
MASON *in Motion*

2010 MASON AREA CHAMBER AWARD WINNERS SELECTED

Each year, the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce recognizes excellence in the Mason area at our annual Awards Dinner. Awards are presented for Citizen of the Year, Excellence in Education, Excellence in Business, President's Award, and Special Recognition. The Chamber's 2010 Annual Awards Dinner will be held the evening of Wednesday, February 10, 2010 at the **Eldorado Golf Course** Banquet Center at 3750 W. Howell Road. Approximately 185 people attend the event to honor those awarded. This year, the following awards will be given to deserving businesses, groups, and individuals:

Harvey and Carol Fanson are selected as the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce's 2010 Citizens of the Year. This annual award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the community over several years through their caring and concern.

They have been extensively involved as volunteers in the **Mason Public Schools** athletic programs for well over 30 years. Harvey Fanson is a volunteer assistant coach for the **Mason Middle School** eighth grade football team. He is a positive role model and mentor for the boys. All their games, and many other games, are video recorded by Carol Fanson. Harvey Fanson records the varsity **Mason High School** football games on Friday nights during the season. Harvey has been a farmer all his life, often postponing his corn or soybean harvesting to coach or attend a game. During the winter, they are actively involved with the wrestling programs at the middle school and high school. They attend most high school basketball games and, in the spring, they help with track and field. Harvey and Carol Fanson have been active volunteers assisting 4-H, FFA, the **Ingham County Fair** and the Aurelius Baptist Church.



expanded since then," says Bob Harter. "Technology has also greatly changed how we do business." His son Eric, the dealership's general manager, and grandson Zach are continuing in the family business.

Earlier this year, General Motors informed the Harters that their Chevrolet dealership franchise would be discontinued soon, due to cutbacks at the national level. Meanwhile, the future focus of **Andrews Automotive** is to concentrate on the used car and body shop parts of their business, while trying to get their franchise back.

(continued on page 2)

A publication of the



Mason Area
Chamber of Commerce

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Mason, Michigan 48854
Phone: 676-1046 ~ Fax: 676-8504
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January 2010

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

- 2010 Chamber Award Winners
- New Chamber Officers for 2010
- News From Our Chamber Members
- Calendar of 2010 MACC Events
- Marketing Tips for Tough Times
- Inserts: Program of Work with President's Letter and Vision and Theme for 2010, Awards Dinner Reservation Form with List of Current and Past Award Winners, Bestsellers News Years Day Event

NEW 2010 MACC OFFICERS NAMED

The Mason Area Chamber of Commerce will have two new officers this year. Neil Kentner of **Wynsmoor Manor** will continue as president, Jamie Robinson of **Bestsellers & Darrell's Market** will be vice-president, Aaron Fiedler of **Fiedler Insurance** will be treasurer, and Jeff Haueter of **Mason A&W Restaurant** will continue as past president. These four officers are all chamber board members and make up the executive committee of the chamber. The 2010 Mason Area Chamber Board elected these officers for a one-year term that begins January 1, 2010 and ends December 31, 2010 at their December 4, 2009 meeting.

MACC TO CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE AWARDS



Cindy Hyaduck of **Mason Middle School** is selected as the recipient of the Mason Area Chamber's 2010 Excellence in Education award. This award recognizes an educator who best exemplifies the qualities that inspire students to learn and value education.

A special education EMI staff member for 27 years, she has been with **Mason Public Schools** for 22 years. Her principal Dan McConaghy says that

“she is a caring and selfless individual who provides a nurturing climate for a group of students who are very needy and highly dependent on a safe and orderly environment throughout the school day.” Cindy Hyaduck has also been active in various school improvement projects, Special Olympics, and Girl Scouts.

Jamie Robinson of **Darrell's Market and Bestseller's Books & Coffee Company** is selected to receive the 2010 MACC President's Award. This award recognizes the contributions made by an individual to the Mason Area Chamber's goals this past year and in recent years. **Darrell's Market & Hardware** is a charter member of the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce.



