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city of meridian 2 0 0 6



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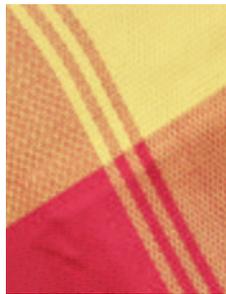
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**Bonnie Busbee**

is an award-winning oil and watercolor artist who specializes in portrait, landscape and still life paintings. She is owner and instructor at *All About Art*, an art school with more than 100 students.



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**Nancy Landrum**

became fascinated with weaving while living on a Navajo reservation. Her weaving has progressed from being strictly wall pieces to fabrics that can serve a wide variety of functions from clothing to table coverings.

**Charlie Busler's**

paintings reveal his love for color and composition over realistic representation. In his 20 years of artistic expression, he has created ethereal landscapes from his imagination.



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**John Marshall's**

*Ghosts Over Central Park* is an evocative oil-on-board painting. He is also a noted sculptor who shares his talents as an arts instructor at Meridian Community College.

**Greg Cartmell,**

a nationally recognized landscape artist, paints in the *pleine-air* tradition of on-location painting directly from nature. His works engage the viewer to mix the colors with one's own eye, and the quality of light is, at times, the focus of his work.



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**Will Myles**

is an accomplished gospel singer and choir leader of *Young People of Praise*, a contemporary gospel choir that delivers a spiritually profound musical presentation. Together for four years, YPOP uses both music and dance to send its message of praise.

**Patrice Moncell Gathright**

is an accomplished vocalist whose genres range from blues to jazz. She has performed in films and docu-features and in clubs, cathedrals and theatres in Europe and the United States. She currently has two CDs: one gospel and one blues.



Inside Back



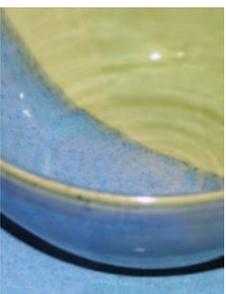
Page 2

**Mike Reich**

has been "turning," or woodworking, for nine years. He primarily turns bowls, vessels and commissioned pieces. One recent creation was a 3/8-inch thick bowl made from a weeping cherry tree, finished with hand-rubbed lacquer and hand buffed.

**Bebe Gianakos**

produces artistic and functional stoneware pottery in her home studio, *Pottery Paws*. She creates what she calls "useful art" that's safe in the microwave, dishwasher and oven. Her pottery is displayed in local shops and at various festivals.



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**George Soule**

is a noted musician and songwriter whose multi-faceted career spans more than 40 years. He is renowned for his work in Muscle Shoals, Alabama during the soul era. His newest album was recorded in Nashville in 2006.

**Becky Glover's**

*Weidmann's Last Lunch* is representative of her photographic style. The photograph captures the restaurant's original character and charming appeal and preserves its rich tradition in a black and white study.



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Back Cover

**Herman Taylor,**

a Navy veteran, turned his 20-year hobby into a business. He uses various pieces of wood and laminates them together to create pieces like pepper mills and rolling pins.

**Patricia Kent**

is a member of the Meridian Museum of Art Board of Directors. She chooses transparent watercolors to bring the spirit and elegance of the natural world to paper.



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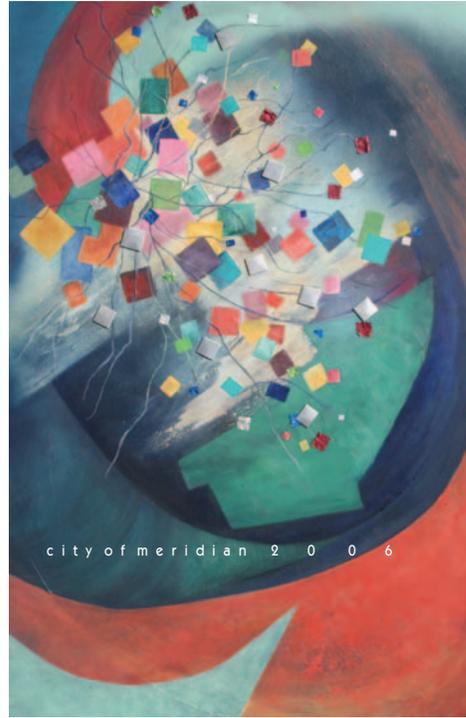
**Ruby Yarbrough,**

a retired teacher, uses books, stuffed animals and other props to weave her tales as a master storyteller. She uses her storytelling to enhance reading and oral communications, and she enchants listeners from small children to senior citizens.

# OUR COVERS

This year's City of Meridian Annual Report features three different covers by three different artists.

2006



**Clo Ann Rabb** works in metal collage, paper collage, oil on canvas, and oil and metal leaf on paper. She incorporates “found pieces” and “trash” into her art. Rabb has won numerous awards and is represented in private and corporate collections and galleries.

city of meridian



**Alex Loeb** says he adds “bits of structure on chance and a little order on chaos” in his paintings. His works have been added to collections from Maine to Oregon and he has been the recipient of more than 80 monetary awards in juried shows.



**Ruth Vinson Irwin** has crafted more than 250 quilts. Her most recent creations are crafted of 100 percent cotton, hand-dyed fabrics, paints, fabric crayons and various threads. She has created custom quilts for outreach organizations like Love's Kitchen and Care Lodge.

## inside

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*Inside Back Administration*

# to the city council and the people of meridian:

The grand opening of the MSU Riley Education and Performing Arts Center was, without doubt, the watershed moment of the year, both for its enormous contribution to downtown development and for its role in catapulting Meridian to a position of eminence as an arts and cultural center for our state and region.

Our community has a rich tradition in the arts. We're the home of extraordinarily talented people ranging from Jimmie Rodgers to the current crop of artists featured in this report. And through the Riley Center, we will once again have the opportunity to expose our children to the arts and nurture inherent talent—an important piece of the educational process missing for several generations.

Another important architectural and historical structure—our 1915 City Hall—is currently undergoing restoration. This long-awaited and much needed restoration will return the building to its original look and, at the same time, integrate modern technology that will allow our employees to work more efficiently and better serve our residents. In anticipation of this restoration, the city now owns the properties surrounded by City Hall, the Doughboy Monument and the Riley Center. When the dilapidated buildings on these properties are demolished, we will be able to create a mall effect, linking the three historic sites.



*Mayor John Robert Smith by the Meridian City Hall, currently undergoing a massive restoration/renovation project that is revealing hidden architectural treasures from the past. The wooden chute in the background simplifies debris removal.*

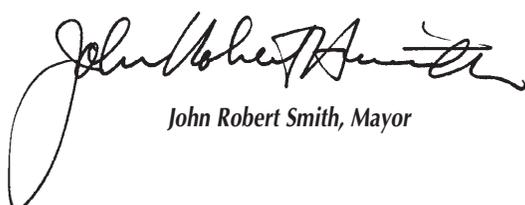


The fourth historic site in that link is the Threefoot Building, the soaring, Art Deco structure that defines our skyline. We have entered into an agreement with HRI, Inc., which will present to us a plan for conversion of the Threefoot into a downtown hotel with the capacity to support the Riley Center through conference and banquet spaces.

