



The

Chamber

APRIL
ISSUE

Courier

The Monthly Business Publication for the Canton Area



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MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARLA BOBELL

“I am Canton Good.” This is the phrase that one of the Excellence Award winners used during their speech at the 99th Annual Chamber Dinner & Awards on March 7th inside the former JCPenney’s building. The fun evening was themed “The Game of Business, Community Champions.” You found an assortment of board games used as center pieces, a huge Scrabble board welcomed you when entering and the Candy Land castle, complete with a lollipop forest, caught everyone’s eye. But the real winners of the night were our chosen winners for 2024; Aaron and Veanna Thum, Business Persons of the Year, Colin Davis, Citizen of the Year and Alicia Gillam, Educator of the Year.

I am always inspired by our winner’s acceptance speeches and this year was no exception. We really do have a wonderful community and wonderful people fill it. It is so easy to focus on things that we perceive as negative, but our Excellence Award winners described how Canton is a very special place to them, their families and, in at least one case, their business.

We all can learn from this frame of mind by looking for the good things that are happening in our communities, be welcoming to a new business that chooses to invest in your community or not wonder why an organization is doing things differently than before. Staying positive and being supportive of growth and change is a much healthier way to live. Would you not agree?

Congratulations to our well deserving 2024 Excellence Award winners, pictured on page 8. Next year the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce will be celebrating 100 years, which will also be Canton’s Bicentennial year. Be on the lookout for a very special Annual Chamber Dinner in 2025!



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**THE GAME OF BUSINESS**
COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

WELCOME NEW MEMBER CANTON - PEORIA ATHLETIC CLUB

The Canton - Peoria Athletic Club (C-PAC) opened in September of 2022, by lifelong Canton resident and Ingersoll Middle School Physical Education teacher, Zachary Welker. Zach has over 30 years of combat sports experience which includes wrestling, mixed martial arts, and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. C-PAC is an affiliate of Peoria Athletic Club in Peoria, with a location in Morton as well. The club offers Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ), Kickboxing, and Kettlebell training. Past classes have included kids BJJ and athletic yoga in partnership with The Breathing Tree Studio of Canton.



BJJ is a martial art and combat sport that focuses on ground fighting and submission holds. It emphasizes leverage, technique, and positional dominance to overcome opponents, regardless of size or strength. BJJ became popular worldwide through its effectiveness in mixed martial arts competitions.

Kickboxing is a combat sport where opponents use a variety of striking techniques, including punches and kicks, to score points while avoiding their opponent's attacks. It also can be practical for self defense. Kettlebell training utilizes cast-iron weights with handles for dynamic exercises targeting multiple muscle groups, providing a comprehensive workout that enhances strength, cardiovascular fitness, and flexibility.

C-PAC is unique in this area, as there is nothing else locally that offers BJJ or Kickboxing. Members train for self defense, competition, or to improve their health and enjoy the social aspect. Several members of local law enforcement at the city, county, and state level train at our facility, and both the Canton Police Dept and The Fulton County Sheriff's Dept utilize our facility for training. Whether it's attending Jiu Jitsu or Kickboxing classes, anyone will become more confident in their ability to protect themselves should the need arise. We welcome adults of all skill levels and offer an opportunity to become a better version of themselves.

Instructors:

Zachary Welker - BJJ

Wade Holm-Choate - Kickboxing

Cory Maurice - Kettlebells

Christa Christensen - Yoga



RETIREMENT - MR. BILL PHILLIPS

Friends, and family gathered at Canton's Harvester Inn this March to celebrate the retirement of William 'Bill' Phillips. Mr. Phillips, former president of Phillips and Associates Architects (now Graham and Hyde Architects), bid a fond farewell while announcing an impressive milestone: 2024 will mark his 50th year of Architectural Licensure in the state of Illinois; 50 years of serving Canton and its surrounding communities; 50 years of professional life filled with challenges, innovations, and undeniable success. Bill, a graduate of CHS and the U of I Architecture Program, joined his father's Canton firm in 1971. Since his licensure in 1974, Bill has worn many hats including draftsman, project architect, principal architect, inventor, and firm president.



