

## Partnering for Success





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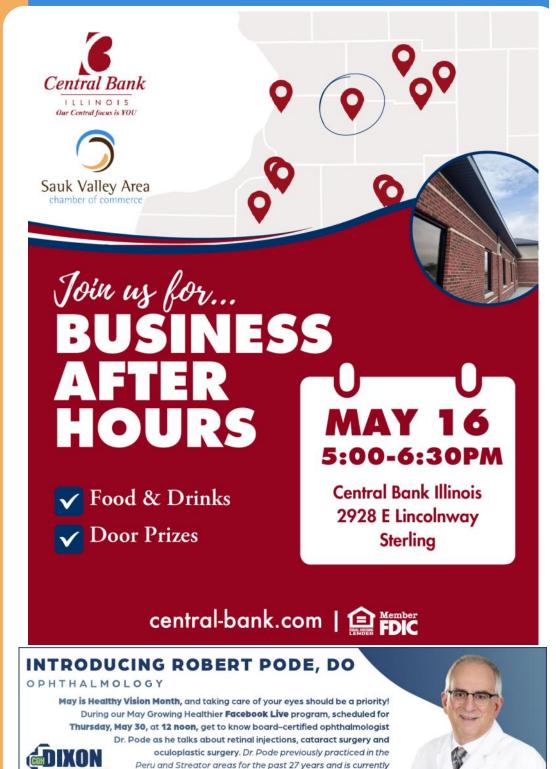






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MAY 2024



accepting new patients at the CGH Dixon Medical Center.

#### **May Meetings**

May 6 Exec

- May 9 Ambassadors
- May 14 Board of Directors
- May 16 HBLC
- May 21 Agribusiness

#### 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, 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

> **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

#### Staff

Executive Director—Kris Noble Marketing Coordinator — Dallas Knack Office Manager/Financial Specialist—Janie Fisher

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

The Sauk Valley Keystone Group, established in 2018 by the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce and Sterling Main Street, is an initiative aimed at mobilizing Millennials and Gen Z members within our community. Its primary mission is to foster community involvement and leadership among young adults, thereby shaping the future of the Sauk Valley area.

Since its inception, the Keystone Group has contributed to various community enhancement projects, including the development of Dogwood Acres Dog Park, feedback regarding the Sterling Riverfront Reimagined project, discussion regarding local murals, the housing challenge, and quality of life priorities. These projects have served as platforms for young leaders to step forward, contribute to meaningful change, and ensure their voices are heard in the community. The initiative has created a space for Millennials and Gen Z, ages 19-38, to connect, share ideas, and collaborate on projects that are of interest to them. This approach has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility towards local development, encouraging a new generation of community leaders to "grow our own."

Understanding that community engagement is not a static process, the Keystone Group has embraced the fluidity and flexibility necessary to remain relevant and responsive to the changing dynamics of its membership. Life events, shifting interests, and the natural ebb and flow of participation have shaped the initiative, making it a resilient and adaptable force for community development.

In recognition of these changes, and based on valuable feedback from participants, the SVACC and Sterling Main Street are committed to offering new opportunities in 2024. Details can be found on page 13.

With renewed focus and energy, we will explore different avenues for engagement, ensuring that the group remains a significant and influential force within the community. Our commitment to this initiative is unwavering, and we eagerly anticipate the fresh ideas, perspectives, and projects that our young leaders will bring to the table.

For more information about how to get involved please contact Kris Noble at knoble@saukvalleyareachamber.com or 815-625-2400.

#### **NEW MEMBERS**

**Paul Bonnell Creative Studio** 308 2nd Ave, Rock Falls 815-213-1810

#### **INVESTOR RENEWALS**

4-D Farms Advocare Independent Distributor AM Disposal Amazing Grace Angelo's B & R Auto Repair/ RC Dyno Center **Bargain Exterminators** Brent's Upholstery & Auto Accessories **Brown Construction Company** Bugsy's Arcade and Gaming **Christ Church Sterling City of Sterling** Clinton LumberKings **Clover Hills Appliance Center** Cork and Brews LLC **County Market** Downie & Associates, CPA's, PC Edward Jones / Loos Exceptional Care & Training Center Gaffey Health Service, Inc. Greater Sterling Development Corp.

