

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY PARTNERS - 2004 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

CHRISTMAS PARTY-December 1, 2004

AmericInn in Wabasha

by Sheronne Mulry

First off I'd like to acknowledge the tremendous respect and admiration for Dave and Shelly Speedling of SVJ Creative Designs who got my feet wet (soaked I'd like to think) in this organization. I'd like to thank the Board Members with whom I have had the privilege to serve with and learn from. The team consisted of Past President: Herdie E. Baisden; Treasurer: Larry Hovde; Secretary: Diana Schmidt; Member-At-Large: Judy Wilder and Member-At-Large: Kaz Rozlik. Best wishes on their retirement to longtime founding members and mentors Maryann Collins-Svoboda and Wayne Nelson. They will be missed, but we understand they have "put in their time." Special thanks to Maryann Pfeilsticker for mailing out Travel Planners from the Toll Free Number requests. A huge thank you to ALL the volunteers who selflessly delivered the Planners to locations near and far. Join me in a round of applause for these hard-working folks along with the committees and membership who have help make 2004 successful on the following efforts:

FINANCIAL: Our budget and financial statement were in check this year. Thanks Larry for keeping track of the money for this year and so many years before.

"GRAND EXCURSION 2004 initiative was truly a history-making success! More than 1 million attendees experienced the Grand Excursion throughout the region
2,000 positive news articles reached 74 million people.
500 television and radio stories touched 37 million people
Nearly 40,000 tickets were sold with a 99% satisfaction rate
There were 41 million web site hits
300 new river events were launched
92% of passengers plan to come back to the Mississippi River"

MEMBERSHIP: Winona was recently added as the 14th community in the organization. We look forward to the infectious enthusiasm generated from Pat Mutter there to spread our promotional efforts.

INTERNET: New web site partners are Voila Media Group of River Falls. They with their marketing expertise added a new dimension.

WEBSITE ACTIVITY: Hits were up in most all categories.

TOLL-FREE NUMBER: Requests are started to be logged into a database. What states and countries planners were mailed are tracked.

TRAVEL PLANNER GUIDES: 200,000 Grand Excursion Special Edition planners were printed by Rivertown Publishing of Red Wing. Metro Distribution in the Twin Cities had 11 pallets (59,400), Bushel & Peck of Lake City had 6 pallets (32,400), Hansen's Harbor of Lake City had 4 pallets (21,600), Maiden Rock Apples had of Stockholm had 16 Pallets (86,400). CTM delivered 4,000 to select corporations in and around the Twin Cities. Congratulations to Midwest Getaway for the 2005 bid which will be 4-color glossy with Television exposure added as a benefit.

BIRDING: Kelly Larson and MaryDeRoos did a phenomenal job along with the host committee members for the event based in Wabasha. Nationally known author and speaker, Stan Tekula, hosted a reception that was attended by

190 people. The event profit was \$5,400!! Best wishes to Kelly Larson on her move up north. Her talents will be greatly missed.

GARDENS: New MVP garden signs painted by Sue Mundy went up in the community gardens. Four color tri-fold brochures were created and printed after months of planning. Accolades to the members of the garden committee. Kudos to Carole and Bill Moore without which the gardens would not have come to be.

WELCOME CENTER: Most Community Books were completed.. At the end of the season Donna Krebsbach manned the center in Pepin and reported the opportunities and challenges there for next season. Thanks Donna.

SOME OF THE MANY SUCCESSES 'AROUND THE LAKE':

Kellogg: Kellogg survived the Highway 42 detour.

Wabasha: The additional help of Cindy Gosse at the Wabasha Chamber/CVB. Wabasha hosted its first Home and Garden show. Cozumel, a Mexican restaurant and Nosh, a gourmet restaurant opens downtown. In-Style, a clothing store and a new jewelry store also opened on Main. New Owners at the Historic Anderson House and Bridgewaters B&B.

Read's Landing: Successful Membership day and Open House was held in August at the Wabasha County Historical Society. New exhibits were added to newly added River Museum Building previously the Post Office.

Camp Lacopolis: Bea Koch had a challenging year but continues to show us what will and determination is.

Lake City: The Frog and Bear Bed and Breakfast opened. Steamboat stops during Grand Excursion were well attended.

Frontenac: Attendance at the State Park remains high.

Red Wing: The addition of Kathy Silverthorn to the Red Wing VCB. She started right before Grand Excursion and has not hesitated in rolling up her sleeves. . She is also President of the Southern Minnesota Tourism Association. We are lucky to have her.

Bay City: Norton's had their first season of business.

Maiden Rock: Had a excellent turn-out for the annual Flood Run. Received good "free press" from the Star Tribune.

Stockholm: The jetty was completed for the Grand Excursion project. Clementines, The Good Apple & Abode are located in the Amish Country Store Building spaces.

Pepsin: New Fitness Center opened its doors. Joanne Lerum opened a three season drive-in grill.

Alma: Alma completed their beautification project. They had a Public Television spot on the City and the Tundra Swans. The BBC has been working with author and river rat Kenny Salwey on a future Television production.

Nelson: New Amish bakery stand and furniture store opened.

Mississippi Valley Partners has a tremendous ability of getting the most

out of the people with the little resources it has to create success. All Organizations need to adapt and react constantly to the demands placed on them. All of us strive to develop and improve. Part of this process is to change, monitor and measure it to find out if it has made a difference? If positive change does not happen, we try something else. My hope as the leader has been to inspire people not only to change but genuinely be on the prowl for new and better ways to do things. It is a mind set to do things the best we possibly can. Membership must be active, involved, inspirational, and creative, while rallying us all to participate in the various changes and having real ownership of all the ideas and decisions involved in creating change. Realize that change is just that: it is restructuring the way we do things. Be positive, helpful, upbeat and supportive of others. I, personally can't say enough about those who have been sincere, listen, show respect, and have expressed enthusiasm. Thanks for the experience and the varied memories.

Sheronne Mulry