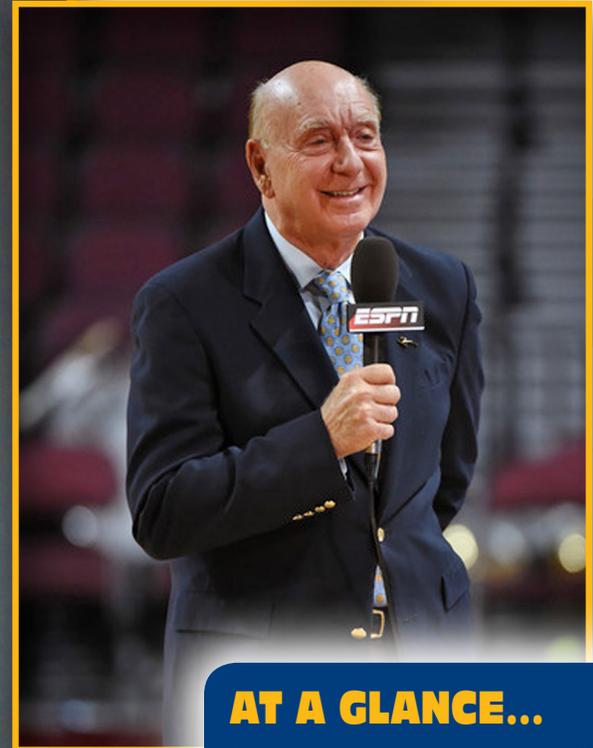
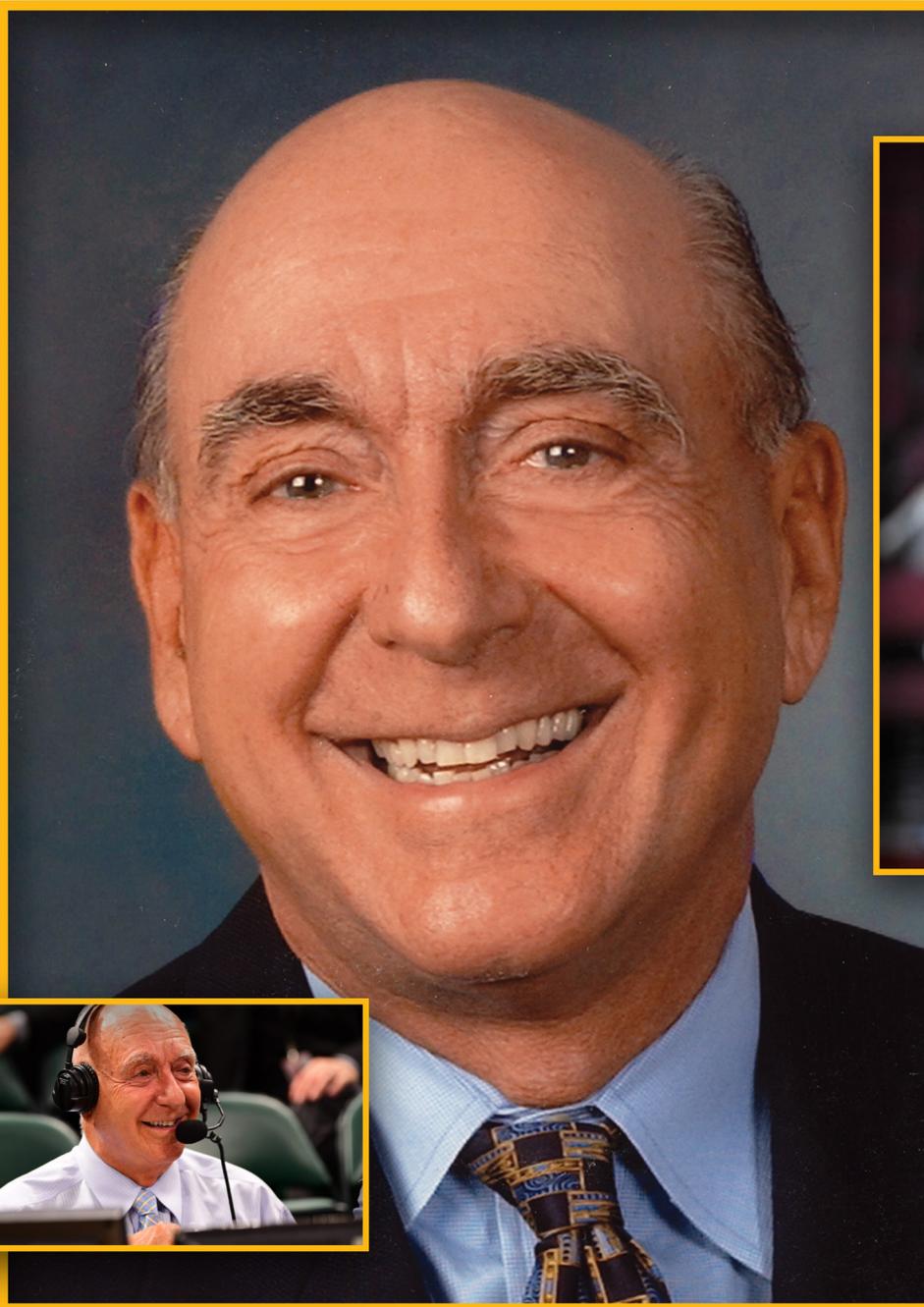


