



**MASON COUNTY GROWTH ALLIANCE**  
*STRENGTHENING OUR LOCAL ECONOMIES*

**NEWS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2      JUNE 1, 2009

**PROMOTING SUCCESS IN MASON COUNTY**

*The Brill Company* in Ludington, a manufacturer of wood furnishings for dormitory and apartment environments, is adding new production equipment which will retain two existing jobs and potentially create three to five more in the next couple of years.

This new machine is a CNC controlled horizontal boring machine that also shoots glue and dowels into the holes immediately after they are drilled; a one-stop process. The CNC capabil-

ity means that set up time is virtually eliminated and will enable more profitability on smaller jobs anytime during the year and even break into larger runs with minimal interruption.

*Michigan Food Processors Co-op (Indian Summer)* is undergoing a construction project at 5130 S. Pere Marquette Highway. This investment will add storage capacity for 125,000 bushels of apples to their existing facility storage. There is

a tremendous demand for apple storage in our area since the last units added in Mason County were built in 1965.

This project will create about four new jobs, but will also enable ten jobs to be retained in our area. The proposed project will enable *Michigan Food Processors Co-op* to increase processing capabilities and ensure continued growth.

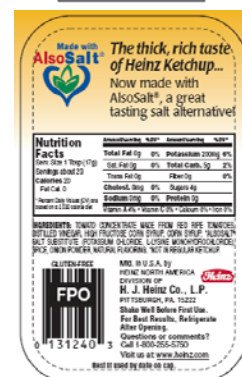
**DNP MARKETS *ALSO*SALT THROUGH HEINZ PARTNERSHIP**

A salt substitute patented by MSU is being used in a new salt-free Heinz ketchup. *AlsoSalt* is produced for commercial use through DNP or *Diversified Natural Products*, of Scottsville. This new product hit the shelves in March '09 and has been well received.

Joan Watsabaugh, whose company markets and distributes *AlsoSalt* for DNP was responsible for bringing the product to the attention of Heinz product developers. She characterized the flavor of the new ketchup as excellent. "It tastes just like

ketchup, which can't be said about some of the other salt-free ketchups on the market."

Another product produced by DNP is their gourmet mushroom line. Currently going through the legal process, DNP will be calling this part of the company 'Gourmet Mushroom East', with a partner outside of the area. Once legalities are finalized, hopes are that production of gourmet mushrooms will ramp up, along with new job creation for our area.



**WSSC BUSINESS START-UP CLASS**

**Business Startup - Entrepreneurship** – Learn the entire process of originating a business – from identifying the opportunities to completing a business plan to get you started.

Key topics include: start-up options, forms of business ownership, financing a new venture, financial management, selecting a location, marketing, regulatory compliance, and understanding fundamental principles of business.

This class is scheduled during the fall semester, Tuesday and Thursday mornings 7:00-8:20am at West Shore Community College beginning Thursday, September 3, 2009.

To register, contact

Dr. Patricia Collins, Vice President of Workforce Development  
 West Shore Community College  
 231-843-5824

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## CREATIVE CO-PACKING & CARROM WORK TOGETHER

Creative Co-Packing Solutions, of Scottville, continues to grow their business in the repacking of products for private label accounts throughout the world. They grew so much in 2008 that they needed more space and did not have time to add on to their existing site or look for a new building.

We sent an SOS message out through the Mason County Manufacturers Association listserv and found a partner in Carrom Manufacturing. The Carrom warehouse in the Ludington Industrial Park had room for lease and the deal

worked out great for both parties.

Not only do Creative and Carrom share space, they have also shared staff. The win-win is that when Carrom is in a layoff period, Creative is ramping up their staffing levels.

The Mason County Manufacturers Association has been instrumental in many relationships like this throughout our county. For more information on how to become a member, check out this new website:

[www.masoncountymanufacturers.com](http://www.masoncountymanufacturers.com)

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORT

The Mason County Growth Alliance (MCGA) presented a proposal to regionalize economic development initiatives in Manistee and Mason Counties to Manistee's Alliance for Economic Success (AES) Board of Directors in May. The presentation involved showing the many ways in which our communities are similar and the joint benefits of working together toward common goals.

The AES Board and MCGA Board both reflected on past team efforts and discussed an array of additional opportunities that could be pursued. We are hoping that between the two organizations, we can determine meaningful ways and ideas to expand upon our existing relationship that will have mutual benefit.



## ALL THINGS POSITIVE ~ JUNE 30TH

Mark your calendars for the next *Memorial Medical Center Foundation Business Leaders Breakfast* coming up on Tuesday, June 30th, 7:30 am at Memorial Medical Center.

