



MRC May Newsletter 2020

Welcome to the May Edition of the Mississippi Recycling Coalition
Newsletter!



[A Note from Mary Love:](#)

Making the Most of the Situation

Dear Friends,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family doing well and staying healthy during these trying times. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has touched all of us in some way, and it has forced us to reevaluate the way we do some things. It has certainly changed our plans, including those for our joint spring conference with the Mississippi Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA). Our 2020 Conference will be cancelled, we are looking forward to our 2021 Conference. There has been much discussion about essential services and what should be included in that category. I believe many people have realized just how essential waste management and recycling services are to our communities. Hopefully, this appreciation and recognition of the importance of waste management will continue as we emerge from the pandemic. On a personal note, my family is

resurrecting our garden. Our oldest son is a Boy Scout, and he will be working on his Gardening merit badge over the summer. For this merit badge, he will also be building a compost bin where we can compost our food waste. We have a makeshift compost area, but this will be an opportunity for us to further reduce our food waste and provide a benefit to our garden as well. This will be a win-win for our family! With summer camps, work conferences, and other events cancelled for the summer, this could be an opportunity to 'turn lemons into lemonade' and further reduce our waste, improve our recycling practices, and be better stewards of our natural resources. Thank you for your continued efforts to support recycling throughout Mississippi, and please know how much we appreciate and value you, your colleagues, and your employees.

Sincerely,

Mary Love Tagert, President of MRC

Announcements and Reminders



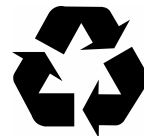
How to Join MRC

Click to find out how you can join MRC today!



Renew your Dues

Have you renewed your membership dues for 2020?



How to Recycle

For information on which materials are accepted in your area and how to recycle them, click here!

Organization Spotlight: Keep Mississippi Beautiful



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

This month our Organization Spotlight is Keep Mississippi Beautiful.

"Keep Mississippi Beautiful works to inspire and educate Mississippians to improve their communities by preventing litter, promoting recycling and beautification. We encourage all citizens to be responsible for improving the state's scenic beauty and quality of life. We feel that these efforts boost civic pride, livability and local economies. Keep Mississippi Beautiful leads a network of almost 50 affiliates and we are one of the fastest growing affiliate networks in the US.

As our communities open back up – we want to remind everyone that we all must continue to do our part to keep our streets, highways, parks, waterways and beaches safe and clean."

-Sarah Kountouris, Executive Director



A note from Will:

Recycling in a Pandemic

The beginning of the pandemic now seems like a long time ago. When the likelihood of shelter in place seemed eminent, ISRI and others, including SERDC, pushed hard for our elected decision makers at the federal and state levels to include recycling operations in the list of essential services which would continue during efforts to arrest the spread of Covid-19. We pointed out that recycling supports much of our nation's commercial infrastructure that will be

necessary during any lockdown. For instance, consider the shipment of medicines, all delivered in corrugated boxes. Food and beverage packaged in postconsumer material is commonplace. Home delivery has taken an expanded role in shopping, delivered in boxes made from OCC. Mixed paper prices have rebounded to positive territory and corrugated is above its fifteen-year average. (Recyclingmarkets.net)

Our efforts were successful and recycling operations were spared lockdown restrictions. Collection and processing employees are allowed to continue their service to our manufacturing supply chain. And they have been busy. Collection of residential materials has increased as much as 30% (Republic Services quoted by CNN). However, commercial collection has seen a decline of similar proportion.

Some of the programs in the Southeast have faced obstacles. Staffing operations has proven to be a challenge for some, especially those MRFs who rely upon inmate labor for sortation. The jails have been quarantined, taking away the labor to operate. Additionally, several communities have ceased collection operations, though a few of those have resumed. Waste Dive has kept a list of the impacted programs. So far, the programs have tended to be smaller communities, limiting the number of households losing recycling access.

When the quarantine winds down and economic recovery begins, there are many budgets strained by revenue lost during the lockdown. It is imperative that we continue to collect and process recycling, as it is a significant contributor to our manufacturing supply chain. Indeed recycling will play an important role in the economic recovery, supporting the 98,000 manufacturing jobs (serdc.org/maps) in the region. SERDC will be hosting a webinar on the upcoming budget stress in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, stay safe, wash your hands, and keep recycling.

-Will Sager, Executive Director of SERDC

School Grants Awarded

Presbyterian Christian School \$1K

Batesville Intermediate \$500

Threadgill Primary School \$500

Lawhon Elementary School \$1K
Itawamba County School \$1K
Columbia Elementary School \$1K
Seminary Middle School \$1K
Long Beach Senior High School \$500
Singing River Academy \$1K
Germantown High School \$500
Dundee Elementary \$1K
Canton Public High School \$500
Vicksburg High School \$500

Member Highlight: Ron Aldridge



This month's MRC Member Highlight is Ron Aldridge.

"Ron is the Ex. Director of the Beverage Association of Mississippi. Ron has served on our board since 1992 and his dedication, devotion and support to Keep Mississippi Beautiful has made us one of the leading State Affiliates in the Nation. Because of his continued volunteer work – we honor an individual every year with the Ron Aldridge Volunteer of the Year Award.

Ron is always the first one to volunteer and usually the last one to leave, no matter the size of the project or where the project is located in our state. He was also honored recently with the Iron Eyes Cody Award one of the most prestigious awards that Keep America Beautiful honors an individual.

I like to think that I am a better person and Director with having Ron's leadership on our Board of Directors of Keep Mississippi Beautiful."

