

LEGISLATIVE POLICI See pg 03



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

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rom the Interim President/CEO



Renee Duxler

The end of one year and the beginning of another always seems to call for a time of reflection as well as planning. Reflecting on the year before and assessing how it went, and then time planning with hopes of growing, improving, learning, and evolving even further. A new year always feels like a clean slate to either start anew, or at least add a new page to prior successes.

Here at the Chamber, we're not only in a time of reflection and planning, but we're also in a time of transition. The changing of the year isn't the only change that is happening around here as our Board begins the process of searching for our new CEO/President.

We enter into the new year facing exciting possibilities, but also some uncertainty and the potential for more change.

I'm excited to be at the helm as we go through this process. The community of Salina is seeing extraordinary growth, and our business community especially is leading the way in innovation, progress, and creativity. Our hospitality, restaurant, and retail industries are beginning to creep out from under the cloud of COVID and have proven their resiliency and tenacity. Our educational institutions continue to see record enrollment numbers, and our healthcare facilities continue to provide state-of-the-art care. Manufacturing continues to grow as an industry, and we can't build houses fast enough for incoming jobs and workforce. Salina has seen over \$1 billion in both public and private investment in the last five years, and that number only continues to grow with new projects and expansions in the pipeline.

All of this growth does not come without its challenges however, and we at the Chamber continue to be hyper focused on workforce development, entrepreneurial support, convention and visitors' activity, and legislative advocacy. The Imagine Salina campaign is winding down in its final year of existence, with bigger and better plans for Love Salina and all of the potential it brings. Project OPEN is providing free business training classes and access to capital to more aspiring entrepreneurs than it ever has before. Visit Salina is looking to create new and improved collateral for recruiting conventions and sporting events. And as you'll read in this issue's cover story, our legislative work is ramping up in a big way as we partner with the City, County, Airport Authority, Salina Community Economic Development Organization and KSU-Salina to invest in governmental affairs efforts.

Our mission is to advocate and elevate our members' economic prosperity and to be the catalyst for our community's future. This includes supporting commerce in the community, but also championing for affordable housing and childcare, access to mental health resources, and development of important community amenities and social infrastructure. We hope our membership can reflect on our successes in these areas, and is planning to join us as we forge ahead in our mission.

We thank you for your membership and wish you a Happy New Year!



Renee Duxler, Interim President/CEO

HERE'S HOW TO CONTACT OUR CHAMBER STAFF



Chamber and Local Partners Develop 2023 Legislative Agenda

Every year, the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce comes together with our community partners that include local government bodies, economic development organizations, educational institutions, and community health stakeholders to develop a regional legislative agenda to present to both federal and state elected officials. For many years now, this process—and the document produced—have been very beneficial. But questions have been raised recently about if it continues to be effective.

Last spring, Salina made incredible headway during the state legislative session with a \$25 million grant for housing as the result. The Chamber, along with our local partners, began to wonder what might be accomplished if we were to focus more effort and weight toward legislative affairs. Salina has the assets and economic development to be a major player in the allocation of state and federal dollars, but just hasn't had the capacity to spend the time and energy needed in Topeka or Washington D.C.

This year it was decided that the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce would join the City of Salina, Saline County, the Salina Airport Authority, the Salina Community Economic Development Organization and Kansas State University-Salina, by investing in a government affairs consultant. This group has contracted with Eric Sexton from Foulston Siefkin LLP in Wichita to help in communicating both funding and policy requests to state and federal representatives. Sexton is an experienced governmental affairs leader who spent 18 years on Wichita State University's governmental relations team, most recently as executive director of governmental relations. During his tenure in that role, WSU ranked 15th in the country for earning directed federal appropriations for important programs.

"We at Foulston Siefkin LLP are proud to become a partner with the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce and the Salina area," Sexton said, "I personally have watched from afar the progress and growth of this community and am excited to be engaged and part of our continuing success at the state and federal level."

One of the major objectives in producing the 2023 legislative agenda was to prioritize what those funding and policy requests would be. The group decided on eight priorities that would guide the process, that included the hot button issues of workforce development, housing affordability, and childcare access.

From these priorities stem funding requests that will provide housing infrastructure, and create training and job opportunities, as well as policy requests that focus on education, housing, childcare, and access to mental health care and resources.

"Labor force is at the top of everyone's mind right now, including the County as we are looking to staff our new jail facility," Phillip Smith-Hanes, Saline County Administrator said, "Access to housing, childcare and mental health care are fundamental pieces of workforce development as we work to put that puzzle together."

