



THE CHAMBER COURIER

April 2021

The monthly business publication of the Canton Area

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are here for your business.
Contact them anytime.**

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Promoting Business in the Age of Social Media

By: Carla Bobell

If you want your business to grow (and survive) you need customers. In order to get customers, you need to promote your business. Promoting businesses has changed over the years and although running an ad in the local newspaper or radio stations is still effective, social media has brought in a new level of promoting.

Social media can be overwhelming. If you are struggling to figure out the best ways to promote your business or even what options are out there, you are not alone. Whether you have no budget, limited budget or an unlimited budget, here are some areas to focus on:

Search engines. Sometimes in small towns we just assume everyone knows where your business is located. Well, they don't, and what search engine will they use to find you? Nine times out of 10 it will be Google. It is important to keep your Google Business Profile up to date. This is what allows your business to be on Google Maps. You do this by verifying ownership of your listing. For a deeper dive into this very effective method of promoting your business visit [13 Google My Business Optimizations](#).

Social media channels. Every business needs a website, no matter how non tech savvy you are, because new customers today expect it! A good website is not only a great promotional tool it tells the story of your business, promotes the goods and services you provide and lists contact information. There are numerous free website builders that you can start with and then as your business grows, you can move to a "paid for" website which will improve your look and image online.

Whether you are a Facebook fan or not, having a presence on Facebook can really get your business noticed, especially if you post daily and share interesting information or pictures about your products, services, or events.

Continued on page 4.



BUSINESS
after hours

AT THE CANTON ELK'S LODGE

Thursday, April 15th
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

HOSTED BY:
midcentury
FIBER

Join us for networking, hors d'oeuvres,
giveaways, and info stations on
Mid Century Fiber processes!

Face masks required for entry.
Sanitation stations will be available at
each entrance.

Save the Date:
2021 Annual Chamber Golf Outing
Friday, May 21 2021



WEE-MA-TUK
HILLS COUNTRY CLUB

ANNUAL CHAMBER GOLF OUTING

FRIDAY,
May 21, 2021

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

\$10,000
HOLE-IN-ONE CONTEST

Get Registered today!
4 Person Scramble
Team Fee: \$300
Includes Golf, Cart, and Lunch

Questions: Carla Bobell
(309) 647-2677 ext. 3
cbobell@cantonillinois.org

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209 East Chestnut Street, Suite 2
Canton, IL 61520
(309) 647-2677
cbobell@cantonillinois.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBER: THE CBD STORE

The CBD Store is excited to announce our expansion into Canton, Illinois!

The CBD Store is a multinational natural health store with 2 locations in Colorado and 2 in Illinois.

One of our owners, Caprice Sweatt grew up in Canton and was one of the founding members of the dispensary in Canton before it was sold. Caprice was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease over 30 years ago and uses CBD to help treat her symptoms, she and her husband Eric have decided to open The CBD Store Canton next to Rise Dispensary in Canton, Illinois. This will give those who are purchasing cannabis a chance to be able to pick up CBD products next door.



The CBD Store

We have a large CBD line, from gummies, drinks, oils, salves, lotions, soaps, capsules, pipes, rigs and lots more! We also have a large line of Pet CBD for your doggies and kitties! There are free samples daily as well as knowledgeable, compassionate staff available to answer all of your CBD related questions - all sets apart from other CBD retailers. Our boutique style stores are clean, comfortable and we follow all CDC and Health Department Guidelines. All Hemp Grown and Produced in the USA.

(309) 357-1455

3102 N. Main Street, Canton

FB: @thecbdstorecanton

WELCOME NEW MEMBER: HARVESTER MEAT COMPANY

Harvester Meat Co.



Opening soon, Harvester Meat Company will offer custom butchering of beef and pork, and sell fresh and frozen meat out of their retail front. Harvester Meat Co. will operate under the father-son leadership team of Kevin and Jake Williams. Kevin, an alum of Canton High School, currently owns and operates Red Oak Estates in Canton, and has been a part of several other business ventures in the area. Jake, also a graduate of Canton High School and Illinois Wesleyan University, currently works with the Natural Resource Conservation Service in McDonough and Hancock counties.

