



Mason Area
 Chamber of Commerce
 Mason, Michigan

MASON in Motion
UPDATE
 November 15, 2012



Mid-Month Supplement to the Monthly "Mason in Motion" Newsletter

Mason Area Chamber of Commerce
 148 E. Ash Street, Mason, MI 48854
 Phone 517-676-1046 -- Fax 517-676-8504
masonchamber@masonchamber.org
www.masonchamber.org

A reminder: **Names** of MACC members are usually in **bold type** in our publications.



Mason Holidays Celebration
Friday, November 23, 2012

- ★ Shopping throughout the Mason area including downtown and antiques district
- ★ "Santa Band," Christmas Tree Lighting (at Maple and Jefferson), and more on the Courthouse Square 6-6:30 PM
- ★ Lighted Parade from Cobblestone Village to Courthouse Square 6:45-7:15 PM
- ★ Kids Ferris Wheel and Games on the Courthouse Square
- ★ Toys for Tots Collection
- ★ Santa at Mason Museum before and after the parade

FREE
 Hot Chocolate and
 more at Mason
 First United
 Methodist Church
 after the parade!



Mason Area
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To volunteer:
 (517) 676-1046
 or masonchamber@masonchamber.org



This information appears on Channel 21 of the WOW! cable system in Mason and at www.masonchamber.org

Get Ready for Small Business Saturday - Nov 24

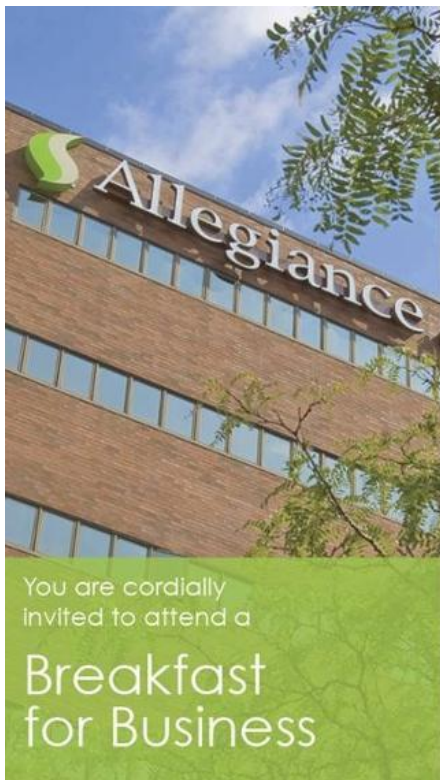
Between Black Friday and Cyber Monday sits Small Business Saturday®, a day dedicated to helping small businesses and their communities.

We, the members of the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce, are proud to take part in Small Business Saturday this year. We want to encourage you to tell your friends and family to Shop Small® with us on November 24th.

For Small Business Saturday, we are excited to offer a free small poster for you to put up in your business to promote the day. Stop by the Chamber office 9-3, M-F to get your free poster.

Visit ShopSmall.com to learn about other ways to get involved and support the other small businesses in your community. Also, don't forget to join the "Shop Mason Values" group on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/130878093607917/>

Thank you for supporting Small Business Saturday 2012!



Understanding Health Care Reform

Understanding Health Care Reform can be a challenge. Let us help you get a handle on how the Affordable Care Act impacts you, your business and our community.

Related to that, we'll also introduce you to an important new network that will be shaping the future of health care in Jackson. Through its collaborative partnerships with physicians, the hospital and community resources, Jackson Health Network forms a community-wide clinically integrated network, which dedicates itself to creating exceptional patient experiences, optimizing the health of community members, improving quality outcomes and lowering the cost of care. Come find out how the JHN will positively impact you.

As always, we will welcome your questions for our presenters.

Presented by:

Peter Pratt

Senior Vice President, Public Sector Consultants

Georgia Fojtasek

President and CEO, Allegiance Health

Tuesday, December 4, 2012, from 7:30 to 9 a.m.

Cascades Manor House, 1970 Kibby Road, Jackson

Please RSVP by Friday, November 30, 2012. Call (517) 796-6482 or email BreakfastForBusiness@AllegianceHealth.org.

