



The Chamber Courier

SEPTEMBER
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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**BUCKHEART
SOLAR**



Executive Director Carla Bobell

There are many benefits to being a Chamber Member of the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce. Customers are 80 % more likely to purchase goods or services from a small business that is a Chamber member based on a survey by American Business Magazine. The Chamber is a vital part of our community and is unlike any other organization. We are a not-for-profit business whose purpose is promoting and protecting our local economy. The Chamber supports our local businesses, builds our community and provides support wherever needed. Some think that the Chamber is only for older, established businesses. The reality is that Chambers welcome businesses at all stages of development, from startups to long-established companies. New businesses can especially benefit from the networking, educational programs, and opportunities that Chambers provide, helping them to establish roots in the community and grow.

Take a look at the Membership Benefits chart for more details on the benefits you receive as a current member of the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce. For even more details on benefits, head to our website cantonillinois.org/chamber and click on Join the Chamber, then Membership Benefits. The Canton Area Chamber of Commerce is here for you and your business. We want to run alongside you to assist in any way, so feel free to reach out to our office anytime, we are here to help keep you on PACE.



Welcome New Member!

Civic Digital Displays

Coming Soon to Canton: Not Your Typical Billboards

Civic Digital Displays (CDD) is proud to bring fresh ideas and greater opportunities for billboard out-of-home (OOH) advertising to Central Illinois. With architecturally enhanced designs, our state-of-the-art digital billboards integrate well with the surrounding landscape in communities, while providing unprecedented access for advertisers. CDD's goal is to promote community pride, goodwill, and small business success. Our digital-only platform allows for tailored advertising campaigns for all businesses and organizations, with creative options for all budgets.

Civic Digital Displays 'went live' with its first digital structure in East Peoria earlier this summer. Currently, signs are under construction here in Canton, Metamora, and Pekin, while a robust development plan continues to come to fruition throughout central Illinois. As the CDD digital network expands across the region, advertisers will have the opportunity to engage potential clients and customers beyond the borders of their communities and counties, and reach much of the regional media market.

Civic Digital Displays was founded in 2023 by lifelong Central Illinois residents to partner with businesses in connecting with the communities that they serve. Our mission is for advertising to fit in where customers are every day in their communities, with upgraded architectural features and local branding on our displays. With our digital only platform, our signs are conducive to building successful advertising campaigns for businesses of all sizes. These digital displays will also serve as important tools for community connections, municipal messaging, and local celebrations.

CDD's work here began long before the foundation for the new digital structure was dug. These signs in Canton epitomize the company's mission of using digital community billboards as tools for economic success, not only for the advertisers which will enjoy the benefit of outreach, but as tools to facilitate redevelopment on otherwise challenging or difficult to develop sites. We look forward to fostering relationships with the members of the Canton Chamber of Commerce and serving you all for many decades to come!

For information regarding how to advertise with Civic Digital Displays, please contact us via email at sales@cividdigitaldisplays.com or call us at (309) 324-0588. You can also check out our website at www.cividdigitaldisplays.com.



New Management for Courtyard Estates in Canton

Gardant Management Solutions, Inc., is now managing Courtyard Estates of Canton

The affordable assisted living community on East Walnut Street is designed to serve adults 65 years of age and older who need some assistance to maintain their independence. The community is fully approved by the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services for Supportive Living so it can serve older adults of all incomes. A financial assistance program is available.

Based in Kankakee, Illinois, Gardant ranks as the seventh largest provider of assisted living in the United States, operating nearly 90 senior living, assisted living, and memory care communities.

“Our focus is on enriching the lives of residents and providing them with the love, the compassion and the dignity they deserve in addition to the help and assistance they need,” says Julie Simpkins, Gardant Co-President. “Our goal is to help each resident to achieve and maintain as much independence as possible for as long as possible.”

Gardant -managed assisted living and memory care communities have been recognized as being among the best in the nation by U.S. News & World Report and as Great Places to Work by the Great Place to Work Institute.

Courtyard Estates of Canton features 51 private studio and one-bedroom apartments, which residents can furnish and decorate to their taste. Each apartment has a kitchenette, bathroom, and emergency alert system.