CHAMBER CONNECTION

A Monthly Publication of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

JANUARY 2020 Volume 60, Number 1



AT A GLANCE...

Business After Hours January 9
Summers, Spencer & Company, P.A.
Certified Public Accountants
3025 Cortland Circle • 5-7pm

Business After Hours January 23
Christ Cathedral
138 S. Eighth Street • 5-7pm

Chamber Annual Banquet . . . February 6
Tony's Pizza Events Center
800 The Midway
Membership Reception • 5-6:15pm
Banquet & Program • 6:30pm

Details inside!

PASS IT ON!

- Human Resources
- Communications
- Sales
- Staff Break Area

VITALE TO BE CHAMBER ANNUAL BANQUET SPEAKER

See Page 4

Salina

Area Chamber of Commerce

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

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Eric L. Brown

From the CEO

Imagine Salina and Placemaking

Thank you for your support of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce in 2019!

In 2019, your Chamber started work on the five-year \$1.6 million initiative entitled "Imagine Salina, Turning WHAT IF into WHAT IS." Through the generous private funding the initiative continued and expanded projects around Workforce

Development and Business Retention and Expansion. The crux of this campaign has been the website and we are proud to let you know that development is complete, and the website is live and has begun receiving traffic. Please take a moment to visit www.imaginesalina.com to see how the potential new residents will see Salina through a fresh lens. We encourage all members and investors to begin incorporating Imagine Salina into their own recruitment efforts. Through the efforts of Imagine Salina, your Chamber has played a direct part in filling over 70 jobs in our community in 2019.

In 2019, the Visit Salina division worked with 57 events, involving 55,825 visitors, and 450 volunteers, produced advertising/marketing placements generating 60.1+ million impressions-potential visitors, and have 77 combined years of staff experience in the tourism industry. Estimated Economic Impact of those group events Visit Salina assisted was \$15.2 million. The Project Open entrepreneur development program formed a new training partnership with Kansas State Polytechnic and offered 20 training classes serving 77 attendees that learned the basics of starting and owning a business. From those efforts, the Chamber loaned \$74,850 to qualified startup businesses that otherwise wouldn't have been able to close the funding gap.

Referrals and networking continue to be a very powerful membership marketing tool for your business/organization. We held 27 Business After Hours that were attended by 2,100 businessmen and women!

We couldn't achieve the results without a strong membership base and I thank you for your continued support and we look forward to 2020! We've listened to feedback and increased the value of membership by adding several membership only offerings and new networking opportunities as well. You will see both that information listed in this newsletter.

