

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY MISSISSIPPI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT



GARY RUSSELL BASS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- HISTORIC PRESERVATION
- TOURISM & BRANDING
- REVITALIZATION

Wednesday, December 21st 2022 6 - 8 PM



LIGHT UP THE TRACE

On the Darkest Day of the Year

WINTER SOLSTICE ON THE LONGLEAF TRACE

L U M I N A R I A S

A LUMINARIA FUNDRAISER



FOR
SAFETY,
SECURITY
& LIGHTING

THE LONGLEAF TRACE RAILS-TO-TRAILS

THE WINTER SOLSTICE + DECEMBER 21ST 2022

The Darkest Day of the Year



December 21st...The Darkest Day of the Year



- The Winter Solstice marks the shortest day and the longest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
- It is the point in time when the Earth's axis is tilted furthest away from the sun, resulting in the least amount of daylight and the most hours of darkness.
- During the Winter Solstice, the sun reaches its lowest point in the sky. This period of darkness has been observed and celebrated by many cultures and religions throughout history.
- Can you think of a better night to have a Luminaria event?

LUMINARIAS... An Ancient Custom!



- Luminarias are a beautiful and traditional way to add light and warmth to any event or occasion.
- These small paper lanterns, made from paper bags, candles, and sand, have been used for centuries to line walkways and create a festive atmosphere.
- By using luminarias for a fundraiser, you can create a warm and inviting atmosphere while also raising money for a great cause.
- Purchase a \$10 luminaria to Honor a Loved One, Remember an Anniversary, Celebrate a life, Honor a Veteran or convey a message.

LUMINARIAS HONOR LOVED ONES & VETERANS



IN MEMORY
OF
DOYLE
SPEIGHTS

IN MEMORY
OF
SANDY
SPEIGHTS

IN MEMORY
OF
"MOM" REID
BASS
TYRONE

IN MEMORY
OF
MAJ THOMAS
EARL BASS
USAF

“The Trace was LIT !!” –The Prentiss Headlight



THE LONGLEAF TRACE *RAILS-TO-TRAILS*



- The Longleaf Trace is a recreational trail located in southern Mississippi, stretching for 44 miles from Hattiesburg passing through Sumrall, Bassfield, Carson before reaching the gateway at Prentiss.
- The trail was originally a railway track for the Gulf and Ship Island Railroad, but was converted into a multi-use trail for biking, walking, running, and horseback riding.
- The Longleaf Trace corridor boasts various landscapes, including forests, wetlands, and farmland, providing scenic views for users.

A LIFELINE TO JEFF DAVIS COUNTY



A 44 MILE LONG TOURIST ATTRACTION
FROM AMTRAK STATION IN HATTIESBURG
CROSSING SUMRALL'S MAIN STREET,
THROUGH BASSFIELD'S FALER PARK,
BY THE CARSON PRIMITIVE CAMPGROUND,
THE MILE-LONG CONTRAIL TO JEFF DAVIS LAKE,
AND THE PRENTISS INSTITUTE HBCU CAMPUS,
BEFORE ENDING AT PRENTISS GATEWAY PARK.

Regional Issues Require Regional Solutions



- Regionalism is a concept that involves collaboration and cooperation among local communities, businesses, and governments within a particular geographic region.
- This approach to governance recognizes that many issues faced by communities transcend municipal boundaries, and require a coordinated effort to effectively address them.
- Safety, Security & Lighting the Longleaf Trace was one of those issues that needed to be addressed regionally.
- This was the motivating factor behind creating this event.

REGIONALISM & THE DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY



- THE DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY HANDLES ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND FUNDING FOR 258 OF THE POOREST COUNTIES AND PARISHES IN THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION.
- GARY RUSSELL BASS WAS SELECTED FOR THE DRA'S LEADERSHIP ACADEMY IN 2022 BY GOVERNOR REEVES, ONE OF 33 FELLOWS CHOSEN FROM THE 8 DRA STATES.
- THE BIG TAKEAWAY WAS THE IDEA OF *REGIONALISM* - WORKING WITH OTHER LIKE MINDED ORGANIZATIONS AND PEOPLE TOWARD A *COMMON SHARED GOAL*.
- THE LUMINARIA EVENT IS THE FIRST *REGIONAL EVENT OF ITS KIND* WITH PLANS TO EXPAND IN THE FUTURE TO INCLUDE THE ENTIRE LONGLEAF CORRIDOR/REGION.

