

20 May 1981 Excerpt from letter from Molly Shaw in Memphis, TN
to Terry & Diann McCabe in Bontoa, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

This letter is long overdue. . . . This has been an incredible year, like none other ever before. I'm going to share the highlights of Mississippi since that's where I've spent most of my time.

George [Howard] and I took the job in Ruth [Wilson's] office after much deliberation by the Area and House over how many people to put in there [in Jackson, MS]. We are sharing one salary which means we are in the office 2-1/2 days a week. We have continued to stay with Vinton [David Zahrt's cousin in Jackson, MS], and he is such a fine person and always welcomes our comings and goings. We started the job on October 6 when the funding came and Ruth had 3 other staff hired by Oct. 20. We have hit it off well in conveying the team approach, but missing the element of covenant has really shown up in that it's hard to get the others to sit down for weekly staff meetings. The other three have had minimal training in leadership but we started the year off right by setting up forums to bring together agencies and organizations in a common field of service, like health, and did special issues forums by county. Then George got this going in East Central P.D.D. [Planning and Development District] with a core of "grads" who wanted to do it for the whole P.D.D. We called it "networking" and the concept sold really well and has emerged as a winning image for future practical training in the region.

At the same time we were setting up our Regional Consult (which was superb after a lot of really hard work), we set up a quasi-symposium for the State of Mississippi which we called Citizens' Public Affairs Forum. It was a series of panels on specific issues with representatives of four sectors. The Governor [William Winter] showed up at the end of the day and made a speech after Dick Molpus [Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Federal-State Programs] got so excited he went

over and got him! The Voluntary Action Fair came off well, too. We honored six signal communities—not as big an event as last year but significant. The office is still not refunded for another year but it is supposed to come through any day.

The training proposal plan is well underway, but counties are Hinds, Lauderdale and Quitman. George and I are doing most of that.