#### **Investor Update May 2024**

Milledgeville Church of the Brethren 25257 Dutchtown Rd., Milledgeville 815-225-7812

HB Wilkinson Title Company Helm Civil Hill's Electric Motor Service, Inc. Home of Hope Jakobs Bros. Farms Inc. K's Korner Trading Post Lee County Republicans Central Committee Lee Ogle Transportation System Majeski Motors Marv Lofgren & Son Contractors McDonald's Mike Sprague State Farm Insurance Moore Monument & Granite Co. Nasos Salon Northern IL Cancer Treatment Center Northern IL Home Medical Supply Northland Mall **Republic Services Rise Broadband** Rock River GAP **Rock River Hospice & Home** 

**Raul's Construction LLC** 605 Dillon Ave., Sterling 815-716-1154

RRCA Accounts Management, Inc. Sandrock Farms/Sauk Valley Angus Sauk Valley Bank Select Employees Credit Union ServiceMaster Sinnissippi Centers, Inc. Slim-N-Hank's Auto Body Shop, Inc Smeltzer Insurance Agency Sterling Federal Bank Sterling Moose Family Center Sterling Park District Sterling Public Library Sterling Schools Foundation Sterling Systems & Controls, Inc. Sterling Woodworks LLC Steve Munson Subway **US Bank** Whiteside County Farm Bureau Whiteside County Genealogists Wilco Rental, Inc. Winning Wheels

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 cere appreciation to these members, please do so! <u>150% Club</u>

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

**Central Bank Illinois CGH Medical Center Community State Bank** Etnyre & Co. 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

**Altran Magnetics** Bushel Basket Candle Co. **Candlelight Inn** Helm Civil Hill's Electric Motor Service, Inc. Illinois American Water Lance's Plumbing **LK Design Source** Loescher HVAC Lutheran Social Services of IL Mattox Insurance Agency McDonald's

Moore Monument & Granite Co NICIL PC Tech 2U **RE/MAX Sauk Valley Rise Broadband Rock River Hospice & Home** Select Employee Credit Union Sterling Commercial Roofing Sterling Rock Falls Child Care **Sterling Township** Surf Internet The Cornerstone Agency United Craftsmen, Ltd.

#### **110% Club**

**1st Gateway Credit Union** Astec Mobile Screens Inc **Bardier & Ramirez Real Estate Bollman Auto Center Compeer Financial Dennis Electric of Tampico** Hawkins-Cassens Insurance

Hill Fastener Imprintable Memories James S. Ferris DDS, PC Kelly's Restaurant **Kiwanis Club of Sterling** Marv Lofgren & Sons Contractors McCormick's Nursey

Mertes & Mertes NAMI Sauk Area **New Millenium Directories** Rock River Lumber & Grain **Rock River Ready Mix** Scholl Insurance Agency Servicemaster ServPro of Sterling

Showplace Antiques St. Vincent DePaul Sterling Chevrolet The Factory **Trinity Insurance** Winter Construction

#### **Chamber Ambassadors**

Allie Johnston – University of Illinois Extension Arnulfo Valdivia—Sauk Valley Bank Brian Hawkins—Brian Hawkins Insurance Cael Sanders—Sterling Federal Bank Cassandra Salmon – OnCall Imaging Chandra Meyer – Re/Max Sauk Valley Christina Bystry — House in the Country Esther Salazar —CGH Medical Center Jennifer Alvarez — Surf Internet Karen Voss – Morningside of Sterling Lyndsey Kelly—Sauk Valley College Foundation Mary White – Community State Bank Pam Fluck – Self Help Enterprises Sami Wiggins — Allure Health Care Sherry DeWalt – CGH Health Foundation Skip Dettman—LSSI Stepheni Chandler—Hughes Resources Tygen Bausman—Exquisite Floral & Party

#### Pam Fluck—Self Help Enterprises

Hello Chamber Members,

My involvement with the SVACC began in 2011. Since that time, I have been, and still am, a Chamber Ambassador, along with serving on the Board of Directors, the Executive Board, and currently Board President. I am proud to be a part of an organization that gives so much to its

community, its members, and the opportunity it provides in getting to know people and businesses in the Sauk Valley area.