ONE COMMON GOAL: Safety, Security & Lighting



- This event seeks to unite the communities of this region toward one common goal: Safety, Security & Lighting on the Longleaf Trace.
- The event is an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of lighting and security on recreational trails, and to encourage community involvement in maintaining and improving the Longleaf Trace.
- By bringing together volunteers and community members, the event fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for the trail, ensuring the Trace remains a safe and enjoyable destination for years to come.
- The inclusion of hundreds of luminarias created by school children not only increases the awareness and turnout for the event but also offers an opportunity for being of service to the community; hopefully inspiring our future leaders to further public service.

Each Location Has Specific Needs...



Money raised in each location stays in that location...

- Sumrall's Main Street Association will use the funds to support their efforts to revitalize downtown.
- Bassfield needs security cameras and better lighting.
- Carson needs upgrades to their primitive campground to better serve equestrian riders and campers.
- Prentiss Institute HBCU campus needs lighting and signage.
- Prentiss needs more security at Gateway Park.

Economic & Community Development



- First and foremost, ensuring that the Longleaf Trace is a safe and secure environment for all users is essential for the well-being of the community.
- By creating a safe and welcoming environment, the sense of safety can encourage more people to take advantage of the trail, leading to increased foot and bike traffic, which can benefit local businesses.
- Additionally, a well-maintained trail can attract visitors from outside the area, bringing in additional tourism dollars.
- The event also offers locals an opportunity to socialize, reminisce and interact with local artists, craftsman and makers right before Christmas.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE!



- The process of setting up the luminarias requires a significant amount of effort and coordination.
- Local churches play a key role in this process, as many of them volunteer their time and resources to help make the event a success. Carson Baptist Church is a prime example of this.
- In addition to the support of local churches, volunteers from the community also play an essential role in the event's success. They help with various tasks, including setting up and taking down the luminarias, providing assistance to visitors, and ensuring that the trail remains safe and accessible throughout the event.

UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY



- The collaboration between churches and volunteers exemplifies the importance of community involvement in creating meaningful events.
- Without their dedication and hard work, the Light up the Longleaf Trace Luminaria event would not be possible.
- Their efforts bring joy and wonder to visitors, and they help foster a sense of community spirit that is vital for the well-being of the area.
- The Light up the Longleaf Trace Luminaria event is a shining example of how a community can come together to create something special and also help to strengthen the bonds between community members.

What's the Greatest Nation? A Donation!



- The Light Up The Trace Event started in 2021 with 3 locations in Jeff Davis County. We raised over \$2500.
- In 2022, we expanded to include Sumrall, in Lamar County; and added the Prentiss Institute. We raised around \$6000 from sales and sponsorships.
- In 2023, plans are to expand further down the Trace to potentially include Forrest County and Hattiesburg.
- This event is poised to become a very big deal in the next few years as it continues to grow and serve the region.

5 LOCATIONS



- PRENTISS GATEWAY PARK
- PRENTISS INSTITUTE'S HISTORIC ROSENWALD SCHOOL
- CARSON STATION
- BASSFIELD STATION
- SUMRALL STATION

3 TOWNS



- **PRENTISS...***THE NATURAL CHOICE*
- GATEWAY TO THE TRACE
- **BASSFIELD...***small town BIG HEART*
- HEART OF THE TRACE
- **SUMRALL...***LIKE COMING HOME*
- SOLAR CENTER OF THE TRACE

2 COUNTIES



- JEFF DAVIS-
- THE GARDEN SPOT OF THE EARTH
- LAMAR-
- MISSISSIPPI'S FASTEST GROWING COUNTY

1 GREAT CAUSE:

CREATING A SAFE, SECURE &
WELL LIT EXPERIENCE FOR
EVERYONE USING THE
LONGBLEAF TRACE!



