



Sauk Valley Area
chamber of commerce

UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ACCREDITED



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Partnering for Success

DECEMBER 2022

Sterling Federal Bank

cordially invites you
to celebrate the Holiday Season
at the

**Sauk Valley Area
Chamber of Commerce**

Business After Hours

Thursday, December 15th

5:00-7:00 p.m.

**110 East 4th Street
Sterling, Illinois**

Cocktails

Hors d'oeuvres ♦ Door Prizes

REGISTER NOW
SVCC.EDU

December Meetings

December 1	Exec
December 8	Ambassadors
December 13	Board
December 15	HBLC
December 20	Ag
December 21	PWN

Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce Directors & Staff

Executive Committee

President: Dr. Jon Mandrell
First Vice President: Pam Fluck
Second Vice President: Tim Determan
Treasurer: Sheila Martinez
Past President: Lance Buser

Term Ends January 31, 2023

Mike Loos, Edward Jones Investments
Sheila Martinez, U.S. Bank
Rick Turnroth, Turnroth Sign Company
Pam Fluck, Self Help Enterprises

Term Ends January 31, 2024

Dave Knie, Knie Appliance & TV
Tim Determan, Pinney Printing
Steve Munson, Retired, The Medicine Shoppe
Lance Buser, Wal-Mart DC #7024
Ryan Olson, Ward Murray Pace & Johnson
Violet Nava, Sauk Valley Bank

Term Ends January 31, 2025

Alejandro Rivera, RE/MAX Sauk Valley
Geoff Wright, CGH Medical Center
Josh Johnson, Whiteside Area Career Center
Dr. Jon Mandrell, SVCC
Rebecca Munoz-Ripley, YWCA

Staff

Executive Director—Kris Noble
Marketing Coordinator— Dallas Knack
Financial Specialist/Office Manager—Bailey Dorner

A Message from the Director

Last month I shared about the importance of shopping local and reasons why it is so important to our community that we spend our dollars locally and support our Sauk Valley businesses.

This month, I have a few suggestions on how to do just that!

There are two big events this month that will benefit our locally owned businesses:

- Friday, December 2 is the Seasonal Sights and Sounds Downtown Christmas Walk. Starting at 5:30pm with the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus we will kick off the evening with the lighting of the tree and Sterling Theatre. Lots of free family activities will be going on downtown. Many businesses and restaurants will be open throughout the evening as well. This is a great opportunity to enjoy a meal, do some shopping or pick up some gift cards!

- Friday, December 9th, in partnership with Northland Mall, the SVACC is hosting an open house at the mall 4pm-6pm. There are many new **LOCALLY OWNED** businesses at the mall, and we want to support them. There will be appetizers and drawings for several amazing door prize baskets. At 6pm all chamber members are invited to Buggy's Arcade and Gaming for some fun. Buggy's has appetizers and adult beverages as well!

On behalf of the SVACC Board of Directors, I thank you for your support and involvement this past year. We look forward to continuing to serve you, our members, and impact change in the Sauk Valley in 2023.

Have a fabulous holiday season

Kris

Investor Update December 2022

NEW INVESTORS

Vibe 815
779-910-6452
2900 E Lincolnway, Sterling
Birth to Five Illinois Region 47
309-393-2541
137 N Walnut St, Byron

Renewal By Andersen
309-481-4905
1008 W 35th St, Davenport
Regional Office of Education #47
815-625-1495
1001 West 23rd St, Sterling
Astro-Ven Distributors
815-288-6747
1888 Paulsen Rd, Dixon

Metro by T-Mobile
815-632-3017
603 Freeport Rd Suite C, Sterling
Elevated Beauty Supply LLC
815-716-8933
2900 East Lincolnway, Sterling

INVESTOR RENEWALS

A & A Flooring
DeJonge Tax & Accounting, Inc.
E.D. Etnyre & Co.
McDonald Funeral Home & Crematory
Midland States Bank

Planet Fitness
Raymond James & Associates
River Country 101.7, WIXN
1460AM/95.1FM, Sky 95.7FM
River Ridge Animal Hospital
Rosemeyer Management Group

Sauk Valley Media
SBM
Stahr Media
Sterling Public Schools
Twin Cities Homeless Shelter (PADS)
Willy's Restaurant

We would like to give special recognition to the following groups who provide extra support to the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce. This extra effort and support is truly appreciated. If you have the opportunity to express your sincere appreciation to these members, please do so!