In particular, the Chamber recognizes her contributions to so many community events as an active member of the Hometown USA Committee for many years. A past member of the Chamber's Board of Directors, Jamie has also contributed greatly to the success of the Good Morning Mason news and networking meetings for each of the 13 years they've been happening. Her activities outside the Chamber are even more numerous and include the **Kiwanis Club of Mason**, **Mason DDA**, and **Mason First Presbyterian Church**. Jamie Robinson, with her husband Scott and son Jared Browsers, also have **The Vault Delicatessen**, located next door to the bookstore in downtown Mason.

The **Michigan Steam Engine & Threshers Club** is selected for one of the Chamber's 2010 Special Recognition awards in appreciation for their preservation of our agricultural heritage through their annual show held since 1972 in our Mason area community. The Club has been in existence since 1958 and will have their 52nd annual show this next summer -- always the weekend of the last Friday in July.



Shireen Luther of the **Kiwanis Club of Mason** and **TomCo Asphalt** is selected for the other 2010 Special Recognition award in appreciation for her leadership and active assistance in supporting so many community events and activities in the Mason area.



Shireen Luther is a lifelong resident of Mason and graduated from **Mason High School** and MSU in Agricultural technology while operating the family farm, raising corn, soybeans, wheat and hogs. She started real estate in 1979 and retired in 2003 to work for **TomCo Asphalt**. She has been a member of the **Kiwanis Club of Mason** for 18 years. When she was president of the club they founded the **Mason High School Summit Campus Key Club**. Liz Luttrell-Wilson and Shireen Luther organized the **Mason Promise Scholarship** in 2005.

The MACC Awards Dinner is generously presented by Mason's **Ace Hardware** and is sponsored by a select number of Chamber members. Individual and group awards are sponsored by many other Chamber members. See the February "Mason in Motion" newsletter for a listing of all our fine sponsors. As part of the event, recognition is also given to retiring Chamber Board members. Prepaid dinner reservations are \$35 per person. Since only a limited number



of places are available, people are advised to send their checks well before the January 29 deadline. Credit card prepaid reservations are taken by phone at (517) 676-1046.

Mailed to over 425 key business decision-makers, advertising in the "Mason in Motion" newsletter provides a low-cost hassle-free direct mail option for business-to-business promotion and marketing.

MASON in Motion

2010 MASON AREA CHAMBER AWARD WINNERS SELECTED

January 2010

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

NEW 2010 MACC OFFICERS NAMED

While display ads like this one are available in this newsletter, most businesses and organizations choose to do an 8 1/2 by 11 inch insert printed by you (or by us if we can use the other side) that allows up to 3 non-competing members to participate at once. Your insert can educate members, stakeholders, and volunteers about your business, include coupons, promote a sale or event, etc. (Like **Bestseller's Books & Coffee Company** has chosen to do in this newsletter.)

- Your own business or organization can be included in the next newsletter by following these steps:
- 1) Fax a copy of what you want to the Chamber at 517-676-8504 or E-mail to masonchamber@masonchamber.org for confirmation of your placement
 - 2) Send \$100 payment to guarantee inclusion in the next newsletter mailing
 - 3) Drop off or mail 440 copies of your insert to the Chamber by the 20th of the month.

NEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

Caring Touch Therapeutic Massage will close in Mason as of December 31, 2009 and will consolidate their operations at their other location at Downtown DeWitt Therapeutic Massage. Any outstanding gift certificates or pre-purchase packages may be redeemed at the DeWitt location. For questions or concerns, please contact Laura Ford at (517) 303-6584.

NEED TO MAKE A HEALTH CARE BENEFIT CHANGE? LET THE CHAMBER HELP

The Mason Area Chamber of Commerce is a reciprocal member with the **Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce**. One specifically contracted **LRCC** benefit extended to select Mason Chamber members is access to the **LRCC** Blue Cross group. The **Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce**, in partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield and Blue Care Network of Michigan is pleased to provide a group health care program designed to help select small business owners attract and retain employees.



The Blues/Chamber sponsored program is available to select groups with two or more employees, as well as sole proprietors. These chamber members have access to a variety of options giving them flexibility to match the best plan to their budget.

Check out the new BlueCore PlusSM plan that offers basic coverage, immediate in-network coverage for routine services, and 100 percent paid urgent care services. Or look at the new BCN high-deductible plan to pair with a Health Reimbursement Account.