Staff is on-duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide residents with help with assistance with activities of daily living and help with medications. Support services such as three daily meals plus snacks, housekeeping, and laundry are included.

Residents also benefit from all of the opportunities that are available to socialize with family, friends, and neighbors and to participate in social, recreational, educational, and wellness programs and special events.

More information can be obtained by calling Courtyard Estates at 309-647-6400.



*Courtyard Estates
of Canton*
SUPPORTIVELIVING

A Message from The Canton Park District

2024 has proven to be a busy year for The Canton Park District!

We had a successful summer season with our Youth Baseball and Adult Softball Leagues, Adult Fall Leagues are now underway. Other events have included a movie in the park, neighborhood games, and tree meditation. Midwest Youth Tennis held youth and adult tennis lessons. The Canton Bike share made a change to the ON bike share app, bikes are available to rent at Lakeland Park, Wallace Park, and Graham Clinic on South Main Street.



Big Creek Park Pool celebrated its 20th year! We had 20,552 people in attendance during the season. Swimmers enjoyed special activities including pool parties, tot time, water aerobics, a dive in movie, and spending time with family and friends.

One of the biggest changes over the summer months has been the retirement of Executive Director, Jon Johnson on June 28th. Jon spent 24 years serving the district in various roles with the last 18 being as Executive Director. Office Manager, Kathy Walljasper who has been with the district since 2006 was named as Interim Director until our new Executive Director, Brent Wheeler takes the reins on September 9th. We also welcomed Administrative Assistant, Mariah Essex to our organization on July 8th.

We still have various programs and events going on to wrap up the year and are working on some exciting projects for 2025. A complete list of programs and events can be found on our website at www.cantonpark.org and click on the 2024 Program and Events tab.

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

Gary G. Baker Recreation Center is located in Big Creek Park (940 North Main) hours of operations are 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Phone: 309-647-7665.

We are excited to see what the future will bring with the changes to our district and hope that the community will enjoy what The Canton Park District has to offer.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Canton Park District

New Executive Director: Brent Wheeler

In the 101 years history of the Canton Park District, there have been only five executive directors. Canton native Brent Wheeler will become the sixth when he begins his new duties in that role September ninth.

Wheeler replaces Jon Johnson who retired June 28th of this year after serving as executive director since 2006. Johnson had been with the district since 2000. Canton Park District Board President Stephen Clark said “The district is grateful for Jon’s dedicated service and leadership and looks forward to continuing its mission under Brent’s guidance.”



Wheeler is a 1993 graduate of Canton High School. He holds a 1997 Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice Sciences from Illinois State University. In 2010 he earned a Master’s Degree in Recreation, Sports, and Tourism from the University of Illinois. He has been with the Peoria Park District since 2001 where he briefly served in a variety of roles before being named in 2002 the RiverPlex Recreation and Wellness Supervisor. In 2014 he was chosen as Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation and has been in that position until accepting the Canton post.

Wheeler is no stranger to the Canton Park District, having served as a Park Board Commissioner from 2011 through 2021. He has also been an active volunteer locally with several organizations and extensive youth sports coaching.

Wheeler has long lived just outside Canton with his wife Mandy, and their three children...Sarah, Allison, and Nick.

Wheeler says he has a deep passion for parks and recreation and is eager to get started as director, adding he’ll use his parks and recreation experience and long association with the Canton community to hit the ground running. He went on to say “I am beyond excited to be able to work in the town I have called home for most of my life and to be able to work with such a talented staff and dedicated Board of Commissioners. Canton has an incredible park system that has played a huge role in my life as well as the lives of my family. I look forward to the work of helping to maintain and enhance these special spaces and places.” He especially wants to thank Interim Director, and longtime Canton Park District Office Manager, Kathy Walljasper, for doing a masterful job of bridging the gap while the new director search process was taking place.

The Canton Park District was established in 1923 and features more than 1,400 acres of property. It has long been considered one of the area’s finest assets. Wheeler says he’s committed to making it even better.

Opera House Plaza

Plans Move Forward For Opera House Plaza, Making Changes To Downtown Landscape

Written by Dana Smith, Executive Director for Canton Main Street

The historic Opera House Professional Building, once located at 45 East Side Square, was built in 1892, rebuilt after it burned in 1894, and survived an F3 tornado that leveled parts of the downtown in 1975. After falling into disrepair, it was restored and successfully converted to downtown office space by Kurt Huber, a Peoria developer.

