

First Lady Marsha Barbour
Announces
Mississippi Governor's Mansion
2010 Christmas Ornament Competition

When Haley and I came into office, we wanted to have a definite Christmas theme as we celebrated the season with the entire State of Mississippi. During our first administration, we chose to focus on the history of our country and state during the administrations of the four Presidents that occupied the White House during the twentieth century.

- Theodore Roosevelt, the first President in the twentieth century, is commemorated on the 2001 Christmas Ornament with the depiction of a “Teddy Bear” in front of the Mississippi Governor’s Mansion.
- Following the 1900s came the “Roaring Twenties” when Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover presided. The ornament symbolizing these years was a replica of the Model T Ford.
- Dwight D. Eisenhower occupied the Oval Office in “The Rocking Fifties” when Mississippi was often hailed as the birthplace of American music. The jukebox was the ornament that commemorated musical legends from Mississippi such as Elvis Presley and B. B. King.
- Then came Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. With the end of the Cold War, the country experienced a revitalization of economic prosperity, patriotism, and pride. The Christmas ornament was a replica of the dome of the Mississippi State Capitol Building, symbolizing the center of government in our state.

As 2008 approached, Haley and I decided to change our focus and have the Christmas decorations celebrate the unique beauty of the land and spirit of the people in the four distinct areas of the State of Mississippi. This year, the region to celebrate is the Appalachians.

I need your help with research and an ornament design that symbolizes something unique about Northeast Mississippi that we can share with people from all over the State. For example, the 2008 Lighthouse Christmas ornament is a replica of the most photographed landmark on the Mississippi Gulf Coast: the Biloxi Lighthouse dating back to 1848. Today, it is one of the easiest lighthouses in the country to see since it is the only one located in the middle of a busy highway! The Lighthouse is a symbol of the strength and perseverance of our people: a beacon of hope reflecting the resilience and character of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

The 2009 Pine Cone Ornament symbolized “The Piney Woods.” Stretching from I-20 in the north to I-10 in the south, it is part of a larger geographical region beginning in southern Georgia and covering the southeast into Texas. The lumber industry began when pine logs were floated down the Pascagoula and Pearl Rivers to be processed at mills along the way. This lumber was used in production of colonial and early American sailing vessels. Because the land could not be farmed extensively, the population remained low until the 1800s when longleaf pine forests became accessible to railroads. Large-scale timber cutting operations were set in motion. However, timber was exhausted and loggers moved on leaving a legacy of miles and miles of deforested land that could grow nothing but trees. A successful solution came about in the early 1900s when a species of pine was developed for production of paper and other forestry products.

Skilled craftsmen such as basket makers and woodcarvers are indigenous to this area with the wonderful wealth of wood as the art medium. This unique culture is also reflected in music that continues to flourish with blues musicians in larger towns and bluegrass festivals and “picking parties” in communities throughout the region.

How to Enter

- **Entry levels include grades 6 through 9**
- **All entries will need to be on letter size (8 ½ x 11) white paper only**
- **Art media may include pencil, pen, marker, crayons, watercolor, paint, etc.**
- **Each student may submit only one work of art**
- **On the back of the artwork, please include student’s name, address, home phone number, grade, teacher’s name, school, school address, and school phone number**

Judging

Each district will select a panel of judges to judge the design on the basis of creativity, how it connects to and reflects the region as well as how it helps others associate the ornament with the region. October 15th will be the date that the district winners are selected.

Once each district has selected a winner, the artwork will be sent to the First Lady and a panel of judges will select the overall winner. Judges will consist of artists, graphic designers, and those associated with the decorations of Christmas at the Mansion.

First, Second and Third place winners will receive a monetary award to go toward their education. These winners will also be invited to the Governor’s Mansion for a Recognition Reception to receive these awards. The 2010 Governor’s Mansion Christmas Ornament will be created based on the First place winner’s design.

Please contact Cora Gee at (601) 359-6420 or cgee@governor.state.ms.us for more information.