Over \$1000 Invested

CGH Medical Center
Community State Bank
Farmers National Bank - Morrison
Midland States Bank
Sauk Valley Bank
Select Employees Credit Union
Sterling Federal Bank
US Bank
Wahl Clipper Corp.
Wal-Mart DC #7024
Ward, Murray, Pace & Johnson

150% Club

Altran Magnetics
Amazing Grace of Sterling
Bushel Basket Candle Co.
Green Bee Energy Efficiency
Happy Tails Humane Society
Helm Civil
Hill's Electric Motor Service, Inc.
Illinois American Water
James S Ferris, DDS, PC
Lance's Plumbing
Lee Ogle Transportation System
Lil Smoked

LK Design Source
Loescher HVAC
Mattox Insurance Agency
Moore Monument & Granite Co
Rock River Hospice & Home
Roy Dern State Farm Insurance
St. Vincent DePaul Society
Sawdust N Dreamz
Select Employees Credit Union
Sterling Rock Falls Child Care
Sterling Township
The Toy Store
T-Mobile
United Craftsmen, Ltd.

110% Club

1st Gateway Credit Union	Folsom's Bakery	Rock River Ready Mix	Stahr Media
Allstate Insurance Company	Hawkins-Cassens Insurance	Rosemeyer Management Group	Sterling Chevrolet
Astec Mobile Screens Inc	Imprintable Memories	Sauk Valley Food Bank	Sterling Commercial Roofing
Bardier & Ramirez Real Estate	Jim Prescott's BBQ Shop	Scholl Insurance Agency	Sterling Napa Auto Parts
Bollman Auto Center	Johnson Oil Company	Sedona Staffing	Sterling Optimist Club
Candlelight Inn	Kelly's Restaurant	Servicemaster	The Cornerstone Agency
Cassens Drainage	Kiwanis Club of Sterling	Shelly Dambman CPA	Wendler Engineering Services
Central Heating & Cooling	Marv Lofgren & Sons Contractors	Sherwin Williams Company	Willy's Restaurant
Compeer Financial	Mertes & Mertes	Showplace Antiques & Treasures	Winter Construction
Dennis Electric of Tampico	New Millenium Directories	St. Mary's School	
Farmer's National Bank	Reitzel Roofing Company	St. Vincent DePaul	
	Rock River Lumber & Grain		

Chamber Ambassadors

Allie Johnston – University of Illinois Extension
Angie Delhotal— Sauk Valley College Foundation
Brock Burlack – T-Mobile
Cassandra Salmon – YWCA
Chandra Meyer – Re/Max Sauk Valley
Christina Bystry — House in the Country
Janell Loos — Heritage Woods
Jennifer Alvarez — Surf Broadband
Justin Wiggins — Wiggins Computing, LLC
Karen Voss – Morningside of Sterling

Mary White – Community State Bank
Melissa Ryan—Rock River Hospice & Home
Nicole Bollman - CGH Medical Center
Pam Fluck – Self Help Enterprises
Roy Dern – State Farm
Sheila Martinez – U.S. Bank
Sherry DeWalt – CGH Health Foundation
Skip Dettman—LSSI
Tygen Bausman—Sterling Federal Bank

Want to join the Ambassadors?

SVACC Ambassadors serve as the public relations arm of the Chamber. They're the face of the chamber and play a crucial role in the work SVACC does. This professional business group works within the membership serving as a liaison between membership and the community. Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at different member locations. Individuals interested in becoming an Ambassador need to submit an application for consideration.

Please call 815-625-2400 or email knoble@saukvalleyareachamber.com to apply



Congratulations to AirPlay Espresso & Bakery for receiving the Customer Service Award!

Shoutout to Alexander for going always going above and beyond for customers!

Visit AirPlay at 115 E 3rd St., Sterling.

Congratulations to HALO Branded Solutions for receiving the Customer Service Award!

Peggy was nominated by a local business for her incredible customer care and follow through.

For more information about HALO call 815-625-0980.



CSA Sponsored by:



Business After Hours | 3 Twelve

Thank you to 3 Twelve for hosting Business After Hours on November 17. We're excited for this new addition to downtown Sterling!

Our next BAH will be December 15 at Sterling Federal Bank. Please join us!



Member Spotlight



We would just like to simply thank the community for their support and love for Sophie's Cafe and Steel Mill Coffee. It takes a community to raise a business and love and care to keep it going. We are forever grateful for your support.

Everyone should know how important local businesses are. Unlike Big Box chains that siphon money out of your community, your local businesses are the backbone of bringing money into your community. This is the money your local banks give out in loans to help give rise to other local businesses, money the city uses to repair or add infrastructure, add emergency services, a new park, river project, etc. It is the lifeblood of any community and without it, communities will fail.

With that, Steel Mill Coffee Co. needs YOUR help. Every person and business willing.

To put it simply we are facing off against the Titans of the coffee industry, and platforms such as Amazon and Walmart make it all but impossible to find new competitors on their platforms. We will need the collective support of the entire Sauk Valley area to gain enough reviews and support to be seen on these platforms and have a chance. Our success is ultimately the community's success. We have a product we are very proud of, that the community can be proud of and be a part of. So please stand with Steel Mill Coffee Co. and let's give these Big Box Titans a run for their money.

