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Tangi touts image for first-class shopping

By Joan Davis

Parish chambers of commerce, parish tourism, the city of Hammond and The Daily Star are rolling out a marketing campaign that is aimed at the shopping public in Tangipahoa.

The rallying cry is “Shop in Tangi,” and the colorful logo of a strawberry and railroad engine will start appearing everywhere soon on banners, on billboards and decals inside storefronts parishwide.



Parish President Gordon Burgess supports the new parishwide initiative and noted it has always been the parish’s motto to shop at home.

“This will be an opportunity for us to push the efforts,” he said.

Mayor Mayson Foster said the City of Hammond has worked on programs with the same theme for years, with the city council approving funding for shop-at-home programs.

“People need to shop where they live now that we have first-class shopping facilities,” he said. “We’re offering retail that’s really first class to all our citizens.”

The chambers’ role in the Shop in Tangi campaign is to spread the word, and Daryl Ferrara, president of the board of the Hammond chamber, said he will meet with other chambers and parish government in the coming weeks to ensure the whole parish is involved.

The chamber will send out e-mail blasts to its 650 members letting everyone know about Shop in Tangi, Ferrara said. The chamber will have the Shop in Tangi banners on display at the Sept. 17 Business Expo and at all meetings throughout the rest of the year at the chamber office.

The banners will also be available for organizations to buy and add their own logos, he said. Decals will be available for merchants to put on their shop windows.

The concept is an easy one: the parish has a diverse selection of retailers, and there is no longer a need to shop outside Tangipahoa’s borders, Ferrara said.

“We feel as a chamber that we want everyone to shop at every business throughout the parish,” Ferrara said. “We have everything here that you need.”

Terry Lynn Smith, director of the Downtown

See SHOP IN TANGI, 3A

Development District, sees the Shop in Tangi campaign as a “wonderful vehicle to bring us all together.”

“We’re hoping people will come see what’s happening in Hammond,” said Philip Nicaud, chairman of the DDD board. “Tangi tourism is a team attitude and that kind of unity breeds success.”

Emily McKneely, director of sales with the Tangipahoa Parish Convention and Visitors Bureau, said a successful retail community helps make her job easier.

“It helps make Tangipahoa a complete package when I’m promoting events like conventions or sporting events,” she said. The shopping component is huge. We need a lot of diversity.”

Daily Star Publisher Keenan Gingles said the Shop in Tangi promotion is aimed at reacquainting residents with how great it is to shop at home.

“This campaign is about reminding our community of just how much our our parish has to offer,” Gingles said. “While our new Hammond Square has been a focal point, we want to emphasize what a wonderful diverse group of services and goods our businesses have to offer to our residents and visitors. Truly, there’s hardly any reason to leave our area. From the north to the south, we’ve really got it all,”

The concept of keeping shoppers inside Tangipahoa is especially close to the heart the owners of the redeveloped Hammond Square.

“The people of Tangipahoa Parish have been driving too far, too long,” said Jimmy Maurin, chairman of the board of Stirling Properties. “They developed an attitude that to have a complete shopping experience, they had to leave Tangipahoa Parish.

“Now that we have the stores people want — Target, J.C. Penney, Best Buy — we have a full complement of retail, and people need to leave the sales taxes here in Tangipahoa.”

Stirling will do its part to spread the Shop in Tangi campaign with billboards going up on Interstate 12 at the east and west entrances to the city, said Grady Brame, executive vice president and partner with Stirling Properties. One side will carry the Hammond Square logo, and the other side the Shop in Tangi logo.