In 2022, I became the Executive Director for Self Help Enterprises. This year is an exciting year for Self Help, as we are celebrating our 60th anniversary! We will be forever grateful to Rev. James Crangle and his foresight to create the beginning of Self Help Enterprises. Throughout the prior 60 years, there have been many changes, moves and new buildings. The one constant that remains is its purpose. We are here to continue the mission Rev. Crangle started and make the next 60 years as remarkable as the first 60.

What else is Self Help doing in 2024? Did you know that Self Help Enterprises has a greenhouse? A generous family donated the greenhouse many years ago and last summer we brought it back to life. The individuals we serve enjoyed digging in the dirt, planting seeds, flowers and the like and then reaping the rewards. As a result, this year we decided to have our 1st annual flower and vegetable sale! An insert is included in this newsletter. Our opening day is Saturday, May 4th, we hope to see you and provide you with flower and vegetable plants for your home.

I would like to thank you for all you, our members, do for the SVACC and the Sauk Valley area. Together, we can achieve great things!

#### Christina Bystry—House in the Country

Wow, another year has come and gone! A few highly anticipated changes have happened at House in the Country Bed & Breakfast. Last summer the restoration of main barn on the property, located north of Sterling on Route 40, was started. Hibbard Construction undertook the arduous task of raising the 170+-year-old barn in order to install a new foundation, a floor,



and remove the hay loft. Its raising, was a purposely slow project and it took months! A good clean and lighting are all remain to be accomplished this year. Being the only B&B in Sterling, the property continues to host guests from all over the country. Also last summer, a neglected and overgrown old farmstead located just south of the B&B property was purchased. The eyesore was completely cleared and is now a clean slate. Watch for changes as you drive by. Contact Christina at 815-970-0305 or Houseinthecountry18@gmail.com for unique country lodging for friends and family.





NAMI—new location! 3103 Freeport Rd., Sterling 815-876-0442



Gripp Custom Farms 401 W. Main St., Wyanet 815-454-9600



April House Children's Adovacy 101 E. Main St., Morrison 815-772-5286



Sterling Township—new location 505 W. Lynn Blvd., Sterling (815) 625-3990 Sterling Park District—Disc Golf Course 400 W. 15th St., Sterling

#### Ambassador of the Year

Jennifer Alvarez, Surf Internet, Ambassador Co-Chair presented Christina Bystry, House in the Country, with the 2023 Ambassador of the Year Award and Certificate of Appreciation for being the SVACC Ambassador Cochair for 2022 and 2023. Congratulations Christina, and thank you for all you do!





#### **Manufacturing Day**

Sauk Valley Community College hosted Manufacturing Day—an event that allows students to tour local manufacturers and then spend the afternoon getting hands on and creative! This year, 141 students attended. Thank you to the following members who participated: P & P Industries, Raynor, Astec, Frantz, and Walmart DC.

#### **Business After Hours**

Thank you to Hope Cancer Wellness Center for hosting this month's BAH.

Please join us next month at Central Bank's new location: 2928 E. Lincolnway, Sterling.



#### Sauk Valley Community Leadership Program

WACC CEO Class students collaborated with the Sauk Valley Community Leadership Program on 4/3/24. First, Le Hartman, facilitator of the WACC CEO Class west and Laura Carbaugh,

facilitator of the SVCLP class, led discussion on generational differences and how to understand motivations in the workplace and in life. Le also facilitated a discussion on the intricacies of Gen Z. A panel of local professional leaders then discussed the need to recognize generational differences in the workplace, including John Berge, McFalls, Berge & Associates; Beth McFalls, McFalls, Berge & Associates; Josh Knie, Knie Appliances; Dr. Jon Mandrell, Sauk Valley Community College; and Joe Strabala-Bright, Sauk Valley Community College. A boxed lunch from the SVCC café sent us off to the rest of our day.

