

## How Can My Business Benefit from Chamber Membership?

Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce



**Mt. Pleasant Area**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Melinda Salchert**

Membership Director

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**113 W. Broadway, Suite 180**

**Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858**

**(989) 772-2396**

**What are you hoping to get out of your Chamber Membership?**

Each answer below has a corresponding page number that includes more details and a list of opportunities that will help you get the most out of membership! Don't see what you're looking for? Contact the Chamber and we will be happy to help in any way we can!

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## General

### Use of Chamber Boardrooms

If you need to hold a business meeting and lack an appropriate area to do it, the Chamber office has a small and large board room available to you, free of charge, based on availability. To schedule or look at the room, please call 989-772-2396 for more information.

### New Member Orientation

We schedule New Member Orientations periodically throughout the year to help familiarize new members with all that we have to offer. We will cover benefits, sponsorship and how best use digital profile. This Orientation is not just available to new members, but also current members and their employees! Call the office at 989-772-2396 to see when the next New Member orientation will be.

## Build Your Network

### Business After Hours

Business After Hours (BAH) is a great monthly networking event to which all Chamber of Commerce members and employees are invited. The evening event fosters new business relationships and referrals in an engaging, comfortable atmosphere with hors d'oeuvres and beverages. Each event is hosted by a different Chamber member throughout the year, and runs from 5–7 pm, typically with 75–150 people in attendance. A short program begins at 6 pm featuring an introduction of new members, a structured networking activity, and door prizes. Cost to attend for members, unless the BAH is a “special event” requiring pre-registration and additional fees, is \$5. Non-members, \$10. **New members in their first year of membership receive free entry for two, or for special BAHs, \$5 off entry for two!**

### *Hosting Opportunity*

Members in good standing may host a BAH provided they have the space and parking at their venue to accommodate the typical attendance numbers. Cost to host includes a sponsorship fee of \$550 and any costs associated with hosting the event, including food, beverages, tents/tables/chairs if needed, door prizes if desired, etc. Any host may work to secure additional supporting sponsors to help offset the \$550 sponsorship fee and other associated costs, if needed. Contact Rachel Rollin at [rrollin@mt-pleasant.net](mailto:rrollin@mt-pleasant.net) or (989) 772-2396 ext. 101 if you wish to host a BAH.

### Business Over Breakfast

Business Over Breakfast (BOB) is a bi-monthly networking event that provides updates on what's happening in the Mt. Pleasant community and the area business community, and fosters new business relationships and referrals in an engaging, comfortable atmosphere with a continental breakfast. The event is hosted by different Chamber members throughout the year, and runs from 8–9 am, typically with around 50-60 people in attendance. Cost to attend for members is \$5. Non-members, \$10. **New members in their first year of membership receive free entry for two!**

The structured program features a fun format including:

- Speedy Seconds, featuring timed news announcements from our local service clubs and organizations
- Moving on Up, featuring news from our members about promotions, new employees, and awards
- It's Your Chamber, featuring tips on how to maximize the benefits of your Chamber membership
- An introduction of new members
- Community Information

- And sometimes a friendly competition to help wake you up!

### *Hosting Opportunity*

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### **Business & Community Expo**

This annual trade show and networking event, typically held in early October, is designed to give local businesses and the community the chance to see the latest and greatest in the Mt. Pleasant Area marketplace. As a member you will have the opportunity to have a booth exhibit and/or be a sponsor. You will grow your professional network, meet customers, introduce the Mt. Pleasant community to your current products and services.

All business types are welcome to exhibit. Booth prices and sponsorship opportunities are posted toward the end of summer each year, and entrance is FREE to community members! There is no better way to immerse yourself in the Mt. Pleasant area business community. Invite your clients, your colleagues, and your business partners. You will make important business contacts, both business-to-business and business-to-public.

### **MyChamber Phone App**

Download the MyChamber App (search "MyChamberApp" in any App Store) for easy access to information on upcoming community and Chamber events, hot deals, and search for other Chamber members by name or category.