The **Lansing Chamber** can also help administer your Blues health care plan so you can spend more time growing your business. They offer billing, membership and dedicated customer servicing. Contact the **Lansing Regional Chamber** or your Mason Area Chamber of Commerce member agent, to help you make a change for the better in 2010! Just let them know you are a member of the Mason Chamber.

WALLING NAMED NEW MACC BOARD MEMBER

Michelle Carpenter of **Dart Bank** has been a 2009 board member and 2009 vice-president of the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce. She has recently moved from Dart's Mason office to work at their Holt/South Lansing office. Therefore, it is with regret that her resignation was accepted from the MACC Board and as vice president as a first item of new business during the Board's meeting on December 4, 2009.

A replacement Board member, to serve immediately and until the next regular election in November 2010, was then selected by the 2009 MACC Board. Selected was Tim Walling of **Dart Bank**, who has been with the bank for over a year as Vice President/Commercial and Agricultural Lender. He has been in banking since 1979, with positions in operations, retail banking and commercial lending. He is part of **Dart's** commercial lending team in both the Grand Ledge and Mason offices.

Tim Walling has been involved for many years in Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, and United Way activities in other local communities in Michigan. We welcome Tim Walling's expertise and the commitment of **Dart Bank** to a strong MACC Board.

NOTE: Members with AT&T or "sbcglobal" e-mail accounts have been experiencing difficulty in sending e-mail to the Chamber and to Chamber staff. If you experience a "bounce back," you may choose to e-mail the Chamber from another e-mail address. Alternatively, you may e-mail Doug Klein at his business or his other job's e-mail addresses -- **dougklein@usa.net** or **kleind@lcc.edu** -- as other members have done. However, response time for those is a bit slower.

MARKETING TIPS FOR TOUGH TIMES

Marketing in the current economy is a big challenge for everyone. Now is not the time to slow down -- not while competition is heating up and prospects make it more and more challenging to win their fleeting time, attention, trust, and purchasing power. Proving your case in your marketing is more important than ever.



With the constant barrage of poorly crafted, cliché sales pitches and marketing messages, many usually assume there is some catch or "gotcha" when advertising claims are stated. Also, our distrust for high profile people getting caught for dumb or illegal behavior makes it easier to be cynical about what people say.

A lot of ads (about 95 out of 100) lack serious proof or evidence to justify belief or trust in what the advertiser is saying or trying to sell. This kind of advertising makes as much sense as setting \$100 bills on fire and tossing them out the window. Amazingly, most people are still missing the "point of proof" during a recession, a time when

marketing dollars must be spent even more wisely.

Here's a quick checklist of 10 powerful tools to consider in proving your case with all of your marketing efforts: 1) Testimonials; 2) Case studies;

3) Pictures of clients using your services or your product in action; 4) Lists of key clients or customers; 5) A strong guarantee; 6) Years in business; 7) Awards, certifications, or industry accolades; 8) Positive industry articles, 9) Articles written about you, your product/service or anyone within your organization; and 10) A "top 10 reasons" or benefits sheet that describes the biggest competitive advantages you provide.

In the age of marketing distrust, and "Advertising Deficit Disorder" it's easy to stand out from the sea of competition. Do what's right, provide superior expertise and service, and back up your claims. Prove your case!



2010 Schedule of Chamber Events

EVENT

MACC Awards Dinner
 Good Morning, Mason!
 MACC Business Expo
 Good Morning, Mason!
 Spring Fling Weekend
 Spring Fling Courthouse Show
 Thursday Night Live!
 Thursday Night Live!
 Good Morning, Mason!
 Thursday Night Live!
 Independence Day Celebration & Parade
 Thursday Night Live!
 Thursday Night Live!

DAY & DATE

Wednesday, February 10
 Thursday, February 25
 Thursday, March 11
 Thursday, April 29
 April 29 to May 2
 Saturday, May 1
 Thursday, May 27
 Thursday, June 10
 Thursday, June 24
 Thursday, June 24
 Sunday, July 4
 Thursday, July 8
 Thursday, July 22

MACC Golf Classic & Mixer
 Ingham County Fair & MV Week
 Thursday Night Live!
 Good Morning, Mason!
 Thursday Night Live!
 Down Home Days Weekend
 Thursday Night Live!
 Down Home Days Family Walk
 Down Home Days Courthouse Show
 MACC Raffle Party
 Good Morning, Mason!
 Mason Holidays Celebration & Parade
 "Holiday Party" Member Mixer
 Good Morning, Mason!