 Allegiance HEALTH

Habitat Celebrates Thirteenth Annual Gingerbread House Competition

The 13th annual Habitat for Humanity of Greater Ingham County Gingerbread House Competition is underway! Gingerbread Houses will be displayed at **The Daily Scoop** in Mason on November 23rd during the Community Holiday Light Parade and at the Living Arts in Williamston during the First Friday events and Light Parade.

Habitat would like to extend a special thanks to the **Dart Development Group** for being a title sponsor for this year Gingerbread House Competition. A special thanks to Kathy and Shawn Sodman at **The Daily Scoop** in Mason and to Susan Byrd at Living Arts Dance Studio in Williamston for hosting the event again this year!

If you are interested in creating and entering into the Gingerbread House Competition please contact the HFHGI office at (517) 655-1872 or email director@inghamhabitat.org. HFHGI will also be in need of volunteers to assist in watching over the gingerbread houses during voting times.

About Habitat for Humanity of Greater Ingham County

HFHGI is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry that seeks to eliminate substandard housing and to make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action. HFHGI builds simple and affordable homes, renovates existing houses, performs critical repairs, and constructs wheelchair ramps in partnership with local families in need.



Mason's Community Thanksgiving Day Dinner is on Thursday, November 22, 2012 from 12 Noon to 1 PM at Mason First United Methodist Church, 201 E. Ash Street in Mason

Suggested Donation \$3, Family \$7. Everyone Welcome! Call 676-9449 or 676-4175 to reserve.



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The Recipe for Thriving Downtowns

Part 1: Volunteerism

Any ideas here for Mason?

<http://www.capitalgainsmedia.com/features/vol0516.aspx>

Computers, Not Candy: The Geek Group Donates 100 Dart Container Laptops to High School Students

On Halloween, as part of The Geek Group's (TGG) 'Computers, not Candy' program, TGG donated 100 re-purposed laptops to economically disadvantaged students enrolled in the Grand Rapids Area Pre-college Engineering Program/Engineering and Biomedical School. These students specifically enrolled in the program because of their passion for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), making them perfect candidates for the laptops.

Dart Container Corporation donated the computers to TGG as part of **Dart's** commitment to increase Michigan residents' access to STEM education. The laptops are one of several donations **Dart Container** has provided in the last four years to The Geek Group. "As an employer of hundreds of engineers, IT and finance professionals in Michigan, **Dart Container** recognizes the need to encourage our state's students to find their futures in these critically important fields of study," said Lelah Melton, Vice President of Information Technology for **Dart**. "We are pleased to partner with TGG to help students in this STEM-focused program to be successful in high school and beyond."

TGG re-furbished the laptops, which included cleaning, hardware repair and installation of the Mint distribution of Linux to make every laptop an open source device. "Giving students an open sourced operating system means that they can play with the computer, and learn from it, in any way they wish," said Adam Bird, TGG board member. "As students of engineering and design, having a computer is an essential tool for learning."

The 'Computers, not Candy' program reflects TGG's mission to increase access to the tools people need to help them learn in their own way and at their own pace. In addition to computers, TGG offers a 43,000 s/f building with a laboratory and workshop to create a physical environment for self-driven learning.

The Geek Group is a federally certified 501c(3) non-profit dedicated to providing access to science, technology, engineering and math by developing programming and facilities for individuals and institutions to learn, explore, innovate and play at an independent pace according to their needs. Based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, TGG has approximately 4,000 members worldwide and 18,000 youtube subscribers.

Dart Container Corporation is family owned and operated, and has approximately 15,000 employees worldwide with its acquisition of Solo Cup Company. The company manufactures more than 1,000 single-use foodservice packaging products with facilities in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Panama, Australia and the United Kingdom. DCC has more than 40 production plants and UV-curable ink manufacturing, machinery manufacturing and polymer production facilities. DCC is headquartered in Mason, Michigan, where the company was founded in 1960.

Attention Rural Ingham County Residents!

Do you need Fuel Oil or Propane? Are you unable to pay for a delivery or for an old bill? Capital Area Community Services has received grant funds to assist low-income households in purchasing **deliverable heating fuel**. Funds are limited to qualified households.

Please contact **CACS** at **(517) 676-1065** for more information.