There is a lot of energy and momentum leading into 2020 for the community and your Chamber and to match that, the annual banquet taskforce did a fantastic job of selecting this year's speaker, Dick Vitale. Even if you don't follow college basketball, you have probably heard of him or at least one of his many catch phrases! I can't wait to hear his message and hope that you and your organization will join us on February 6th for our annual banquet!

Best,

President/CEO

Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

HERE'S HOW TO CONTACT OUR CHAMBER STAFF

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Jr Leadership Salina Important Program

The Salina Area Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Salina Community Foundation are proud to sponsor an exciting program called Junior Leadership Salina. The program is beginning its 33rd year and is open to members of the junior class at Central, South, Sacred Heart, Ell-Saline, Southeast of Salina High Schools, Salina Christian Academy, Cornerstone Classical, and Home School students. A maximum of 25 participants will be chosen. Dress for the program is casual, and students with special



needs can be accommodated. Early applications will be given priority.

Sessions will include informative presentations by a variety of area leaders, business and community tours, panel discussion and dialogue between participants and program presenters. Each session will be held in the evening and will last two to three hours. Attendance is mandatory for all sessions.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Develop knowledge about the community, business, and civic engagement
- Develop and practice leadership skills and competencies as developed by the Kansas Leadership Center
- Stimulate interest in becoming involved in community activities and assuming leadership roles

Tuition is \$100; however, participants are asked to pay only \$25. The remaining \$75 will be underwritten by sponsorship from the business community and other interested individuals. Each session will be held on a Monday evening and will run from 5:30-9pm. Application deadline for the 2020 Class is January 10, 2020. For more information about Junior Leadership Salina please contact LaCrista Brightbill at the Chamber, lbrightbill@salinakansas.org or (785) 827-9310, x 124.

Salina's Legislative Priorities Shared

On December 9, 2019, community leaders came together on the K-State University Polytechnic Campus to discuss 2020 legislative priorities with elected officials and their representatives. The Chamber and our partners were able to meet with Rep. JR Claeys, Rep. Diana Dierks, Rep. Steven Johnson, state representative Anthony Bruna of Sen Pat Roberts' office and Katie Sawyer of Rep. Roger Marshall's office. The event provided a great opportunity for everyone involved to share thoughts and ask questions during a meaningful conversation. Keeping our initiatives and positions in front of our elected officials is an integral responsibility as we all work together to become the community we want Salina to be.

Partner organizations joining the Chamber included: City of Salina, K State University Polytechnic, University of Kansas School of Medicine-Salina, Salina Regional Health Center, Salina Airport Authority, Salina Area Technical College, Salina Public Schools, Saline County, and Salina Community Economic Development Organization.

Topics of the day's discussions included Healthcare, Education from Early Childhood through Post Secondary, Tax Reform, Home Rule, Infrastructure, Transportation, and others. For more information about the Chamber's 2020 Federal and State Legislative Positions, go to <http://bit.ly/2020LegislativePolicyAgenda>.

Welcome Jen Bailey to the Chamber staff!



Jennifer Bailey

The Chamber is excited to announce the hiring of Jennifer Bailey (Marks) to fill the role of Administrative Services Coordinator. In this role, she will be the front-line customer

service representative, provide staff with administrative support, assist the Pres./ CEO with scheduling, and also be the lead staff on the Mid America Farm Expo, and the School to Career programs.

Jennifer is a Salina native and recently boomeranged back to Salina from Kansas City. She graduated from Johnson County Community College and has spent the previous 15 years working for television stations in the KCMO market in administrative support roles. Her experience, skill set, and personality should mesh nicely with the rest of the team. She joined the Chamber staff on December 2nd, please help us welcome her!

Ambassador of the Year 2019 Announced



Cindy Short

The 2019 Don Weiser Ambassador of the Year is Cindy Short, Mortgage Loan Officer with Exchange Bank. "Cindy joined the Ambassador team a year ago and hit the

ground running. She has done such a fantastic job. We were lucky to have her assistance," said LaCrista Brightbill, Events and Community Initiatives Director. Cindy will receive 2 tickets to the Chamber Annual Banquet and her picture will be displayed at the Chamber office for her work! Congratulations Cindy!