We are also aggressively working toward the development of downtown museums, including one in conjunction with the Institute of Southern Jewish Life celebrating our city's Jewish heritage. Tied to that will be the restoration of the African-American Business District, a historically and economically significant part of downtown.

The Police Department will get a much needed, new facility on the block currently housing Temporary City Hall. Architectural selection and other preliminary work are already under way. And we will be building a new fire station in the Bonita Lakes area to provide excellent coverage for that growing area and our most recently annexed residents.

Through downtown development, public safety improvements, and residential programs that are fostering new housing, especially to low-income residents, we are providing the underpinnings for the growth of our community's economy and its emergence as a vibrant arts center.

  
**John Robert Smith, Mayor**



*Meridian City Council members amid the splendor of the completely restored Grand Opera House. Back row, from left: George Thomas, Ward 1; Jesse Palmer, Ward 4; John Harris, Ward 5; front row, Barbara Henson, Ward 3; and Mary Perry, Ward 2. Below, the magnificent Grand Opera House of Mississippi on the second floor of the MSU Riley Center.*





Move everything but don't disrupt any city services. Such was the monumental task assigned to the Information Systems Division. And the staff succeeded. As all employees moved out of City Hall for the long-awaited restoration of the historic building, the Information Systems employees coordinated the incredibly complex job of relocating phone lines, cables and computer hook-ups without so much as a blip in our ability to provide needed services to our residents and customers.

In addition to meeting that daunting challenge, Information Systems coordinated data, phone wiring and installation of network equipment for the new Emergency Operations Center on 14th Street, completed the setup for the new Homeland Security Department's emergency trailer, and upgraded the city's AS400 operating system. The staff also began implementation of a new software package for the municipal court system and tied the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) into the computer-aided dispatch system for easy checking of drivers' licenses and tag numbers by the Police Department.

The move to Temporary City Hall on Seventh Street sparked some changes in the Collections Division. With the closure of the drive-through window for water bill payments at City Hall, staff members worked out a plan with Trustmark Bank to allow customers to pay their water bills at the bank's drive-through window. Also as part of the move, the Utility Billing Division relocated permanently to the Public Works Complex; however, we wanted customers to be able to continue paying their bills at City Hall. Thus, a new division called Utility Collections was created and put under the umbrella of the Finance and Records Department for the convenience of our water customers.

The move also necessitated the review, sorting and storage of thousands of official documents, some dating back to the early 1900s. While this process was time consuming, some interesting details came to light. For example, under the tenure of Mayor J.W. Parker who, fittingly, was mayor when City Hall was built, financial documents detailed expenditures for items such as coal for the library, telegrams, smallpox supplies and horseshoeing. The city gained revenue from the sale of two fire horses, six mules and an old wagon.

Back in the 21st Century, this year our Finance and Records Department was awarded the prestigious Certificate of Excellence for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the 10th consecutive year. And the Business Affairs Division continued its mission of collecting taxes, administering municipal court and purchasing goods and services. During the year, more than 9,000 purchase orders were processed, privilege licenses were issued to 232 new businesses, and the municipal court processed more than 16,000 cases.



*The City of Meridian now accepts payments for water bills at Trustmark Bank's drive-through window downtown.*



*Above, moving out of City Hall. Below, moving into our temporary home as City Hall is renovated.*



## fire

A small child crawls through a smoky room, feeling his way to the door and to safety. In this case, it's not a real house fire but a simulation made possible with the Fire Department's new fire safety trailer. Designed to resemble the interior of a house, the trailer is filled with a synthetic, non-toxic smoke that obscures vision. Children learn to prepare two ways out of each room, get low, crawl to safety and—just as importantly—not to go back into the smoke-filled room.

The fire safety trailer is the latest tool helping the department in its mission to educate people about fire safety. Having the right equipment and highly trained firefighters will always be critical, but preventing fires from happening and teaching people how to respond properly are equally important.

In partnership with the Meridian Housing Authority and the Key Chapter of the American Red Cross, more than 10,000 smoke detectors and 4,000 carbon monoxide detectors have been given out in the community, many of them placed in the homes of senior citizens. In housing authority units, 1,500 fire extinguishers have been replaced and more than 400 automatic kitchen vent hood extinguishers have been installed in high-risk units.





*Above, firefighters tackle a residential fire using the new compressed air foam system. The tanks (right) use 60 gallons of water and one-half gallon of foam solution to make approximately 600 gallons of fire-fighting foam. Below, Fire & Line Safety Educator Jimmy Hoffer (left) and Meridian Housing Authority Line Safety Coordinator Ginger Hand inspect one of the 420 automatic fire extinguishers installed in many housing authority units.*



*Above, children learn about fire safety during Fire Prevention Week in the city's new fire safety trailer. At right, Fire Pup and Little Squirt with kids at Children First Day.*



Our Fire Prevention Division inspectors completed more than 3,800 fire and life safety inspections of commercial buildings and implemented night inspections of all nightclubs and bars. The fire marshal pored over building plans for new commercial structures and inspected the buildings during construction to ensure they were being built to fire code requirements. The Arson Task Force investigated all suspicious fires, which led to numerous arrests and provided a strong deterrent to potential arsonists.

In the months following Hurricane Katrina—when Meridian was the southernmost destination for Amtrak—our K-9 handler used his explosive-detecting K-9 to search cars on the Amtrak Crescent. Cars and baggage were all thoroughly searched before each train left Union Station for New York City. Those searches are still conducted randomly.

A new, state-of-the-art compressed air foam unit was installed in a quad cab pickup. It supplies 600 gallons of fire-fighting foam that can be used to combat fires in difficult-to-reach locations such as parking garages and at interstate accidents. A new fire engine has been ordered to serve the southeast section of the city. The engine will have dual foam capabilities, a compressed air foam system and a 75-foot, top-mounted ladder. The engine will be housed at the planned No. 8 Fire Station, to be located at the intersection of Bonita Drive and Highway 19 South. This location will allow for quick access to Highway 45, Bonita Lakes Mall, Meridian Crossroads, Hilton Garden Inn and the entire Bonita Lakes area.

The construction value of building permits issued through the Inspections Division skyrocketed to almost \$49 million, a hefty 65 percent increase over the previous year. Rigorous enforcement of the latest building codes also helped keep residents' insurance rates low.

Our Planning Division staff took the lead in protecting our neighborhoods and encouraging residential development in key areas as part of Gulf Opportunities Zone legislation that followed Hurricane Katrina. We also continued our affordable housing initiative by identifying surplus city property and offering it to developers. An additional seven lots were donated to Habitat for Humanity, and we are in the process of acquiring properties that had reverted to the state and will now be used for affordable housing. Staff members continued to work on the \$17.2 million Hope VI project, which will result in the development of 72 mixed-income units at Davis Courts and 130 rental and 20 home-ownership units at Victory Village.



