



# THE CHAMBER COURIER

August 2023

The monthly business publication of the Canton Area

## Your Chamber Ambassadors are here for your business.

**Emylee Bitner**, Bank of Farmington  
**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**, Davis GMC  
**Sherri Delost**, Jim Maloof Realtor  
**Madison Embry**, Bank of Farmington  
**Kim Fischer**, Canton Harvester Inn  
**Jeromie Hale**, Bistro 101  
**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  
**Elli Rickert**, Jack's Bar  
**Chase Shawgo**, Ipava State Bank  
**Codi Swibold**, Hy-Vee Food Stores  
**Dr. AJ Thum**, Associates in Dentistry  
**Nick Wright**, Country Financial



## Why Your Dad Was Right About Chamber Memberships

By Christina Green

Okay, so maybe your Dad never told you anything about Chamber memberships but I'm sure between one of your parents you learned the following lessons. And you might be surprised how they apply to Chamber memberships.

### You Are the Company You Keep

Do you remember this one? Your parents likely told you to be careful who you associate with because people assume certain things about you based on your peer group. So, let's see. If you hang out with business-focused, civic-minded people through the Chamber, what does that mean for your business? Only good things! Your parents were right. The company you keep says a lot about you.

### One Day You'll Thank Me

The day you join the Chamber, you become exposed to a lot of incredible knowledge through member connections, deep resources within the Chamber, its programming and sponsorship opportunities. But the information doesn't find its way into your brain through osmosis. You need to meet the people who can help your business succeed and attend the programming or support the community events. If you do, your business and network will grow and you'll thank the Chamber one day.

### Manners Don't Cost a Dime

Manners don't cost a dime and neither does making the most of your Chamber membership. Whether you make lifelong connections that will help your business prosper or you never do anything with your Chamber membership, the fee is the same. So, what do you say? Why not get involved as much as possible or use those resources to maximum advantage? You have everything to gain and nothing more to spend.

**Q: How can a business or organization become a sponsor at a community event hosted by the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce? Do all events have an opportunity to set up a booth?**

**A:** It's easy! Contact Carla Bobell, Executive Director of the Canton Chamber by either calling 309-647-2677 Ext. 2 or send an email to her at [cbobell@cantonillinois.org](mailto:cbobell@cantonillinois.org). She will then share the sponsorship opportunities and inform you if setting up a booth is an option. If a booth is desired, a sponsorship level is required.

Chamber events, like the Cruise In and Taste In Canton, draw thousands to our community and is a great opportunity for your business or organization to get some amazing exposure!



**BUSINESS BEFORE BREAKFAST**

Hosted by  
CANTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
SPOON RIVER COLLEGE  
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

REGISTER HERE FOR THE  
Free of Charge Webinar

THE CANTON AREA CHAMBER AND THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH AT SRC ARE INTRODUCING YOU TO AN INCREDIBLE AI TOOL CALLED CHATGPT. THIS FREE WORKSHOP AIMS TO EQUIP PARTICIPANTS WITH THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO EFFECTIVELY UTILIZE CHATGPT IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL ENDEAVORS.

**JOIN US VIRTUALLY**  
**THURSDAY, AUGUST 3RD AT 8:00AM**

LEARN ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF CHATGPT WITH MICHELLE HOWE, INSTRUCTOR OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AT WIU. AT THIS EXCLUSIVE WORKSHOP ENTITLED "MASTERING CHATGPT"

  
MICHELLE HOWE

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

*President - Jana Emmons, Ipava State Bank*  
*Vice President - Chad Holloway, OSF HealthCare*  
*Treasurer - Chad Murphy, Spoon River College*  
*Secretary - Erin Watson, Watson Center for Wellness*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Business and Community Development**  
 Jason Gumbart, Apex Seed Company

**Government Affairs**  
 Jay Valencia, Canton High School

**Member & Public Relations**  
 Diane Bell, Di's Boutique

Ashton Dare, MidAmerica National Bank  
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 Renee Lewis, Jim Maloof Realtor  
 Lacey Neal, Rock Valley Physical Therapy  
 Barnhart, Tinsman & Parrish  
 Alesia Shaw, Graham Health System

Brayden Coker, Student Representative

## EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Jon Johnson, Canton Park District  
 Mayor Kent McDowell, City of Canton  
 Superintendent Tad Derenzy, CUSD #66  
 President Curt Oldfield, Spoon River College

## STAFF

*Executive Director - Carla Bobell*  
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 (309) 647-2677  
[cantonareachamber@gmail.com](mailto:cantonareachamber@gmail.com)  
 Facebook CACC61520  
*Assistant Director - Mallory Jackson*

## EARLY CHILDHOOD REGIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Using a Collective Impact Model, between September 2022 and June 2023, Birth to Five IL led their Action and Family Councils through data discussions to identify gaps and barriers for children and families throughout Central IL. They coordinated focus groups, interviews, and surveys to gather input from community members across the Region. See the findings, regional strengths, family- and community-identified needs, and recommendations for how to make our Region's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) programs more accessible and equitable to children, families, and ECEC providers.

