



The Chamber Courier

JULY
ISSUE

The Monthly Business Publication for the Canton Area



CANTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CARLA BOBELL**



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Executive Director Carla Bobell

Wow! What an amazing Bicentennial Celebration Week! What did you participate in during the 10-day celebration? What was your favorite event? There were SO many!

As a Chamber, we were honored to kick off the Bicentennial Opening Ceremony during the 34th Annual Canton Cruise In in downtown Canton on Friday, June 20th. That night as the Bicentennial flag was being raised underneath our American Flag, I felt a sense of pride I have not felt in a while. As the Bicentennial week unfolded, that pride continued, in fact, it continued to grow for our community. Did you feel it? So many from our community volunteered their time, sang in the Dust Bowl Era Concert, performed in The Chautauqua and Cemetery Walk, entertained us with concerts, created displays of history, watched the unveiling of the Time Capsule from 1925, enjoyed the ice cream social, created a memory during the Parade of History, ran or walked in the 5K Run/Walk, attended an amazing Doors concert, and closed out the celebration week with the Bicentennial flag coming down on June 29th. It truly was a magical time for the City of Canton.

There have been a handful of people commenting on how nice it would be to have activities like what happened during the Bicentennial all year long. I could not agree more, however, the Bicentennial committee took four, almost 5 years, to plan those 10 days, and there were many generous people who donated the funds needed to host (and pay for) such amazing events. Now that the Bicentennial Committee is officially done planning events, it will be up to other organizations, businesses, and individuals to step up and plan (and cover costs) for multiple events. It can be done! Out of our office, the Canton Area Chamber and Canton Main Street host many of the events that happen downtown for the community, which take months of planning (and many sponsorships), and another great example is the Canton Park District who offers many activities throughout the year for both children and adults. Many churches plan Vacation Bible School, organizations plan outings, bars plan concerts, but there is room for more!

One of the exciting things to come next summer will be Music in the Plaza. The new construction of the Opera House Plaza will hopefully be done in September of this year, and we look forward to doing a grand opening and breaking in the new, large stage that will be a part of the plaza. We will be looking for musical performers to bring live music and possibly live theater to our downtown, so be looking for more information to come on this exciting future entertainment!

Be a part of making the next 100 years in Canton a great place to continue to live, work and for sure play.....and be entertained!

WELCOME NEW MEMBER GILLAM'S PRODUCE

Gillam's Produce is a family owned and operated business located at 25171 N Rawalts Rd in Canton. Gillam's Produce spans a plot of over 20 acres, and it offers apples, strawberries, pumpkins, flowers, and other assorted fruits and vegetables.

Dave and Kim Gillam are the owners of Gillam's Produce. Dave grew up on an apple orchard named Pleasant Row Orchard in Cuba, IL. His parents, Leroy and Ruthe Gillam, taught him how to care for apple trees, make cider, and how to grow other various fruits and vegetables. He decided to carry on the family business in Canton when he and Kim started their own apple orchard in 1989. Other fruits and vegetables were added over the years as the business grew. Gillam's Produce primarily offers its produce at the Canton Farmers' Market and on the Spoon River Drive in Canton.

Produce is generally offered between June and October. Strawberries typically start near Memorial Day and are available for two to three weeks, depending on the weather. Strawberries have traditionally been offered via u-pick or by placing phone orders. Vegetables and flowers become available near the end of June and early July and last through September. Next up are pumpkins and apples, which are usually available between late August to mid October.

Gillam daughter, Marissa Feenstra, expanded the business to include cut flowers in 2023. Flower events such as Fill-A-Pumpkin and U-pick will be offered throughout the season. Flower U-pick events have been popular for those who want to spend time outdoors, walk through a field of flowers, and make their own arrangements. A list of flower u-pick events is available on the Gillam's Produce Facebook page and on the Gillam's Produce website. Individuals who do not prefer to pick their own flowers will have opportunities to order flowers via our website as early as July, or by stopping by the Canton Farmers' Market to pick up a fresh bouquet.

Keep up on
available produce,
events, and more at
gillamsproduce.com
or by visiting the
Gillam's Produce
Facebook and
Instagram pages.



 [Gillamsproduce](#)

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Dave & Kim Gillam ~ Marissa & Alex Feenstra



CITY OF CANTON REFLECTION OF BICENTENNIAL

What a June it has been, with the many celebrations for Canton's 200th birthday. From my viewpoint as Mayor, those ten days had my calendar full of events to attend and competitions to judge. I could not be more satisfied with the community members that the City appointed five years ago to organize this huge celebration. Everyone I speak with is in agreement, that these six committee members went above and beyond to dream up not just a few, but a total of 40 events. It was a huge undertaking, and they managed every detail to perfection. They succeeded in weaving Canton's rich history throughout everything, coming up with truly something for everyone's enjoyment, and leaving us all with memories to talk about for years.