[Click here to purchase Steel Mill coffee.](#)

SVACC Ag Committee

The SVACC Agribusiness committee presented contributions to Sterling FFA, Oregon FFA, and Whiteside County Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom Program to support Ag Education initiatives in the Sauk Valley.

The SVACC is committed to supporting our local education programs and students. We know that by working together, we can make this community stronger!



Ribbon Cuttings



Mandy Rae's Eyebrow Studio
1510 Prophetstown Rd., Rock Falls
815-564-7130



Walmart Store 891 remodel
4115 E. Lincolnway, Sterling
815-626-7200



Shelter Insurance - Phillip Vasquez
1503 1st Ave, Ste E, Rock Falls
815-632-3393



3 Twelve
312 Locust St., Sterling



JJM Printing—NEW location
1301 E 4th St. Sterling
815-632-3913



Castor Health Institute
6 E 23rd St., Sterling
815-564-0977



Midland States Bank remodel
941 1st Ave., Rock Falls
815-626-4737



Schnappin Outlet
2900 E. Lincolnway, Sterling
(815) 246-2323



Schnappin Deals
2900 E. Lincolnway, Sterling
(815) 246-2323

Governmental Affairs

From Jeremy Cirks, State of Illinois Treasurer's Office



Illinois Secure Choice: Expanding Retirement Savings Access for Illinois Workers

Per [State law](#), employers with 5 or more Illinois employees that have been in business for at least 2 years and that don't offer a tax-qualified retirement plan are required to register for and facilitate Illinois Secure Choice.

Through Illinois Secure Choice, Illinois workers can save for retirement through Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) funded by payroll deductions. The program is facilitated by the State of Illinois and administered by a professional financial services firm. Employers do not pay any fees, make contributions, or have any fiduciary liability – they simply facilitate employee payroll deductions and keep their employee rosters current.

Businesses with 16 or more Illinois employees must register for or report an exemption from the program by November 1, 2022. The registration/exemption deadline for businesses with 5-15 employees is November 1, 2023, though employers are welcome to join ahead of their applicable deadlines.

Businesses with an upcoming registration deadline will receive correspondence directly from Secure Choice. Business owners can also access information and resources by:

- Visiting the program website, ilsecurechoice.com
- Attending a webinar ([employer overview webinars](#) are held each week)
- [Scheduling time with Jaimee Niles](#), the Illinois relationship manager for the program who can provide hands-on assistance

Workforce Development

Certificate of Employability Workshop held at SHS and Amboy High School

This fall, the SVACC and several employers provided the 6-week Certificate of Employability workshop to students at Sterling High School and Amboy High School.

The six session topics included:

- How to get the Job
- Work ethic
- Professionalism
- Communication
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Problem Solving/Critical thinking/Creativity

Thank you to the following SVACC members who participated this fall:



Students were also given the opportunity to gain information about local businesses in the area and the various career pathways right here in the Sauk Valley. They also learned about the importance of essential skills in the workplace. This initiative is an example of bridging the gap between students/education and employers/businesses. We were able to connect with over 50 high school students about pathways and skills in the work place.

If you would like to be part of this program, please contact Kris at knoble@saukvalleyareachamber.com

The Sauk Valley Community Leadership Program cohort met at the Rock Falls Community Building on November 2nd. First, Dr. Tad Everett, Superintendent of Sterling Public Schools spoke to the class about Leading through Change and shared so many strategies that the cohort members could all take and use immediately. Dr. Paul Steinke, CGH CEO, rounded out the day with a compelling discussion on Organizational Change and Why Businesses Fail.

The Sauk Valley Community Leadership Program cohort then met at Wahl Clipper Corporation on November 16th. Our first speaker was Bruce Kramer, Senior VP, North America Consumer Division at Wahl Clipper Corporation. Our second session included a focus on agriculture, featuring Katie Pratt, family farmer and Lee County’s Agriculture Literacy Coordinator, and Nik Jakobs, partner, Jakobs Brothers Farms. The final session featured cohort members Heather Koski and Craig Shurson from Frantz Manufacturing. The morning culminated with a tour of Wahl Clipper and lunch from the always-fantastic Candlelight Inn.



Guest Editorial

Written by Pamela Martinez, Executive Director, Sauk Valley Foodbank

A history of the Sauk Valley Foodbank:

In 2001, when the closure of Northwestern Steel and Wire Co., Lawrence Brothers, and National Manufacturing, increased demands on local food pantries brought the need to Carol Siefken who had also lost her job in computer finance from the closures. The United Way of Sterling-Rock Falls (United Way of Whiteside County) formed a committee and approached the River Bend Foodbank to see whether the area needed a foodbank of its own. From there, the Sauk Valley Foodbank started with a card table, a desk lamp, paper and pencil, and two pallets of food donated by the United Way of Sterling-Rock Falls (United Way of Whiteside County). From those two pallets, the food bank has gone on to handle more than 2.4 million pounds of food a year (2022).