This summer and fall, the Birth to Five IL Team will work with their Action and Family Councils to share the report's findings throughout the Region, keeping with their mission to capture as much input as possible.

For more information contact Paul Larson, Shannon McKee or Lacie McGraw at Birth to Five IL

Located at 117 N. Main Street in Canton. Their phone number is 309-270-5519.



**4,598**

Children Under  
the Age of 6  
in Region 26



**2,345**

Children 0-5  
at 200% Federal  
Poverty Level



**675**

Children 0-5  
Without Publicly  
Funded ECEC Slots

**64%**

Percentage of children ages 0-2 who do not have a slot in a licensed or license-exempt child care center or home





## RIBBON CUTTING THIS YEAR



Ribbon Cutting on January 12th for Lattimore Properties at their Rooftop Lodge AirBnB on South Main in Downtown Canton.

Owner Dan Lattimore purchased and then renovated a three-bedroom, one bathroom apartment with a full kitchen.

AirBnB: Canton Rooftop Lodge

Ribbon Cutting on February 28th of this year at Birth to Five. They are located at 117 N. Main St. in Canton.

This new organization is redesigning the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) system with families at the center.

Facebook: BirthToFiveIL



Ribbon Cutting on February 28th of this year at Mercantile 25 - Event Space. They are located at 25 E. Fort St. in Downtown Farmington.

Mercantile 25 is a rustic, unique, large storefront available for private parties, birthday parties, wedding receptions, family reunions, baby showers, wedding showers, celebrations of life, and so much more!

Facebook: Mercantile 25 - Event Space



Ribbon Cutting on March 12th of this year for the Horseman football team.

The Plow City Horseman are an adult amateur football team that had their first season in 2023. They continue to recruit players and play other adult football teams throughout central IL.

Facebook: Horsementfootball



# RIBBON CUTTINGS CONTINUED



Ribbon Cutting on April 27th of this year at Rancho Nuevo Mexican Restaurant. They are located at 811 N. Main St. in Canton.

Rancho Nuevo is a family-owned Mexican cuisine restaurant located next to McDonald's. They have a large menu of choices and serve lunch and dinner.

Facebook: Rancho Nuevo Mexican Restaurant

Ribbon Cutting on May 25th of this year at Skateland Canton. They are located at 1040 W. Hickory St. in Canton.

Skateland Canton is a family fun center providing people a place to roller skate and spend time in the community with one another.

Facebook: Skateland Canton



Ribbon Cutting for Graham Health System new Convenient Care. Located at 126 N. 5th Avenue in Canton.

This new Convenient Care covers urgent, prompt or quick care so no matter what you need they are ready for you seven days per week from 7:00am to 7:00pm.

Facebook: Graham Health System



SHOP. EAT. ENJOY.  
**LOCAL**



## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION



**Holiday**  
LIGHTSHOW  
*is coming*

**Volunteers are Needed**

SHIFTS ARE FROM 5:00PM - 8:30PM  
SHOW NIGHTS: FRIDAY, SATURDAY, & SUNDAY

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We are looking for groups of 8 to 10 from businesses and organizations to volunteer during the run of the Holiday Lightshow. You will assist in parking cars or selling tickets. No children under the age of 12, please.



SCAN TO SIGN UP

QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL THE CANTON CHAMBER OFFICE AT (309) 647-2677 OR EMAIL [CANTONAREACHAMBER@GMAIL.COM](mailto:CANTONAREACHAMBER@GMAIL.COM)

## MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT TAD DERENZY

We are thrilled to announce that Canton School Districts has welcomed Cara McGee as the principal of Eastview Elementary School! With immense enthusiasm, we invite you to read the inspiring introduction penned by Mrs. McGee herself.

I am Cara McGee, new principal at Eastview Elementary School. With 15 years of experience in the field of education, I have dedicated my life to shaping young minds and making a positive impact on the lives of my students.

My journey in education began with a passion for helping children learn and grow. With a master's degree in Elementary Education, I laid a strong foundation for my teaching career, instilling a love for learning in my students and fostering an environment of curiosity and creativity in the classroom.

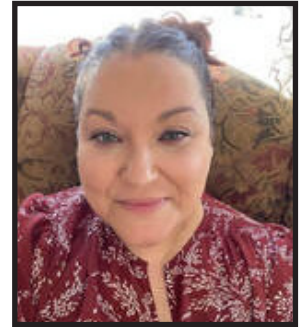
My commitment to educational excellence led me to pursue further knowledge, obtaining a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction: Trauma and Resilience. With this specialized expertise, I recognized the importance of addressing the diverse needs of students, particularly those who have experienced adversity and trauma. With compassion and dedication, she has worked tirelessly to create inclusive and supportive learning environments that empower students to overcome challenges and achieve their full potential.

I also earned a master's degree in educational leadership. This qualification equipped me with the skills and knowledge to make a broader impact on education. Whether collaborating with fellow educators, spearheading curriculum development, or advocating for positive change in the educational system, I consistently strive to elevate the quality of education and ensure every student receives the support they deserve.