A final copy of the legislative agenda will be available on the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce website, or you can receive one by contacting Renee Duxler at rduxler@salinakansas.org or 785-827-9301.

The 2023 Legislative Policy Agenda focuses on eight priorities for regional growth, economic development, community health, and overall quality of life for Salina and the area.

Drive regional success & economic development





Strengthen a skilled workforce

Establish affordable, quality housing





Fortify transportation initiatives

Invest in education





Enhance quality of life & community amenities

Ensure affordable healthcare & mental health resources





Secure access to early childhood programming and childcare



Business After Hours is a <u>5pm-7pm</u>
<u>Thursday</u> evening networking
event offered for Chamber
Members.

Attendees are Charged \$5 at the Door. Annual Fast Passes are Also Accepted.

Contact Stephanie Gillig at sgillig@salinakansas.org or 785-827-9310 ext. 124 to schedule a Business After Hours at your Business.



CHAMBERRESPONSIBILITIES

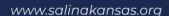
- Sound System
- Emcee for the Evening
- Registration Table/Greeters

THE CHAMBER WILL MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS & WILL PROVIDE A \$250 ATTENDANCE DRAWING

THE CHAMBER WILL ADVERTISE THE EVENTS IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

- Chamber Connection Newsletter
- Bi-Weekly Emails
- Social Media
- Invitation Postcard Mailed to Members

THE CHAMBER WILL ACCEPT AND TRACK RESERVATIONS FOR THIS EVENT







- Provide Tours (If Desired)
- Provide Food & Beverages for Attendees Alcoholic Beverages are Permitted



THE HOST BUSINESS WILL DESIGNATE A REPRESENTATIVE TO SPEAK A FEW WORDS REGARDING THE BUSINESS/SERVICE(S) PROVIDED



- The Host May Provide a Door Prize if Desired, This is Not Required
- The Host Business May Choose to Send Out Their Own Invitation to the Event in Addition to the Chamber's postcard

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS





The 2023 Mid America Farm Expo in Salina has been set!

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday March 22nd, 23rd, 24th



More details including booth prices and availability coming soon!

Contact Stephanie at sgillig@salinakansas.org or 785-827-9310 ext. 124 with any <u>questions.</u>

2023 KICK OFF EVENT!!



SALINA AREA YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Come and check out what Salina Area Young Professionals is all about!

Memberships are \$50 per person and will be available online through salinakansasyp.com after January 3rd or you can get your membership that evening... but not required!

JAN 19 2023

6PM TO 8PM

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY SALINA

College Center Conference Room 2310 Centennial Rd



HORS D'OEUVRES, DRINKS, CASH BAR, PRIZES, GAMES, AND NETWORKING



WELCOME ABOARD

HELIO NEXT HOLDINGS, INC.

Sam Browning 514 S. Santa Fe Ave

785-833-6724 • www.helionextcompanies.com

STREMEL & KUHN LAW OFFICES CHARTERED

Michael Kuhn 200 S. Santa Fe, Suite 6

785-833-6262 • www.stremelkuhnlaw.com

VORTEX SPRAYLINERS

Sam Browning 510 N. Santa Fe Ave 785-833-6724 • www.vortexsprayliners.com

785 AESTHETIC MED SPA

Dr. Patrick Lucaci 204 S. Santa Fe Ave 785-333-4286 • www.785medspa.com

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RIBBON CUTTINGS

with the Bluecoat Ambassadors!



Fili Creative held a ribbon cutting to kick off their December 6 Business After Hours!





THANK YOU

to these Chamber members who continue to support our programs through their membership renewal:

- ▶ AmericInn by Wyndham
- ▶ Apron Strings
- **BANK VI**
- ▶ Blushe Boutique
- ▶ Keith Bremerman
- ▶ Cheney Door Salina
- ▶ Chief Advisors Corp
- ▶ City Plumbing Company, Inc.
- ▶ Citywide Storage
- Commercial Signs, Designs & Shirts
- ▶ Commercial Tire Centers, Inc.
- ▶ Coops Pizzeria
- Copy Co.
- ▶ Doug Bradley Trucking, Inc.
- ▶ Drs. Cooper, Banninger & Ebert
- ▶ E Bar Z Stables
- ▶ Excel Security Systems, L.L.C.
- ▶ The Golf Shop
- ▶ Goodwill Retail
- ▶ Gourmet To Go/Loft Catering
- ▶ Great Plains Manufacturing Co.
- Isis Temple
- Janzen Marketing, LLC
- ▶ Jerry Diehl Construction
- ▶ Johnson Sand
- ▶ Jones Gillam Renz Architects
- Joyce Volk Insurance Agency, Inc.
- Kansas Bankers Technologies, LLC
- Kansas Beach Hospitality & Events