*A two-day tree maintenance workshop included both classroom instruction and hands-on field demonstrations.*



Federal and state money paid for 99 percent of the \$111,000 cost to prune right-of-way trees damaged by Katrina. More than 1,000 tree problems were addressed during the program. Through a grant from the Mississippi Forestry Commission, 370 trees were planted at the I-20/59 and Highway 19 interchange, the western gateway into the city.

Through a grant from the downtown hospitals, we completed a traffic study—part of a three-phase project aimed at creating a cohesive campus for the hospitals. The newly designated Downtown Historic District plan has gone to the National Park Service for approval. The Architectural Review Board and the Historic Preservation Commission were consolidated to cut duplication and increase efficiency.

The Cultural Affairs Division coordinated a program with experts from the Seaside Institute and the Tomlinson Graham Group focused on implementing the objectives of the Urban Land Institute's completed downtown development plan. Staff also kept the arts in focus through ever-popular events like Arts in the Park, the Threefoot Festival, the Cellular South Meridian Symphony Fourth of July Concert, the Downtown Merchants Association Christmas Parade and Meridian Day at the Neshoba County Fair.

More than 300,000 bus and train travelers moved through Union Station during the year. At the same time, station conference rooms were booked for 285 meetings, classes, parties and reunions. During the growing season, the Farmers Market was once again a popular destination for those with a taste for fresh produce.

*Community Development continues on page 11*



*Top photo, the drum major from Mississippi Valley State University's Marching Band struts downtown at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade and Celebration. Directly above, crowds enjoy a wide array of artwork at Arts in the Park, held for the first time at Bonita Lakes.*

c o m m u n i t y d e v e l o p m e n t

*Community Development continued from page 9*

Eight downtown property owners took advantage of the Main Street Facade Improvement Grant program. Improvements included painting, signage, awnings, planters and window and door repair. Main Street Meridian received national and state certification and, as a result, got gateway signage provided by the state Department of Transportation.

The Seventh Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade and Celebration drew big crowds downtown, as did Little Mardi Gras, which attracted 3,000 revelers. Even bigger crowds—an estimated 6,000 people—flocked downtown to the Juneteenth Heritage Festival, which celebrates the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation.

The Retiree Recruitment program brought six retiree families to Meridian, for a total of 127 retiree household relocations since the program began. Staff coordinated the annual Retiree Health Fair, the Retiree Celebration and the always popular Senior Prom.

The Keep America Beautiful program encouraged beautification projects by distributing \$10,000 worth of mini-grants to area schools, churches and civic organizations. The commission and staff also participated in Public Lands Day and Hazardous Waste Day and partnered with local organizations to develop an I-20/59 entranceway project featuring a carousel horse.



*Third grade students at Poplar Springs Elementary School plant an Arbor Day tree on the school grounds under the watchful eye of Mayor John Robert Smith and Meridian Tree Commission Chairman Tom Carmichael.*



*Above, one of eight buildings improved through the Main Street Facade Improvement Grant program. Below, the finished building.*





h o m e l a n d  
s e c u r i t y

Responding to the mission to protect our residents in the event of a disaster or other emergency, our Homeland Security Department hosted an extraordinarily wide array of classes for our employees, as well as emergency responders from the state and region.

A staggering 23,000 classroom hours were logged for training in disciplines such as firearms qualification, defensive driving for teens, incident command, interstate criminal enforcement and threat and risk assessment. More than 1,500 students attended classes, which also included K-9 training, a terrorism course, CPR and first aid, domestic violence response, Glock armor training and motorcycle training.

Through a grant from the Federal Railroad Administration, our passenger rail rescue classes continue to provide the most realistic training possible at our Public Safety Training Center. The facility has full-sized Amtrak cars, including an engine, lounge car and two passenger cars. One passenger car is overturned to simulate a derailment. The other car is placed over a ravine to provide realistic and challenging training.

Improvements in communications equipment, hazardous materials equipment and the firing ranges, along with construction of an urban assault area, have provided the facility with state-of-the-art technology for training. The department and the city participated in the State of Mississippi's training and exercise program for pandemic flu. This nine-month series prepared us to respond effectively to an epidemic such as the Avian flu.

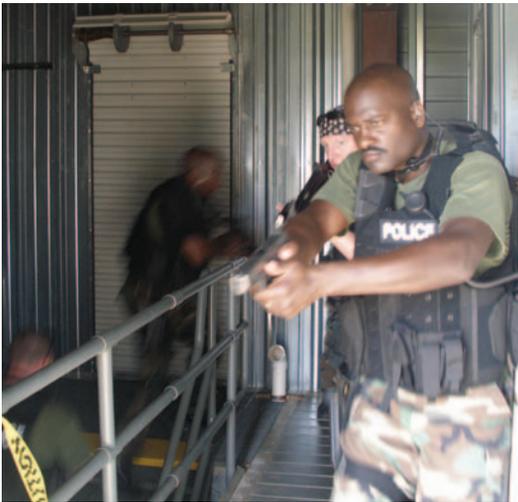
As the lead agency for the nine-county Southeast 2 Regional Response Team, we met bi-monthly with the 160 members for updates and equipment training. Interoperability and cooperative communications programs give us the capability to quickly assemble a team and respond with precision and effectiveness. The team has many skills on which to draw: disciplines include law enforcement, fire service, emergency management, public works, public health and hospital administration. Among the numerous training sessions were hazardous materials awareness and operations, rope rescue, decontamination training, and public works response to weapons of mass destruction incidents.

Using the state's "all hazards" approach, we used funds to acquire dual-use equipment and training materials that could be used for all hazards, from train derailments and terrorist attacks to natural disasters and major accidents.

After Katrina recovery, our Emergency Operations Center team met to coordinate the creation of a new center for emergency preparedness and operations. The EOC was moved to a newly renovated building on the corner of 26th Avenue and 14th Street. It was first activated in response to the death of former Representative G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, whose funeral was attended by more than 2,000 people, including former President George Bush and Barbara Bush.



*Above, a Southeast 2 Regional Response member and two Meridian firefighters assist U.S. Environmental Services personnel in entering the Philadelphia Super Wal-Mart for observation of a chemical spill.*



*Above, SWAT members practice making an entry at the Public Safety Training Center. Below, local emergency medical service personnel, the SWAT Team and the Fire Department use the training facility throughout the year.*





p a r k s  
& r e c r e a t i o n

*Ma. Hill*

*From an Easter Egg hunt complete with the Easter bunny, to art classes, to golf and swimming, Parks & Recreation taps into energy and creativity.*



Want to learn to make stained glass? How about learning to weave a pine needle basket? These are but two choices on the ever-growing list of classes offered through the Parks and Recreation Department.