1. Prentiss Gateway Park



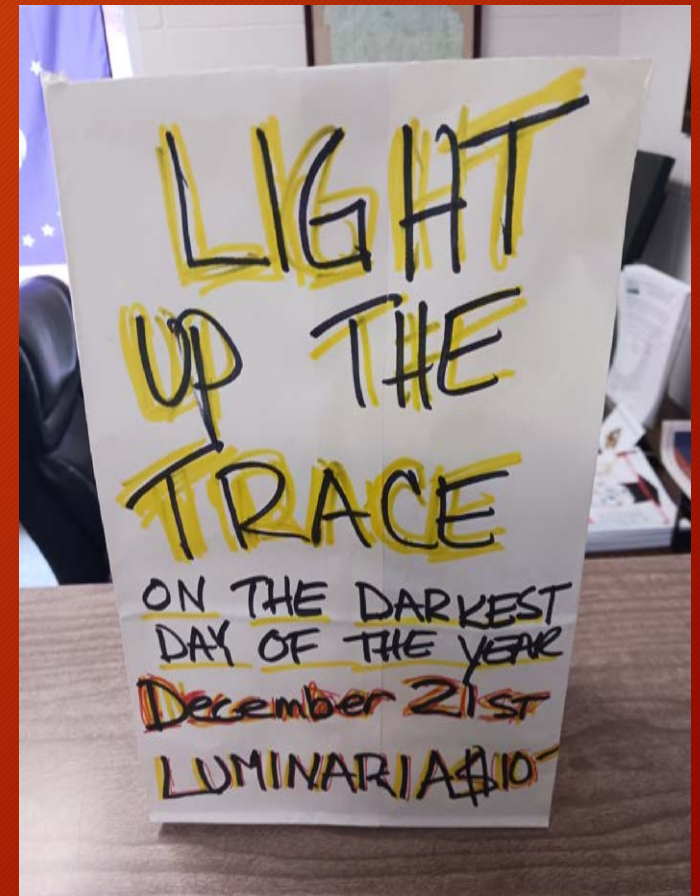
2. HBCU Prentiss Institute's Rosenwald School



3. CARSON STATION



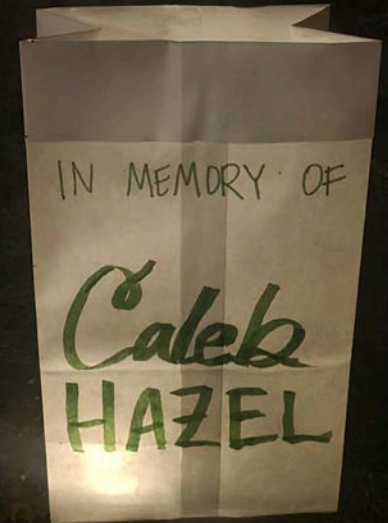
**CARSON
BAPTIST CHURCH
PLACED LUMINARIAS
DOWN THE TRACE
AT CARSON STATION**



4. BASSFIELD STATION - largest turnout!



5. SUMRALL'S Main Street JOINED THIS YEAR



And Now... A Word from Our Sponsors!



REGIONS

REGIONS BANK SITS ACROSS FROM GATEWAY PARK IN PRENTISS AND ANCHORS THE LONGLEAF TRACE.
REGIONS WAS THE GATEWAY SPONSOR FOR THE EVENT.

APRIL LEBOEUF OPENED A NEW ALFA INSURANCE AGENCY IN PRENTISS AND WAS THE HOMETOWN SPONSOR FOR 2022.

PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR CALL FOR HOMETOWN SPONSORS IN ALL TOWNS & OTHER SPONSORSHIPS FOR CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS.