Thursday, July 29
 August 2 to August 7
 Thursday, August 12
 Thursday, August 26
 Thursday, August 26
 September 16 to 19
 Thursday, September 16
 Friday, September 17
 Saturday, September 18
 Thursday, October 14
 Thursday, October 28
 Friday, November 26
 Thursday, December 2
 Thursday, December 9

MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SPONSOR NETWORKING AND COMMUNITY EVENTS. THIS IS A GREAT WAY TO PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS!

2010 Board of Directors

Neil Kentner President
Wynsmoor Manor
 Jamie Robinson Vice-President
Darrell's Market & Bestsellers
 Aaron Fiedler Treasurer
Fiedler Insurance Agency
 Jeff Haueter Past President
Mason's A&W Restaurant

Pam Bullen *Bullen's Wellness*
 Sue Burgess *B-Dry System of S. Central Michigan*
 Joe Dean *City of Mason*
 Jim Harvey *Mason Public Schools*
 Chris Iott *Ace Hardware*
 Robin Manno *Dart Container Corporation*
 Ron Tatro *Mason Orchestral Society*
 Tim Walling *Dart Bank*
 Bob Warnke *Mason State Bank*

Doug Klein Executive Director
 Bonnie Root Administrative Assistant
 Aleasha Wood Program Assistant



Mason Area
 Chamber of Commerce

148 E. Ash Street
 Mason, Michigan 48854

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PRESORTED
 STANDARD
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 MASON, MI
 48854
 PERMIT NO. 42

Bestsellers Books & Coffee
On the Courthouse Square
bestsellersbookstore.com
676-6648

**New Years
Day 2010!
11am-3pm**

**Bestsellers
4 hour-
Book
Blow-out
Sale!**

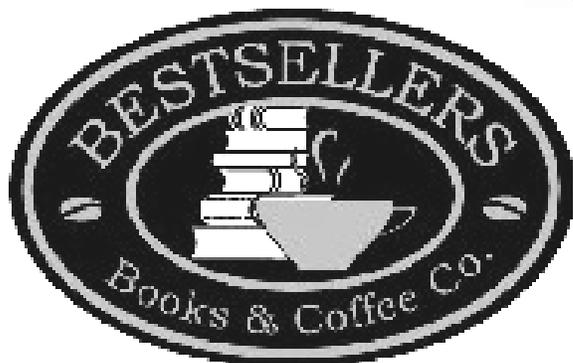
- **25% off stocked
Adult Hardcover**
- **20% off Stocked
Paperbacks**
- **20% off Stocked
Teen & Children's
Books**
- **50% off Bargain
Book Selections
(up to 80% off original)**
- **50% off used books
(Up to 90% off original)**

Advantage Awards, prior pur-
chases, special orders and holds
are not included in this sale.

EAT!

Enjoy Full Breakfast
Brunch in our
Café & Banquet Room
11am-1pm \$10

**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**





 *Mason Area*
Chamber of Commerce
Mason, Michigan



It's a jungle out there!
Here's a great way to cut through to reach your best customers.

Complete this form and return it right away to:
MACC, 148 E. Ash Street, Mason, MI 48854
Phone: 517) 676-1046 Fax: (517) 676-8504

Please reserve a table in the next Mason Area Business - to - Business Expo on Thursday, March 11, 2010 for our business or organization.

(Limited to the first 25 businesses responding. MACC members only. Details will follow when you return your form.)

Business/Organization: _____

_____ Our check for \$100 is enclosed.
_____ Please bill us.

Do you sell products and services to businesses and organizations?

Don't miss this one! Sign up now for the next Mason Area Business-to-Business Expo, which will be held on Thursday evening, March 11th from 5 to 8 PM at the Cobblestone Events Center, 205 Mason Street in the Mason Antiques District. It's a great way to talk with other business people about your business!

MASON
HOMETOWN U.S.A.
VALUES

*Buy locally.
It's good for our community
and good for our future.*



ANNUAL AWARDS



Mason Area
Chamber of Commerce
Mason, Michigan

Citizen of the Year – An individual who has made significant contributions to the community over several years through their caring and concern.