He has been instrumental in the design of local landmarks including the Fulton County Courthouse Addition (1974), Fulton County Jail (1982), multiple additions for Parlin Ingersoll Library (1986-present), numerous Canton Park District projects (1980s-2000s), St. Mary's Parrish Center (2000), the Canton YMCA Pool and Recreation expansions (2001), YMCA Cowan Gymnasium (2003), Mid Century Communications Headquarters (2005), and the Canton Area Veterans Memorial (2012).

Bill and his father were also innovators, developing an automated decision-making software for architectural specifications and document coordination, known as System George. Cliff and Bill acquired 2 US patents for this work. Additionally, Bill was an early proponent of solar energy, holding a US Patent for solar collection innovation.

Bill has always been a catalyst for change in education, serving as District Architect for several area districts including Canton #66, Fulton #3, Havana #126, and Lewistown #97. He has



collaborated closely with school superintendents, teachers and staff to develop countless successful projects. In 2001 Bill even received a "Friends of Education" Award from the Regional Office of Education. Recent successful school projects include Farmington Pre-k thru 12 School (2005), United High School Fieldhouse Addition (2012), Canton Sr. High School Culinary Kitchen and Science Remodel (2022) and the Canton HS Multi-Purpose & Music Room Addition (currently under construction).

Bill and his business have been wonderful supporters of the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce for many years and we would like to thank him for that dedication to the Chamber and to his community. We wish Bill the best on his retirement Congratulations, Bill!

SRPED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MICHELLE SPIVA

The Spoon River Partnership for Economic Development (SRPED) is thrilled to announce Michelle Spiva as their new Executive Director. Michelle brings two decades of leadership experience and is passionate about driving economic development in Fulton County. With experience in business operations, education, finance and project management, Michelle has a unique skill set that will benefit business growth in our community. She earned her Bachelors of Business Administration from Capella University with a focus in Management and Leadership. This study of leading people and communities through open communication will help to bring businesses, local government, investors and other key stakeholders together to benefit all of Fulton County.



Michelle Spiva
Executive Director of SRPED

Michelle and her family have been proud to call Canton home since 2012. Volunteering in our community has always been important. Currently, Michelle serves on several local boards including Spoon River United Way, Graham Hospital Foundation, Lambda Chi Omega Sorority and is currently the Vice Chair of the First Christian Church Board. Her passion for helping others within our community through active volunteerism is inspiring.

With high energy and a motivational style of leadership, Michelle brings a visionary perspective to SRPED. She is eager to meet with local business owners, professionals, entrepreneurs, and other key stakeholders to drive positive growth for businesses and residents alike. With a dedicated focus on workforce development, downtown revitalization, and business attraction, Michelle will help to serve as a catalyst for economic and community development in Fulton County.



mspiva@cantonillinois.org



309-641-2677 Ext. 4



**SPOON RIVER
PARTNERSHIP**
for Economic Development

CANTON PARK DISTRICT

In February 1921, the Canton Chamber of Commerce named attorney C.H. Hippler to head a committee to investigate the creation of a park district in their township. As a result, a petition was filed asking Canton Township to be constituted a park district. The referendum question passed during the December 19, 1922 election by a two to one margin. The Canton Park District was officially organized on April 3, 1923 and began operations by purchasing Big Creek and Athletic Parks.

Over the last 100 years the District has expanded to over 1,400 acres and includes South Park, Anderson Park, John Dean Park, Wallace Park, Lakeland Park, Hulit Park, and the Ingersoll Airport. Only a handful of park districts across the state have airports under their management.

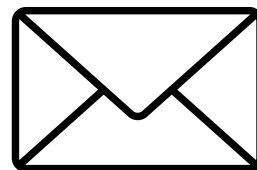
The Park District offers numerous facilities for residents and visitors of Canton including: a modern pool with drop and flume slides; seven playgrounds; eight ball fields; dog park; tennis and pickle ball courts; four picnic shelters; veterans memorial; Donaldson Community Center; Gary G. Baker Recreation Center, exercise equipment; golf range; six outdoor basketball courts; horse shoe pits; 18 hole disc golf course; ten miles of paved walking and biking paths; and five lakes.

The Park District has a full time staff of seven but employs up to 100 during the year. Employees work in various departments such as administration, maintenance, recreation, and airport.

