discussed that there will have to be a concerted outreach effort in all parties' efforts.

MAGNOLIA provides online databases for publicly funded K-12 schools, public libraries, community college libraries, and university libraries in Mississippi.

The Humanities Council: The Humanities Council has developed the following programs that could assist you in your reading efforts:

- Prime Time Family Reading Time encourages families to read and exposes families to local libraries. There is a proposal before Congress that would provide for twenty states to have 20 Prime Time sites for three years. The Humanities Council will be taking Prime Time to Operation Shoestring in August.
- The Humanities Council can award grant to local communities for reading and literacy programs.
- The 11th Annual Natchez Literacy Celebration will be held June 1-3 in Natchez.

There was consensus among the group that all reading/literary/library programs should work together to maximize resources and to minimize replication of such resources. Don Simmons gave the example of having recently been in a town where three libraries (public, community college, and school) are literally within a stone's throw of each other, but there is no coordination of resources, with duplication, for example, in the periodicals each library subscribes to.

The Majesty of Spain exhibition will offer a great opportunity to libraries. Among other things, libraries can advertise the exhibit and can offer selected books and readings on Spain.