Vitale to be Chamber Annual Banquet Speaker

Dick Vitale, College Basketball Analyst, ABC Sports and ESPN talent, will be the featured speaker at the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet, Thursday, February 6, 2020. The banquet will be held in the Arena of the Tony's Pizza Events Center beginning at 6:30pm. A membership networking reception will be held from 5-6:15pm in Heritage Hall of the Events Center.

Dick Vitale, college basketball's top analyst and ambassador, joined ESPN during the 1979-80 season—just after the network's September 1979 launch, following a successful college and pro coaching career. In 2008, Vitale received the sport's ultimate honor when he was selected as an inductee into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. In addition, he's been selected for 17 halls of fame across the country. Vitale is also quite the philanthropist. He's on the Board of Directors of The V Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to finding a cure for cancer and founded in 1993 by ESPN and the late Jim Valvano.

"The Salina Chamber has been known for its Annual Banquet speakers for years, with all of the energy and momentum happening in Salina, we wanted a speaker that could match that energy and get attendees motivated to be even better in 2020! That is why the committee chose Dick Vitale, and

he is the perfect choice!" stated Joyce Volk, Chamber Board Chair. "Our members will recognize the man with a 1,000 catch phrases and we look forward to his positive and high energy message as we celebrate 2019."

The banquet will be held in the Arena of the Events Center (seating will consist of tables of eight which includes dinner). Tickets for Chamber members are \$60 per person for the banquet. Tickets for non-members are \$85 per person for the banquet. Reservations for members and the general public can be made by calling the Chamber office ticket hotline at (785) 827-9310, x 123, stopping by the Chamber office, 120 W. Ash, or by emailing Sandy Cole at scole@salinakansas.org. Tickets will be reserved on a first-come, first-serve basis.

A limited number of sponsorships are available. For details regarding the cost and amenities of the sponsorships, persons can contact the Chamber office.

The evening will consist of remarks by outgoing Board Chair Joyce Volk and incoming Chairman James Lambert, a brief review of the Chamber's accomplishments in 2019, and the address by Dick Vitale.

For more information on the banquet and Dick Vitale, go to the Chamber's website at www.salinakansas.org.



Dick Vitale

Chamber Announces NEW Member Benefits for 2020

Chamber staff has been working to collaborate with known business partners to create NEW benefits for our members, starting this month. Check out what we have in store for you:



Office Depot/OfficeMax

Receive custom-discounted pricing on your everyday office supplies! Just use your Salina Area Chamber of Commerce/Office Depot Purchasing Card in store. Don't have a Purchasing Card? Call Ashley Finan, Membership Recruitment and Retention Director, to get yours!



Constant Contact

Member benefits include:

- Up to 25% off Constant Contact's powerful and easy tool
- In-person educational workshops and online training designed to help members increase revenue
- Free support for those members that need help with Constant Contact or with their marketing strategy



Vision Care Direct

VISION CARE DIRECT Vision Care Direct is proudly owned by private practice optometrists right here in the great state of Kansas, many of whom live and operate their business in the Salina area. Choosing VCD for your company's vision benefits ensures that revenue and tax dollars stay in Kansas to support your local communities and schools.

To learn more about these and many more Member Benefits, contact Ashley Finan, Chamber Membership Recruitment and Retention Director, at afinan@salinakansas.org or (785) 927-9310 x132.



Good Sports

2020 Tournament of Champions Wrestling

The annual Kansas Tournament of Champions Wrestling Tournament will be held on January 24-25, 2020 at the Tony's Pizza Events Center. Hosted by the Salina Kids Wrestling Club,



this tournament hosts more than 1,300 youth wrestlers and 3,000+ spectators from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Colorado. The Salina Kids Wrestling Club looks to continue hosting one of the premier wrestling tournaments in the state of Kansas this year and continue its streak of record breaking attendance for the ninth year in a row. Participants can weigh-in on January 24, Friday night between 6pm and 8pm. The tournament begins Saturday morning at 8:30am, and admission is free. For more information about the tournament or sponsorship opportunities, contact tournament director Rich Zimmerman at (785) 823-3987.