We hold our Parking Lot Pantry Day every Saturday, unless it’s a holiday. This day is where families come to the foodbank through a drive through style, and receive food. We give away produce, meat, and dry goods. We have seen the number of families ebb and flow throughout the last two years. From the beginning of 2022 the numbers stayed steady between 225 to 350 families a week until Easter. Since Easter, in April the number of families has increased to over 350 per week. We have already seen over 400 on four separate occasions and we feel that the numbers will continue to rise throughout the remainder of the year. Since January 2022 we have seen over 14,266* families and 47,542* individuals through our Parking Lot Pantry Day. (*numbers are duplicated)

We are located at 1801 Plant Drive, Sterling, IL. We serve 46 pantries, 13 mobile pantries and we are in five counties. We welcome volunteers to help during the week and especially Saturday’s. We run on seven part-time employees and one full time.

Written by: Hunter Luyando—Newman Central Catholic High School

CEO has impacted all of us in similar and different ways. For me I wanted to join it to work on my social skills. It has changed me a lot. It helped me learn how to keep conversations going. I've become more and more comfortable talking to strangers. You learn about business, but you learn more life skills than just learning business things. CEO sets up their students for success. This month we had Gary Devore come in and speak to us, which I always enjoy. He talked a lot about mental health. He showed us breathing techniques to help you when you're stressed. I've incorporated it into my routine whenever I get stressed out. Students deal with a lot of stress whether it's grades, sports, looking for colleges, and other things we can't control. CEO also helped open my mind to looking at things from different perspectives. I'm very glad I decided to become a CEO student. It has made a huge impact on me in just the first few months.

Written by: Gracie Rippey—Rock Falls High School

You may hear the same things over and over about the CEO Program. How it is a student-driven entrepreneurial class for which we tour businesses and learn about how they operate, but it does more than you could ever imagine. Even just a few months into the program, it has transformed my way of thinking entirely. From the way I communicate with strangers, to volunteering at new places for the benefit of my community, there has already been a major transformation in how I go about living my life.

An important lesson that applies to CEO is the three factors that affect a person's drive. Something to look up to, look forward to, and chase toward. Something to look up to is the accomplishments our class has made so far. We have learned and achieved more in the past few months than most of our classmates have during their entire high school careers, including learning how to properly generate income for our class and listening to inspirational stories from successful entrepreneurs. Next is something to look forward to, including all of the things that could come out of this program. "Could" meaning however much you put into this program is how much you receive. We are currently working on our class business which is an amazing opportunity in itself, let alone our personal businesses and other things we will learn along the way before the end of the year. It's exciting to think about how much we will have grown and accomplished after this program. Lastly, is something to chase. Our entire class has goals and aspirations for the program. Something specific that we chase is success. Our class is a very special group that is driven to succeed, which is very powerful considering the downfall in the motivation of young people in recent years. We all work together strategically to achieve our goals and succeed in the program. In all, CEO is more than just a business class, it teaches valuable lessons that are useful for the rest of our lives.

Shoppes at GRANDON PLAZA

Application Portal Now Open!

The Shoppes at Grandon Plaza, a retail incubator project by Sterling Main Street, are designed to attract small businesses, create more retail shopping, and bring people into downtown Sterling. Its inaugural season will open in the spring of 2023!



Six 12x16 incubator units will be available. The initial application portal is now open, and the deadline to apply is December 31, 2022 at 5 PM. Applications will be reviewed in early 2023 and Vendors will be notified of their acceptance in February 2023. Possession of the units will be delivered to vendors at the beginning of April and vendors will have one month to customize their spaces prior to the May 2023 opening.

For complete details on this exciting project visit our [website](#) or contact:



**STERLING
MAIN STREET**
Inspired. Involved.

15 E. 3rd Street
Sterling, IL 61081
815.626.8610
janna@sterlingmainstreet.org
www.sterlingmainstreet.org



SAVE THE DATE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2



Scan this code
for details



Festivities begin at 5 PM for late night shopping,
tree lighting, horse & carriage rides, fireworks,
entertainment, kids activities & more!

Sponsored by:



Illinois American Water

Lundstrom Florist • Midland States Bank • PC Tech 2U • SBM
Showplace Treasures & Antiques • The Caring Center



  For more information visit
www.sterlingmainstreet.org



Sauk Valley Area
chamber of commerce



Open House

Friday, December 9
Northland Mall
4 - 6PM

Door Prizes
& Appetizers

6PM Chamber Social Event
@ Buggy's with Drink Specials

Register to win \$100.00 in gift certificates to
SVACC members located in the mall.