“We saw a need in the community and we are going to fill it. All the butcher shops in the area are scheduled out at least a year in advance, and Canton needs a home town meat market. We are working with local producers to be able to stock locally raised meat in our store, and we will also stock Bison and Elk from our family farm. We will have a large capacity for processing compared to the other butchers in the area, so we can feed the growing demand for local meat. We plan to be fully operational by the end of this summer.” – Jake Williams.

Harvester Meat Co. is in what was formerly known as the Alder Professional Building at 200 Alder Road in Canton. They can be reached at Harvestermeatco@gmail.com. Be on the look out for more information and an opening date!

209 East Chestnut Street | Canton, IL 61520 | (309) 647-2677

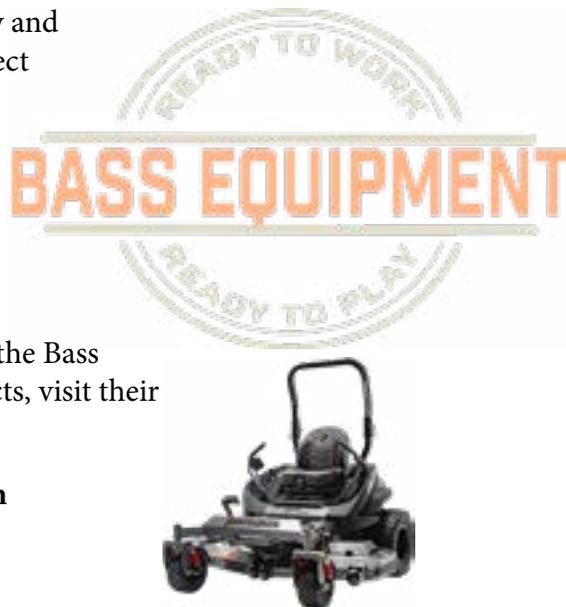
WELCOME NEW MEMBER: BASS EQUIPMENT

Jeff Bass started this business with two things in mind: his family and his community. For him, this shop is personal, and you can expect quality, family-like service at Bass Equipment.

Bass Equipment is a family-owned and operated business. Owner Jeff was excited to have his grand opening on March 25th. Bass Equipment is a dealer for brands such as Spartan Mowers (pictured right), Envy Neighborhood Vehicles, and Intimidator Utility Vehicles. If you're looking for some high-quality outdoor activity equipment, look no further! Or, for tune-ups, check out the Bass Equipment's service shop. For more information on their products, visit their website at www.bass-equipment.com!

303 N. 1st Street
Cuba, IL 61427
(309) 785-7047

Mon thru Fri: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sat: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm
Sun: Closed



Promoting Business through Social Media Continued

Facebook is the largest social network online and is a great way to stay in contact with existing customers. Other social media networks include LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest and the newest, TikTok. Get online and read up on each of these social media options to see which one(s) you would feel comfortable using and could help your business get noticed more.

Online directory listings. Consumers routinely visit online directories to search for very specific services or businesses that fit their specific needs. These sites tend to be high-traffic, long-standing websites with high domain authority. Some examples are Yelp, Angies List, Yellow Pages or Map Qquest. The greatest thing about these listings is that they are free!

Local community. When you are a locally owned business the community is a critical component of your success. Customers want to get to know you like family. The person who knows your story best is you, so writing a news article to put in a local paper or Chamber Courier, perhaps, is a great way to inform customers about your compelling business story.

Networking with other local businesses is another great way to increase your presence in your community. Attend a Business After Hours, sponsor a local community event or offer to volunteer at those events and wear a shirt with your logo that shows everyone what business you represent. This shows your involvement and that you give back to your community.

There is a plethora of options when it comes to promoting your business and this article is only a small glimpse. A great blog for you to check out is from Wordstream.com and look for the article [30 Best Ways to Promote your Business in 2021 – With or Without Money](#) by Kristen McCormick. Don't be shy, promote your business, get involved, and go toot your own horn!