The SVCLP cohort met on Wednesday, April 17, at The Gathering Place in Dixon, a beautiful meeting/party spot next door to Salamandra's. The topic focus for the day was Economic Development and Small Business

Entrepreneurship. The morning began with a Entrepreneurship Panel Discussion, facilitated by Dallas Knack, owner of The Violet Veranda. Sarah Lewis, owner of the Autism Center of Sauk Valley; Dr. Jon Devereueawax, Professor of Economics at SVCC and photographer; and Katy Selmi, owner of Selmi's Bridal and Special Events and Florist and Country Financial representative discussed entrepreneurship. Our next session included the following Economic Development leaders of the Sauk Valley area: Kim Ewoldsen, Director of Regional Economic Development and Illinois Small Business Development Center, Sauk Valley Community College; Tom Demmer, Executive Director, Lee County Industrial Development Association; and Kris Noble, Executive Director, Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce. Salamandra's served us a wonderful taco/nacho bar for lunch.

Interested in joining the '24-'25 cohort? Visit svleadership.org



#### **Guest Editorial**

Written by Stephanie McLean, Sauk Valley CPR



Founded in 2023 by registered occupational health nurse and instructor Stephanie McLean, Sauk Valley CPR, LLC is a mobile business based in Sterling, IL which provides services in the surrounding Sauk Valley communities. She first started teaching CPR in 2020 to the local business community when she worked at KSB Hospital. "I became an instructor because I was inspired by the stories of patients I've encountered over the years who survived cardiac arrest through CPR and I strongly support the American Heart Association's mission to provide science-driven education to those with a desire to learn and want to make a difference in a life-threatening emergency. More importantly, I want those I teach by the end of class to feel comfortable in their knowledge and skills so that there is no hesitation or reservations when immediate help is needed after 911 is called. So many of us are fearful of the consequences of doing CPR: 'Will I hurt or kill them?', 'Will I be held legally responsible if something goes wrong? ''' They are all valid concerns but we work through this through video-led instruction and practice on the mannequins in a safe atmosphere which encourages questions, learning from mistakes, and utilizing constructive feedback. My belief is that the more people out there who know how to provide high-quality CPR, the better off we all are as a community. It's a good feeling to know that with every class I teach, there's more people added out there who've got your back if something should ever happen to you.''

Sauk Valley CPR, LLC also provides instruction and certification in First Aid as well as training for businesses who must meet OSHA standards for blood borne pathogen prevention and exposures in the workplace. "Our business has a far-reaching audience and has the ability to meet many needs from day care centers, to churches, social groups, schools, businesses and factories – even individuals…you name it, I will do my best to try to accommodate what you need to accomplish your goals."

Services and pricing through Sauk Valley CPR can be obtained by visiting www.SaukValleyCPR.com and any questions can be directed

to info@saukvalleycpr.com.

Be sure to visit their booth at the upcoming health and wellness events at the YWCA Cinco de Mayo on 5/03/24 and the Child Fair at Sauk Valley Community College on 6/01/24.



#### Congratulations to Sterling Fence Company for receiving the Customer Service Award!

They were nominated for supporting the community in many ways. They provide great customer service, quality work, and value their customers.

Visit them at 2704 Locust St., Sterling or call 815-625-2201.

CSA Sponsored by: Mike Sprague StateFarm



#### **Government Affairs**

#### Increases to Exempt Salary Requirements are Coming – Get Ready!

By Kevin Kleine, Sara Zorich

On April 23, 2024, the United States Department of Labor (DOL) announced its final rule, amending the minimum salary levels necessary for employees to be considered exempt from the overtime requirements under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) "White Collar" (executive, administrative, and professional) exemptions. The final rule is set to take effect on July 1, 2024. The current minimum salary level threshold for exempt employees under the FLSA is \$684/week (\$35,568 annually) and \$107,432 minimum compensation for the highly compensated employee. The final rule does not amend the FLSA's definition and standards related to an employee's job duties under the "White Collar" exemptions.

