



Sauk Valley Area  
chamber of commerce

UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**ACCREDITED**



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# Partnering for Success

JULY 2025

Together with the area chambers of commerce,  
Sauk Valley Community College presents

## BUSINESS *After* HOURS

**THURSDAY, JULY 17**  
**5:00 - 6:30 P.M.**

**SVCC WEST MALL OUTDOOR PLAZA**  
(SVCC WEST MALL IF RAINING)

Grab your Hawaiian shirt and hula over to  
SVCC for drinks, appetizers and door prizes.



**\$25**

*Get ready, get set... give back!*

## SPORTS PHYSICALS

**\* Available now through August 31!**

Give back to your child's school by taking advantage of **\$25 sports physicals\*** at participating CGH Clinics and the CGH Ready Care Clinics in Dixon and Sterling. **CGH will donate \$5 from each exam to support your child's school.** It's a win-win for your family and your community!

All locations, excluding Ready Care, appreciate appointments made in advance. Your child does not need to be an established patient. Payment is due at time of service (cash or card). This offer is for sports physicals only; for well-child exams or immunizations, please contact your child's primary care provider.

Visit [www.cghmc.com/sportsphysicals](http://www.cghmc.com/sportsphysicals) for a complete list of dates and locations!



## July Meetings

- July 8 Exec
- July 10 Ambassadors
- July 15 Board of Directors
- July 15 Agri-business Committee
- July 17 Hispanic Business Leaders
- July 17 Business After Hours

### Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce Directors & Staff

#### Executive Committee

President: Pam Fluck  
First Vice President: Geoff Wright  
Second Vice President: Alejandro Rivera  
Treasurer: Tim Determan  
Past President: Dr. Jon Mandrell

#### **Term Ends January 31, 2026**

Pam Fluck, Self Help Enterprises  
Sandi Cavazos, US Bank  
Kristina Kaecker, Kunes RV

#### **Term Ends January 31, 2027**

Tim Determan, Pinney Printing  
Lance Buser, Wal-Mart DC #7024  
Ryan Olson, Ward Murray Pace & Johnson  
Bailey Schneiderbauer, Sauk Valley Bank  
Mike Ceruzzi, Moore Tire  
Josh Knie, Knie Appliance & TV

#### **Term Ends January 31, 2028**

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

Dallas Knack—Executive Director  
Ronda Borgmann—Financial Specialist

The views expressed by any member of the Chamber do not represent the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce in any official endorsement or support of any specific elected official or political party. Any products, events, statements, views or opinions offered or expressed by members are not the products, events, statements, views or opinions of the SVACC, nor endorsed by the Chamber or its membership at large.

## A Message from the Director

As we enjoy the sunshine and vibrant energy of summer, I want to take a moment to encourage all of us to embrace the spirit of “supporting local.”

Our local businesses are the heart of our community. They sponsor our kids’ teams, donate to local events, and create jobs right here at home. When you choose to shop, dine, or use services locally, you’re not just making a purchase — you’re investing in your neighbors, your friends, and the future of the Sauk Valley.

This summer, I challenge each of us to be intentional. Whether it’s grabbing dinner from a new-to-you restaurant, catching a movie at the Sterling Movie Theatre, or taking your child to Woodlawn for a class, every decision to support local helps our region thrive.

Thank you for continuing to make Sauk Valley a place we’re proud to call home. Let’s make this summer one to remember — by supporting local, together.



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### Committee Highlight: Hispanic Business Leaders Committee

HBLC met for their monthly meeting to discuss the upcoming Fiesta Parade and Celebration on September 20. Leo’s Marvelous Bites was a great location for the meeting and the group enjoyed a delicious lunch. Violet Nava from Leo’s Marvelous Bites spoke with the committee, giving a history of the business including the Puerto Rican and Hispanic roots, and why she wanted to get involved with HBLC.



# Save the Date

Friday, August 1: **Hot Dog Day and Family Fun Fair**

Thursday, August 7: **40<sup>th</sup> Annual Steak Fry in the Country** (more information on pg 11)

Saturday, September 20: **72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fiesta Day Parade and Celebration**

For more information on upcoming events, visit [saukvalleyareachamber.com/events](http://saukvalleyareachamber.com/events).

## Investor Update July 2025

### **INVESTOR RENEWALS**

Bollman Auto Center  
Bonnell Industries  
Castor Home Nursing Inc  
Central Bank Illinois  
City of Sterling  
Community State Bank  
Educators of Beauty  
Farmer's National Bank  
Hartland Controls LLC  
Kiwanis Club of Sterling  
Kunes Auto Group

Lundstrom Florist Inc  
Micron Industries Corporation  
Open Door Community Church  
Poolside Pools & Spas  
Revive Boutique  
RiverWorks Coworking LLC  
Rock River GAP  
Rock River Hospice & Home  
Subway  
US Bank

### **Over \$1000 Invested**

Central Bank Illinois  
CGH Medical Center  
Community State Bank  
Farmer's National Bank  
Midland States Bank  
Sauk Valley Bank  
Select Employees Credit Union  
Sterling Federal Bank  
The IFH Group  
US Bank  
Wahl Clipper Corp.  
Wal-Mart DC #7024  
Ward, Murray, Pace & Johnson

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!

