

Strand leaders share area's needs, wishes

By Zane Wilson - The Sun News

Feb. 07, 2008

COLUMBIA --Interstate 73 was one of the focal points for the annual Myrtle Beach reception for legislators held here Wednesday night.

One entrance to the party room at a downtown hotel featured an ice sculpture with an I-73 logo. Beside it was a large plate of South Carolina-shaped cookies with blue icing and the I-73 logo.

"We wanted to make sure that I-73 was showcased here," said Amie Lee, marketing coordinator at the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce.

The chamber sponsors the event along with Coastal Carolina University, Horry-Georgetown Technical College and Golf Holiday.

Members from the groups come to meet and greet legislators and try to acquaint them with the area's needs, such as I-73, beach renourishment and tourism promotion.

There was no heavy lobbying. "Just fellowship," said Eddie Dyer, vice president of Coastal.

Rep. Dan Cooper, who as chairman of the budget-writing House Ways and Means Committee controls the shape of the state budget, said the people from Myrtle Beach were not lobbying him, but others at the reception were.

Rep. Harry Cato, R-Travelers Rest, said he couldn't miss the Myrtle Beach reception because he knew it would have good food and good company.

State Treasurer Converse Chellis said he attended the reception because of Myrtle Beach's importance to the state economy and the amount of money the area pumps into the treasurer's office.

The sponsors also wanted to thank legislators for what they have done, such as the money for tourism promotion that was put into this year's budget.

"We'll stay the golf capital of the world" if lawmakers continue to provide promotion funds, said Golf Holiday President Mickey McCamish.

Contact ZANE WILSON at 357-9188 or zwilson@thesunnews.com.