Responding to community needs, the staffs at both the Senior Citizen Center and Velma Young Center are always looking for fresh ideas for classes. Some of the newest are basic drawing, Swedish weaving, tatting, oil painting, doll construction, word processing and literary discussions. Enrollment in long-time favorites like ceramics and sewing continues to grow. The yoga class doubled in size, requiring the hiring of another instructor, and a second strength training class for osteoporosis prevention was added.

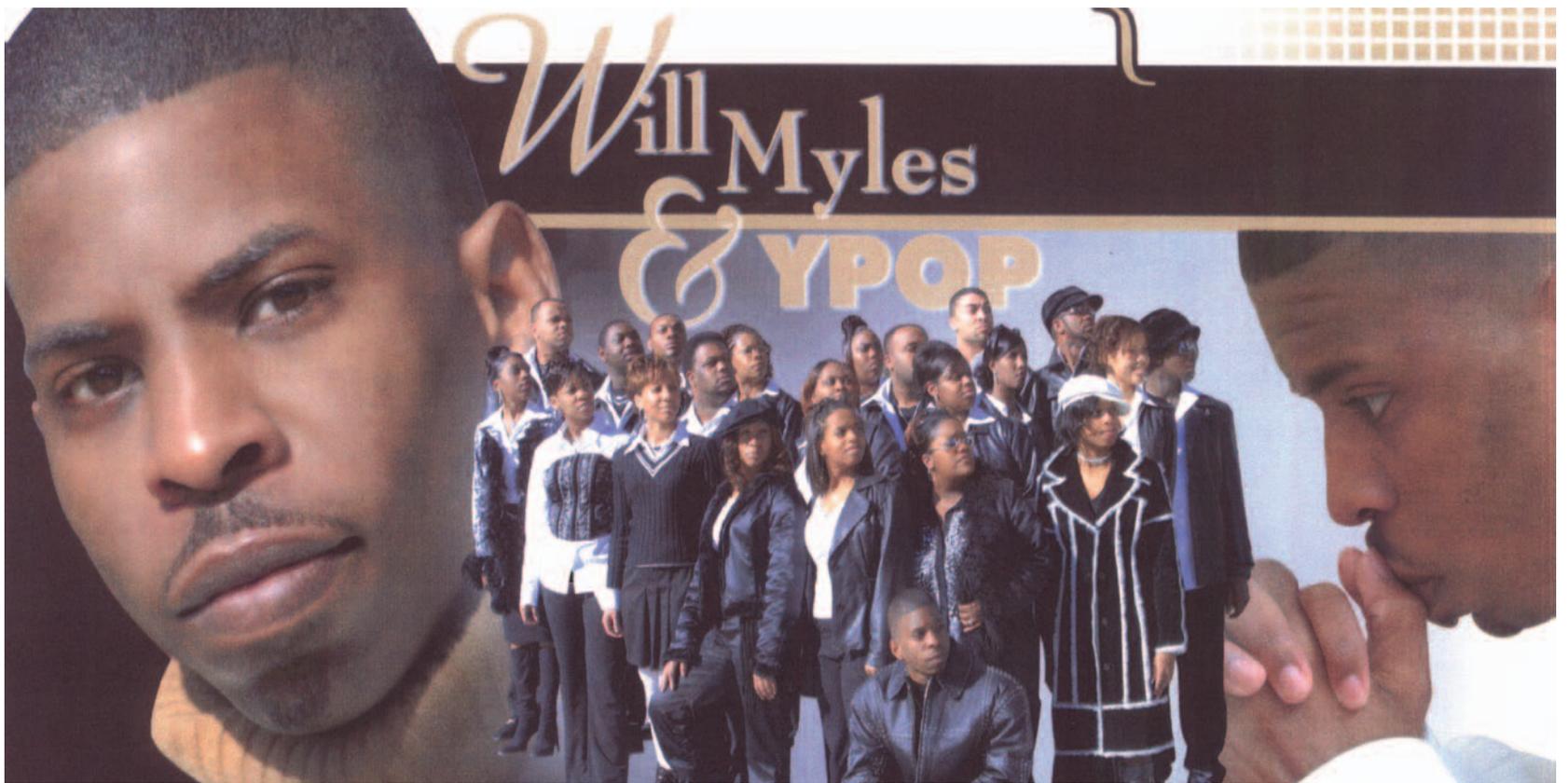
More classes have been added at night, including line dancing and ballroom dancing, and the Senior Citizen Center now opens several Saturdays a month for workshops like Bob Ross oil painting, watercolor classes and a once-a-month country music dance and potluck supper.

Tennis lesson programs at Highland Park and the Northeast Park Tennis Center have continued to grow, as have all the programs and leagues at the various ball fields. Swimming lessons are still the most popular classes every summer. This past summer, our staff taught more than 600 children in a very structured and professional Red Cross-certified program.

A major goal of the year was to increase awareness and participation in the department's special events. The 2006 Punt, Pass and Kick competition was the biggest sectional ever hosted in Meridian. Five winners qualified for the regionals in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with hopes of moving on to the nationals in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Annual events such as the Moonlight Run, Easter Egg Hunt and Kids All-American Fishing Derby were enjoyed by more than 1,000 adults and children.

As always, the grounds maintenance and building maintenance crews worked hard to keep our parks, ball fields and facilities in great shape. Crews worked especially hard to continue the repairs and upgrades from Hurricanes Ivan and Katrina. Lakeview Golf Course looks as good as it has in several years, despite severe battering from the hurricanes. Eighteen new tee marker and concrete hole description signs have been placed on the course, and all new golf carts will soon be in service.

Running an ever-growing recreation program cannot be done by staff alone. Volunteer parent organizations make an enormous contribution to the effort, sponsoring such programs as youth baseball, softball and soccer. These volunteers recruit coaches, sponsors and officials, and assist in bringing in tournaments for their respective sports.



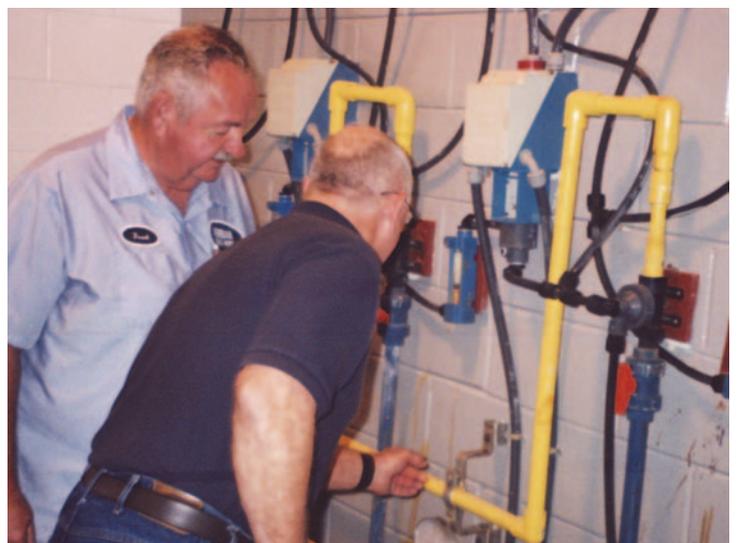
p u b l i c w o r k s

The Hurricane Katrina devastation at Bonita Lakes Park was so severe that a representative from the National Parks Service told our Freshwater Treatment staff that clearing all the trails could take at least two years. But we did it in three months using our own employees, as well as horse riders, mountain bike riders and hikers during volunteer cleanup days.