MARKETING & PROMOTING THE EVENT



1. WEBSITE www.LightUpTheTrace.com
2. FACEBOOK ADVERTISING targeting 30 mile area
3. FLYERS with a QR Code for online purchases
4. PRESS RELEASE sent to media outlets around the State
5. T-SHIRTS with the logo to sell and give away as promotions
6. NEWSPAPER ARTICLES - Prentiss Headlight - Hub City Spokes
7. ART CONTEST - JE Johnson & Carver Elementary Schools
8. Free TV Announcement on FOX 23
9. Letters to EVERY CHURCH - and theres a lot in Jeff Davis County!
10. FACEBOOK REELS -Luminaria Video
11. HASHTAGS-- #EmbraceTheTrace #LightUpTheTrace #LongleafTraceYall
12. Promotional LUMINARIAS placed in Businesses
13. SPONSORSHIPS - Gateway Sponsor & Hometown Sponsor

Flyers + Website + Press Release



LIGHT UP THE TRACE

On the Darkest Day of the Year!
LUMINARIA EVENT
www.LightUpTheTrace.com

WHEN
Winter Solstice
Wednesday,
December 21st
6pm

WHERE
The Longleaf Trace
• Prentiss Gateway Park
• Prentiss Institute Campus
• Bassfield Station
• Sumrall Station

**REGIONAL
EVENT
TO FUND
SAFETY &
SECURITY
ON THE
LONGLEAF
TRACE!**

**LUMINARIAS
\$10 EACH**



AVAILABLE

- LightUpTheTrace.com
- JDC Economic Development District Office
- Prentiss City Hall
- Alfa Insurance
- Prentiss
- Bassfield City Hall
- AF Carraway Store
- Bassfield
- Plum Trophy
- Sumrall
- Priority One Bank
- Sumrall



PRESS RELEASE For November 29, 2022

Contact: Gary Russell Bass, Director, JDC Economic Development District
Phone: 601-792-5903

Light Up The Trace Luminaria Event
A regional fundraiser for safety, security & lighting along the Longleaf Trace.

BASSFIELD, MS (November 29, 2022) – The *Light Up The Trace Luminaria Fundraising Event* is held each year on the Winter Solstice, for 2022 that is on December 21st. This event spans four locations in three towns across two counties. All locations will have coordinated events happening on the same night and at the same time in an effort to raise funds to provide safety, security and lighting in the respective communities along the Longleaf Trace corridor. "Monies raised in each location will stay in that location to meet each location's specific needs," said Gary Russell Bass, Director of the Jefferson Davis County Economic Development District.

The event is a first of its kind regional event. 2021 was the inaugural year for the event, with three communities participating. It has expanded in only its second year, with plans to continue expanding to include more event locations, participants, luminarias purchased, and also more volunteers with each annual event. This year, the Prentiss Institute will join in the celebration with an event at the Rosenwald School, just a few hundred yards down the trace from Prentiss Gateway Park.

"The Longleaf Trace is a lifeline to the towns of Sumrall, Bassfield and Prentiss. The "Longleaf Corridor" has unmet potential for tourism. And Tourism IS Economic Development!" according to Bass. This event focuses on uniting these communities toward a common goal of providing a safe and secure experience for trace travelers all year long while celebrating the season and honoring the special people and events in our lives during this special evening. The event is part festive holiday, part patriotic celebration, and part walk down memory lane.

Luminarias can be purchased online by visiting the *Light Up The Trace Luminaria Fundraising Event* website: www.LightUpTheTrace.com or purchase in person by visiting Plum Trophy Sales or Priority One Bank in Sumrall, the AF Carraway Store in Bassfield, Bassfield City Hall or Prentiss City Hall or Alfa Insurance in Prentiss.