MILLENNIALS RETURN MIGRATION

By Carol Davis

Note: This is the first in a series of Canton Area Chamber of Commerce feature stories focusing on the impact of young professionals returning to live and work in rural communities. The articles highlight Canton High School graduates from 2005-2015 who migrated out of the community after high school and then returned to the Canton area to continue their professional careers.

Many business articles and research studies over the past decade have focused on why millennials flock to larger cities to live and work. Large cities and suburbs generally offer higher salaries, more opportunities for upward advancement, and a wide variety of retail shops, sporting events, and community activities. However, some current researchers believe they may be witnessing the beginnings of a trend shift represented by those millennials who return home to rural areas immediately following college graduation or return upon to pursue a second career, a trend referred to as return migration.

Discerning millennials consider several factors before returning to their birth places or home- towns. A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) research article, entitled Why Some Return Home to Rural America and Why It Matters, indicates that a primary motivating factor for young professionals returning home is the desire for family connections. These young professionals value their own upbringings and hope to replicate those experiences for their own children.

The USDA research found that educational opportunity also plays a major factor in the return migration decision process. While urban schools may offer a wider variety of educational options and programs, parents consider potentially smaller class sizes, the ability to work directly with their children's teachers, and a better probability of their children's participation in school athletics and extra-curricular activities important as well.

Other factors in favor of rural communities may include shorter travel to places of employment and recreational environments with natural habitats or landscapes. As more rural Baby Boomers retiring, doors open for young careerists to move into the retirees' positions. Further, millennials value the ability to actively participate in community organizations which cultivate a strong sense of belonging, civic engagement, and personal worth.

The website APolitical suggests a civic change which may encourage young professionals to return to their rural hometowns. For years, rural town narratives contained messages of economic woe and societal decay, unconsciously supporting a negative view of their communities. However, mayors and civic leaders of rural districts have seen the value in promoting the positives of rural living most attractive to young professionals with families.

The USDA report found that young people "who left home for education and training came back to fill positions as doctors, pharmacists, accountants, bankers, lawyers, hospital administrators, teachers, business managers, and entrepreneurs. They moved into family businesses—insurance companies, newspapers, real estate agencies, restaurants, retail stores, manufacturing plants, farms—or took over businesses from retiring owners... and that...the return migration strategies may prove more effective than attempts to retain young people in the years right after high school."

Millenials Return Migration Continued

Since 2005, strong evidence of this return migration shift has surfaced in and around the Canton, Illinois area. For the next several months, these articles will focus on those millennials who embody the return migration trend and on the positive community impact these young professionals make now and into the future. We begin with Jake Snowman.

HERE AT HOME

Today Jake Snowman is an emerging lawyer employed by Meade Law in Canton after passing the Illinois State Bar just a few months ago. In the summers between his semesters at the University of Indiana-Bloomington Law School, Jake interned with attorney Trygve Meade where he was provided real world experience in creating legal motions, briefs, and memorandum and in participating in legal meetings or events with Attorney Meade. By this point in his career quest, Jake knew he had chosen his professional path well. But Jake's journey included many intriguing side routes along the way.

Jake grew up in a professional family in rural Fulton County. His parents, Scott and Tracy Snowman, are lifelong educators as well as entrepreneurs specializing in the visual arts and their unique reindeer farm. Many of their artistic works may be found displayed on the exteriors of community buildings or properties throughout Fulton County. Jake's sister, Taylor, is a professional photographer.

As a boy, Jake spent enjoyable hours on his grandparents' farm which manifested into a love for animals, chemistry, and biology. Jake had a natural curiosity and he wanted to know what made nature work. By the time he reached Canton High School, Jake's interests expanded even more. He played saxophone in the concert and jazz bands, participated in scholastic bowl, and competed in track and field.

"For years, I struggled with deciding what I wanted to do with my career," Jake says. "I thought about medicine, education, law, and a plethora of other things, but for a long time nothing really ever stuck out as it."