At the same time, our freshwater storage capacity was expanded to 12 million gallons with the completion of a new 500,000-gallon bulk water storage tank to serve the Meridian/Lauderdale County Industrial Park. Our employees were also busy treating 2.1 billion gallons of water and, once again, achieving a perfect score on the annual inspection by the Mississippi State Department of Health. We've gotten a perfect score five out of the last six years, a feat no other system our size has matched.

Katrina repairs were also undertaken by the Wastewater Treatment Plant staff. The roofs on the digester building, engine room and main building were replaced, as was the back wall of the emergency generator building. Employees treated 3.8 billion gallons of wastewater at the main plant and 120 million gallons at the east Meridian plant, which serves NAS Meridian.

Following the massive cleanup of more than 28.4 tons of debris left by Katrina, our Sanitation Division administered a FEMA program that allowed the city to bid for debris removal from private property. The program resulted in the removal of debris from about 322 private lots in the city. We continued to oversee our contract with Waste Management for hauling 13,500 tons of garbage, bulky waste and compostable waste to the landfill. About 20 percent of the residential waste was recycled, so it never made it to a landfill.



*Above, workers at the North Meridian Freshwater Treatment Plant adjust chlorine levels to ensure maximum quality in the drinking water supply. Below, workers remove undergrowth and check for tree roots as part of the process of repairing the dam on the lower lake at Bonita Lakes.*



Cleaning and repair work from Katrina continued in 2006 in the Street Division as well. Curbs, gutters, inlets and ditches damaged by uprooted trees were fixed, and repairs were completed, on damaged traffic signals.

The 2005 paving project was completed. A project to connect Highway 39 to 10th Avenue was completed with the construction of 29th Street, including curbs, gutters and inlets. A second project for the Hope VI development at Davis Court continued with the construction of a new road with curbs, gutters and inlets. Division crews started a ditch maintenance program by cleaning out Magnolia and Robbins creeks. The annual cleaning of Sowashee Creek was completed and sandbars were removed.

Sign and Traffic Signal employees changed the traffic flow around the new MSU Riley Center by creating two-way traffic on three blocks. This involved repainting traffic lines and changing traffic signals. Our insect abatement program to battle West Nile virus continued with nightly spraying and the use of larvicide in low areas. A new grant will allow us to enlarge the program next year.

Our crews completed more than 1,200 work orders for jobs such as asphalt work, street striping and signage, drainage work, tree pruning and removal, grass cutting and traffic signal installation.

The Fleet Maintenance Division expanded shop hours, which enabled vehicles and equipment to be repaired and maintained after normal business hours to be back in service the next day. Since taking over the job of maintaining more than 400 pieces of two-way radio equipment, our staff has been able to save more than \$40,000 over what was previously spent on a private contract. During the year, our staff made more than 3,000 repairs to cars and trucks and performed thousands of other maintenance jobs.

The Lines Maintenance Division joined the Mississippi One Call System, creating one crew that stays busy locating water lines for the gas company and others who are digging. More than 5,000 of these location calls were answered. The sewer flush truck crews, in addition to routine maintenance, assisted Atmos Energy with flushing so cameras could be put into sewer lines to determine where new gas lines should be located. These crews also helped the Street Division in its efforts to unstop storm drains and culverts.

The mechanical crew maintained lift stations, water booster pumps and electrical systems. Utility crews also made all the water and sewer taps for the Hope VI project, replaced or repaired 137 fire hydrants, and made various repairs in response to more than 2,100 work orders.



*At the Meridian-Lauderdale County Industrial Park, a 500,000-gallon water storage tank is slowly raised from the ground to the top of the concrete column. Using a series of cables snaking down the column and jacks attached to both the tank and the top of the column, a technician raises the tank a mere eight inches at a time.*





## p o l i c e

Meridian Police Department officers and staff are a few steps closer to packing their bags and moving to a new location. The new police station will be located on the block between Seventh and Eighth streets and 24th and 25th avenues, currently the site of Temporary City Hall.

When City Hall employees move back across the street after the restoration of City Hall is complete, the temporary building will be demolished, paving the way for construction of a much-needed, new police station. In the meantime, all the required land has been purchased, and the process of selecting an architect to design the building began in the Fall of 2006.



*Named in honor of fallen soldier and range master Jackie Abercrombie, the pistol range at the training facility features an automatic target system.*



*Motorcycle officers proudly display awards won in state competitions. Just as proud is Jamie Nance (right) of Chunky River Harley-Davidson, whose company leases the motorcycles to the Police Department for \$1 a year.*

In a move to increase performance and efficiency, the rank structure within the department has been changed to allow a captain to be in charge of all personnel in the three major divisions—patrol, investigations and administration. Each captain reports directly to the chief of police and the assistant chief of police and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the respective division.

Training continues to be a top priority, evidenced by the fact that our officers consistently receive more than the 16 hours of annual training required by the Mississippi Minimum Standards Board. The department utilizes in-house instructors as well as instructors provided through the Public Safety Training Facility, ensuring that officers maintain a high level of proficiency. Doing much of the training locally keeps costs down so courses can be offered in a broad range of law enforcement disciplines.

Also at the training facility, three of our five firing ranges now have automatic target systems. The 50-yard pistol range was dedicated in memory of Corporal Jackie Abercrombie, who served as range master and training coordinator and who also served his country in the Iraq War.

The addition of motorcycles several years ago has proven to be a real boon to the department. The officers on motorcycles work traffic details, provide a very visible public image and allow other officers to concentrate on patrol. And they're very good at what they do. The motor officers competed in two competitions this past year and took top honors in both.

The department acquired a new live-scan machine that allows investigators to obtain better quality fingerprints to submit to the crime lab. In addition, the department now has two polygraph operators on staff in the Criminal Investigations Division.

The Interstate Crime Enforcement Unit keeps rolling along. A number of vehicles transporting illegal drugs have been seized, along with substantial amounts of cash.