Drop off your new, unwrapped toys at the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center, 148 E. Ash Street in downtown Mason 9-3, M-F.



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Habitat Seeks Fund Development Committee Members

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Ingham County (HFHGI) is seeking volunteers to join its Fund Development Committee. The purpose of the committee is to work in partnership with the Board of Directors to ensure fiscal needs of the affiliate are met and to encourage the community to participate in the ministry with cash and in-kind gifts.

The committee assists in fundraising efforts through planning and organizing fundraisers, works with churches, individuals, business' and financial institutions. Members need to leverage good networking connections in the communities, share creative ideas and plans to generate resources, and be able to work with all different kinds of people.

Anyone interested in joining the committee please contact the HFHGI office at (517) 655-1872 or send an email to director@inghamhabitat.org.

Do you have your MACC Member Value Card?

If not, stop by the Chamber office to get one today!
Check out the values at the <http://www.masonchamber.org/valuecard.html> website.

Our latest addition:

Swab Collision

Show us your Mason Member Value Card and get up to \$100 off of your deductible or \$100 towards and Enterprise rental car (3-5 days) on new collision insurance work only. Other discounts are available (ask for details). swabjr@att.net

EMPLOYING VETERANS WORKSHOP

Sponsored by the Michigan Chamber Foundation

November 20, 2012

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center

East Lansing

Cost: \$40 for employers, \$15 for veterans

Michigan has over 40,000 unemployed veterans with significant skills and experience to offer employers. This unique workshop features a multi-perspective approach to hiring veterans. For employers, hear how to navigate the hiring process and learn what resources are available to you when hiring veterans. For veterans, learn how to translate military experience into business-relatable skills that give you a competitive advantage. *For questions about the event, contact Bob Thomas at 517-371-7639.*

New Member Benefit Available: Find Interns - Free

Internships aren't only for the summer anymore. Students are now looking for internship opportunities now, and we're here to help you connect with them! The [Mason Area Chamber of Commerce](#) has partnered with Internships.com to make sure your business has all of the tools and resources necessary to make your internship program a success.

As a Mason Area Chamber member, you can do the following all for free:

1. Easily post your internship opportunities.
2. Proactively recruit using an extensive student resume database.
3. Access exclusive resources to help start a new internship program or optimize your current one.

Help your business find the best talent in the Mason area and [post your internship today](#).

Expectations run high for holiday season

Three out of four Michigan retailers expect to increase sales this holiday season, many by more than 5 percent, according to the Michigan Retail Index, a joint project of **Michigan Retailers Association (MRA)** and the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

"Michigan retailers are bullish on the holiday season," said **MRA** President and CEO James P. Hallan. "Their forecasts are the most optimistic in more than a decade."

The monthly Index survey found that 43 percent of the state's retailers expect their holiday sales to rise by more than 5 percent over last year, while 32 percent expect smaller increases. Another 18 percent believe their sales will match last year's, and 7 percent project a decrease. The average of all their forecasts is +13.4 percent.

Holiday hiring is expected to increase slightly: 11 percent plan to increase employment, 5 percent reduce it and 84 percent keep the same level as last holiday season.

The September Michigan Retail Index found that 42 percent of retailers increased sales over the same month last year, while 37 percent recorded declines and 21 percent saw no change. The results create a seasonally adjusted performance index of 54.0, down from 61.7 in August. A year ago September it was 57.9.

The Index gauges the performance of the state's overall retail industry, based on monthly surveys conducted by **MRA** and the Federal Reserve. Index values above 50 generally indicate positive activity; the higher the number, the stronger the activity.

Looking forward, 59 percent of retailers expect sales during October - December to increase over the same period last year, while 16 percent project a decrease and 25 percent no change. That puts the seasonally adjusted outlook index at 76.8, up from 67.7 in August. A year ago September it was 61.4.

Central Michigan retailers led the state in September with 67 percent of the regional group reporting sales increases. Gifts stores, furniture and appliance stores, department stores and apparel stores throughout the state rang up the best numbers among the various trade lines.

Where Will Your Organization Be in Five Years?

