

# 31<sup>st</sup> & Pearl

## **BBER Slumber Better for All**

The recent Economics Symposium put on by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research Director, CoB economist William Gunther, revealed much about the shallowness of the CoB's "Centers-in-Residence." The Symposium seemed to offer little beyond hoping for another hurricane like Katrina, since, according to Symposium presenters, Ms. K offered up economic bliss by the truck load. While BBER critics thought that Gunther's BBER had finally awakened from a long winter's nap, we all came to learn that, when it comes to the image of USM and its CoB, the BBER does more good when sleeping.

Now, as we close the books on the Symposium reports that were provided by *The Hattiesburg American's* reporter/blogger, it seems that Gunther is really taking past criticisms of his BBER laziness to heart – or, at least he is making it seem that way. Encouragement comes from CoB PR Manager Janis May's 22-Jan-08 press release entitled "College of Business Offers Free Access to Four Decades of Mississippi and U.S. Economic Data." That presser indicates that economic data from 1969 through 2005 have been made available "thanks to" the CoB's BBER. However, skepticism comes from the statement that the data project is the result of work done by the Pacific Northwest Regional Economic Analysis Project and the Regional Economic Measurement Division of the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Gunther's BBER will simply be writing checks off of CoB accounts to finance work on, and electronic access to, the project. Signing checks – that's about all the exercise (former) Dean Bill will be getting from this new project.

Readers of usmnews.net, primarily those from Mississippi, should realize that these checks Gunther will be writing will come from tax coffers. The BBER is not into raising funds from the private sector. Heck, the CoB as a whole barely does any of that. This money will come from the backs of hard-working Mississippi taxpayers, like much of the other money that is wasted by CoB administrators. Perhaps it would be better if the BBER went back to sleep.