# municipal budget 2007

# year ending september 30, 2007

## REVENUES

Licenses & Permits	\$ 2,405,000
Inter-Governmental	13,815,000
Charges for Services	2,360,500
Fines & Forfeits	840,000
Miscellaneous	495,000
Balance End of Prior Year	3,500,000

Tax Levy Required to Support General Fund	7,939,800
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## TOTAL GENERAL FUND

**AVAILABLE CASH & ANTICIPATED REVENUES \$31,355,300**

Water Fund	11,889,250
Lakeview Golf Course	433,500
Concessions	52,200
Union Station	405,700
Waste Collection & Disposal	2,627,950
Homeland Security	655,500
Arts District Parking Garage	196,300

**TOTAL ENTERPRISE FUNDS 16,260,400**

**DEBT SERVICE 4,810,000**

**TOTAL REVENUES FOR ALL CITY FUNDS \$52,425,700**

## EXPENDITURES

General Government	\$ 3,166,900
Finance & Records	3,028,450
Community Development	1,742,400
Parks & Recreation	2,511,350
Public Works	7,236,100
Police Department	7,094,350
Fire Department	5,825,750

Cash Reserve for FY 06 Operations 750,000

## TOTAL GENERAL FUND

**EXPENDITURES \$31,355,300**

Water Fund	11,889,250
Lakeview Golf Course	433,500
Concessions	52,200
Union Station	405,700
Waste Collection & Disposal	2,627,950
Homeland Security	655,500
Arts District Parking Garage	196,300

**TOTAL ENTERPRISE FUNDS 16,260,400**

**DEBT SERVICE 4,810,000**

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES FROM ALL CITY FUNDS \$52,425,700**

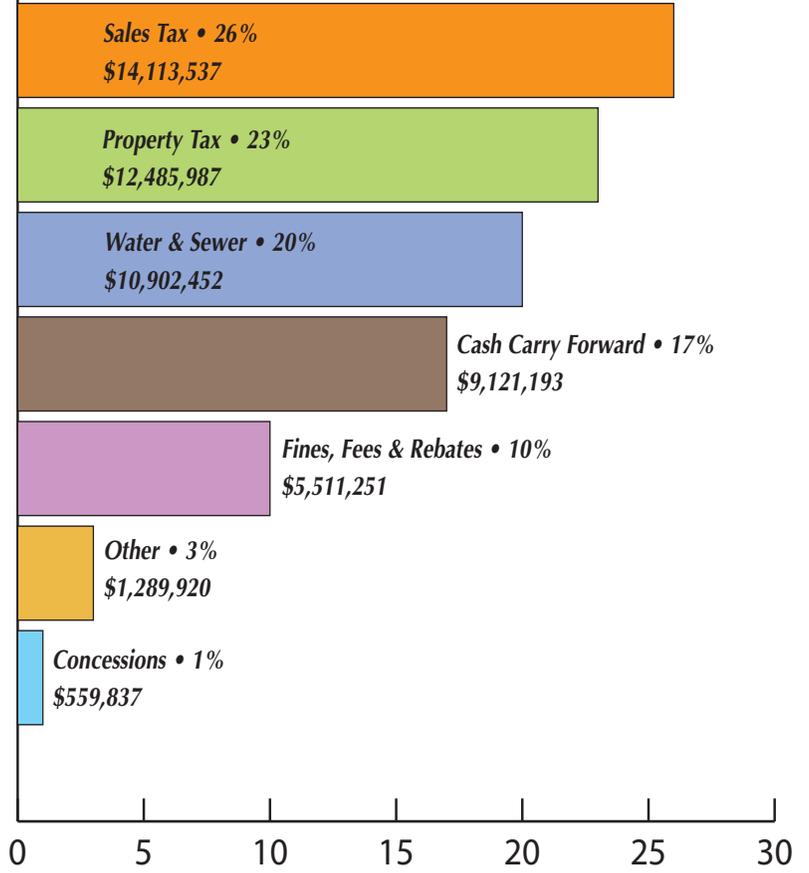
## millage comparisons

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>GOVERNMENT SERVICES</b>										
General Fund (Including Parks & Recreation)	21.17	21.48	23.44	25.86	28.69	30.39	30.39	30.19	29.56	30.51
Fire/Police	7.35	7.35	7.45	5.28	4.79	4.60	4.49	4.79	5.05	5.40
General Municipal Retirement	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Total (Excluding Bond & Interest)	31.52	31.83	33.89	34.14	36.48	37.99	37.88	37.98	37.61	38.91
Bond & Interest	17.62	17.31	15.25	15.00	15.01	12.09	12.20	12.10	12.47	11.17
Total (City, Government & Service Receiving Ad Valorem Tax)	49.14	49.14	49.14	49.14	51.49	50.08	50.08	50.08	50.08	50.08

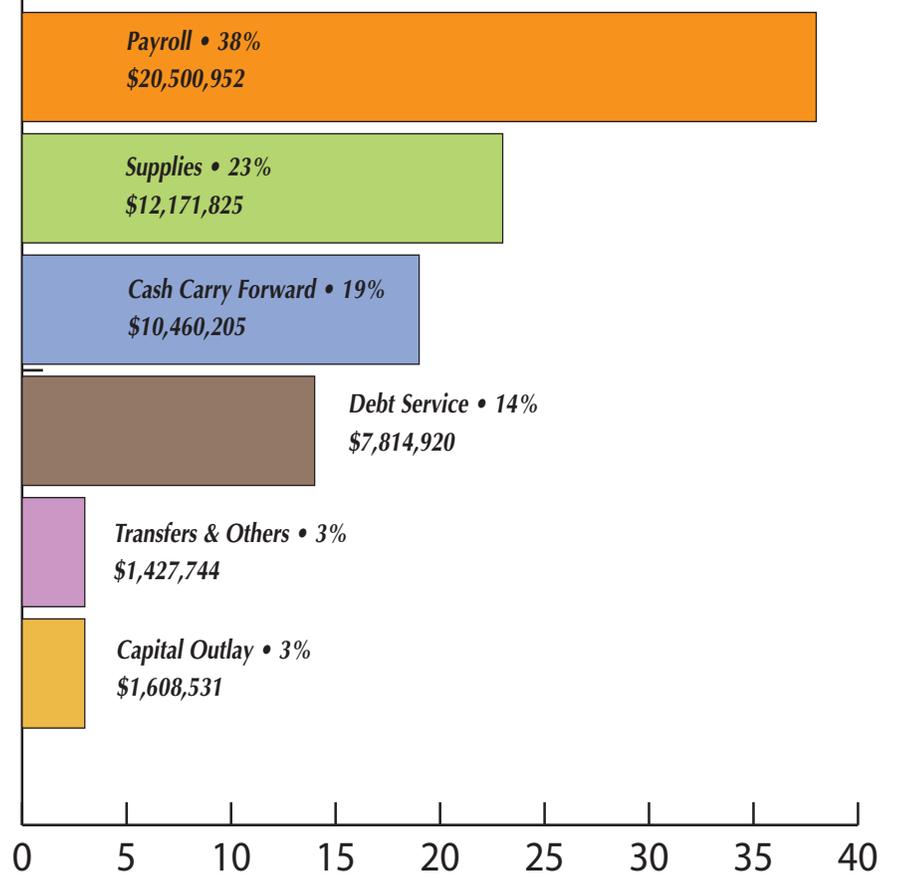
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>CITY SCHOOLS</b>										
Separate School District (MP & DM)	49.42	50.66	54.24	52.91	52.68	52.50	54.38	54.38	53.30	54.00
Meridian Community College (Support & Enlarge)	6.28	5.83	6.16	6.57	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Bond & Interest	2.91	2.21	2.95	3.77	4.70	2.87	0.92	2.99	3.35	1.87
Total (For Schools Receiving Ad Valorem Tax)	58.61	58.70	63.35	63.25	64.38	62.37	62.30	64.37	63.65	62.87
Total (All Operations Receiving Ad Valorem Tax)	107.75	107.84	112.49	112.39	115.87	112.45	112.38	114.45	113.73	112.95
County	42.26	42.26	42.26	43.11	43.11	43.06	42.50	44.79	45.45	47.67
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>150.01</b>	<b>150.10</b>	<b>154.75</b>	<b>155.50</b>	<b>158.98</b>	<b>155.51</b>	<b>154.88</b>	<b>159.24</b>	<b>159.18</b>	<b>160.62</b>



