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## Phil's Forum 4-11-06 A Creative Spark

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I think I finally have the answer to the age-old question, "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?"

The answer is the egg!

I know because I saw the Easter Bunny carrying it, hip-hop-hopping along the bunny trail.

Now that we have that riddle solved, let's tackle a more puzzling problem.

Just how will an Arts Community located on the north side of downtown at the old Armory help the economy of Jackson?

Some people see it as just another subsidized housing project. Others think it will be great – only if you're actually in the project.

On the positive side, many proponents talk about the influx of people living in the downtown area eating at downtown restaurants and shopping at downtown stores. Others talk about the magnetism of tourism caused by this arts community. Still others mention how this project will change the way outsiders view Jackson as a whole. Maybe we'll be able to drop the "prison-city" moniker for something a little more inviting.

I believe there is an even larger benefit to our community by having the Armory Park Arts Project happening here in Jackson.

Creativity.

All artists bring one common skill to the table – Creativity - the ability to make "something from nothing."

In a way, we all are creators. Roy H. Williams, the Wizard of Ads, put it best in a recent email newsletter when he said,

"If you accept the book of Genesis, then God is a creator by nature. And he created us in his image, little miniatures of himself. That means we're creators by nature, too."

But the artists among us are those who have taken this talent for Creativity and done something special with it. They have taken thoughts and ideas and turned them into works of art.

How will that help Jackson? Simple. There's a very fine line separating the Creativity of an artist and the Creativity of an entrepreneur. Both make something out of nothing. Both take ideas and turn them into realities. Both breathe life into the creations of their minds.

Remember that even the largest companies out there (think Wal-Mart, GM, even Exxon) started the same way as a song or piece of art – as a Creative idea that somebody brought into existence.

And when you bring this many artists into one area, raising the level of Creativity within the arts community, you will most certainly raise the level of creativity within the community as a whole.

- 1. Creativity leads to new ideas.**
- 2. New ideas lead to new businesses.**
- 3. New businesses lead to new economic development.**

You could call it a Creative Spark that's about to light this city on fire with a glow that will reap benefits for generations.

Of course, you all know where I stand on Creativity.

Creativity is one of the three pillars of a Great Toy.

Without it, our toys leave us bored. With it, the possibilities of play, discovery and growth are endless.

So while the Armory Park Arts Project brings that Creativity to Jackson as a whole, we'll keep doing our part sparking the same level of Creativity in your children.

Happy Shopping and Happy Easter!

-Phil Wrzesinski