## **Promote Your Business**

### **Annual Events & Sponsorship Opportunities**

There are many sponsorship opportunities available through the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce. Contact Rachel Rollin ([rrollin@mt-pleasant.net](mailto:rrollin@mt-pleasant.net)) for a full list of annual events (Golf Outing, Annual Awards Banquet, YPN Statewide Leadership Conference, Regional Business After Hours) & sponsorship opportunities.

### **Printed Membership Directory & Community Guide**

This full-color annual magazine serves as a comprehensive community profile and business guide to the Mt. Pleasant area. The Chamber distributes 5,000 directories to area businesses, organizations, hotels, schools, real estate agencies and Michigan Welcome Centers. Members are listed in the directory both online and in print. Chairman's Circle level Chamber members are highlighted.

This publication is printed once a year. Our current directory publisher is Backus Public Relations, Inc. If you are interested in advertising in the directory, contact Kathy Backus at (989) 330-1191 or [kathy.backus@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.backus@gmail.com).

### **E-Newsletters**

Both the Chamber E-Newsletter and *Member Minutes* is emailed out bi-weekly to more than 1,200 Chamber members, organizations, and friends of the Chamber.

### Monthly Chamber E-Newsletter

Filled with Chamber news, happenings and upcoming events, the monthly digital publication provides an opportunity for members to advertise and promote their business in several ways. For more information on how, contact the Chamber Office at (989) 772-2396.

### Monthly Member Minutes

The Chamber's *Member Minutes* is an electronic announcement all about our members. This publication includes a **Member Spotlight** (must be a member for 1 year), **Ambassadors Corner** (highlights an Ambassador or Ambassador activities), **News & Views** (member press releases, promotions or important business news that you submit to us) and **Upcoming Events** (Chamber events as well that members send to us) in the area. If you are interested in more information on any of these or possible subject matter, contact the Chamber Office at (989) 772-2396.

### Mt. Pleasant/Isabella County Map

Members can take advantage of different advertising opportunities in this city/county map produced by the Chamber. 10,000 copies are printed and distributed throughout the state to Michigan Welcome Centers, area hotels and businesses. They are also placed in relocation packets, which are sent to people moving or considering a move to the Mt. Pleasant area. These maps are printed every other year. For more information on this advertising opportunity, contact the Chamber Office at (989) 772-2396.

### Website Banner Ads

There are a variety of banner ad sizes and options for placement on the Chamber's website. For more information on this advertising opportunity, contact the Chamber Office at (989) 772-2396.

### Ribbon Cuttings

Chamber members are welcome to request Ribbon Cuttings for grand openings, relocations, additions/renovations, etc. The Chamber offers the "giant scissors" and red ribbon, as well as promoting attendance to the ribbon cutting with our Chamber Ambassadors and members online and in our publications before the event and placing a photo and information in the *Member Minutes* e-newsletter after.

Members who host ribbon cuttings, which are typically held on a weekday in the afternoon, usually provide refreshments, tours of the facility (if possible), and sometimes offer small giveaways, specials deals, or a door prize drawing. Get creative! Just be sure to let the Chamber know all the details well ahead of time so we can help you with promotion. Contact Director of Events Rachel Rollin at [rrollin@mt-pleasant.net](mailto:rrollin@mt-pleasant.net) or (989) 772-2396 ext. 101 to schedule a ribbon cutting.

### Add a FREE Item or Certificate to New Member Welcome Kits

After a business joins the Chamber, they receive a "New Member Kit" (valued over \$350.00) with FREE offers and certificates from current Chamber members. Not only will they receive it once they are joined, the savings can be redeemed immediately and they can then contribute a similar offer for future new members, as yet another way to promote their business.

Both Chairman's Circle members and Basic members receive the New Member Welcome Kit upon joining the Chamber, but Chairman's Circle members also receive items in the special Chairman's Circle Kit, not only at the start of their membership, but every year after as long as they remain a Chairman's Circle member.

If your organization would like to add a special FREE coupon, offer or certificate to either Welcome Kit, please contact the Chamber Office at (989) 772-2396 with details to ensure its placement in our membership marketing materials.

### **Membership Mailing Address List**

If you wish to send out postcards introducing your business to the community or perhaps to announce that your business has relocated, a complete list of current Chamber members and their mailing addresses is available to Chamber members in good standing for \$50. The price for non-members is \$150 and requires payment in advance.

The Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce never releases lists of member e-mail addresses.

## **Increase Referrals to You**

### **Office Referrals**

The Chamber receives thousands of calls each year from residents and visitors asking where to find specific goods and services in the Mt. Pleasant area. It is often the first stop, physically or virtually, for those planning to vacation or relocate to our area. Every day, there are several calls to the office with “Where can I go for....” Or “What’s the best place for...” and those inquiring are referred to our list of members **first**.

### **Referrals Over Business**

Referrals Over Business (ROB) groups are unique and exciting groups of Chamber members that meet once a week to enjoy a cup of coffee or lunch, share business updates, and exchange referrals. During these meetings, other members will become familiar with your business and learn how they can refer you to their own circle of contacts. Imagine having a focus group working for you to find referrals for your business. That's like having a staff of 10 to 25 members that are not on your payroll but are out on the streets getting you more exposure and connecting you to important businesses and customers!

Each Chamber business category is allowed one representative per ROB Group, so some representative positions may already be filled in current groups, but if there is interest from enough members, there is always the possibility of creating new groups. ROB meeting attendance is mandatory, and if the primary representative from your business cannot attend, the groups ask that a secondary representative attend in his or her place. Cost is \$100 annually. Contact the Chamber office at (989) 772-2396 if you would like to attend a ROB meeting, and to see if there is an opening for your business category.

### *Current ROB Groups*

Thursdays – 7:30-9:00 a.m. at Coldwell Banker/Mt. Pleasant Realty, 304 E. Broadway, downtown MP

Tuesdays- 9:00-10:00 a.m. with rotating venues

***The Chamber is seeking interested businesses to start a second ROB group. Contact Membership Director Melinda Salchert at [msalchert@mt-pleasant.net](mailto:msalchert@mt-pleasant.net) if interested.***

## **Gain Online Exposure**

### **Online Business Directory Listing**

The Chamber's online business directory, which can be found on the Chamber's website at [www.mt-pleasant.net](http://www.mt-pleasant.net) allows individuals to search for member businesses by category, keyword, or alphabetically. Members with the Chairman's Circle (enhanced) membership package receive a business listing under three categories, and priority placement (top of page) in business directory search results. Extra business category listings can be purchased for an additional \$35 each.

### **Online Business Profile**

Chamber members have the opportunity to market their business to consumers with an online business profile on the Chamber website.

To login, go to the Member Login link on the Chamber's website ([www.mt-pleasant.net](http://www.mt-pleasant.net)). If you do not know your username, call the Chamber at (989) 772-2396. Forgotten or lost usernames and passwords can be retrieved using the "Forgot your username/password?" link on the login page.

Basic membership package can post the following on their profile page:

- business contact information
- link to business website
- links to business Facebook and LinkedIn pages
- a business description (200 characters)
- driving directions
- keyword search terms
- hours of operation
- listing under ONE category
- post job openings
- "Hot deals" for customers
- "Member-to-Member" only deals
- upcoming events
- "Email Link to a Friend" on your profile
- ability to pay invoices and register for events online

Chairman's Circle or "enhanced" membership package can post **all of the above** as well as:

- a company logo
- listing under THREE categories
- an enhanced 1,500-character business description
- a map link (Google, MapQuest or upload a PDF map)
- a photo gallery (up to 8 photos)
- a YouTube video
- up to 5 bullet point listing
- additional keyword search terms

With the easy-to-use database, members have access to their own information. Members are encouraged to keep their location and contact information up to date, as well as the total number of their full and part time employees. Creating and maintaining a complete profile will result in better visibility for easier access to your business.

### **Visibility on Search Engines**

If your business does not have much of an online presence yet, your business listing and profile on the Chamber website will help to increase your business's visibility on search engines. Being a Chamber member, increases your "SEO; Search Engine Optimization".

## **Enhance Leadership Skills**

### **Young Professionals Network (YPN)**

The Mt. Pleasant Area Young Professionals Network (YPN) is a group of young professionals ages 20 to 40 that meets several times a year to network, volunteer, develop leadership skills, grow professionally through educational seminars, panels and events, and of course, have fun! The Young Professionals Network provides tools that can be utilized in a real-world setting.