For more information, press only:
Contact: Gary Bass
Office: 601-792-5903
Cell: 601.303.5511
Email: JDCEconDev@gmail.com

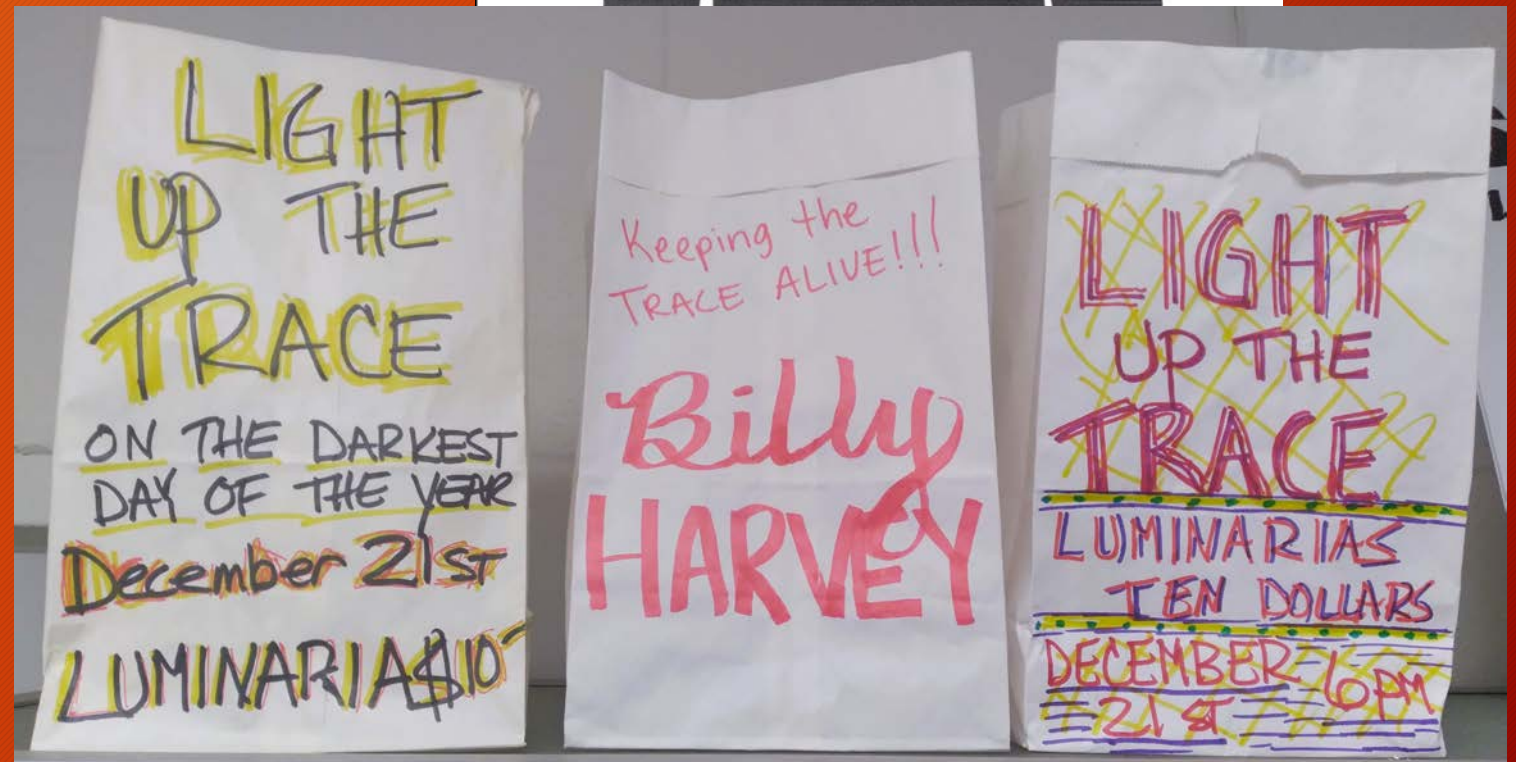
For more information or to purchase luminarias: www.lightupthetrace.com

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ART WALK & CONTEST

Encouraged Greater Turnout for the Event!



T-shirts - Newspaper Articles & Promotional Luminarias



JOIN US EVERY DECEMBER 21ST Y'ALL !



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