Beyond my professional accomplishments, I find immense joy and fulfillment in my role as a mother. Married for 15 years and blessed with three wonderful children, I bring the same nurturing and caring approach from my classroom and educational life to my family life. Balancing the demands of a successful career with the responsibilities of motherhood, I demonstrate unwavering love, patience, and guidance; nurturing both my own children and the students I serve, to become compassionate and well-rounded individuals.

In my spare time, I enjoy exploring new ways to engage with our community, spend time with my family, and cuddle up with my cats and a good book.

Through my experience, academic achievements, and unwavering dedication, I hope to continue to be a beacon of inspiration to my students, colleagues, and family. My passion for education, combined with my caring and nurturing nature helps me in my goal to aid in shaping a brighter future for generations to come. I am excited to continue to serve the Canton community and cannot wait for our upcoming school year and years to come!



Cara McGee  
Principal at Eastview Elementary  
Canton Union School District #66

## CANTON AREA CHAMBER



## YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

- Networking
- Professional Development
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Leadership
- Connection with other young professionals

For more information visit  
[cantonillinois.org/chamber](http://cantonillinois.org/chamber)

*Scan Me!*



**SPONSORED IN PART BY:**







The poster features a vibrant green grass background. A central blue and white checkered picnic blanket contains the event details. On the left, a white rectangular box lists the activities. To the right, a yellow circular logo for the Canton Area Chamber is positioned above a silver fork and spoon. At the bottom right, a large yellow circular graphic displays the date and location, accompanied by a skewer of food.

**TASTE**  
*in*  
**Canton**

**FOOD TASTING**

**BEER & WINE**

**LIVE MUSIC**

**KIDS ACTIVITIES**

**PIE EATING CONTEST**

**12:00 PM - 3:00 PM**

**CANTON AREA CHAMBER**

**SUNDAY**  
**SEPTEMBER 24, 2023**  
**DOWNTOWN CANTON**



# 150% CLUB

The 150% Club is an optional membership upgrade that provides added exposure for your business. By paying an additional 150% of regular membership dues at the time of your renewal or new membership, your business can join the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce 150% Club.

*Meet our*

## 2023 MEMBERS

A&M Storage Company  
 Advanced Rehab & Sports Medicine  
 American Family Insurance  
 American Legion Post #16  
 Apex Seed Company  
 Art Hossler Auto Plaza  
 Axline Pharmacy  
 BeMobile Verizon  
 BH Materials  
 Big Brothers Big Sisters  
 Buckheart Solar  
 Camille's of Canton  
 Canton Community Concert Association  
 Canton Daily Ledger  
 Canton Elks Lodge  
 Canton Family YMCA  
 Canton Harvester Inn  
 CEFCU Canton Member Center  
 Central Illinois Lighting & Signs, Inc.  
 CFC Properties  
 COOK Medical  
 Crawford's Home Furnishings  
 Dempster Insurance Agency  
 Di's Boutique  
 Fairview State Banking Co.  
 Froehling, Weber & Schell, LLP  
 Fulton County Emergency Medical Assoc.  
 Fulton County Housing Authority  
 Fulton County Septic  
 Fulton Democrat  
 Galesburg Broadcasting  
 Giant Goose Ranch  
 G-M Mechanical  
 Harold Jump  
 Harriet Williams  
 Helping Hands Resale Shoppe  
 Hocker, Fitzjarrald & Richardson, PC CPAs  
 Holthaus Companies, Inc.  
 Hulvey Law  
 Humane Society of Fulton County  
 Ipava State Bank  
 JC Custom Laser Creations, LLC  
 Jim Maloof Realty

John Clark  
 John McCarthy Attorney at Law  
 Johnson & Johnson, P. C.  
 Jones Surveying & Engineering Corp  
 Kevin & Debbie Stephenson  
 Kevin Meade  
 Kevin & Debbie Stephenson  
 Kiwanis Club of Canton  
 Lairus Solar, LLC  
 Maurer-Stutz, Inc.  
 Meade Law Office, P. C.  
 Mel's Sporting Goods  
 MidCentury Communications  
 MidAmerica National Bank  
 Midwest Dental  
 Monical's Pizza  
 MWC Advertising - Zak Edmonds  
 Navigator CO2 Heartland Greenway  
 North Central Behavioral Health Systems  
 Oakdale Veterinary Center  
 Oak-Hines Funeral Homes  
 Official Time Out  
 OSF Healthcare  
 Otto Stephenitch  
 Phil Miller  
 Progressive Vision Center, LTD  
 Pure Green, LLC  
 Rancho Nuevo Mexican Restaurant  
 Scott Miller  
 Sherwin-Williams of Canton  
 Space Walk of Central Illinois  
 Spoon River Media, LLC  
 State Farm Insurance - Chuck Taylor  
 Stinauer Family Dentistry  
 TBK Bank  
 The Loft of Canton Rehabilitation & Nursing  
 Timbuk Tech, Inc.  
 Town & Country Insurance Agency  
 VR Meat Company  
 Walgreen's of Canton  
 Walmart of Canton  
 West Central Powersports  
 Wee-Ma-Tuk Country Club