
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: FIRST LADY MELANIE MUSGROVE
FROM: KELLY RILEY
SUBJECT: THE CENTER FOR THE BOOK
DATE: 3/21/00
CC: ROSEMARY MAXEY

I have reviewed the documents regarding the Mississippi Center for the Book and have found the following:

- Congress created the Center for the Book within the Library of Congress in 1977 to stimulate public interest in books, reading and libraries. The Center is a partnership between the government and the private sector, depending primarily on tax-deductible contributions from corporations and individuals to support its programs, publications and events. The Center's best known reading promotion project is its 30-second "Read More About It" messages on CBS television programs (actors, public officials, etc. encouraging viewers to "discover" through reading.)
- Thirty-nine states have established affiliated centers. States must submit proposals to be awarded a state center. A state center's affiliation with the Library of Congress Center lasts three years and states must formally request renewal. Among Mississippi's contiguous states, all but Alabama have a state center.
- The Mississippi Library Commission has hired Thurman Boykin to coordinate Mississippi's application for a center. Mr. Boykin anticipates submitting Mississippi's proposal to the Library of Congress in April, with the award being announced in late April at the Center for the Book's annual meeting. He reports that Mississippi's submitting a proposal is merely a formality. According to Mr. Boykin, next Tuesday's luncheon is a one-time meeting of the steering committee to solicit feedback on the application and the proposed purposes/programming for the center.
- Mississippi's proposed Center for the Book would serve three purposes:
 - To stimulate the public's interest in literacy through writing and reading;
 - To celebrate the literacy heritage of Mississippi; and,
 - To encourage the book arts.

The center anticipates accomplishing this through activities such as development of study groups of authors, exhibits, statewide book festivals and "brown bag lunches" with Mississippi authors.

- In his February 24 correspondence to you, John Pritchard, Executive Director of the Library Commission, requested your considering a partnership with the Center for the Book so that your patronage impacts the Center's activities. Mr. Boykin invited you to the luncheon to make you aware of the expected approval of the Mississippi Center for the Book. Your level of involvement after that is totally up to you.

The center could serve as an avenue for your literacy program as the center would have a purpose of promoting reading. It could also serve as a means of promoting the Governor's project of students obtaining library cards in order to participate in the Governor's Reading Honor Roll.

I have the documents regarding this matter in my office and will be happy to file them for you. Please advise me if you would like me to return them to the mansion. I look forward to accompanying you to the Center for the Book luncheon on March 28.