Excellence in Business – A business that has demonstrated innovation, risk and growth that represents the entrepreneurial spirit of business development.

Excellence in Education – A teacher who best exemplifies the teaching qualities that inspire students to learn and value education.

President's Award – A person or group of persons who have made significant contributions to the Chamber's goals over the past year.

Special Recognition – A person, group of persons, or organization that has made significant contributions to the community or to the Chamber usually within the recent past. This is an opportunity to highlight people, events, or programs that have made an impact in the community or in support of Chamber programs.

This is a list of Chamber award winners through 2010:

Citizen of the Year

Aggie Corner – 1987
Jenny Dart – 1988
Donald Cairns – 1989
Rollin Dart – 1990
Terry Shultis – 1991
Mary Jo Leonard – 1992
Wendy Pulver – 1993
Jim Blauvelt – 1994
Frank Guerriero – 1995
Claude Cady – 1996
Jackie Lawrence – 1997
Virginia Schlichter – 1998
Sue Parsons – 1999
Stan Jordan – 2000
Tom & Rose Mary Hopp – 2001
Ray Perkins – 2002
Larry Howe – 2003
Bob Ware – 2004
Jack Davis – 2005
Doug Williams – 2006
Don Jacot – 2007
Shirley Grieve – 2008
Lee Talboys – 2009
Harvey & Carol Fanson – 2010

President's Award

Dick Roberts – 1996
Craig Goble – 1997
Liz Hogg & Tom Marriott – 1998
MACC Golf Outing Committee – 1999
Jeff Haueter – 2000
Jeanine Christman – 2001
Tom Bergeon – 2002
Kerry Ferguson – 2003
Doug Klein – 2004
Russ Whipple – 2005
Arnold Short – 2006
Ron Tatro – 2007
Cathy Groce – 2008
Pat Weiler – 2009
Jamie Robinson – 2010

Excellence in Education

Mary Lou French – 1996
Cheryl Roe – 1997
Margaret Edgar – 1998
Sandra Haynes – 1999
Debbie Blauvelt – 2000
Jana Stewart – 2002
John Berry – 2003
Margaret Doolittle – 2004
Michele Shafer – 2005
Kathy Horton – 2006
Barb Buda – 2007
Margaret Cottrill – 2008
David Jones – 2009
Cindy Hyaduck – 2010

Excellence in Business

Vision Real Estate – 1996
Joseph A. Young & Associates – 1997
Mason Community News – 1998
AeroGenesis Aviation – 1999
Grove's Motorsports – 2000
Cayenne Grill – 2001
Bestsellers Books & Coffee Co. – 2002
Merindorf Meats – 2003
Done-Right Auto & RV – 2004
ServiceMaster Absolute – 2005
Gestamp U.S. HardTech – 2006
Sheridan Realty & Auction – 2007
Wolverine Engineers & Surveyors – 2008
Ware's Pharmacy – 2009
Andrews Automotive – 2010

Special Recognition

MACC Balloon Rally Committee – 2002
John & Betty Brazier – 2003
Mason Optimist Club and Mason DDA – 2004
Joe Watkins – 2004
Care Free Medical & Gorsline-Runciman – 2005
Sheren Wright – 2005
Mason Area Historical Society – 2006
Jeff Haueter – 2007
Mason Promise Scholarship – 2007
Colleen Briggs – 2008
American Legion Post 148 – 2008
Len Stuttman – 2009
Friends of the Mason Library – 2009
Shireen Luther – 2010
Michigan Steam Engine & Thresher's Club – 2010

Your Invitation to an Evening of Excellence...

MASON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2010 AWARDS DINNER



To Honor the 2010 Recipients of

The Citizen of the Year Award
Harvey & Carol Fanson

The President's Award
Jamie Robinson

The Excellence in Business Award
Andrews Automotive

Special Recognition
**Michigan Steam Engine
& Threshers Club
and Shireen Luther**

The Excellence in Education Award
Cindy Hyaduck

Wednesday, February 10, 2010
Eldorado Golf Course ~ 3750 W. Howell Road
\$35.00 per person
5:30-6:30 ~ Social Hour ~ Cash Bar
6:30 ~ Dinner

Our Awards Dinner is presented by Mason's **ACE Hardware**
and generously supported by select Chamber members.