-Sarah Kountouris, Executive Director of Keep Mississippi Beautiful

A Message from Ron on 'Why I Love Making a Difference through KMB & MRC':

"From a young age my parents instilled in my heart a love for our country,

its beauty, its people and our Creator; and a responsibility to actively care for His creation for His Glory, and to pass it on better than we found it for the benefit of future generations — and especially now for our four grandchildren. Then came my military training of picking up routinely every tiny piece of paper, cigarette butt, or other form of litter — not just to follow orders, but to leave an indelible impression that it's the smallest things that can make the greatest difference. It especially taught me the value of combining our efforts together as a team working toward a common goal, and for preparing me to not ask of others what I'm not willing to do myself.

Upon my return to Mississippi from active duty service in 1977 and establishing my law practice in Jackson, I sought out some of the best opportunities to serve our community. It was God's leading that I was introduced to Keep Jackson Beautiful where I got involved and served on its Board, as its Vice President, and chaired a citywide cleanup. In my later work with the Mississippi Beverage Association as its executive vice president, I was asked by my predecessor Bob Biggs whether I'd be interested in filling his seat on the Keep Mississippi Beautiful Board of Directors. Bob had helped form KMB along with Louise Godwin, KMB's first state Chairperson and my #1 KMB mentor.

Once I met KMB's other Board members and local affiliate leaders, it was obvious this was a united team working together with the same heart for each other and for Mississippi, its beauty, its people and for God's creation. What better place to serve than through KMB since 1992 as a Board member and also as its second State Chairman. What a blessing it's been, especially to have been on its Executive Director selection committee twice when we chose two of our nation's very finest state leaders in Barbara Dorr and Sarah Kountouris. There are none better nor are there any better with whom to actively serve and grow in achieving results that continue to make a positive difference for our state. God has continuously blessed my life through KMB and its statewide team of dedicated worker-servants!"

-Ron Aldridge, Executive Director of the Beverage Association of Mississippi

Joshua Oliver – University of Mississippi, Marketing Major,
Senior

Anna Boxx – Millsaps College, Environmental Science Major,
Sophomore

Erin Wicht – Mississippi State University, Food Science, Nutrition
and Health
Promotion Major, Sophomore

Semenyo Kouhogan – Hinds Community College, Nursing Major,
Sophomore

Ariel Farmer – Hinds Community College, Biology Major,
Freshman

Rachel Green – University of Southern Mississippi, Accounting
Major, Sophomore

Delaney Gillespie – Mississippi State University, Chemical
Engineering Major, Senior

Anish Bista – University of Mississippi, Mechanical Engineering
Major/Computer Science Minor, Junior

Lisa Phan – Mississippi State University, Chemical Engineering
Major, Junior

Erika Erickson – Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College,
Marine Biology/Chemical
Engineering Major, Sophomore



A Note from Jen:

Keep on Keeping on...

Like most of you I have heard this advice most of my life, but until recently I never knew how much I would need it. A mere two months ago we were all going about our business. Getting up every morning, getting ready for work, sending our kids off to school, meeting friends for a night out, browsing the isles of our favorite

shops, working out at the gym and attending our places of worship. We were living our lives as we always have, carrying out our routines. Then COVID-19 reared its ugly head and forced us all to stop-cold. Our routines were thrown out the window to make room for frantic grocery store runs, homeschooling, conference calls and zoom meetings. Our business casual attire exchanged for yesterday's sweatpants and a ball cap to hide our too-long hair and too-gray roots.

For many of us more than our routines have been impacted. Some have lost loved ones, lost their jobs. Others have suffered the emotional toll of working long hours stocking shelves, attending the sick and in other jobs that don't allow for "sheltering in place," but rather require being placed on the front lines.

As members of the Mississippi Recycling Coalition, we are no different. We are a community of business and industry, state and federal government agencies, schools and universities, local governments, non-profits, trade organizations and individuals that have all been impacted by this global pandemic. And while we may not have expected or even been prepared for the circumstances in which we find ourselves, we have made the necessary adjustments to get the job done.

Our challenge today is to extend this attitude of perseverance to include our organization's mission of promoting and increasing recycling. While we know that recycling is an essential business, we must make sure our fellow citizens, lawmakers and other decision makers understand the importance of recycling as well. In spite of COVID-19, the benefits of recycling remain the same. In fact, recycling may be more important now than ever before as these materials are an important link in our nation's supply chain. From the boxes used to ship our goods to the containers that hold food, personal care items and medical supplies, recyclable materials are needed to manufacture these items. Therefore, I encourage you all to continue your recycling efforts however possible so that these supply chains are maintained. Whether maintaining our local programs, promoting recycling to our fellow citizens or working to create new opportunities for recycling businesses in our state, we all have a role to play in maintaining and growing the recycling industry in Mississippi not only during these challenging times, but for all times.

Maybe life will go back to way it was before. Maybe we are in for a "new normal." One thing is certain. When it comes to recycling, we WILL keep on keeping on!

Warm regards,

Jennifer Milner

State Recycling Coordinator

Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

Recycling 101

Recyclable Materials:

- #1 Plastic Bottles (empty water, soda, juice bottles with a neck and screw top that have the #1 symbol printed)
- Mixed Paper (Junk mail, office paper, newspaper, magazines, etc.)
- Aluminum Cans (Drink cans, pie tins, and aluminum foil)
- Steel Cans (Rinsed steel food cans)
- Cardboard (Corrugated cardboard boxes and paper bags)
- #2 Plastic Bottle (Empty laundry detergent bottles and milk jugs with neck and screw top that have the #2 symbol printed)



[Check out the links below.](#)

This Month in the News:

Easy Ways to Start Recycling

Plastic that travels 8,000 miles: the global crisis in recycling

Mississippi Recycles

UNSUNG HEROES - Waste and Recycling Collectors

What Waste Collectors and Recyclers Need to Know about
COVID-19 from the CDC

Mississippi Recycling Coalition

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