The topic of discussion will be 'All Things Positive in Mason County'. The focus will be on the positive growth and commerce that is taking place in our community and surrounding region. We will have a line-up of brief presentations telling good news stories.

If you have a positive story that you would like to share about your business or organization, please email Julie Van Dyke at [jvandyke@masoncountygrowth](mailto:jvandyke@masoncountygrowth) or call 845.6646.

**Let's keep working together to get the good news out and spread the positive spirit!**

### Unemployment Figures:

**The current unemployment rate does not seem so bad when you compare to where it was in 1983.**

County	Current Mar 2009	Historic LOW		Historic HIGH	
	%	%	Date	%	Date
Lake	19.3	4.4	October-00	21.8	March-83
Mason	15.4	3.3	October-00	23.5	February-83
Mecosta	13.7	2.3	October-99	17.9	January-85
Newaygo	14.7	3.1	September-00	20.9	January-82
Osceola	16.0	3.5	April-00	23.0	March-83
Michigan	13.4	3.1	April-00	17.1	January-83
USA	9.0	3.7	December-00	11.4	January-83

Data series begins January 1978

Sources: MI Dept of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth  
USDOL Bureau of Labor statistics

## MANY SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES IN MASON COUNTY



In honor of National Small Business week, May 17-23, 2009, we would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge our local small businesses and the resources that service them. We are very fortunate here in Mason County to have the variety and volume of resources that an entrepreneur and/or small business require to thrive.

A small business is defined by the SBA (Small Business Association) as a business that employs fewer than 500 individuals. 99.9% of all U.S. companies are classified as small businesses and 98.4% of all Michigan companies meet that same classification. Small businesses have created 60-80% of net new jobs in the past decade nation wide. Small businesses have the benefits of bringing in "new" money into a community, which then results in job creation. In turn job creation increases spending in the local community and also raises the tax base. This higher tax base influences the opportunities for community members and

increases the value creation in the region. Many communities recognize the 3/50 project which enhances local buying power. Each individual community member targets 3 independently owned businesses in the area that they would not like to see leave the community. If that individual spends \$50 in each of those establishments on a monthly basis, for every \$100 spent, \$73 stays within the community making a huge impact on the local economy.

Small businesses across the county are succeeding by tapping into local resources, communicating and continually educating themselves in an ever changing economy. In Mason County alone, we are able to capitalize on a variety of educational tools including workshops, counseling, research and industry focus groups.

Between the Scottville Main Street Program and the Ludington & Scottville Chamber of Commerce there are frequent trainings and informa-

tional workshops. Some topics for these instructional programs are human resource management, marketing, internet appearance, tax form information, etc. The Mason County Growth Alliance (MCGA) and West Shore Community College (WSCC) work closely in offering entrepreneurial courses on starting up a business. The MCGA also works one-on-one with growing businesses to increase job creation. SCORE and the MI-Small Business & Technology Development Center (MISBTDC) work hand-in-hand to counsel entrepreneurs and small businesses with start up and growth through counseling and research. Also, The Starting Block Business Incubator in Hart is an incredible facility to assist entrepreneurs in the food industry throughout the region.

Please accompany us in celebrating and referring our local small businesses and the resources that support them.

## STATE UNVEILS BUSINESS ONE-STOP PORTAL

Starting a business in Michigan should become easier now that the state has launched a new Web site that guides prospective owners through all the permits and tax information needed before the front doors are opened.

The new site for the Michigan Business One Stop is [www.michigan.gov/business](http://www.michigan.gov/business)

One-stop-shop for business represents a significant reform in how we are serving the business community. State government is stream-

lining its operations and creating a single point of entry to state government for businesses that call Michigan home or those looking to establish a presence in the state.

**Michigan Business One Stop**  
Your source for doing business [Michigan.gov/business](http://Michigan.gov/business)



# MASON COUNTY BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION



*Compete with other local entrepreneurs to win!\**

Whether you have a new start-up proposal or are an existing business, submit your business plan to compete for a chance to win cash and local incentives to put toward your business.

Final plans must be submitted by June 30 at 5 pm. To qualify, register by May 1 through Jamie Healy, MI-SBTDC at (231) 845-6646 or [jhealy@masoncountygrowth.com](mailto:jhealy@masoncountygrowth.com).

*\*Business must locate in Mason County. Judging will be completed confidentially in July by a panel of sponsor judges. Prizes for top business plans will be awarded through cash, in-kind services and incentive package opportunities.*



Sponsored by



**National City**  
Now a part of PNC



**SCORE**



The MI-SBTDC program is partially funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration. All MI-SBTDC programs or co-sponsored programs are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made, if requested at least 2 weeks in advance. Contact Anthony Fox, 1375 S. Clare Ave, Harrison, MI 49626, ph. 989.386.6530.