Jake, age 2

Jake credits Canton High School science teacher, Jodi Eberle, with helping him focus in on his eventual career. "Ms. Eberle's zest for her profession really shined through. I wanted to enjoy my job as much as she enjoyed hers, and that revelation really did change my mindset and help me narrow down what I wanted to do," Jake states.

It is not surprising that Jake expressed a strong interest in public school operations and administration. His grandfather, Tom, had served on the Canton School Board for years. The year after Jake graduated from Canton High School in 2013, he campaigned for and was elected to the Canton District #66 School Board. Jake served three years on the school board and of particular interest to him was how law could either obstruct or advance positive change.

"It was all about the process," Jake says.

Millenials Return Migration Continued

AWAY FROM HOME

After Jake completed his college education at Bradley University in 2017, he was accepted to the University of Indiana – Bloomington School of Law. Jake recalls the day in law school when he fully appreciated he had chosen the right profession for him.

“One day, we had a problem that dealt with the First Amendment in schools. The other members of my group did not have much experience with the First Amendment or constitutional law in general, but it happened to be one of the areas I had a lot of background in since I had recently written a law journal article on the subject,” Jake recalls.

“One of my group members, who was very worried about an upcoming exam, contacted me and asked me several questions about the First Amendment. I helped her through some of the more confusing points, and when we were done, she thanked me and said she “felt much better.” I realized that it felt really nice to ease someone else’s worries like that, and it strengthened my resolve in my desire to succeed in becoming a lawyer. I wanted to help more people like that, and in situations closer to home.”

Jake graduated from law school in the spring semester of 2020. As planned, he returned to the Canton area while he awaited his license to practice law in Illinois. The Illinois Bar examination was originally scheduled in July of 2020. However, Jake faced additional tensions when the Illinois Bar had to reschedule the examination twice due to the COVID pandemic. However, Jake’s resolve proved successful and joined Meade Law Office, no longer an intern, but a fully licensed attorney at law.

Trygve Meade explains why he selected Jake to be a member of his law firm.

“Very shortly after I bought Judge Beal’s practice, I ran into Jake at church, where he was accepting a scholarship,” Meade says. “Jake was a senior at Bradley University then planning to attend law school, and I thought that the least I could do was offer to meet with him and talk about what law school was like and what to expect.

“When we met, we talked about his plans and I was really excited to learn that he wanted to come back and work in Canton after he graduated,” Meade continues. “Canton’s ability to bring its brightest young students back to live and build careers here is one of the things that makes this community so special. Jake came back and took an internship with me the first summer of law school, and I knew immediately that we had someone really special on our hands.”

BACK HOME

Obviously, Jake maintains a close relationship with his family and that connection played a major role in his return to the area after graduation from law school. However, family is not the only reason.

Jake states, “I think, apart from family, the primary reason I came back to Canton is the sense of community here. Canton, at least in my mind, is not so much a city as it is a collection of wonderful people doing their best to be good neighbors. The people here really try to make it home. When I first went to IU and met new people all of the time, I mentioned to one of my now good friends that I was from Canton, Illinois.

Millenials Return Migration Continued

Surprisingly, he told me that he had been to Canton before as part of a film crew for Cook Group when the restoration was taking place. He mentioned he had genuinely enjoyed his time in Canton because not only was it a charming small town, but the people there immediately recognized he came from out-of-state and went out of their way to make sure he felt welcome and comfortable.”

Jake believes that story illustrates at least partially why he returned to Canton. “This town really is a community that works together to constantly improve itself, and one that I’m enormously proud to be a part of. It is no wonder I enjoyed growing up here so much, and why I was eager to come back. Another place wouldn’t be home like Canton is home.”

So, will Trygve Meade take a risk on another Canton native when his law firm expands?

“I absolutely will give first consideration to Canton natives in the future,” Meade states. “If their experience is anything like mine, I know how much support and love and opportunity Canton will give them when they come back to work here. And as I continue to grow in my career, I would be honored to have the chance to give those same opportunities to the next generation of Canton natives.”