On November 16, 2016, a deadly natural gas explosion severely damaged the building. Over 100 other buildings and businesses in the downtown area also sustained damage. The Opera House was eventually demolished, and the lot sat vacant for years. All that changed two years ago with a simple sketch by Carol Kohler, assistant to the mayor, proposing a new vision for the unused space in the center of the downtown.

In May of 2023, StudioK Architecture, in Princeton, Illinois, was hired by the City of Canton to create conceptual designs based upon the sketch. When the City approved the ideas presented, Farnsworth Group, an architectural and engineering company with offices in Peoria, was hired to develop a master plan for the Opera House Plaza project, including the architectural design and estimating costs. In March of 2024, the City Council approved the proposed budget, earmarking \$2.2 million in Business Development District funds. Farnsworth Group will oversee the bidding and construction process.

The design pays homage to the original building design, echoing the arched entrance with stone and open arches that cover a central walkway leading to a stage area. The hope is the space will be used for performances, public and private events that enhance the downtown, and engage the community. It will also have greenspace, seating areas, lighting, and landscaping.

Groundbreaking for the Plaza is anticipated for October, with a goal of completing the project in time for the Bicentennial Celebration in June of 2025. The planning committee was comprised of Carol Kohler, City of Canton; Amanda Sampson, then Marketing & Tourism Director for the Spoon River Partnership for Economic Development (SRPED); Michelle Spiva, Executive Director of SRPED; Carla Bobell, Executive Director of the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce; and Bruce Brown and Jacob Heck of Farnsworth Group.

A copy of the plan may be viewed at the Chamber offices, 48 North Main Street, Canton, or at the mayor's office in the City Building at 2 North Main Street in Canton.

Opera House Plaza



45 EAST SIDE SQUARE

D Service Beyond the Contract
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INSURANCE AGENCY, LLC
www.dempsterinsurance.com

74 E Pine Street
Canton, IL 309-647-4284

Purchase an advertisement in the Chamber Courier

Are you looking for a new, affordable way to market your business or organization? The Canton Chamber is now offering ad space in our new and improved Chamber Courier.