## 2006 funds from all sources



## 2006 use of funds by budget type



# d e v e l o p m e n t p r o j e c t s

## completed projects

- Gallagher Creek Channelization
- Riley Center (Downtown)
- Highway 11/19 Interchange (Airport Exit) Landscaping
- New Street: 29th Street from 10th Avenue to Highway 39 (not on map)
- Traffic Signal Upgrades: 8th Street, Highway 39 & Highway 19 South (not on map)

## projects under construction

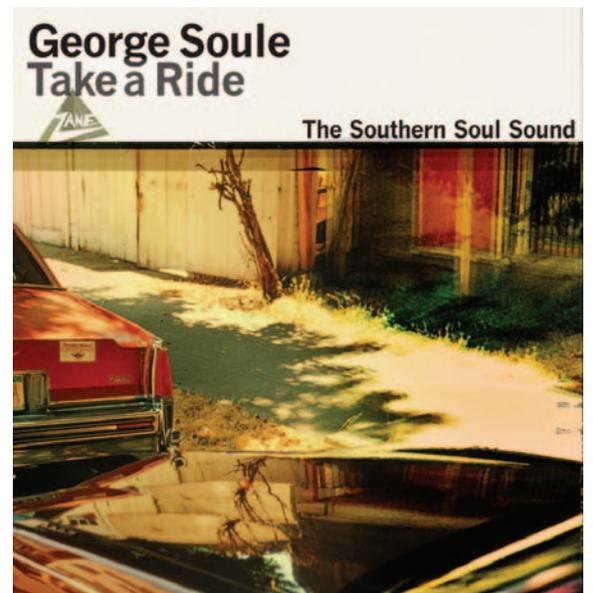
- Public Safety Training Facility (Bonita)
- Hope VI Street Infrastructure & Improvements (Davis Court)
- Sewer to Annexed Area
- Downtown Drainage Improvements
- City Hall Renovations
- 52nd Street Drainage Improvements (not on map)

## designed projects

- Highway 39/North Hills Street Intersection & North Hills Street Widening
- Fire Station: Highway 19 South
- MDOT Interchange to New Industrial Park
- Mississippi Arts & Entertainment Center (Bonita)
- Hope VI Street Infrastructure & Improvements (Victory Village)
- 10th Avenue Extension from Windmill Drive South & East to Highway 39
- Additional Repair of Lower Lake Dam at Bonita
- Sewer Rehabilitation Analysis (not on map)

## proposed projects

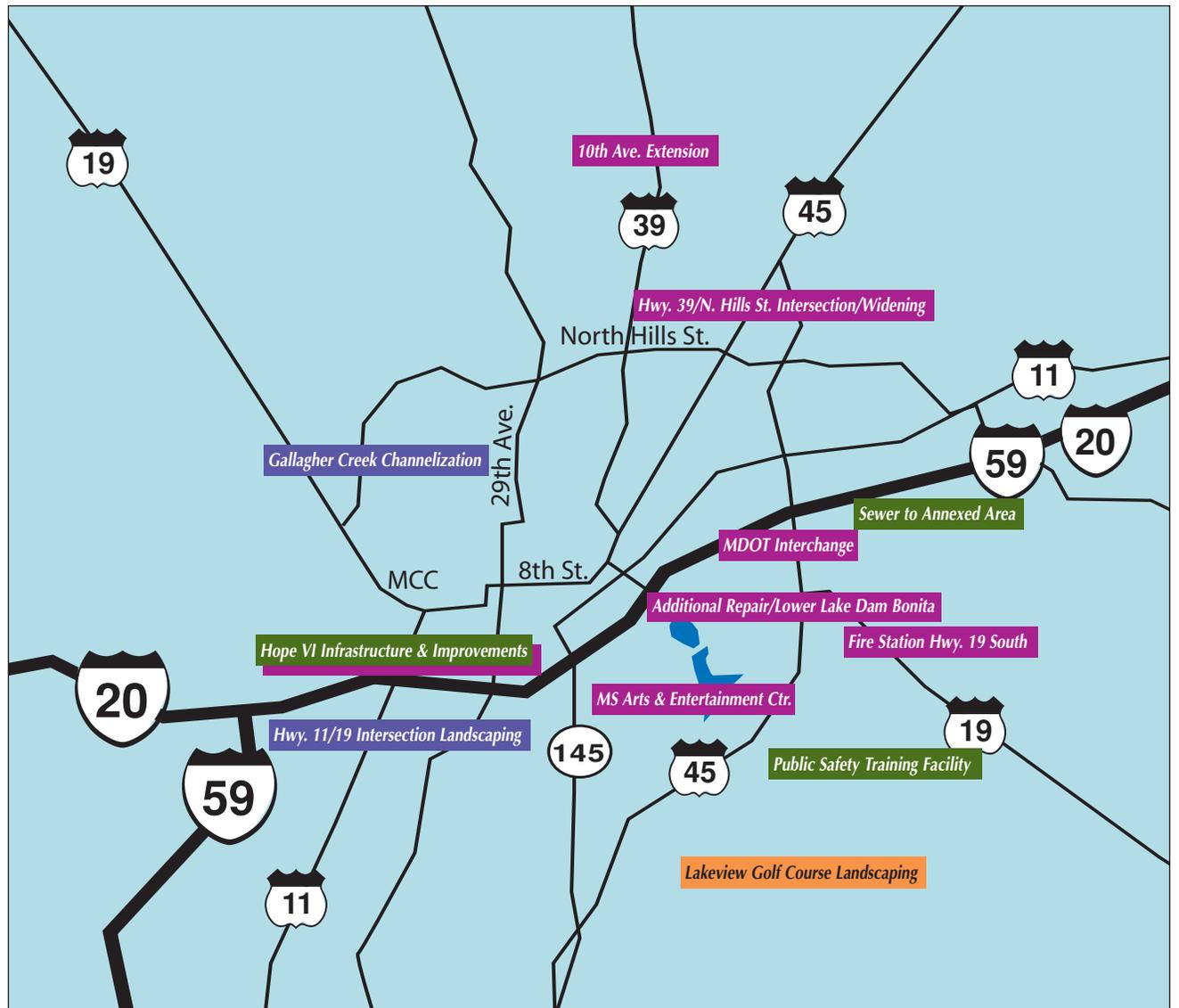
- Threefoot Hotel
- African-American Business District: 5th Street
- Museum Complexes:
  - Children's Hands-On Museum (Old Bell South Building)
  - Railroad Museum (REA Building/Open)
  - Jimmie Rodgers Museum (Old Newell Paper Building)
  - Institute of Southern Jewish Life (Kress Building)
  - Mississippi Industrial Heritage Museum (Soulé Building)
- Freedom Park (Downtown)
- 22nd Avenue Bridge Renovation
- Dumont Plaza Remodeling
- Building Murals & Public Art (Downtown)
- New Police Facility (Across from City Hall)
- Lakeview Golf Course Landscaping
- Medical District Area Plan Improvements (not on map)
- Retirement Development (not on map)
- One-Way to Two-Way Street Conversion/2 blocks completed in 2006 (not on map)
- Highway 45 Interchange Improvements (not on map)





