

Pardon Our Dust - a Year after Katrina

by Staff

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or

A Year After Katrina

The one year anniversary since Hurricane Katrina basically destroyed the Mississippi Gulf Coast shoreline is fast approaching.

We thought we would follow up on our previous article "Pardon our Dust" where it was discussed about promoting the Gulf Coast especially for tourism related items.

As of August 16, 2006 lets touch base on a few items.

The rebuilding of the Coast area attractions, casinos and hotels IS proceeding, albeit slowly. Let me say that along the actual coastline, its pretty apparent that much work is left. Photos simply do not show the entire scope of the damage that was done by the storm surge of Katrina. Much damage and debris remain. Many building shells dot the landscape.

Biloxi "appears" from the cursory scan we took to be leading the way in the rebuilding effort. The beach and water is somewhat cleaner than the Gulfport area. The Casinos are opening sooner etc. The work continues in both Gulfport and Biloxi on the casino hotels. Its a major undertaking to move the casinos into the onshore hotels. And renovating them while trying to be open. The Beau rivage appears to be doing it with some class. They are staying closed until they are ready (Opening scheduled for Aug 29,2006). While some others have casinos open with MAJOR work going on around them. Not a pretty site for the tourist who might expect more than just a view of a poker table or slot machine.

Visitors at this time should be made aware of what they are going to see when they get here. And it is slowly but steadily getting better. The number of available motel and hotel rooms is also improving. Hopefully by this time next year we will be able to compete again for the tourism dollars. Certainly in the Casino market. But also as a more family oriented resort area.

Whats left of the Grand Hotel Gulfport

August 2006

Many billboards along Interstate 10 proclaim the openings of the Casinos. One new casino, "Island View Casino Resort" stating opening in Sept. That may be true, however all we saw on Highway 90 was a lot of construction and Old Grand Casino signs. How ever we did see a trailer with an Island view employment center sign. A good sign is their new website finally came on line last night. www.islandviewcasino.com.

The work on the Treasure Bay casino hotel, one where the casino is open with renovating going on around is progressing.

The Treasure Bay website looks spiffy and nice and they mention that phase one of their construction is complete. But no pics of what the outside currently looks like.

Eventually all will be great looking and a fine resort. Frankly I think someone visiting just might be slightly disappointed in the overall setting.

Now the good news.

At least in Biloxi, the Casinos are beginning to look good. Great food is returning!

And once you get away from the beach areas much is back to normal. Gulfport has a great water park open, Gulf Islands Water park (which the kids love).

Most of the Golf Courses are re-opened, including the Grand Bear. And the Charter Boat fishing industry is not dead. While many charter boats were temporarily closed primarily due to the marina damage, most are back.

We have a listing of them here. The shopping malls are now open. All indicators of the infrastructure of the Gulf Coast returning.

Work on the Biloxi Ocean Springs bridge on Highway 90 is progressing.

Staff photo August 2006.

The damage from Katrina will not be cleared up and new facilities replaced in months and some cases years. But all the signs point to a returning economy. Investment by some major players for coveted casino turf is occurring. Indicating bright future expansion of that resort area.

Traffic to this website has been steadily increasing in the past few months indicating that the rest of the world IS interested in coming here to play.

But at this time..

Its readily apparent that we are not yet back to our beautiful scenic beach area. Just so you know what you are going to see when you visit. Dont let that stop you from coming to play, eat, fish or golf.

And check back here regularly. We will let you know just how the Gulf Coast is recovering.

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