### **150% Club**

Altran Magnetics  
Helm Civil  
Hill's Electric Motor Service, Inc.  
Lance's Plumbing  
LK Design Source  
Loescher HVAC  
M5 Industries  
Mattox Insurance

PC Tech 2U  
RE/MAX Sauk Valley  
Reagan Mass Transit  
Rock River Hospice & Home  
Select Employees Credit Union  
Sterling Commercial Roofing  
Surf Internet  
United Craftsmen, Ltd.

### **110% Club**

Adobe Acrobat  
Best Cob  
Bollman Auto Center  
Bushel Basket Candle Co.  
DeJonge Tax  
Dennis Electric of Tampico

Farmer's National Bank  
Frantz Manufacturing  
Gold Star Cleaning  
Grace Point Church  
Hollyhock Hill Farms  
Kiwanis Club of Sterling  
McCormick's Nursey

Mertes & Mertes  
New Millenium Directories  
River Ridge Animal Hospital  
Scholl Insurance  
ServPro of Sterling  
Showplace Antiques  
Smeltzer Insurance

St. Vincent DePaul  
Trinity Insurance



## Chamber Ambassadors

Allie Johnston — University of Illinois Extension

Brian Hawkins—Brian Hawkins Insurance,  
The Cornerstone Agency

Cael Sanders—Sterling Federal Bank

Chandra Howard — RE/MAX Sauk Valley

Christina Bystry — House in the Country

Esther Salazar —CGH Medical Center

John Kelly—Culver's of Rock Falls

Karen Voss — Morningside of Sterling

Lyndsey Kelly—Sauk Valley Community College

Mary White — Community State Bank

Pam Fluck — Self Help Enterprises

Sami Wiggins — Castor Home Nursing

Sherry DeWalt — CGH Health Foundation

Tygen Bausman—Sauk Valley Bank

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### Ambassador Spotlight: Esther Salazar, CGH Medical Center

My name is Esther Salazar, and I joined the Chamber as an Ambassador last year. I work for CGH Medical Center in the Auxiliary department and the Marketing department.



In the Auxiliary department, I work with CGH Auxiliary volunteers. The volunteers give their time to help with a variety of tasks at CGH. They provide wheelchair transport, help people find where they need to go, assist at fundraisers, blood drives, and much more. I help make sure the volunteers have what they need to be successful. They're a very fun and dedicated group and if you're interested in volunteering for CGH you can call 815-625-0400 ext. 5727.

In marketing, I work with my department to promote CGH services and the exciting and new developments happening at the hospital. I look forward to all the projects and updates CGH has planned. Keep an eye out for our next HealthLines newsletter for all the newest information.

In December of last year, my fiancé and I welcomed our baby girl! It's been a very exciting time raising her and I'm happy to have her grow up in our wonderful community.

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Our ambassadors spent a Saturday morning giving back to the community! Thank you, Sauk Valley Foodbank, for allowing us to help with your weekly giveaway. It was a rewarding morning and we hope to be back soon!



In June some of our Ambassadors got together for lunch at Candlelight to chat and catch up on things happening in our community. It's always a great time getting together with this group!



Interested in joining the Ambassadors?  
Email Dallas at [director@saukvalleyareachamber.com](mailto:director@saukvalleyareachamber.com).

## Ribbon Cuttings

**April House Children's Advocacy**  
201 W. Market St., Morrision  
815-772-5286



**Matt Gimbal, Edward Jones**  
3917 E. Lincolnway Suite A, Sterling  
815-718-6401



**Total Phone Repair**  
106 W. 2nd St., Rock Falls  
815-564-2300

### **Congratulations to Ken Nelson the Customer Service Award!**

Ken Nelson goes above and beyond to help customers from sales to service. One nominator praised Anna Jahn in service for "providing immediate attention and making room for me to see a technician. Just half an hour later, I was on my way, and the repair was completed the next morning. Her care and service were remarkable."

Another nominator cited Mike, Brayden, and Brett for "ordering my new car to my exact specs. They kept me updated on every step of production. Once my vehicle was ready, the process of purchasing was just as easy."

It was just another great experience from such a reputable dealership like Ken Nelson."

CSA Sponsored by:





## Business After Hours

June Business After Hours was hosted by Morningside of Sterling.

