

MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FRIDAY FACTS

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TUPELO RANKED IN TOP 10 BY *SITE SELECTION*

Tupelo and the Lee County area are featured in the March 2001 issue of *Site Selection* magazine with Tupelo ranking eighth in the United States, as one of the "Top 100 US Small Towns for Corporate Facilities". *Site Selection* is a well-known international publication that allows this recognition to receive worldwide exposure, thereby enhancing Tupelo's marketing efforts in the area. This is the third time that the Tupelo/Lee County area has been recognized by *Site Selection* in the "Top 100 US Small Towns for Corporate Facilities".

The Community Development Foundation (CDF) of Tupelo has also been recognized three times by *Site Selection* as one of the "Top Ten Economic Development Groups in the Nation". According to Mark Ledbetter, CDF Industry Division Leader, "Being recognized by *Site Selection* is an exceptional achievement when competing with more than 7,000 groups for the recognition."

Dave Rumbarger, CDF President and CEO, stated, "We are delighted to be a part of this elite group of communities and for the rest of the world to know what Tecumseh, FMC, Cooper Tires, Action Industries, and others have known for years: Mississippi's most progressive community is also a national bestseller too. The Community Development Foundation and local leaders are working hard to maintain and enhance the opportunities for our residents and their children."

The support and leadership from the Mayor of Tupelo, City Council and the Lee County Board of Supervisors were instrumental in this achievement. CDF also has had the full support of the state legislature, administrative offices and the national legislative leaders from Mississippi in its effort.

Six other Mississippi cities made the "Top 100" list. They include: Booneville, tied for 46th; Columbus, 57th; Corinth and Meridian, tied for 75th; and Hattiesburg and Vicksburg, tied for 83rd.

"The rung of a ladder was never meant to rest upon, but only to hold a man's foot long enough to enable him to put the other somewhat higher."

-- Thomas Henry
Huxford

GOVERNOR MUSGROVE ANNOUNCES CREATION OF CAPITAL ACCESS PROGRAM

Mississippi Governor Ronnie Musgrove, in a ceremony held at the Capitol, affixed his signature to House Bill 439 authorizing the creation of the Capital Access Program. This legislation creates a State-run loss reserve fund allowing banks and other qualifying lenders to utilize their underwriting standards for eligible loans without the government's approval of the loan making process.

"Our new plan for economic development, the Advantage Mississippi Initiative, contained as one of its benefits this program to enhance our competitive advantage against other states," said Governor Musgrove. "I am pleased today to be a part of improving Mississippi through economic development."

The Capital Access Program also focuses on serving the needs of minority-owned businesses and low to moderate-income communities. The program supports start-up businesses and provides working capital to borrowers who are not as well served by other credit enhancement programs, typically not reached by other small business lending programs.

"The Capital Access Program will also allow us to issue grants or loans to counties and municipalities to assist in infrastructure related improvements, purchase equipment to construct and repair public facilities which many communities need desperately to help them recruit business and industry," said J.C. Burns, Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority. "With this new program, we are taking one more significant step toward a future filled with opportunities for our people, a future filled with success and prosperity."

VOLUNTEER "HEROES" TO BE RECOGNIZED BY GOVERNOR, JEFFERSON AWARDS

The Mississippi Economic Council's (MEC) Leadership Mississippi is joining with the Governor's office and the Commission on Volunteer Service to recognize volunteers. The GIVE Awards are presented by the Offices of the Governor and First Lady to individuals, organizations or communities for volunteer efforts and will be made on April 4.

Those qualifying for GIVE Awards earn the opportunity to be considered for the national Jefferson Awards, presented in June in Washington, D.C. Leadership Mississippi is partnering with the Jefferson Awards to create the first statewide Jefferson Awards grassroots system.

Mark Abernathy of National Bank of Commerce in Starkville serves as MEC's Leadership Mississippi chairman. Gloria Johnson of Entergy in Jackson is the Jefferson Awards committee chair.

For more information, contact Peggy Howard at 1-800-748-7626 or (601) 969-0022. Visit MEC on the World Wide Web at www.mec.us.

CROSSROADS FILM FESTIVAL SHOWCASES MISSISSIPPI FILMS AND MORE

In cooperation with the Crossroads Film Society, the Mississippi Film Office, a division of the Mississippi Development Authority, presents the Second Annual Crossroads Film Festival in Jackson from April 5 through 8. The festival will feature premieres, short films, documentaries and seminars. Films will be screened at United Artists Parkway Cinema, the Mississippi Museum of Art and the Alamo Theater during the festival. Many of

the filmmakers will be on hand to share their experiences.

"We were fortunate to have most of the filmmakers with us to discuss their films," said Nina Parikh, Associate Manager of the Film Office, of last year's festival. "And each one of them commented on how friendly everyone was . . . they loved being here." With over 750 festivals worldwide, the emphasis on hospitality and heritage sets Crossroads apart.

World premieres will include a film by Mississippi native Ron Rodenmeyer along with the Southern premiere of Tag Purvis' *Red Dirt*, filmed in his hometown of Meridian in 1998. In addition, a special screening of *Harem Scarem*, starring Elvis Presley and Mary Ann Mobley, will be featured. A focus on Blues with documentaries by Robert Muggee and panel discussions at the Alamo will highlight Saturday's activities.

Attendees will be treated to rare screenings of award-winning films from around the world. These films will compete for awards in the following categories: Best Feature, Best Short Film, Best Documentary and Best Student Film. Several workshops will be a part of the four-day festival, including "Fundraising for Film and Video" and "Using Macintosh iMovie Software". Also, an animator from the Walt Disney Company will facilitate a discussion about computer and conventional animation.

Hal and Mal's will be the location of two social events associated with the festival – performances by musician-actor-filmmaker-philosopher-icon Webb Wilder on Friday night and Chris Thomas King, one of the stars of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, on Saturday night.

Ward Emling, Director of the Film Office, stated, "The Crossroads Film Festival is an important part of the Mississippi film program on many levels: It provides a forum for filmmakers, showcases the work of the cinema-generation of the Mississippi storytelling legacy, brings dozens of filmmakers to Mississippi, and presents a world of independent films to a new audience."

For more information about the festival, call 601-359-3347. To volunteer, contact Lynnette Hanson at 601-371-4313.

BOOSTER ENGINE PASSES MILESTONE TEST

The common booster core (CBC) for the Boeing Delta IV family of rockets has successfully passed a critical test at the John C. Stennis Space Center in Hancock County. Boeing engineers said the results mark a major milestone for the Delta IV program, slated for launching in 2002.

Engineers conducted the first in a series of hot-fire tests on the CBC. They ignited the Boeing-built Rocketdyne RS-68 engine for 15 seconds, generating the equivalent of 14 million horsepower.

"The test firings will include a five-and-a-half full-flight duration test where the CBC goes through sequences and events of an actual flight. The test program is designed to substantially reduce the risk in launching the new vehicle," said Dan Collins, Vice President of the Delta and Titan programs of Boeing.

When operational, the CBC will allow all five variants of the Delta IV family to use common systems and assemblies, thus providing a cost-effective, reliable launch vehicle. The Delta IV family is capable of lifting payloads up to 28,950 pounds into orbit.