Key Points

- Strategic planning helps you position your resources for success in a volatile business environment.
- Your plan should describe your current state and set measurable goals to achieve a desired future.
- Include mission and vision statements that define the purpose of your organization and what it seeks to accomplish.

Where do you want your organization to be in five years? For busy executives and business owners concerned with meeting deadlines and keeping customers happy, this can be a difficult question to answer, but it could have important implications in your long-term success.

Strategic planning is a systematic process that can help you answer this question by establishing the future direction of your organization. Today's competitive marketplace is constantly changing. The strategic planning process can help you take stock of where you are now and how you can best position your resources to maximize your potential.

Keys to a Successful Strategic Plan

While every organization is different, a good strategic plan involves some universal elements. In order to be successful, your plan should:

- Accurately describe the organization's current situation
- Define the best way for the organization to respond to a changing business environment and remain competitive
- Define a specific vision for a desired future
- Set goals and objectives for achieving that future, including approaches for measuring progress
- Have the support of upper management and the involvement of the entire organization

Steps in Strategic Planning

1. Preparation - determine if the time is right for a planning effort and obtain the full support and commitment of the entire company leadership. Without proper resources and time, the planning effort will not be successful. The following tasks must be completed in order to prepare the planning process properly:
 - Identify the specific issues that the planning process should address
 - Create a planning committee
 - Develop an organization profile
 - Clarify roles within the planning process
 - Develop a specific method or system for the planning process
2. Mission and vision - develop mission and vision statements which set the overall theme of the strategic plan, as well as the tone for everything that follows. The mission statement should define the purpose of the organization and what it seeks to accomplish, as well as the values that guide it. The vision statement forms the blueprint for the planning process. It describes any unmet needs in organization's product and service offerings, and how it will go about fulfilling those needs.
3. Situational assessment - obtain and evaluate current information about the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This information will highlight the critical success factors facing the

organization, and what must be addressed within the strategic plan. The situational assessment is both internal and external. The internal assessment looks at organizational labor and capital resources, financial position, and so on. The external assessment measures the competitive landscape and describes client and supplier relationships.

4. Developing strategies, goals, and objectives - the outcome of this step is the ultimate strategic direction of the organization and the steps needed to get there. This step is the heart of the planning process and involves cooperation between planning committee members, management, and selected employees. The strategy defines the overall approach to be taken, while the goals and objectives provide measurable outcomes. Equally important is a specific plan of action for achieving the goals and objectives.
5. Writing and communicating the plan - put together a written plan that: describes the reasoning behind it; evaluates your current situation; and defines where you hope to be and how you will get there. The plan should also highlight your mission and vision statements. Distribute the plan throughout the organization and highlight it with oral presentations. Hold follow-up meetings to maintain focus on the plan and to provide updates on progress.

It is hard to say where you will be in five years, but the strategic planning process can help you define your future and navigate an ever-changing marketplace.



“Red Nose Ruckus”

DINING – DANCING – AUCTION
FOOD – CASINO GAMES – CASH BAR

Music by the Sea Cruisers

to benefit *Child and Family*

Charities and Angel House

Friday, November 30th starting at 6 PM

Best Western Plus in South Lansing

For ticket information,

call (517) 882-4000



This information appears on Channel 21 of the WOW! cable system in Mason and at www.masonchamber.org

Child and Family Charities Wins Federal Grant Award Funds to provide substance abuse services to high-risk youth