The DOL's final rule establishes the following changes:

#### Effective July 1, 2024,

Exempt employees must be paid a salary of at least \$844/week (\$43,888 annually). If employees make less than that amount, they are not exempt from overtime and are eligible to receive overtime for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. Total compensation for the FLSA highly compensated exemption increases to \$132,964.

#### Effective January 1, 2025

The exempt salary threshold amount increases again to \$1,128/week (\$58,656 annually). Total compensation for the FLSA highly compensated exemption increases to \$151,164.

According to the final rule, the DOL will update these minimum salary thresholds every three years (i.e., on July 1, 2027, July 1, 2030, July 1, 2033) to reflect current earnings data.

It is critical for employers to review their current exempt employee pay mechanisms in light of the FLSA salary increases, and to analyze the following:

- How many of your current employees will be impacted by this salary increase?
- Is a salary increase in July 2024 and January 2025 for those who do not currently meet the salary requirement a plausible financial decision to meet the required increases?
- Are there job positions that should now be reclassified as non-exempt and the employees will now be entitled to overtime if they work over 40 hours?
- Tightening up policies regarding working overtime and working with management to limit the number of overtime hours worked for non-exempt employees.
- Reviewing job descriptions.
- Reviewing handbooks and policies regarding exempt and non-exempt status.
- Reviewing benefits applicable to exempt and non-exempt employees and how a change in status may impact the benefits to your employees.

Employers have options:

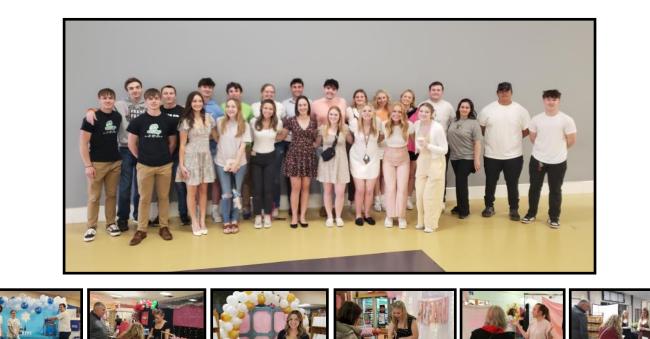
- Increase the employee's salary to that proposed in the new regulations (July 1, 2024 and then again January 1, 2025);
- Keep the salary the same, reclassify the employee as non-exempt and pay the required overtime payments based on the employee's regular rate of pay;
- Reclassify the employee as non-exempt and reduce the employee's salary or change the employee to hourly at a lower rate so the total earnings do not change after overtime is paid;
- Eliminate the employee working any overtime hours

It is imperative for employers to analyze their exempt workforce NOW to prepare for the July 1, 2024 effective date.

#### **CEO** Program



Congratulations to the CEO Program on the 2024 Trade Show! It's so wonderful to see the community come out to support these students as they put their businesses to the test. Thank you to all who came out and shopped, ate some great food, and showed support for these incredibly hardworking students.



#### **Guest Editorial**

My name is Tanner Thompson and I am the Director of YMCA Camp Benson. I had the privilege of attending camp as a child, going through the Staff Development Program, becoming a counselor, and working my way to this position at camp.

YMCA Camp Benson is a beautiful summer camp that offers overnight camping for campers ranging from just entering first grade to the age of seventeen. While pictures show natural rock bluffs, a river full of campers tubing, or a game of capture the flag, these are not the things campers talk about when they get picked up on Saturday mornings. They talk about the songs they sang. They talk about the games their counselor taught them. They talk about conquering fears and trying new things. They talk about the friends they made. The nicknames they came up with. The wristbands they received when Staff saw them exhibiting the core values of camp: Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Dedication, and Inclusiveness. They talk about how much they want to come back next summer.



#### Follow the signs to our greenhouse!



## ENERNOVA

### LUNCH & LEARN ENERGY UPDATES FROM ENERNOVA PARTNERS



AJ Allison Senior Energy Consultant, EnerNova Partners

#### THURSDAY, MAY 16th 11:30PM-1PM

ANGELO'S II 2525 E LINCOLNWAY, STERLING, IL 61081

#### Workshop Highlights:

- Electricity & Natural Gas 101
- What is Deregulation? Do I have a choice on how I purchase electricity and natural gas for my business?
- How to lower utility costs in a rising market.
- What is Group Purchasing and What are the Advantages?