There is a small membership fee of \$40 for the year. Employers are encouraged to support their young professionals through learning about the program and assisting with program fees if possible. In addition to planning fun YPN social events, the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce also provides several other professional development opportunities to YPN members throughout the year, including the annual Michigan Young Professionals Network Statewide Conference.

The Mt. Pleasant YPN meets monthly to learn about issues affecting young professionals today and ways to get more involved with the community. The Mt. Pleasant YPN has general membership lunches on the fourth Tuesday of the following months (unless otherwise notified): Jan-May and Sept-Nov from 4 - 5 pm at Hunter's Ale House on E. Blue Grass Rd. June through August is "summer break", and although luncheons are suspended, there are social events.

Contact Rachel Rollin at [rrollin@mt-pleasant.net](mailto:rrollin@mt-pleasant.net), or call the Chamber at (989) 772-2396 for more information on or to join the Mt. Pleasant Young Professionals Network. You may also contact Rachel with questions, or to share ideas on a topic for a program.

### **Rollie Denison Leadership Institute**

The Rollie Denison Leadership Institute (RDLI) is an intensive educational program to prepare individuals to be the leaders of the future in the greater Mt. Pleasant area. It is sponsored by the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce and named after G.R. "Rollie" Denison, who was known as "Mr. Mt. Pleasant."

Leadership Institute participants learn about the many facets of the Mt. Pleasant community including: Leadership Styles and Practices, Leadership Philosophies, Technology, Economic Development, Healthcare, Education, Criminal Justice System, Local Government, Business Ethics, Business Law, Cultural Diversity, Listening Skills, Public Speaking, and Media Relations. The speakers for each topic area are experts in their fields and give the "perspective from the top."

In many communities, the key civic, business, and government leaders consider themselves too busy to make presentations like these, so they send a subordinate staff member to represent the agency or organization. In Mt. Pleasant, we have dedicated leaders that recognize the importance of the Leadership Institute. They make themselves available to make the formal presentations. As a result, over the nine-month program, RDLI participants develop an incredible network of high-level contacts on which they can call for the remainder of their careers in the Mt. Pleasant community.

*Gain a Graduate Network:* A second important network is the Leadership Class itself. Through the intense, interactive programs, participants get to know each other and often become life-long friends, maintaining the friendships and contacts long after graduation. The RDLI programs are conducted every other year



beginning in October of even-numbered years, and ending in May of the following year. Class size is limited to 35 individuals. During this period, the group meets for one full day per month for eight months.

### **Committee Opportunities**

The Chamber has several committee service opportunities available from year to year. Use your talents to help make an event even more special and connect with other local professionals at the same time! There's always room for extra help on our Golf Outing committee, Young Professionals Network Statewide Conference committee, and Young Professionals Network general committee (must be YPN member). Contact the Chamber office at [jpierson@mt-pleasant.net](mailto:jpierson@mt-pleasant.net) or (989) 772-2396 if you are interested in joining a committee.

## **Expand Business Knowledge**

### **Sm/Lg Business Workshops**

The Chamber plans quarterly business education workshops with topics pertinent to both large and small businesses. Past topics have included Five Things Every Small Business Should Know About IT, Managing the Millennials, and Health Care Reform: What Your Business Needs to Know. Watch your email for information about upcoming workshops in e-newsletters and e-blasts.

### **Economic Outlook Luncheon**

This annual luncheon serves as an informational and interactive presentation on the current state of our economy, and the new laws and policies that will affect our local economy in the near future. The luncheon is a great way to get your questions answered by economic experts in a smaller, more comfortable setting, with potential for one-on-one interaction with experts on the economy.

### **Legislative Breakfasts**

During these bi-annual breakfasts, state legislative panelists give presentations with the latest updates from Lansing, new policy initiatives and the most recent actions of the Governor of Michigan. Presentations are followed by a Q&A period that allows attendees to ask individual legislators and local officials more specific questions. The program includes a full plated breakfast and is a great opportunity to network with our legislators and other Chamber members.