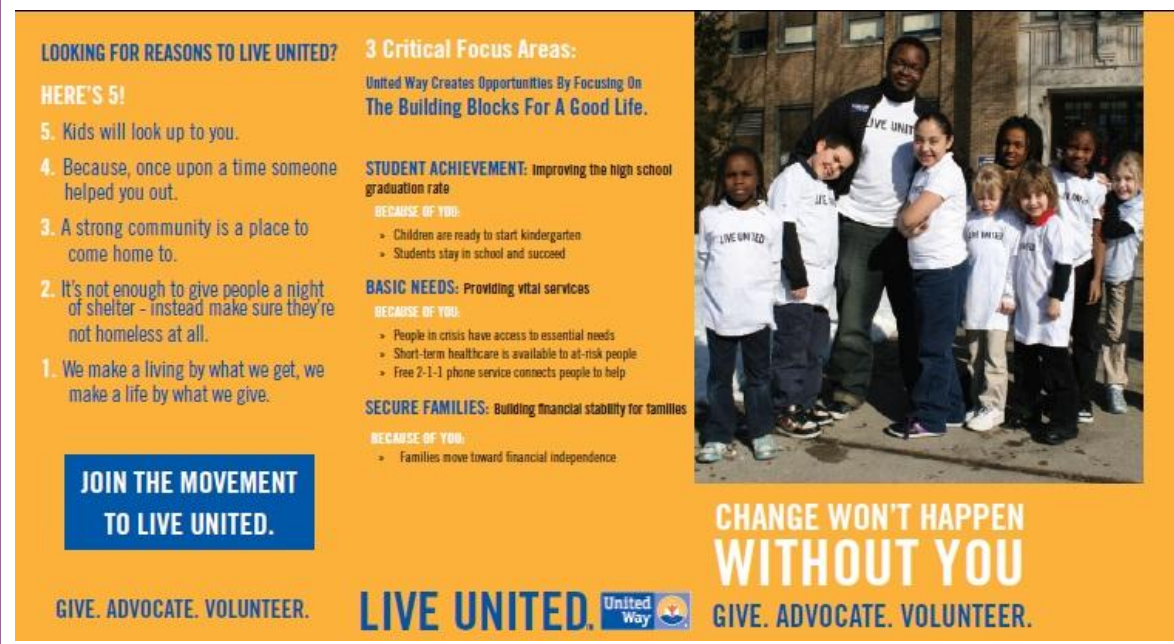
Troubled youth will receive comprehensive counseling and support under the terms of a federal grant awarded to **Child and Family Charities** by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Over \$590,000 will be distributed to **Child and Family Charities** during the three-year funding period to provide assessment and treatment services to first-time youth offenders participating in Teen Court, a juvenile justice diversion program. The goal of the project is to identify and counsel youth with substance use problems at the earliest stages of delinquent behavior in order to prevent further illegal activity.

"Only ten grants were awarded nationally," said Jim Paparella, Executive Director of **Child and Family Charities**. "That says a lot about the integrity and quality of our programs and services, in addition to community need."

Teen Court, which merged with and became a program of **Child and Family Charities** in 2008, offers Ingham County youth who have committed a minor legal offense an opportunity to engage in community service, restitution, and education groups. Upon successfully completing the Teen Court program, youth avoid formal court involvement.

According to Mike Botke, Director of Teen Court, "This grant will have an immediate impact on our client population because it literally immerses a substance abuse program inside Teen Court. Many of the young people referred to Teen Court come with an undiagnosed substance use disorder or an offense that is drug or alcohol related."

The project will utilize newly hired professional staff from the agency's adolescent treatment program, New Focus. The Director of New Focus and the SAMHSA project supervisor is Kathy Davis. Direct services began November 1, 2012.



LOOKING FOR REASONS TO LIVE UNITED?

HERE'S 5!

5. Kids will look up to you.
4. Because, once upon a time someone helped you out.
3. A strong community is a place to come home to.
2. It's not enough to give people a night of shelter - instead make sure they're not homeless at all.
1. We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT TO LIVE UNITED.

3 Critical Focus Areas:
United Way Creates Opportunities By Focusing On **The Building Blocks For A Good Life.**

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: Improving the high school graduation rate

BECAUSE OF YOU:

- Children are ready to start kindergarten
- Students stay in school and succeed

BASIC NEEDS: Providing vital services

BECAUSE OF YOU:

- People in crisis have access to essential needs
- Short-term healthcare is available to at-risk people
- Free 2-1-1 phone service connects people to help


SECURE FAMILIES: Building financial stability for families

BECAUSE OF YOU:

- Families move toward financial independence

CHANGE WON'T HAPPEN WITHOUT YOU

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

LIVE UNITED. 

A possible Christmas gift?

Mason Museum Publishes Book of School Memories

Mason School Memories, a book created by the **Mason Area Historical Society**, with help from the community, is now available. A committee, under the direction of Shirley Renwick, recruited local people to write about their memories of school days. Many are about attending a one-room school. Tributes are paid to favorite teachers. Administrators as well as students contributed to the volume.