2020 Sky Gymnastics Winter Wonderland

The 9th annual Winter Wonderland event will be held by Sky Gymnastics on January 25-26, 2020 at the Salina Fieldhouse. Organizers expect over 450 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 our event! Travis Scheele works with me to make sure I have everything I need. The large space helps make the event run smooth. With the downtown renovations being almost complete, we hope to bring more people into Salina to see and enjoy what we have to offer." For more information contact Sheena by e-mail at storres@genesishealthclubs.com

McClure Honored by KSAE

KSAE, the Kansas Society of Association Executives, represents a significant core of Salina's statewide convention and meeting clientele. In addition to execs, KSAE is comprised of meeting planners and other staff, and suppliers like Jo Ann McClure, Visit Salina's Convention and Military Manager.



During KSAE's annual meeting in Topeka last month, McClure was very deservedly honored by this, our 'Association of Associations' for her work and dedication to the industry.

Ron Seeber of Kansas Grain and Feed Association, and 2019 KSAE Board President announced, "The 2019 KSAE Supplier Member of the Year is JoAnn McClure. As the Convention Sales Manager with Visit Salina, JoAnn has been a consistent face within KSAE, attending events throughout the year, sponsoring activities through Visit Salina including this conference, and has been an active participant in the Conference Planning Committee giving her ideas, suggestions and time to make our annual meeting a success. It is my privilege to present JoAnn McClure with the 2019 KSAE Supplier Member of the Year award."

"We are all so proud of Jo and all she does for the Salina initiative, especially in the convention market," said Sylvia Rice, the Chamber's Visit Salina Director. "She loves this community and celebrates in promoting Salina as a convention destination, working closely with her partners at our hotels and venues. The KSAE award celebrates her talent and expertise in the industry, and Salina is fortunate to have her as part of our team!"

Marquee Welcomes

January 4	World Class Basketball Tournament
January 9-11	Kansas Land Surveyors
January 11	MAYB Basketball Tournament
January 16-17	Nat'l Assoc of Retired Federal Employees
January 16	Kansas Funeral Directors
January 18	USSSA Basketball Midwest Winter Showdown
January 22-23	High Plains Journal Soil Health U
January 23-24	KS Assoc of Ag Educators
January 24-25	KS Kids Wrestling Club Tournament of Champions
January 25-26	Xtreme Gymnastics Tournament
January 27-28	KS Land Improvement Contractors Assoc
January 31-Feb 1	Smoky Valley Hoops Encounter Basketball Tournament

Dollars & Sense

Recent groups Visit Salina worked with and the estimated visitors' spending they created in the community:

Sacred Heart Holiday Classic Basketball Tournament

\$59,520

Salina Airport Authority Shares From a Special December Report

by Tim Unruh, Salina Airport Authority

Two big changes in the United Airlines flight schedule out of Salina are aimed at achieving smoother and more convenient air travel that will significantly reduce travel time.

As mentioned in the December 2019 Chamber Connection, beginning March 5, 2020:

- Salina's scheduled air service will resume nonstop flights to Denver seven days a week. The stop at Hays will be eliminated to and from the huge airport in Colorado, where connections can be made to 172 cities.
- Daily service to Chicago will be re-timed to improve connections at O'Hare Airport to most major destinations. United currently offers service to 208 cities from Chicago, most of which can be reached on a one-stop basis from Salina.

The changes will improve commercial air service out of Salina, said Gary Foss, Salina Airport Authority's air service consultant. The changes were prompted by a Salina Area Chamber of Commerce survey, in which local businesses responded with a "resounding" desire for nonstop flights heading west.

"The number one travel choice was nonstop service to Denver," Foss said. "It's huge for Salina. That extra 30 to 40 minutes stopping in Hays was really a pain for a lot of people," he said. Ditto that, according to Sylvia Rice, Director of Visit Salina, the travel and tourism arm of the Chamber. "This is a comment we hear often – that the stop in Hays is troubling for many of our travelers," she said.