Thank you, Morningside of Sterling, for hosting this month's Business After Hours and giving our members a chance to get together! Their facility provided a beautiful space for networking, and we even had a chance to tour the facility and learn more about their five star senior living services.

The event was catered by another SVACC member, House in the Country. Check out Christina's delicious spread!



## Golf Outing

The 59th annual golf outing was a fantastic day! Thank you to the sponsors and golfers who came out in support of the Charles Farnham Scholarship and workforce development initiatives.



Thank you for supporting the 59th Annual SVACC Golf Outing

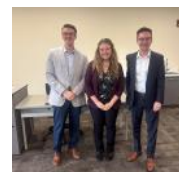


## Government Affairs

On June 18 our members had the opportunity to hear legislative insights from both state and federal perspectives at our Legislative Updates lunch and learn.

Ryan Gleason from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Andrew Cunningham from the Illinois Chamber of Commerce shared timely updates on policies and issues that impact our region's businesses.

Thank you to Ryan and Andrew for keeping our members informed!



## Guest Editorial

*Written by: Ellie Hanlon, Marketing & Development Director Sterling-Rock Falls Family YMCA*

Come join the summer fun at the Sterling-Rock Falls Family YMCA! Our schedule is packed from Summer Day Camp activities to Camp Benson trips and we're so excited to share it all with you!

Our Summer Day Camp program provides childcare for parents over the summer. With over 170 kids participating, we're having the Best Summer Yet! But don't worry about missing out on the fun. Our Summer Day Camp program transitions into our Before and After school program. During this program students can have the same great fun and parents have peace of mind knowing their kids are safe and active before and after school.

YMCA Camp Benson is also off to a great start! Kids have hiked, explored, bonded, and made lasting memories at our summer camp located in Mt. Carroll, IL. Registration for later camp weeks is still open. This year Camp Benson has a new specialty week, Basketball Skills Camp. During both the Adventure Week 6 and Mini Camp sessions 6A & 6B, campers can attend break-away training sessions with some of our best coaches!

The Sterling-Rock Falls Family YMCA has activities for all ages throughout the year. For younger kids just starting off on their sports journeys we have our flag football, basketball, soccer, and cheerleading programs! Swimming lessons are always important to keep summers safe and exciting! For our older members, we offer group fitness classes nearly all day every day. And our personal trainers are ready to work with you one on one or in small groups to really focus on your fitness goals!



At the Sterling-Rock Falls Family YMCA we endeavor to make sure no one is turned away due to the inability to pay. Each year we run our Annual Support Campaign, which aims to raise money for scholarship and program assistance for our members. Together we can continue Making Good Happen in our community all year long!

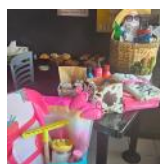


To learn more about what the YMCA has to offer, donate to our Making Good Happen Campaign, or register for one of our great programs, visit our website today! [www.srfymca.org](http://www.srfymca.org).

## Professional Women's Network

Summer vibes, strong connections, and a whole lot of fun at our latest Professional Women's Network event! From fun questions and networking bingo to delicious food and custom cocktails by Bartini's, this event had it all. Thank you to Bartini's for hosting and to our generous door prize sponsors: Sterling Federal Bank, Lundstrom Florist, Mud & Moo Boutique, Chickens and Scratch Tallow Company, Castor Home Nursing, and Sleek Hair & Beauty - Hair Specialists. We love seeing our members come together, connect, and leave inspired!

Special thanks to our PWN 2025 event series sponsors: H.B. Wilkinson Title Company, The Wellspring, Whiteside County Senior Center and Whiteside County Public Transportation.





## Scholarships

Each year the SVACC and our committees award scholarships to local students pursuing continued education in a variety of fields. Through your support and generosity at events such as the Golf Outing, Steak Fry, Fiesta Parade, and Manufacturing Dinner, we are able to award \$30,500 in scholarships for this school year. We are excited to announce the 2025-26 scholarship recipients:

### Agri-Business Scholarship:

Andrea Buhrow, University of IL  
Brooklyn Robillard, Western Illinois University  
Daniel Kelly, Iowa State University  
Emma Foster, UW Platteville  
Jon Spoerlein, Bradley University  
Katelyn Smoot, University of IL  
Kately Stoller, UW Platteville  
Troy Anderson, Iowa State University  
Allison Duggan, SVCC  
Blake Huizenga, SVCC  
Jace Urish, Highland Community College  
Brysen Full, SVCC  
Kadielynn Nelson, SVCC

### Farnham Scholarship:

Carolyn Masini, Bradley University  
MaryKay Downs,  
Merrick Delali Amankwa, UW Platteville  
Samantha Knox, Augustana College

### Hispanic Heritage Scholarship:

Amiya Rodriguez, SVCC  
Ben Munoz-Ripley, Augustana College  
Connie Ibarra, SVCC  
Kaitlyn Moore, Illinois Wesleyan

### Manufacturing Scholarship:

Niklaus Nardini, Morrison Institute of Technology

## Members in the News

STERLING, IL – Sauk Valley Bank is pleased to welcome Bailey Schneiderbauer as the Sterling Market President. In this role, Bailey will oversee market operations, community partnerships, and customer service initiatives for the Sterling area, continuing Sauk Valley Bank's mission of delivering trusted, local financial services.