How To Register: EnerNovaPartners.com 309-230-2272 ajallison@enernovapartners.com



**REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY MAY 9 I LUNCH INCLUDED FROM ANGELO'S** 



RAISING HOPE FROM THE DEAD

# INFORMATIONAL

Friday, May 3, 2024

6:00-7:30 PM

Open Door Community Church
 1705 6th Ave, Sterling, IL

Resurrecting hope through the **power**, **people**, & **process** of the 12 steps.

Learn More www.opendoorcommunity.church/RecoveryAlive

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ARE YOU BETWEEN THE AGES OF 19 & 40 AND WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE SAUK VALLEY AND GET INVOLVED?

The Sauk Valley Keystone Group is an initiative of the SVACC and Sterling Main Street. The group was formed in 2018 to be a voice for the Millennial generation and has expanded to include Gen Z. The purpose of the network is to learn about what is happening in the community, and to encourage active participation in impacting change in the community - focusing on what is important to YOU.

**KEYSTONE** 

Sauk Valley

#### **UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:**

#### **Family Fun Night**

Friday, May 3 | 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Sterling Rock Falls Family YMCA (2505 Ave. E, Sterling) Geared toward parents with young children. Join us for games and activities in the gym, snacks, and swimming. This is a great opportunity to meet other parents with young children, and spend time with your kids in a safe and fun atmosphere. \$10.00/family. Register here: <u>bit.ly/43TqDwl</u>



#### **Keystone Meeting**

Wednesday, May 15 | 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Sterling Township (505 W Lynn Blvd., Sterling) Join us for a tour of the new Sterling Township building and youth center. Engage in conversation about what is happening in the community and have an opportunity to share your ideas, suggestions, and thoughts about our area. Registration not required.

Keystone Social Event for ages 19-40 Thursday, May 23 | 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Whoop Your Axe (2317 E. Lincolnway, Sterling) Join us for axe throwing, beverages, snacks, and opportunity to meet others in the community. \$15.00/person. Register here: <u>bit.ly/43GsPXU</u>

Questions? Contact Kris at knoble@saukvalleyareachamber.com or 815-625-2400





SVACC 58th Annual Golf Outing Registration and Sponsorship



#### Friday, June 14, 2024 | Deer Valley Golf Course

Proceeds to fund the Charles Farnham Business Scholarship and chamber operations.

Registration/Lunch 11:30am Shotgun Start 12:30pm Awards 5:00pm

Presented by: AUTO GRO						OMMERCIAL	COFING ROOFING KUNES RV STERLING
<b>Eagle -</b> \$550.00 Full Hole Sponsor	<b>Birdie -</b> \$450.00 1/2 Hole Sponsor				<b>Par -</b> \$425.00 Full Hole Sponsor		<b>Caddy-</b> \$300.00 1/2 Hole Sponsor
4 Golfers       4 Golfers       2 Golfers       2 Golfers         *All Packages Include: 18 holes with cart, green fees, lunch and signage on your sponsored hole. All sponsors will be noted in the event program with your business logo.         GOLF ONLY:							
AUTO-HOME-BUSINESS-WORK		SPONSO ONLY: ole \$275. ole \$175.	OR \$80.00 Per \$320.00 Fou		Golfer		
Golfers' Information:         Company Name:         Contact Name:         Phone:         Email:         Golfers:         Golfers:         Golfers:         SVACC - 211 Locust Street, Sterling, IL 61081         Phone:       815-625-2400   Fax:         815-625-2400   Fax:       815-625-9361         Email:       knoble@saukvalleyareachamber.com			Bird Par Cad Gol list Full	Select: Eagle Package Birdie Package Par Package Caddy Package Golf Only (\$80.00/golfer)/ list number of golfers Full Hole Sponsor Only 1/2 Hole Sponsor Only		<ul> <li>□ Invoice Me □ Check Enclosed</li> <li>□ Credit Card □Visa □ M/C</li> <li>Name on Card:</li></ul>	