The book is full of photos of Mason school buildings and of students. It is dedicated to the memory of two women who are remembered for their impact on students and the community, Margaret Doolittle and Dorothy Ferris. Mason School Memories is available at the historical museum on Oak Street and at **Bestsellers Books & Coffee Company**.

Final Note:

Continuing a 40-year tradition, the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce publishes its "MASON in Motion" printed and mailed newsletter near the end of each month. This hard-copy newsletter has information about Chamber events and programs, new Chamber members, news from member businesses and organizations, and more - in a short four-page format. The several insert pages included in the newsletter each month are designed to be removed for easy sharing or posting within a business or organization. For this reason, the Chamber has decided to continue distributing this newsletter in the conventional manner with no opt-out. This also maintains value for limited advertising. Advertising inserts are just \$100 per insertion to reach 430 key decision-makers in the Mason area. This newsletter is mailed to all contact people for Chamber members, Chamber volunteers, and select stakeholders. A .pdf copy of the newsletter is also available to all the same day it is delivered by the post office at the Chamber's website www.masonchamber.org. Deadline is the 20th of the month for all submissions. Items are included as space is available and submissions are edited for space and consistency of the publication.

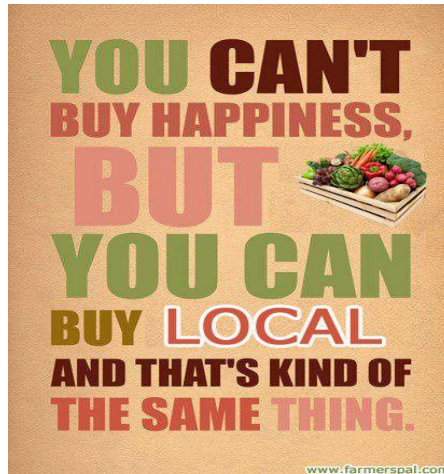
Since August of 2006, the Chamber also publishes a mid-month "MASON in Motion UPDATE" newsletter electronically. This e-mailed newsletter is forwarded to all who have submitted their e-mail addresses to the Chamber, provided they are associated with a Chamber member, are a Chamber volunteer, or are a select stakeholder. A link to the archive on the website for the .pdf copies of the printed and mailed "MASON in Motion" newsletter is included in the UPDATE. A .pdf copy of this UPDATE newsletter is also available to all at the Chamber's website www.masonchamber.org under the "Newsletters" tab. Deadline is the 10th of the month for all UPDATE submissions. All items submitted are included, subject to minor editing for publication consistency.

It is the intention of the Chamber to limit broadcast e-mails to those who have e-mail addresses submitted to the Chamber to 24 times per year at most. Of course, those who are Chamber leaders and volunteers get much more frequent information e-mailed to them.

Look ahead for upcoming events on:

www.masonchamber.org

**AT THE HOME PAGE, CLICK ON THE
MASON AREA COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR**



**FEEL FREE TO FORWARD THIS NEWSLETTER UPDATE TO OTHERS AND INVITE THEM TO SEE OUR REGULAR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER ONLINE
CLICK ON NEWS AT:**

www.masonchamber.org

TO VIEW UPCOMING MASON AREA COMMUNITY CALENDAR EVENTS

Click on Community Events at: www.masonchamber.org

MACC distributes UPDATE in "Constant Contact." This "Mason in Motion Update" bulletin is being sent to those who have e-mail addresses registered with the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce as contact people for Chamber members, associates of Chamber members, and select Chamber stakeholders.

To be removed from this list automatically and ***permanently***, do NOT reply to this e-mail. Instead, use the UNSUBSCRIBE button or send a new e-mail with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line to: masonchamber@masonchamber.org

Also, whenever you know of anyone who isn't getting this, but should be getting this by e-mail, just let us know. We'll be glad to add their e-mail address to the list!



Join Our Mailing List!

FOR A .pdf FILE OF LAST MONTH'S PRINTED "MASON IN MOTION" NEWSLETTER AND OTHER MASON AREA COMMUNITY INFORMATION, GO ONLINE AND CLICK ON NEWS AT WWW.MASONCHAMBER.ORG