Today the future looks bright for the 26-year-old Cantonite. When asked where he sees himself ten years from now, Jake replies, “My answer is fairly straightforward. I am very happy here with my wonderful fiancée Mara, and my only hope is that in ten years I will have really helped our community through my work as a lawyer and as a community advocate. I want to continue growing our firm, I want to continue growing as a lawyer, and I want to continue helping as many clients and community members as I can. Whatever steps I need to take to accomplish those goals will be the steps I take moving forward into the future.”



DOES YOUR BUSINESS HAVE AN EVENT COMING UP?



As Illinois is beginning to re-open, so don't forget to add your event to the Chamber's Calendar of Events on our website!

To add your event, visit our website at www.cantonillinois.org/chamberofcommerce. Then click on “Calendar of Events” in the box on the left-hand side. Once on the Calendar of Events page, click “Submit New Event” just above the calendar. Or, if you would like assistance, feel free to reach out to us and we will help you set up your organization's event!

(309) 647-2677 ext. 4 | cantonareachamber@gmail.com

Planning for Your Business in a Post-Pandemic Economy

Cole McDaniel, Executive Director of the SRPED

As recent months have shown us, COVID-19 has significantly impacted all sectors of the economy. In particular, small businesses have been among the hardest hit by the pandemic. From the bricks-and-mortar family shops to online service-based companies, business owners are scrambling to make sense of this new reality and the evolving relief programs that have been made available through the Federal Government and the State of Illinois.

Plan tomorrow's success today

Start by looking at how COVID-19 has impacted your business. Consider the following:

- Customer demand: has it increased, decreased, or remained steady?
- Working conditions for staff: for example, have some/all of your staff moved to a work-from-home arrangement
- Supplier issues: can you still get parts/services on time?
- Delivery options: has anything changed?

Getting a snapshot of where your business is right now can help you identify what needs your immediate attention, as well as new opportunities due to the pandemic.

Create a plan to address the necessary issues. This will give you a framework to populate with action items. After creating an initial plan, prioritize. Break your plan down into a timeline and create a budget. How much will it cost to make the necessary adjustments? And where will you get the money? You have several options.

You could temporarily shut down your business if you haven't already, or slow it down while you put your new plan in place.

This could also be a good time to develop a new product line or service based on new customer demands. When it comes to surviving and thriving in the current economy it's hard for business owners to make definite plans. No one knows how long restriction will remain in place, whether they will get stricter or become more lenient, and what our post-pandemic world will look like.

Yet by identifying your current strengths and concerns, taking advantage of State and Federal small business relief programs, planning for different scenarios, and strengthening your company culture and team individuals, your business will be in the strongest possible position when the new normal arrives.



MESSAGE FROM ROLF SIVERTSEN

Superintendent for CUSD #66

Sports and COVID-19: A Challenge

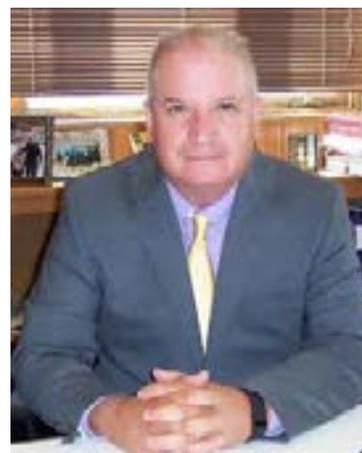
With COVID 19 statistics continuing to decline our state is slowly beginning to return to normal. A return to normal for our school district means more students transitioning from a remote instructional format to an in-person format and the reopening of our sports program. The Canton Little Giants Football Team began their season on March 18th against the Morton Potters. To say the least, it has taken quite some time to get to this point due to the pandemic. For example, the original season was supposed to have begun in late August or early February. However, due to the COVID 19 pandemic the season was delayed multiple times. With the opening of sports imminent, the logistics to conduct the games with restrictions will be challenging.

The biggest challenge the school district will face with sports are capacity limitations for spectators. Three weeks ago the capacity limit for all facilities was 50 persons. Luckily the Illinois Department of Public Health revised the limitations for outdoors sports to 25% capacity of a facility. This is a huge adjustment that will allow us to admit additional spectators. To do so the district will pre-sell tickets to prioritize the admittance of spectators. For example, those given priority to attend games will be parents of athletes and performers – on both teams. Another challenging issue will be the sale of concessions.