## **Group Insurance Programs**

### **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Group Program**

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) partners with the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce to provide a group program to our members, including a broad range of health insurance plans. BCBSM promotes preventative care and wellness by offering wellness rewards plans and a savings program featuring special discounts on healthy products and services, which place an emphasis on keeping Michigan employees healthy. BCBSM's health plans also give your employees access to nearly every hospital in Michigan and more than 90 percent of its doctors and pharmacies. Other benefits include servicing close to home, easy online resources, and worldwide acceptance through the BlueCard Worldwide® Program

Purchasing your business's health insurance through this group program helps your Chamber! Contact one of the following participating agencies to get started!

<b>General Agency Insurance Company</b> 525 E. Broadway Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 (989) 773-6985 x254	<b>Northwestern Mutual</b> 114 E. Broadway Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 (989) 773-6433
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<a href="http://www.ga-ins.com">www.ga-ins.com</a> <i>Carolyn Miller</i>	<a href="http://www.mtpleasant-mi.nm.com">www.mtpleasant-mi.nm.com</a> <i>Gary Messing</i>
<b>Total Investment Planners</b> 118 W. Michigan St. Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 (989) 772-5253 <a href="http://www.totalinvestmentplanners.com">www.totalinvestmentplanners.com</a> <i>Terrie Zitzelsberger</i>	<b>Mt. Pleasant Agency, Inc. – Central Insurance</b> 119 S. Franklin St. Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 (989) 772-2977 <a href="http://www.mtpleasantagency.com">www.mtpleasantagency.com</a> <i>Kurt Feight</i>
<b>Crapo Agency of Mt. Pleasant</b> 206 N. Franklin St. Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 (989) 773-7353 <i>Michael Crapo</i>	<b>Ieuter Insurance Group</b> 414 Townsend St Midland, MI 48640 (989) 835-6701 <a href="http://www.ieuter.com">www.ieuter.com</a> <i>Ranaeda Yuncker</i>

**Health Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs)**

A flexible spending account (FSA) is one of a number of tax-advantaged financial accounts that can be set up through a cafeteria plan of an employer. A health FSA allows an employee to set aside a portion of earnings to pay for qualified expenses as established in the cafeteria plan, most commonly for medical expenses, but often for dependent care or other expenses. Money deducted from an employee's pay into a health FSA is not subject to payroll taxes, but funds not used by the end of the plan year are lost to the employee, known as the "use it or lose it" rule.

**Accident Fund Workers' Compensation Insurance Group Program**

According to the State of Michigan website, if you regularly employ three or more part-time employees at one time, or employ one or more persons for at least 35-hours per week for at least 13-weeks during the preceding 52-weeks, you are required to have Workers' Compensation Insurance. If purchasing something is mandatory for your business, why not save money to get it?

The Mt Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce and Accident Fund Insurance Company of America are proud to offer a Workers' Compensation Group Program exclusively to Chamber members. Designed specifically to aid the small- to mid-sized business owner, all Chamber members in good standing are eligible for this program, subject to underwriting guidelines.

**Chamber members receive 5% up-front savings on their premiums through this group program. That 5% savings alone often covers the entire cost of a business's Chamber membership dues!** Plus, when the group performs well, participating Chamber members are eligible for dividends, rewarding you for your safety management. There is no minimum premium to qualify, and Accident Fund also offers a variety of loss prevention tools, to further support your commitment to creating a safe working environment.

**Accident Fund Insurance Company of America**

Accident Fund Insurance Company of America is a member of Accident Fund Holdings, Inc. All policies are underwritten by a licensed insurer subsidiary of Accident Fund Holdings. Licensing per state varies by subsidiary. Accident Fund offers workers' compensation insurance, including group dividend programs, through Chambers of Commerce and independent insurance agents. **To join** the Accident Fund groups program through our Chamber, contact one of the Accident Fund Insurance Company of America

participating agents below. *Note: You must be a member in good standing to participate in this program.*

**General Agency Insurance Company**

525 E. Broadway  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
(989) 773-6981  
[www.ga-ins.com](http://www.ga-ins.com)

**Crapo Agency of Mt. Pleasant**

206 N. Franklin Street  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
(989) 773-7353