- Wally Kearns
- L & S Building Contractors, Inc.
- ▶ Lauren Quinn Flower Boutique
- Linda M. Lawrence, MD
- Long McArthur, Inc.
- ▶ John C. Marietta, D.D.S.
- ▶ The Market Shop
- Marshall Motor Co., Inc.
- ▶ McAlister's Deli
- ▶ Mowery Clinic, L.L.C.
- Networks Plus
- Neuschafer & Associates, Inc.-American Family Ins
- New Horizons Dental Care, PA
- Norton, Wasserman, Jones& Kelly, L.L.C, Attorneys
- ▶ Paramount Bar
- ▶ Pathway Financial Solutions
- Pestinger Heating & Air Conditioning
- ▶ Phil's Karts
- ▶ Ponton Construction, Inc.
- Precision Electrical Contractors L.L.C.
- ▶ Producers XL
- ▶ Professional Hearing Center
- Archie Riggs
- ▶ Ritter Tile
- ▶ Ryan Roofing, Inc.
- ▶ Salina Medical Esthetics
- ▶ Salina Regional Health Center
- ➤ Salina Regional Health Foundation

- ▶ Salina Rescue Mission, Inc.
- Salina Scale Sales & Service Inc.
- Salina/Saline Co.
 Crimestoppers Assoc.
- ▶ Saline County Fair Association
- ▶ Sandstone Saloon
- ▶ Smart Insurance
- SMG Unlimited
- ▶ Solomon State Bank
- ▶ Sonic Drive-In
- ▶ Sonic Drive-In #2
- ▶ Spangles Restaurant
- SSC Advisors, Inc.
- St. Mary's Grade School
- ▶ Starbucks Salina Downtown
- State Farm Insurance -Bary Martin
- ▶ Lawrence Stoskopf
- ▶ Theatre Salina
- ▶ Total Turfcare, Inc.
- ▶ USD 306 School District
- ▶ Dan Vidricksen
- ▶ Watson Electric, Inc.
- ▶ Web Creations & Consulting
- ▶ WPM Pathology Laboratory



Marquee Welcomes

January

- 3 Crossroads Dodgeball Tournament
- 7 WCS Bash Basketball Tournament
- 14 MAYB Basketball Tournament
- 21-22 Sky Gymnastics Winter Wonderland Competition
- 27 Smoky Valley Hoops Encounter Basketball Tournament
- 28 Kansas Kids Wrestling Tournament of Champions
- 29 KJCCC Wrestling Duals

2023 Sky Gymnastics

Winter Wonderland

Competition Springs Back

The annual Winter Wonderland event will be held by Sky Gymnastics on January 21-22, 2023 at the Salina Fieldhouse. Organizers expect over 520 athletes from outside the area to compete. The tournament is open to all levels and sanctioned by the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU).

Event organizer Sheena Torres said, "We are excited to again be utilizing the Salina Fieldhouse for the event! Travis Scheele works with me to make sure I have everything I need. The large space helps make the event run smooth, and Downtown provides a warm and welcoming place for participants to shop, dine and experience great attractions."

For more information contact Sheena by e-mail at genesisgymnasticsclub@gmail.com

In The News



Sunflower Bank and First National 1870 announce a total donation of \$101,895 to schools that participated in the ABC Program for Education's 2021-2022 school year campaign, which includes \$15,636 received by schools in Salina. Sunflower Bank originated the program in 2001, and since then has contributed over \$1.6 million to support kindergarten through 12th grade education

in the communities it serves. Donations were distributed throughout October 2022 by local branch teams.

The ABC Program is funded in part based on customer debit card transactions and new accounts opened. Sunflower Bank and First National 1870 customers have the opportunity to select an ABC Program-registered school to support with each qualifying debit card purchase during the campaign. The standard school donation per transaction is \$0.02.* This year for the first time, for every new Elevation Checking account opened 11/15/2022-8/31/2023, \$5.00 will be donated to an ABC Program-registered school chosen by the account owner. For more information, go to Sunflowerbank.com\abc or contact your Sunflower Bank branch.

GOT NEWS?

Do you have news to share about your business or organization?

Email srice@salinakansas.org and we'll publish it in an upcoming issue of Chamber Connection.