projects key

- completed
- under construction
- designed
- proposed





The local artists featured in this report represent a breadth of disciplines and a nearly endless capacity for artistic expression. They are painters, potters and photographers. They are musicians, quilters, weavers, woodworkers and storytellers. Whether working at their crafts full-time or grabbing precious minutes at night and on weekends, all of them are passionate about expressing themselves through mediums that allow them to soar and explore.

Many of these artists are regionally and nationally known, but they are grounded here. Each time they make a brushstroke or sing a note, they color it with their experiences in our community. And just as the community had a role in shaping who they are, we are shaped by the creativity they share with us.

One of the artists explained her work by saying, “It is with reverence that I attempt to interpret the wonders of this earth.”

The wonder of artistic expression is an ideal embraced by each of these artists and by everyone in the community who shares a talent that adds to the richness of community life.

*Maureen Lofton*  
Maureen Lofton—Editor

## Temporary City Hall Offices

2412 7th Street

### Mayor

601.485.1927 • 601.485.1911 fax  
www.meridianms.org

### Executive Staff

- *Chief Administrative Officer*  
601.485.1929
- *Equal Opportunity Officer*  
601.485.1962
- *Human Resources Director*  
601.485.1934 • 601.485.2585 fax
- *Assistant for Governmental Affairs*  
601.485.1819
- *Risk Manager*  
601.485.1887

### City Council

Clerk of Council  
601.485.1959 • 601.485.1913 fax

### Finance & Records

Divisions: Business Affairs, Collection, Finance, Information  
Systems & Utility Collection  
601.485.1946 • 601.485.1979 fax

## Community Development

723 23rd Avenue  
601.485.1910 • 601.484.6813 fax  
Divisions: Administration, Cultural Affairs, Inspection, Keep  
Meridian/Lauderdale County Beautiful, Main Street, Planning & Union  
Station

## Union Station

1901 Front Street  
601.484.6841 • 601.484.6849 fax

## City Attorney

505 Constitution Avenue  
601.693.2393

## Fire

2500 14th Street  
601.485.1822 • 601.485.1878 fax  
Emergency: 911  
Divisions: Administration, Prevention, Suppression & Investigation

## Homeland Security

1180 Sandflat Road  
601.484.6890 • 601.484.6895 fax

## Police

2415 6th Street  
601.485.1893 • 601.484.6832 fax  
Divisions: Administration, D.A.R.E., Investigation, Patrol & Training

## Parks & Recreation

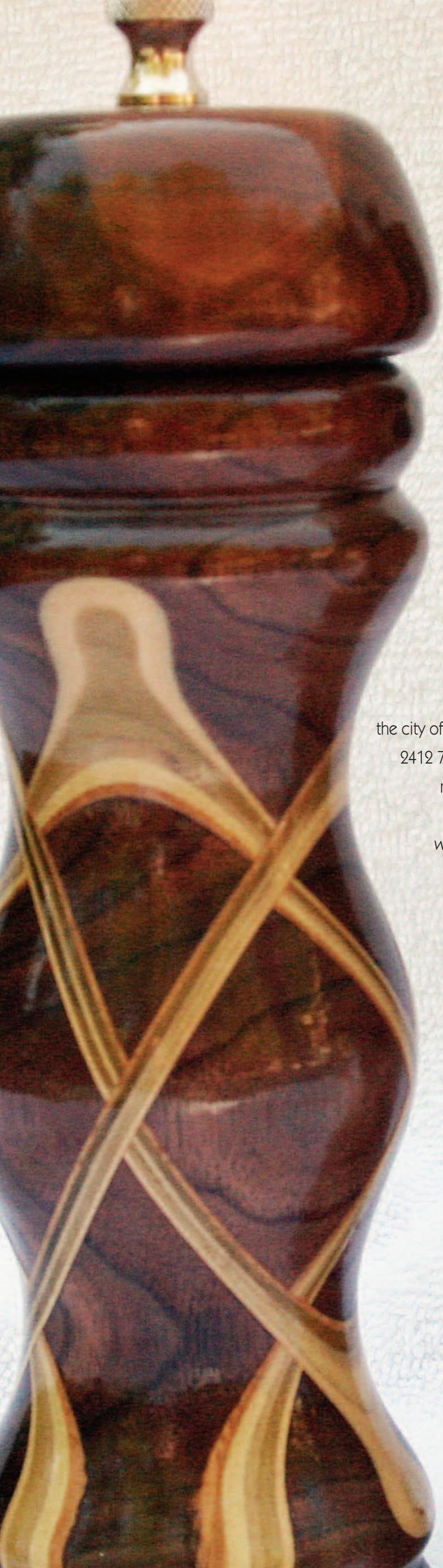
1720 Jimmie Rodgers Drive  
Highland Park  
601.485.1802 • 601.485.1851 fax  
Divisions: Administration, Concessions & Lakeview Golf Course,  
Grounds Maintenance & Programs

## Public Works

311 27th Avenue  
601.485.1920 • 601.485.1864 fax  
Divisions: Administration, Engineering, Freshwater Treatment, Fleet  
Maintenance, Sewer Collection, Solid Waste Contract Coordinator,  
Street Maintenance, Utility Billing, Wastewater Treatment, Water  
Distribution Lines & Traffic Control Devices

Individual e-mail addresses are available on our website at [www.meridianms.org](http://www.meridianms.org)





the city of meridian annual report 2006  
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