The best part of this celebration was the sense of community that came out so strongly. The wonderful people of Canton, who were so proud to be a part these events, who volunteered their time to help on our hottest weeks of the season, who took part in as many events as their schedules could allow. So many homes and businesses who took the time and expense to decorate with flags and banners. People who made the effort to clean and repaint and repair. Flower planters that appeared at businesses that had never been before. Our very own Public Works crews who really took on a multitude of additional projects to be sure our downtown looked its best. Everyone working together and being proud of our city.

Together, let's carry this sense of pride forward, keep it going. Everyone working together to make Canton a great place to live. This is what will propel us into the future as a strong community that is attractive and progressive.

Mayor Kent McDowell

**Send a Thank You
to Public Works, City Council,
or Bicentennial Committee
to 2 N. Main Street
Canton, IL. 61520**



CANTON CRUISE IN WINNERS 2025



Mayor's Choice

1970 Mercury Cyclone Spoiler
owned by Leonard Barnard.
Mayor McDowell is pictured with
Leonard's son, Eric Barnard



Motorcycle

Sponsors Choice - Category - Motorcycle
WINNER: 1965 Harley FLH owned by
Tom Boyer from Yates City
Sponsors Judge was from
Windshield Specialists



1959 & Older

Sponsors Choice - Category - 1959 & Older
WINNER: 1958 Chevy Impala owned by Fred Jones from St. David
Sponsors Judges were from Apex Seed Company LLC

CANTON CRUISE IN WINNERS 2025



1960 - 1979



Sponsors Choice - Category - 1960 - 1979

WINNER: 1966 Ford Thunderbird owned by Doug & Mary Wagner from Amboy, IL
Sponsors Judges were from Pizza Hut in Canton & Dee Clark-State Farm Agent



1980 & Newer

Sponsors Choice - Category - 1980 & Older

WINNER: 2021 Ram Truck TRX owned by Kyle Benson from Farmington
Sponsors Judges were from TBK Bank

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CANTON BICENTENNIAL

Congratulations to Chamber Member winners of the Bicentennial parade!



Snowman's Reindeer Farm



MidAmerica National Bank

A large collage of 25 photographs capturing various community events and milestones in Canton, Illinois, celebrating its 200th anniversary. The images show people in costumes, musical performances, a parade, a 5K run, and community gatherings. A central sign reads "CANTON ILLINOIS BICENTENNIAL 1825 - 2025".



Holiday Trivia Night

L I G H T S H O W

Canton Elk's Lodge

61 W Elm St.

Downtown Canton



July 19th

Doors: 5pm

Triva: 6pm



Team of 8 - \$110

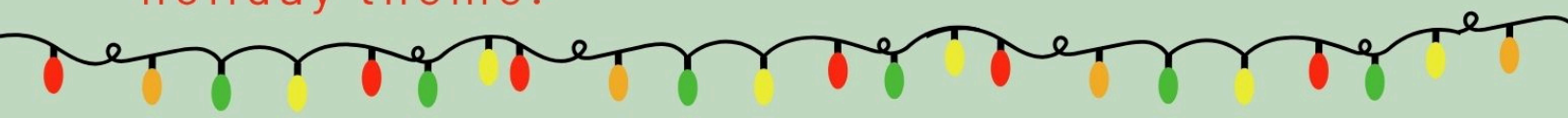
Interested in sponsoring this fundraiser: \$40 and receive advertising at the event by decorating a table.



Need more Information?

**Contact the Canton Chamber
at 309-647-2677**

You won't want to miss this sleigh full of fun!
\$8 meal, silent auction items, Holiday picture
and a prize for the best dressed team in
holiday theme.



Mixer

AFTER HOURS



CANTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Thursday, July 17th

5 - 7 pm

HOSTED BY

Location



White Oaks Sports
Bar & Grill
46 White Court, Canton



Networking Opportunity



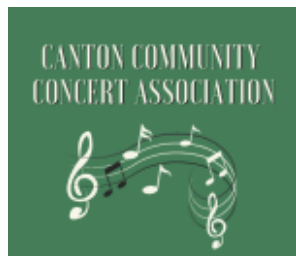
Giveaways



Food & Spirits

Served Pizza
Buffet!

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