The Garage, 134 S. Fourth Street, has been honored for their work to keep children safe, with an Outstanding Coalition Organization award from Safe Kids Kansas. Many of their hands-on exhibits are dedicated to safety, including the Seatbelt Convincer that teaches the importance of wearing a 3-point seatbelt. They offer driving simulators as well, which have more than 900 hours on them since the museum's opening in early February and their Turbo Trivia Tower includes questions based on the Kansas Learner's Permit Test. The award was presented at an event in Topeka, and celebrated back at the museum by museum staff and board members (right photo). Congratulations to The Garage! To learn more about The Garage, visit the museum's website or its Facebook page.

Bill Burke Park & BFRA Update

by SPR Recreation Superintendent, Travis Scheele

Nemaha Sports Construction Company and Schwab Eaton Architects are teaming up and moving forward with the Bill Burke Baseball and Softball Turf Renovation Project. They have implemented a phased approach starting with four fields (2, 4, 5 & 6) to eliminate the possibility of all eight fields not being available due to inclement winter weather.

Bill Burke restrooms and concessions are also being worked on simultaneously, but by separate City staff. The concession renovation is already 80% complete with umpire changing area included. New restrooms will be implemented by Fields 7 & 8 and by the concessions stand. The restrooms by Field 3 will also be renovated.

At Berkley Family
Recreation Area
(BFRA), Schwab
Eaton is generating a
design to improve the
drainage issue.

\$ It Pays to Attend\$



At the Fili Creative Bah on December 6th, Bob Huseman with Huseman Vet Clinic won the \$250 Attendance drawing (above), and Hank Boyer was the winner of a 30-sec promo video by Fili Creative (below).



BUSINESS

After Hours

JANUARY

Mark your calendars to attend the following Business After Hours in January.

VYPE

VISIT SALINA ANNEX 120 W. ASH (BEHIND THE CHAMBER BUILDING)



THUR. 1-12

SALINA AREA TECH

2562 CENTENNIAL ROAI



THUR. **1-19**

RESERVATIONS ENCOURAGED





CHAMBER NEWS

2023 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Fast Passes

2023 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS FAST PASSES ARE NOW AVAILABLE. ORDER THROUGH QR CODE OR CONTACT STEPHANIE AT SGILLIG@SALINAKANSAS.ORG \$50 per Fast Pass





NETWORK WITH FELLOW CHAMBER MEMBERS AT THESE MONTHLY, INFORMAL EVENTS AT BUSINESS LOCATIONS IN SALINA.

Download the

5ALINA 67401

App!

Featuring the NEW Visit Salina Guide, SalinaAE.com Calendar, Chamber Business Directory, Special Offers and MORE!





2022 HIGHLIGHTS OF CHAMBER PROGRAMS AND WORK

A look at the highlights from 2022, continued from the December 2022 newsletter.

LEADERSHIP SALINA

The Leadership Salina Graduation was held November 17 at the Salina Country Club to recognize the 29 graduates and feature their Team Projects:

The Orange Team developed a program to provide dog waste stations downtown, in an effort to maintain the beautiful aesthetics that have been created through the downtown development of the past few years. Team Members: Tyler Etlind, Dian Gebhardt, Michael Fulkerson, Chris Lehecka and Bryant Lovin

The Red Team project involved an effort to update the Database of Local Non-profit Organizations and create a Resource Guide. Team Members: Annetta Flax, Jake Huffaker, Sarah Keck, Terri Schweitzer, and Josh Tellefson

The Yellow Team developed Project Affirmation. Team Members: Kyle Chamberlin, Chelsey Copeland, Stephanie Gillig, Ron Redden and Kimberly Vega

The Blue Team worked to create a Downtown Alley Lighting program as an enhancement of our downtown aesthetic and public safety. Team Members: Stephanie Anderson, Colton Carlson, Justine Curtis and Nikki Roelfeson

The Green Team created the Feed the Tech Titans Challenge. Team Members: Jeremy Bohn, Natalie Gordon, Mattie, Cristina Nieto and Zach Weis

The Purple Team developed Salina Youth Helping Hands. Team Members: Julie Mindrup, Lauren Pesek, Curtis Stevens, Brandon Stokesbary and Corey Wellbrock

A quick look at the Imagine Salina program - BY THE NUMBERS!

- Unique website visitors 2022: 38,745
- Campaign to date (2020-2022) unique website visitors: 104,911
- Resumes submitted: 132
- Community tours provided: 32
- Informational packets distributed: 276

Visit @imaginesalina on youtube.com to see new digital marketing videos by Fili Creative!