Please RSVP by Friday, January 29th
Reservations cannot be accepted after January 29th nor will any be available at the door

Please return the form below to the Chamber office to arrive before January 29, 2010
148 E. Ash Street ~ Mason, MI 48854 ~ Fax: 676-8504 ~ E-mail: masonchamber@masonchamber.org
Questions: (517) 676-1046

MACC 2010 AWARDS DINNER



Mason Area
Chamber of Commerce
Mason, Michigan

The following people will attend from _____

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 8. _____ |

Payment Enclosed

Bill Us

2010 PROGRAM OF WORK



Mason Area
Chamber of Commerce
Mason, Michigan

OUR MISSION: The Chamber of Commerce team of members promotes community pride, stimulates an awareness of the community and promotes economic growth in the Mason area.

2010 ACTION PLAN

GOAL 1. Economic Development – Support the facilitation and promotion of sustainable economic development consistent with “Mason Values” in the Mason area.

- A. Improve communication about housing for sale or lease. Work on online relocation resources. Maintain a list of vacant commercial and industrial property. Maintain a list of rental residential properties. Publish the lists on the Chamber’s website.
- B. Encourage education and networking among local residents who are starting new businesses with specific programs to promote the availability of entrepreneurial training, counseling, and other resources. Host a business-to-business event again in 2010 for members.
- C. Partner and support the business retention and attraction efforts of local agencies (regional, county, township, and city) through active participation -- to identify and help resolve issues that will help keep existing businesses here and bring in needed businesses to the Mason area.
- D. Support the active search for niche businesses that have a high likelihood of success in our community and are complimentary to existing businesses. Assist in soliciting specific niche expansions for existing businesses or partnerships when appropriate to meet community needs.

GOAL 2. Member Networking – Provide leadership to bring attention to and increase the vitality of the Chamber and the community.

- A. To help business owners, managers, and employees build better relationships, continue to host and expand activities that offer business networking. Networking events planned for 2010 include six Good Morning, Mason! programs, the Annual Awards Dinner in February, the Golf Outing in July, and Member Mixers including the Holiday Party Mixer in December.
- B. Implement membership recruitment and involvement programs that will retain and increase Chamber membership. Initiate continuing contact with all members and non-members in 2010.
- C. Seek opportunities to mentor new members. Encourage sponsorship of networking events, volunteer leadership, and involvement of all members in Chamber programs and activities.
- D. Represent and promote the Chamber and its members at ribbon cuttings, open houses, and member activities. Offer “visitor center” services at local events.

GOAL 3. Community Identity – Encourage local commerce of all kinds – retail, service, and manufacturing – with an integrated community identity of “Hometown U.S.A.”

- A. Be partners with the Mason Downtown Development Authority, the City of Mason, Ingham County, and others to maintain the attractive appearance of the downtown area and community “entrances” throughout the year. Continue the banners, map, and visitor guide programs in rotation.
- B. Coordinating and hosting community events that bring visibility to member businesses and provide them the opportunity to participate in the community through active sponsorship. Enhance existing community events and promote new ones by encouraging cooperative efforts between cultural, service, and other community groups.
- C. Revitalize the Member Value Card and Gift Certificate programs to increase local commerce and business opportunities with and among Chamber members. Support opportunities for cooperative promotional campaigns among members and other businesses and organizations.
- D. Promote the community activities and events of members and other groups in the Mason area that increase the awareness of our community, provide worthwhile activities for residents, and bring visitors into our community.

GOAL 4. Membership Value – Enhance the value of Chamber membership and provide for the operational needs of the Chamber.