Various programs and events are offered throughout the year including Youth Baseball, Movies in the Park and Dive-In Movies at Big Creek Pool. Lil Explores, Jr. Master Naturalist, Dance Classes, Bingo and Bunco. For a full list of programs and events check out The Canton Park District website at www.cantonpark.org and click on the 2024 Program and Events tab, or call the Gary G. Baker Recreation Center for more information at 309-647-7665(Pool).



The Park District's administrative office is in Wallace Park at the Donaldson Community Center (250 South Avenue D)
Office hours are 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday-Friday
Phone: 309-647-1345. Fax: 309-647-2463
Email: info@cantonpark.org



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

The 99th Annual Chamber Dinner & Awards took place on Thursday, March 7th at the former JCPenney building in Canton with the theme of “The Game of Business, Community Champions”. At this event we recognized very deserving winners of the Excellence Awards given out by the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce. Those winners are:



Educator of the Year - Alicia Gillam (left), Citizen of the Year - Colin Davis (middle), and Business Persons of the Year - Aaron and Veanna Thum, owners of Crawford’s Home Furnishings (right)



Also given out this night was Ambassador of the Year to Dave Lewis owner of Dave Lewis Studios



Many Chamber Members and families and friends of the winners all gathered together for a wonderful evening.

THANK YOU

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR ANNUAL DINNER & AWARDS SPONSORS!



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Thank you for supporting this cherished Chamber event

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Harriet Ellis
Harold Jump



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CANTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS *after hours*

Networking
Opportunity

HOSTED THIS MONTH BY:

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— OF CANTON —
REHABILITATION & NURSING

Will be held at Bistro 101
101 E. Elm St. Canton IL



Thursday, April 18
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Food, beverages, fun, giveaways and networking

Upcoming 2024 Business After Hours 5:00pm - 7:00pm

May 16th

Country Financial & Wee Ma Tuk

June 20th

Rock Valley Physical Therapy

July 18th

Spoon River Home Health, Quality
Roll Off, & Mercantile 25

August 15th

Buckheart Solar

September 19th

TBK Bank

October 17th

United Way for Fulton County IL

November 21st

Barnhart, Tinsman & Parrish, Ltd Klinedinst
Chiropractic, Stinauer Family Dentistry,
Oakdale Vetrinarian Center, Davis &
Campbell, LLC and Official Time Out

December 12th

Ipava State Bank & Billy's Tap

Interested in hosting Business After Hours in 2025? Contact Carla Bobell by
phone at 309-647-2715 ext 2 or by email at cbobell@cantonillinois.org.



Samantha Braden - Rhoades Real Estate

Bobby Brown - Flat Branch Home Loans

Joe Christian - MidAmerica National Bank

Stephen Clark - Town and Country Insurance

Brandy Cozad - Jack's Bar

Kiley Davis-Crouse - Line-X of Canton

Tama Duhs - Bank of Farmington

Sherri Delost - Jim Maloof Realtor

Madison Embry - Bank of Farmington

Jake Green - Graham Health System

Jeromie Hale - Bistro 101

Elli Hummel - Jack's Bar

Amanda Ketcham - Spoon River College

Seth Klinedinst - Crawford's Home Furnishings

John Lemon - Rise Canton

Dave Lewis - Dave Lewis Studio, Ltd.

Taryn Mellert - Spoon River Electric

Amanda Reed - MidAmerica National Bank

Codi Swibold - Hy-Vee Food Stores

Dr. AJ Thum - Associates in Dentistry

Missy Towery - Mid Century Fiber

Bryce Vaughn - CEFCU of Canton

Nick Wright - Country Financial



Community Work Day

Saturday April 27, 2024
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Arrive at 8:45 am in Jones Park

Downtown Canton

Rain Date is Saturday, May 4, 2024



HOSTED BY



WEE-MA-TUK Hills
Country Club



ANNUAL
CHAMBER

**GOLF
OUTING**

FRIDAY,
May 17, 2024

LUNCH - 11:00
TEE-OFF - 12:00

4 Person Scramble

Team Fee: \$300

Includes Golf, Cart, and Lunch

Questions: Carla Bobell
(309) 647-2677

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