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

A huge THANK YOU to the 15 local businesses that hosted a Business After Hours event in 2022!

- **Brown's Shoe Fit**
- **Crown Distributer**
- JAB IT PC
- Residence 600
- **Salina Country Club**
- Long McArthur
- **Sunflower Adult Day Services**
- VFW and Salina Military Affairs Council (SMAC)
- Tri Rivers Fair
- Kansas Wesleyan University
- Salina YMCA
- Exline Combines with their 150th Celebration Ribbon Cutting
- **United Capital Management and The Sullivan**
- Salina Regional Health Center
- **FILI Creative**

SALINA BUSINESS HALL OF FAME

There were three inductees to the Salina Business Hall of Fame in 2022, which was celebrated at an event at the Salina Country Club on November 10. Richard Linton, President of Kansas State University, presented the keynote address. The 2022 inductees are:

- **Mabel Shelton** in the Historic category
- **Mel Jarvis** in the Historic category
- Larry Triplett in the Contemporary category

The recipient of the first Spirit of Salina award is Tyler Gallagher, owner of Seraphim Bread. This award was created to recognize an emerging entrepreneur in the Salina business community. Business Hall of Fame Taskforce members include Larry Britegam, Tom Bell, Tom Pestinger, Katie Platten and Linda Salem

INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

The Chamber led another successful international trip in October 2022. Sixty travelers enjoyed a Seine River Cruise featuring Paris and Normandy. There is a trip to Vietnam planned for 2023!

VISIT SALINA 2022

MILITARY & AVIATION EVENTS

Salina is so fortunate to have the incredible facilities at the Salina Airport Authority (SAA), the Smoky Hills ANG Weapons Range and Crisis City. Military and aviation events added to a successful year in 2022. Visit Salina is honored to work with these groups to assist in identifying event conflicts, coordinate group room blocks at hotels and be the general liaison to community resources. SAA estimates that 12 Military & Aviation events in 2022 involved 2,617 personnel over 205 event days and created \$7.2 million in estimated expenditures. Jaded Thunder always generates significant room nights for our hotels, and lots of business across town. The exercise was a success for Salina in 2022. The International Aerobatic Competition (IAC) also returned in 2022, with a commitment to return in 2023.

SPECIAL EVENTS & AG EVENTS

The popularity of Salina for car enthusiasts continues to bring events throughout the year. The Kustom Kemps of America (KKOA) again cruised into Salina in July, bringing some of the most beautiful autos, and most enthusiastic fans we see each year, and 2022 was another successful year.

In 2022, Visit Salina worked with two new auto clubs - the Crown Vic Association and National Studebakers.

The **Studebakers Meet** chose to coincide with the Smoky Hill Museum Street Fair, bringing a unique addition to their annual parade. The Garage has been a great location for these types of events, and others.

The Gelbvieh Cattle (Junior) Show was a big addition to the Ag related events held at the Saline County Livestock & Expo Center (SCLEC) in 2022. The event brought participants and their families to Salina from across the nation for up to seven days.

The move from Tony's Pizza Events Center (TPEC) to the 4-H Building at SCLEC with the Kansas State Square Dancers Association helped to insure many more years for this group to call Salina home.

A BIG win was the successful negotiation of a five-year contract with the Kansas Horse Council to bring Equifest of Kansas to Salina, 2023 through 2027. Salina is proud to assist and recognize its impact, bringing participants, spectators and vendors from across the nation. Looking forward to this multi day/evening event in March for each of the next five years. (See article to the right.)



UPDATE

by Justine Staten, Director - Kansas Horse Council Since 2020, EquiFest of Kansas is greeted with a hearty welcome to Salina. We were delighted to

celebrate our 25th event year anniversary here and look



all horse lovers, shoppers & foodies to enjoy. For those just looking to be entertained, there will be three nights of evening entertainment in 2023. In keeping with tradition, the annual Ranch Rodeo competition will be held on Friday and Saturday nights. Thursday will be something special that is currently being planned. Dates for the upcoming event are Thursday, March 16th through Sunday, March 19th. As always, kids 12 & under are free, plus Free Admission on Sunday! This is a great "Staycation" event over spring break week for those nearby. Watch for some EquiFest themed events happening downtown in Salina during Spring Break week leading up to the opening day. Want to get involved? EquiFest of KS is looking for Volunteers! Contact **Justine Staten** for more information about volunteering or sponsorship opportunities.

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



Salina Chamber of Commerce





Visit Salina





Imagine Salina