As Market President, Bailey will focus on developing new and existing customer relationships by providing the Sterling community with additional resources to support economic growth. "We are fortunate to welcome Bailey into this role at Sauk Valley Bank. She brings many years of retail and banking experience to our industry. Since joining Sauk Valley Bank, she has progressed from a retail banking role to becoming the first Market President for the Sterling region. She aligns seamlessly with our bank's values and mission," said Dirk Meminger, President and CEO. "With her experience, I look forward to strengthening existing relationships and building new ones within our Sterling community. Her addition will support the Sterling market area and enhance how we meet the needs of our customers and community."

Bailey is a lifelong Sauk Valley native. She graduated from Rock Falls Township High School and attended Sauk Valley Community College, where she played basketball. She and her husband, Michael, have one son, one daughter, and are expecting another daughter in August. Her strong family values align with those of Sauk Valley Bank, as she prioritizes both her family and community. She sits on the Board of Directors for the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce and serves on the Promotions Committee for Sterling Main Street. Bailey brings nearly eight years of experience with Sauk Valley Bank. She began her career as a part-time teller and steadily advanced through key positions, including Universal Banker, Solutions Center Team Lead, AVP Retail Market Manager, and VP of Retail for all markets. In this newly created role as Sterling Market President, Bailey will address the needs of [Sauk Valley Bank's] largest market, which includes three locations. Given her involvement in the Sterling community and the many relationships she has built at Sauk Valley Bank, she is the perfect addition to [Sauk Valley Bank's] Leadership Team.



# Grant Ready: Unlocking Funding for Your Next Big Idea

Thursday, July 17, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Sauk Valley Community College · Room 1C03  
Water & lemonade will be provided.  
Free to attend!

## Grant Pre-qualification Process & Resources *(Led by SBDC)*

3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## Q&A with Panel of Grant Writers *(Hosted by SVB)*

4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Daniel Payette	<i>Executive Director of Blackhawk Hills Regional Council</i>
Greg Gates	<i>Executive Director of Reagan Mass Transit District</i>
Ashley Richter	<i>Executive Director of the United Way of Lee County</i>
Robbin Blackert	<i>Rock Falls City Administrator</i>

## Networking & Individual Questions

4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.



Registration deadline is July 10. Register online at [sauksbdc.com/training](http://sauksbdc.com/training) or scan the QR Code.  
Sauk Valley Community College, 173 IL-2, Dixon, IL 61021

Questions? Email Justin at [sbdc@svcc.edu](mailto:sbdc@svcc.edu).



In accordance with the American Disabilities Act and state law, you may request accommodations due to a disability by contacting the Illinois SBDC. The Illinois SBDC Center is Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity and Sauk Valley Community College.





# Lovett Child Development Center

## Work with Confidence

We are dedicated to providing a nurturing and stimulating environment where your little one can grow, learn and develop.

- ✓ Art and Crafts
- ✓ Outdoor play
- ✓ Music and Movement
- ✓ Science and Discovery



**START MONDAY**



hgrobe@dixonymca.org  
**815-288-1124**



# STEAK FRY IN THE COUNTRY

Thursday,  
**August 7**  
5:30 p.m.

**Ted Jacobs Farm**  
6700 Hickory Hills Rd., Rock Falls

The Steak Fry in the Country brings together Chamber members, agri-business, farmers, and community members for an evening of networking, discussion on agricultural topics, and a steak dinner hosted by the SVACC Agribusiness Committee. Proceeds support local agricultural and Chamber initiatives.

**Tickets are available at**  
**[saukvalleyareachamber.com](http://saukvalleyareachamber.com)**  
**or call 815-625-2400 by 8/1**



**NEW  
this  
year!**

**Happy Hour  
sponsored by**

**Nutrien**  
Dixon

**NEW!**

## VIP PACKAGE

**\$800 - package includes:**

- ✓ Tickets for 10 people
- ✓ Premium seating & location
- ✓ Event sponsorship
- ✓ First to dine following auction
- ✓ Business logo displayed on table

## Event Sponsorship Only - \$250

Includes: space to display one banner or piece of equipment during the event. Business logo included in program.

## Event Ticket Only - \$25/person



**Questions? Contact Dallas at**  
**815-625-2400 or [director@saukvalleyareachamber.com](mailto:director@saukvalleyareachamber.com)**