- A. Develop and implement programs to retain and increase Chamber membership, to provide valuable services to members, and to maintain the ability of the Chamber to carry out its mission. Accomplish a readjustment in the dues structure to a tiered benefits program in 2010.
- B. Develop a variety of opportunities existing businesses can use to become more efficient and effective. Provide opportunities for volunteer leadership and involvement of all members in Chamber programs and activities.
- C. Help to grow the Chamber’s Hometown U.S.A. investments funds by sponsoring and coordinating fundraising events, including, but not limited to, the MACC Raffle and Party in October.
- D. Continue to engage in a strategic planning process in 2010 to look at vision, mission, goals, and values and will make changes as needed. The 2011 Program of Work will be based on the results of that planning.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Your Chamber of Commerce serves the Mason area community in a variety of ways – helping to expand the business community, bringing attention and visibility to the Mason area, encouraging shopping at local businesses, and being a resource to help serve the needs of our businesses. We achieve our mission with the help of many volunteers who give their time, talent and leadership skills to help make the Mason area a great place to live and work. Our Program of Work for 2010 encourages volunteer leadership and touches on the many areas where the Chamber helps the Mason area maintain its reputation as a vibrant and exciting place to be. The Chamber will also place special emphasis on event sponsorship as a promotional value this year. We will continue to host community events to bring visitors into our community and provide an opportunity for our members to sponsor events where residents gather together and renew friendships. Providing networking opportunities among business owners, managers and employees continues to be an important Chamber function and many networking events are also offered during the year. If you can find the time to volunteer for at least one committee, activity or event, I know you will find it rewarding both in the achievement you feel and in the new personal contacts you will make. Call the Chamber office to let us know how you would like to do your part in keeping our community a great place to call home.

-- Neil Kentner, 2009-2010 President - Mason Area Chamber of Commerce



2010 PROGRAM OF WORK VISION AND THEME

Buy locally.

It's good for our community and good for our future.

To promote long-term prosperity in the Mason area, our 2010 vision will remain one centered on continuing efforts to shift more buying behavior of residents, visitors, and organizations toward support of our local businesses. We still need to consciously plan a future that will encourage placing more value on commerce in our community. Each time we spend a dollar, we would do well to weigh the full value of our choices, not solely to

ourselves immediately, but for the future we want in our own hometown. We need to recognize the impact of our dollars and support institutions that benefit our common interests.

It's time people in our community stop paying the higher costs to our local economy when we allow the Mason area to gradually lose its local business base. We need to commit ourselves to reducing the flow of our hard-earned money to other areas, regions, states, and countries. Local businesses create a multiplier effect in our community's economy of three to five times. Local businesses not only employ local people, they employ a wide array of supporting services. They hire architects, designers, shops, sign makers and contractors for construction. Local businesses make opportunities grow for local accountants, insurance agents, computer consultants, attorneys, advertising outlets and others.

Local retailers and distributors also often carry a higher percentage of locally-made goods, creating more jobs for local producers. Small manufacturers are also affected since they rely on local retailers to give their new products a chance. Local retailers are more likely to take a chance with the goods of a new manufacturer, or a product that is not part of a national sales plan. Therefore, small manufacturers and a wide variety of service industries have a clear stake in the health of local retailers.

Retailers sift through competing goods and services to find those that appeal to their customers. Even though a single local shop may have a smaller selection than a big city outlet, a multiplicity of retailers creates great diversity. For example, when local retailers buy for their local customers' tastes, the cumulative effect is demand for a wider variety. Our freedom of choice is imperiled when a few buyers from internationally-oriented businesses choose what reaches consumers. This may be only mildly disturbing for most consumer goods, but truly frightening when you consider the impact on our choice of technology, news and other modes of expression.

When asked to name our favorite restaurant, cafe or shop, we almost always cite a unique local business (look at the results of the latest *Ingham County Community News* "People's Choice" poll as proof). We embrace the idea of distinctive businesses with local character, but often forget their survival depends on our patronage. It is easy for us to get so consumed by efficiency that we forget how much of our lives we spend eating out, shopping, going online, and doing other business. We owe it to ourselves to consider the quality of our buying experiences, and understand the long-term benefits when we choose a community-based business.

Local owners, managers and employees with much of their life invested in their businesses have a natural interest in the long-term health of our community. Community-based businesses are essential to charitable endeavors, frequently serving on local boards, and supporting a variety of causes. Not all local businesses are models to follow, and big is not necessarily a bad thing, but the overall impacts are clear: local businesses play a vital role in our community that internationally-oriented businesses rarely do. For example:

- local businesses make more of their own purchases locally.
- more of the profits from local businesses recirculate in the community.
- local businesses have employees with more diverse skills, employing more managerial and professional people locally.

Our vision is simple: our dollars make a difference. Supporting local businesses is the best choice to insure the economic future of **Mason, Michigan – Hometown U.S.A.**



Mason Area
Chamber of Commerce
Mason, Michigan