Additional Information Here

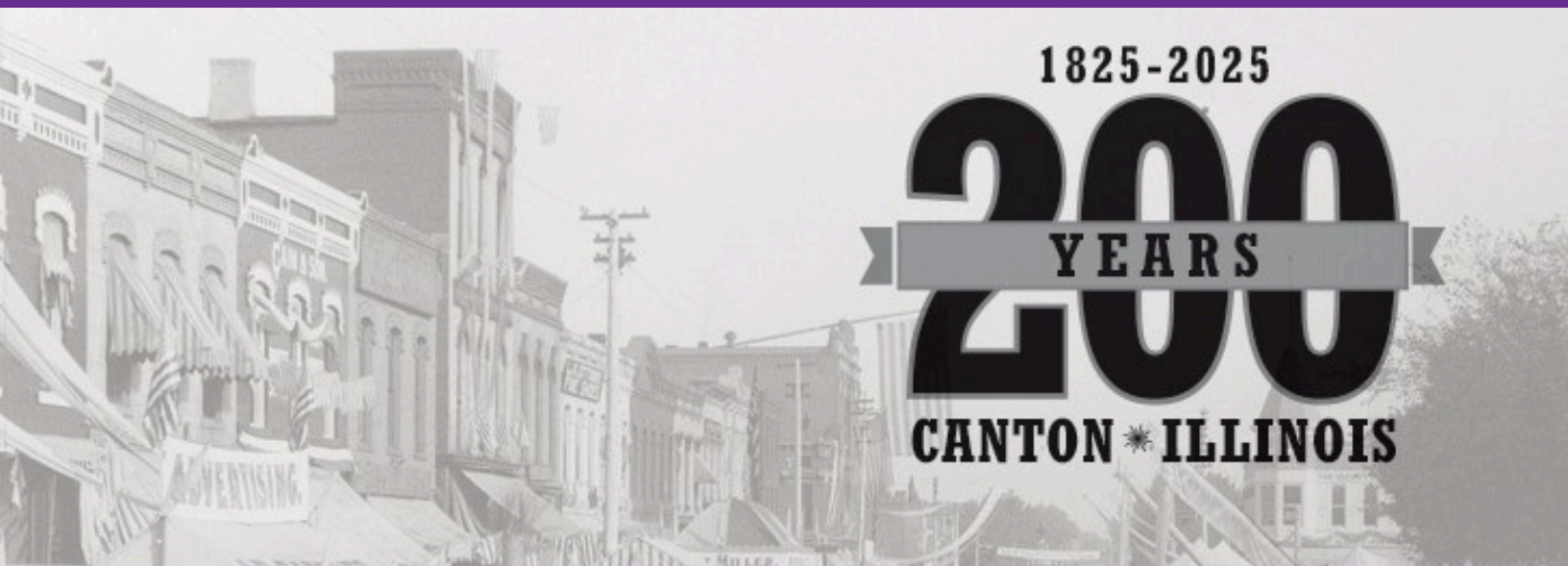
Canton Bicentennial

200 years is a long time...and it's a milestone worth celebrating! That's why Canton is preparing to go all-out for its Bicentennial in 2025! From its founding in 1825 to now being on the cusp of the celebration, it's exciting to know we'll be commemorating 200 years of history and progress. Mark the June 20-29, 2025 celebration dates on your calendars now. Those ten days will be filled with many events and activities. They'll showcase our long and rich heritage in a way sure to foster a spirit of community pride and unity.

Planning those events and activities is well underway by the Bicentennial Committee. In the coming months you'll be hearing about what they're putting together. There will be something for everyone to enjoy! Businesses and organizations are welcome to host their own events during the celebration. If you would like the event to be promoted in the Bicentennial promotional material, be sure to get your event sent in by December 30th, 2024. Use the "event registration form" by completing and returning to the Bicentennial committee.

EVENT REGISTRATION FORM

Want to learn more about the Canton Bicentennial celebration? Would you like to volunteer? Call 309-647-2677, email cantonilbicentennial2025@gmail.com, or go to www.cantonillinois.org.



SAVE THE DATES! JUNE 20-29, 2025

Canton Bicentennial

If your business or organization wants to participate as a Bicentennial Sponsor, there are various levels that allow you to be involved.

Canton Bicentennial Contribution Levels

P & O - \$1,000 or more

Includes: 1-Bicentennial banner, 5-Bicentennial coins, large advertising

Harvester - \$750 or more

Includes: 3-Bicentennial coins, medium advertising

Little Giant - \$500 or more

Includes: 2-Bicentennial coins, small advertising

Orendorff - \$350 or more

Includes: 1-Bicentennial coin, line mention advertising

Bicentennial - \$200 or more

Includes: line advertising

Big Toot - \$100 or more

Friendship \$25 or more

Call 309-647-2677 or email cantonbicentennial2025@gmail.com

CANTON BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION • JUNE 20-29, 2025



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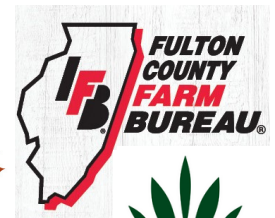
Harold Jump



G-M MECHANICAL



Harvester Meat Co.



RANCHO NUEVO



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AUGUST BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

BUCKHEART SOLAR



HOSTED THIS MONTH BY:

TBK BANK
801 N Main St.



September 19, 2024
5:00 – 7:00 pm

Food, Beverages, Fun, & Networking

UPCOMING BAH

October: United Way of Fulton County

November:

Barnhart, Tinsman & Parrish, Ltd
Klinedinst Chiropractic
Stinauer Family Dentistry
Oakdale Veterinary Clinic
Davis & Campbell, LLC

December:

Ipava State Bank & Billy's Tap

HAPPENING THIS MONTH!



FOOD TASTING

BEER & WINE

LIVE MUSIC

KIDS ACTIVITIES

PIE EATING CONTEST

12:00 PM - 3:00 PM



SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 29, 2024
DOWNTOWN CANTON

Interested in being
a food vendor?
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CHAMBER CHAMPIONS



CEFCU®

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!