More than likely the sale of concessions will be much different than in the past. For example, to prevent cross contamination condiments will need to be restricted to individually packeted items. Specifically, no containers of sugar or other items bulk items will be placed for communal use. It is also highly unlikely that cooked items will be sold. Cooked items will be a risk for contamination because so many people handle them. Finally, the last challenge will be the use of PPE and social distancing.

Even though football is an event that is conducted outside PPE restrictions will still be a state mandated requirement. For example, all spectators will be required to wear masks while attending the football game. Also, spectators will be expected to social distance.

At the end of the day, even though there are restrictions, we are playing football – which is great! It is important to remember that the state of Illinois almost did not have a high school sports season this year. Thankfully, the pandemic numbers are on a downward trend and our high school athletes are able to participate in a sport season.





COMMUNITY WORK DAY

SATURDAY MAY 1, 2021

9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Arrive at 8:45 a.m. in Jones Park in Downton Canton
 Rain Date is Saturday, May 8, 2021

We are looking for groups and individual members of the community to volunteer to help with projects around the Canton Community. Volunteers who participate will be assisting with projects at some of our local agencies, schools, and Jones Park in downtown Canton. Projects will possibly include:

- Painting
- Spreading gravel/mulch
- Maintaining trails
- General clean-up
- Planting/pulling weeds
- Cleaning cabins

If you are interested in volunteering or have a location that has a potential project, please contact the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce at (309) 647-2677 ext. 3 or email at cantonareachamber@gmail.com





The 150% Club is an optional membership upgrade that provides added exposure for your business. By paying an additional 50% of regular membership dues at the time of your renewal or new membership, your business can join the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce's 150% Club.

Meet our

2021 MEMBERS

- Advanced Rehab & Sports Medicine
- American Family Insurance
- American Legion Post #16
- APEX Seed Company
- Art Hossler Auto Plaza
- Associates in Dentistry
- Bank of Farmington
- Barnhart, Tinsman & Associates, Ltd.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Camille's of Canton
- Canton Elks Lodge
- Canton Family YMCA
- CEFCU Canton Member Center
- CFC Properties
- COOK Medical
- Crawford's Home Furnishing
- Dana Smith
- Dempster Insurance Agency
- Di's Boutique
- Eagle Point Solar
- First Christian Church
- Froehling, Weber & Schell, LLP
- Fulton County Emergency Medical Assoc.
- Fulton County Housing Authority
- Fulton County Septic
- Giant Goose Ranch
- G-M Mechanical of Canton, Inc.
- Harold Jump
- Helping Hands Resale Shoppe
- Hocker, Fitzjarrald & Richardson, PC CPAs
- Houlthaus Companies, Inc.
- Hy-Vee of Canton
- Ipava State Bank
- Jimmy Johns - Subwars, LLC
- John Clark

- John McCarthy - Attorney at Law
- Johnson & Johnson, P.C.
- Jones Surveying & Engineering Corp
- Kevin & Debbie Stephenson
- Kevin Meade
- Kiwanis Club of Canton
- Maurer-Stutz, Inc.
- McDonald's of Canton
- Mel's Sporting Goods
- MidAmerica National Bank
- Mid Century Fiber
- Monical's Pizza
- North Central Behavioral Health Systems
- Oak-Hines Funeral Homes
- Official Time Out
- Otto Stephenitch
- Pizza Hut
- Progressive Vision Center, LTD
- Pure Green, LLC
- Renaissance Care Center
- Rhoades Real Estate & Land Auction Services, Inc.
- RISE Canton
- Scott Miller
- Security Finance
- Sedgwick Funeral Homes & Crematory
- Sherwin-Williams
- Spoon River Animal Clinic
- State Farm Insurance - Chuck Taylor
- The CBD Store
- Timbuk Tech, Inc.
- Town & Country Insurance Agency
- Walgreen's of Canton
- Walmart of Canton
- WBYS AM & WCDD FM Radio