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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS LUNCHEON

JACKSON, Miss. – The Mississippi Main Street Association (MMSA) celebrated the achievements of the Mississippi Main Street Communities and Member Towns at the Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon held June 13, 2002, at the Crowne Plaza in Jackson, MS. The Mississippi Main Street Association, a program of the Community Services Division of the Mississippi Development Authority, is designed to improve all aspects of the downtown or central business district of Mississippi Main Street communities.

“Because of the dedication of the local Main Street managers and the Mississippi Main Street Association, thousands of jobs have been created in downtown areas across Mississippi,” said Robert J. Rohrlack, Jr., executive director of the Mississippi Development Authority. “The Mississippi Main Street program has breathed economic life into many of Mississippi’s communities.”

At the awards luncheon, mayors, alderpersons, elected officials, Main Street managers and local board members from the state’s 40 active Main Street programs and member towns heard about the accomplishments that have established Mississippi as one of the top Main Street programs in the nation. Mississippi leads the nation in Public/Private Reinvestment with over \$1 billion reinvested on a local level as a direct result of the Main Street initiative.

The Honorable Billy Wiseman, mayor of New Albany and MMSA’s statewide president, presented the awards. Jan Pannell with the Tupelo Main Street program was honored with the Paul Coggin Award, Main Street’s most coveted volunteer recognition award for her long-term support of the Main Street program.

“The 2002 Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon gives us the opportunity to celebrate a very important economic development program in the state of Mississippi,” stated Beverly T. Meng, MMSA’s executive director. “Since 1993, the Main Street program in Mississippi has created 1866 new businesses and over 16,000 jobs in the 40 communities that have active Main Street programs.”

A complete list of award winners is attached.

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Mississippi Main Street 2002 Annual Awards Winners

1. Best Newsletter – Hattiesburg
2. Best Image – Tie
 - a. “Come See Who we Are” – New Albany
 - b. “Discover the District “ – Columbus
3. Creative Fundraising – Tie
 - a. “The Poison Dart” – Port Gibson
 - b. “Takin’ it to the streets” – Columbia
6. Adaptive Re-use – Small property – Davis Piano Works – Port Gibson
7. Adaptive Re-Use – Large Property – Barrett Law Firm - Lexington
8. Adaptive Re-use – Large Property – Viking Range Corp. - Greenwood
9. Adaptive Re-use - Big Box Property – Cingular Wireless – Ocean Springs
10. Outstanding Commercial Rehab – Clark’s Jewelers - Cleveland
11. Public Historic Rehab – Tate Co. Courthouse - Senatobia
12. Private Historic Rehab – Smith & Company– Greenwood
13. Façade and Historic Rehab – Turner Building – Philadelphia
14. Special Event – ChiliFest – Tupelo
15. Merchant of the Year – Lisa Wagoner, Courtney Farms – Ocean Springs
16. Outstanding Economic Restructuring – Jack Reed, Jr., Reed’s Department Store - Tupelo
17. Best New Development – The Thirsty Hippo - Hattiesburg
18. Public Private partnership – Bryan Reading Park, West Point
19. Public Improvement – Kosciusko
20. Friend of MS – Darienne Wilson, Director, Mississippi Division of Tourism
21. Special Service Award – Chief Ron Smith - Tupelo
22. Paul Coggin Award – Jan Pannell - Tupelo
23. Spirit of Main Street – The Heritage Singers – Port Gibson

Complete details and descriptions are available the local Main Street office in each city listed or contact Mississippi Main Street Association for a complete listing of local Main Street Offices.