Currently splitting two flights a day with Hays, six days a week, the service may seem to be trimmed, Foss said, but the single flight a day, every day, in tandem with the seven days per week Chicago service dedicated entirely to Salina, adds an additional 36,000 seats a year to the Salina market.

"Now we have all the seats to ourselves," he said. Eliminating the stop in Hays cuts at least an hour round-trip from Denver flights, estimated Kent Buer, president and CEO of First Bank Kansas, and chairman of the Salina Airport Authority board.

Beginning March 5, flights to Denver will leave Salina at 6:10 AM central time and arrive at 6:50 AM mountain time. Currently, they're leaving at 6:50 AM central time and not arriving until 8:25 AM mountain time, due to the one stop in Hays.

Flying straight to Denver "does make it more attractive," said Bob Vidricksen, chairman of the Saline County commission. "It quickens your trips and lessens the hassle, so it's a good deal," he said. Salina Mayor, Dr. Trent Davis, sees the Denver change as "very nice for us here," and a good move for the airline's leaders. "It's gonna open up a world of connections," Davis said. "I think we can make that flight a profitable one for them."

Adding Saturday Denver flights is also a plus, said travel agent Luci Larson, co-owner of Action Travel, 116 S. Seventh. "Saturday service to Denver, right now, is sporadic. The fact that we are going to be able to get in and out of here on all Saturdays, is going to alleviate a lot of problems," she said. "Now that we're nonstop, that's icing on the cake."

Note: These are excerpts from Unruh's story.

For entirety, go to: <http://bit.ly/SAADec2019ReportingPoints>



New Members

1 VISION AVIATION
2044 Scanlan Ave

DJR INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
(785) 826-0777

HOMESTEAD MINISTRIES
157 S. 10th Street • (785) 313-1425

THE JAMES JUDSON AGENCY
1103A W. Crawford • (307) 438-1895

STARBUCKS SALINA DOWNTOWN
257 S. Santa Fe • (785) 515-2600

COUNTRY INN & SUITES, BY RADISSON
2760 S. Ninth St • (785) 827-1271

GROW BOLD
(785) 493-4791

MOKAS-SOUTH
2424 S. Ninth St • (785) 822-0733

SALINA MEDICAL ESTHETICS
200 S. 5th St • (785) 827-2238

In The News

HAMPTON INN, 401 W. Schilling, has been recognized for excellence in the hotel industry. The hotel has recently been ranked #1 among 1,363 Hampton Inns in the nation! This ranking is determined by overall guest experience, friendliness of staff and cleanliness of rooms. Hampton Inns are a Hilton hotel brand. The Salina location was recently renovated and is an S&B Motel property, owners Stanley & Ursula Weillert. Monica Baltazor is General Manager. Congratulations to the Hampton Inn for a well-deserved award!

The **JAMES JUDSON AGENCY**, a Farmers Insurance office, has opened at 1103 W. Crawford Street, Ste A. James has completed a year of training with Farmers as Protégé Agent, after 13 years of service as a pastor. The licensed CSSR is Marissa Martinez, who speaks Spanish. The agency offers Home, Auto, Life and Commercial Insurance. They are proud to announce a partnership with the Lady in Red Organization for Quotes for a Cause. For everyone who comes in and lets James give them a quote, by mentioning the Quotes for a Cause initiative and Lady in Red, they will donate \$5 to Lady in Red. For more information, contact Farmers Insurance at (785) 370-3495.



COOPS PIZZERIA, 123B S. Santa Fe has recently remodeled their dining room. Stop in and enjoy their featured Italian homemade sauces, select bacio cheese, homemade dough and quality toppings. The pizzeria has daily lunch and evenings specials and invites you to come "Taste the Difference." Hours are Mon.-Sat. 11am-2pm, Thurs, Fri & Sat. 4:30-8:30pm.

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**.

Chris Rice, golf course Superintendent at **SALINA COUNTY CLUB**, 2101 E. Country Club Road, was elected to the board of directors of Kansas Golf Course Superintendents Assoc. (KGCSA) at their annual meeting in December. The KGCSA is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving its members by providing them with educational opportunities, professional development, networking opportunities, advancing their profession and enhancing the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf. Congratulations Chris!

