

Community celebrates the season with holiday events

The holidays bring lots of special events, and GMA is involved with some of the season's biggest. GMA has long supported Greensboro's Holiday Parade and, in more recent years, the Festival of Lights that signals the beginning of festivities in downtown Greensboro.

Now that GMA has embraced High Point's business community through last year's merger with the High Point Merchants Association, GMA continues the tradition of producing High Point's Holiday Festival Parade. It's the largest nighttime parade in the state.

Mark your calendars and don't miss any of the sights and sounds of this holiday season.

November 24 / Uptown High Point

Christmas Tree Lighting

Train depot, corner of Main and High Street, 5:30 p.m.

Holiday Festival Parade

Main Street, from Green Drive to Montlieu Avenue, 6 p.m.

December 4 / Downtown Greensboro

Musical Stroll along Elm Street

From Center City Park to Bain Street, 6-9 p.m.

First Friday Indie Market

MLK Parking Lot (corner of Elm and MLK Drive), 4-9 p.m.

Winter Wonderland

Hamburger Square, corner of McGee & S. Elm Street, 6-9 p.m.

Community Sing-along & Tree Lighting

Center City Park, corner of Friendly & N. Elm St., 5:45-9 p.m.

December 5 / Downtown Greensboro

Holiday Parade, noon

Route begins at 401 N. Greene Street (Jaycee Building), continues south on Greene, turns left on East Market Street, then turns left on Church Street. Parade route ends in front of the Greensboro Children's Museum.



A float in High Point's nighttime parade.



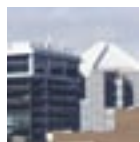
Photo by Lynn Donovan / Courtesy Grassroots Productions
Center City Park, 2008 Festival of Lights, Greensboro.



Matt Sykes, owner of Hassle Free Home Improvement.

Home improvement business focuses on customer service

Matt Sykes took his first construction jobs while a student at Oak Ridge Military Academy.



NEW MEMBER PROFILE

everything you can for the customer, and you'll get everything you need and more."

Hassle Free Home

Improvement's services range from roof replacements to drywall, painting, vinyl siding and kitchen remodeling.

The company is not a general contractor, which limits projects to \$30,000 or less. Sykes notes that small room additions can be accomplished within that range.

Sykes belongs to the Networking Gurus, a GMA group that meets weekly to exchange business leads. He's also a believer in the more informal networking opportunities, such as After Work Networks and the new Noontime Network events.

"That's where the business comes from," Sykes says, "just getting to know people and seeing what their needs are. And it really helps me with some of the aspects of selling."

Hassle Free Home Improvement
www.hfimprovement.com
336-908-5547

Construction was booming in northwest Guilford County, and he found employment with crews building large retirement communities.

Later on, at Appalachian State University, he majored in business management and took courses in construction technology. He graduated in 2004 and returned to the Piedmont Triad, where he gained more experience working with crews on many types of construction.

"I love putting up trim and doing intricate interior work," he says. A back injury pushed him into more of a management role, and six months ago Sykes started his own business, Hassle Free Home Improvement. Now he deals with clients and directs crews on the job.

Sykes chose his business name because it reflects his basic philosophy. He likes to quote Zig Ziglar, the famous motivational speaker: "Do

February 25: Save the Date

Plans are under way for GMA's 104th Annual Dinner. Details are coming soon, so plan now to be a part of this annual gala event.