K-State Football Wildcat Denzel Goolsby received a surprise honor during practice earlier this year. Because of his work with Boys & Girls Club and many other community efforts off the field, he was chosen as part of the 2019 Allstate AFCA Good Works Team. As coach called the team for a huddle, Goolsby's entire fan club, led by Krissy Blocklinger, Location Manager at **ALLSTATE**, 1512 E. IRON in Salina, stormed the field to honor the player. Blocklinger presented his trophy and extolled the player's many accomplishments. Goolsby was one of 22 chosen from a field of 137 student athletes and one honorary coach.

SERAPHIM BREAD, 228C S. Santa Fe Ave., is celebrating two years of business in downtown Salina! The bakery features breads, rolls, unique lunch items and more – plus a great outdoor dining area in a neighboring plaza. This fun downtown eatery was a Project Open client when they opened, receiving guidance and funding to get their business off the ground. Tyler Gallagher is the owner/baker.

take to meet

The James Judson Agency, Farmers Insurance

as Owner James Judson answers five questions about himself and the organization:

Can you please give us a summary of your personal background?

I grew up in Colorado and New Mexico ranch country and was the only kid at college with his own saddle in the dorm room. After leaving home and graduating from college and seminary, I spent 13 years as a parish pastor before deciding I needed to pursue financial stability for my family by other means. I became a Farmers Agent through the Farmers Protégé Agent Program.



What is it about your business that is unique or special?

What separates you from your competitors.

I bring both my ranch country upbringing and my years of experience as a pastor into how I care for my customers. I make it my goal to take care of my customers better than anyone else and my pastoral touch makes a difference in that. We are also a bi-lingual agency.

See the entire interview, and others, posted at: www.salinakansas.org/chamber/take_5.aspx

Chamber Ribbon Cutting



The much-anticipated Downtown Streetscape opening was celebrated with a ribbon cutting!

BUSINESS *after* HOURS

REFRESHMENTS • TOURS • DOOR PRIZES

Summers, Spencer & Company, P.A.

Certified Public Accountants

3025 Cortland Circle

Thursday, January 9

5-7pm • \$5 per person or Fast Pass

Summers, Spencer & Company, P.A. invites you to join them in celebrating their two-year anniversary in their south Salina location. Check out their office space, meet staff and learn more about the business and individual advisory services they offer. They are small enough to offer highly personalized service, but, with their locations across Kansas, large enough to offer unmatched expertise. Come on up and tour their 2nd floor suite, enjoy drinks, appetizers and some fun giveaways.

Christ Cathedral

138 S. Eighth Street

Thursday, January 23

5-7pm • \$5 per person or Fast Pass

Christ Cathedral has been a landmark place of worship and home to people of faith for over a hundred years. Within its walls, you will find beautiful artistry, experience the powerful and ancient music of the Anglican tradition and the warm welcome of their faith community that continues to be devoted to Salina.

Come on out, network with fellow Chamber members and discover all that SS&C, P.A. and Christ Cathedral have to offer.

\$ It Pays to Attend \$

For reservations call (785) 827-9301 or email dsmith@salinakansas.org

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Smoky Hill Silver Great Option Anytime!

During the Christmas holiday season, Chamber staff see member businesses utilizing Smoky Hill Silver (SHS) certificates as employee gifts and incentives, in a BIG way!

Individuals come in to purchase SHS as thank yous for teachers, daycare providers, stylists, the kid who shovels the walk...you name it! In the spring, there is a burst in SHS activity with graduations, Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day. Late summer is back to school time. Honestly, anytime is the right time for this versatile, perfectly fitted gift idea.

It's a great program overall. The Chamber charges no fees to the SHS purchaser nor the businesses who redeem the certificates. They simply go into the regular bank transactions for the day.

Need more reasons to consider SHS for gift giving? Here are a couple of terrific ones!

- You can keep dollars here and generate important sales tax for the community;
- You can support fellow Chamber members in the process! #ThinkSalinaFirst!

Want to know more? Call the Chamber office at (785) 827-9301.