



## Meet our new primary care team in O'Fallon.

SSM Health welcomes Joanna Janas-Kaminsky, MD, and Keisha Young, NP, to our office at 604 Pierce Blvd., in O'Fallon. With the addition of our new team, we now provide comprehensive care to patients of all ages, including:

- Routine checkups, screenings, and immunizations
- Treatment for illness and injuries
- Chronic condition management

---

Same day appointments are available.  
Schedule online at [ssmhealth.com/ILFamMed](https://ssmhealth.com/ILFamMed)  
or call **618-222-9244**.



Joanna Janas-Kaminsky, MD  
Internal Medicine



Keisha Young, NP  
Family Nurse Practitioner



DECEMBER 2023

# CHAMBER TRACKS

Official Newsletter of O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce

## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DEBBIE ARELL-MARTINEZ

November was a whirlwind, and it seems like December has no plans to slow down either! Buckle up for another busy month ahead.

We hosted our **Meet the Municipalities luncheon** on November 8th. If you attended, we hope you enjoyed the more relaxed and interactive atmosphere. We're planning something similar next year, with a keen eye on acoustics! Stay tuned for more details.

Our **Wing Walk** is in full swing, and we're thrilled with the creativity shown by our participants. For those of you involved, we hope this promotion brings a wave of potential new consumers through your door – the ultimate goal of this exciting initiative.

We're busy crafting our 2024 programming and are eager to share it with you soon. Recognizing the limited time everyone has, we're working hard to ensure our events are not only engaging but also meaningful and genuinely helpful to you. Stay tuned for what we have in store.

As 2023 comes to a close, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your unwavering dedication to our Chamber—the best one around! Our thriving community is a testament to the strength of our membership. Thank you all, and happy holidays.

*-Debbie*



Business After Hours  
November 2023

## This issue:

**Participate in Wing Walk 2023**

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**Holiday Party Schedule of Events**

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**8 Ways to Keep the Competitive Edge**

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**Upcoming Events**

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# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

## NOVEMBER NEW MEMBERS

### Apex Leadership Co.

Tonya Meyer  
O'Fallon, IL 62269  
618-964-8907  
[Tonya.meyer@apexleadershipco.com](mailto:Tonya.meyer@apexleadershipco.com)  
(Education/leadership/Fundraising)

### Brown Premier Car Service

Tracie Brown  
Belleville, IL 62221  
618-248-8583  
[traciebrown@BrownPremierCarService.com](mailto:traciebrown@BrownPremierCarService.com)  
(Business & Professional)

### Extraordinary Balloons

Leatha Dilworth  
1624 N. Carlyle Ave  
Belleville, IL 62221  
618-595-0121  
[exballoons@gmail.com](mailto:exballoons@gmail.com)  
[www.extraordinaryballoondecor.com](http://www.extraordinaryballoondecor.com)  
(Arts, Culture and Entertainment)

### Holistic Journey

JenniferL. Smith, LMT  
635 W. Highway 50  
O'Fallon, IL 62269  
618-409-3869  
[Holisticjen9@gmail.com](mailto:Holisticjen9@gmail.com)  
<http://yourholisticjourney.com>  
(Health and Wellness)

### Logisticus Technologies LLC

Vonzetta Thomas  
1111 S. Lincoln, Suite 316  
O'Fallon, IL 62269  
703-798-8153  
[vthomas@lgist.com](mailto:vthomas@lgist.com)  
<http://www.lgist.com>  
(Technologies)

### UnitedHealthcare

Alexa Agoranos  
200 W. Madison St. Suite 2600  
Chicago, IL 60606  
312-348-3827  
[alexa\\_agoranos@uhc.com](mailto:alexa_agoranos@uhc.com)  
<http://www.uhc.com>  
(Insurance)



**Newsletter Sponsor \$100**  
**Featured Business Ad \$75**  
**Full Page Ad \$50**  
**1/2 Page Ad \$35**  
**1/4 Page Ad \$25**

[LEARN MORE](#)



# MEMBER RENEWALS

Bank of O'Fallon  
B.C.Signs  
Bel-O Cooling and Heating, Inc.  
Busey Bank  
Byrd Consultants, LLC  
Cambridge Capital Management LLC  
Care Access  
Caseyville Township Sewer  
CC Food Marts, Inc  
Country Financial- Derrick Lebryk & Michael Schreffle  
Delmar Financial Company  
Discovery School  
Distler's Auto Repair  
Edward Jones Investments-Mary Ruettgers  
Family Eye Care of O'Fallon  
First Baptist Academy  
First Command Financial  
Four Paws Animal Hospital  
Full Circle Auto  
Fulford Home, LLC  
Gifts for Individuals, LLC

Global Brew  
Hampton Inn  
Heartland Womens Healthcare  
Holiday Inn Fairview Heights  
Huntleigh Securities Corp-Debra Yaeger  
Judy Dempcy Homes  
Kerber Eck & Braeckel LLP  
Kunkel Wittenauer Group  
Lagnappe Landscape  
Local Noon Enterprises LLC  
Markarian Orthodontics  
Metro East Dermatology  
Metro Lock & Security, Inc.  
Mueller-Schneidewind-Koeneman Agency, Inc.  
New American Funding  
New Life In Christ Church  
O'Fallon Area Habitat for Humanity  
O'Fallon Electric Company  
O'Fallon Little Panthers Sports Club  
O'Fallon Rotary Club, Inc.  
O'Fallon School District 90

O'Fallon Township High School  
Office Centers, Inc.  
Olson Orthodontics  
Professional Therapy Services  
RE/Max Preferred-Susan Holden  
Rotary Club of O'Fallon  
Sanctuary Salon and Boutique  
Schwarz Center  
Sigman Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc.  
Sky Zone Fairview Heights  
Southwestern IL Board of Realtors  
St. Nicholas Catholic Church  
State Farm Insurance-Mike Morril  
Steve's Auto Body, Inc.  
St. Paul United Church of Christ  
Standard Rule Promotions  
Steve's Auto Body  
Sylvan Learning of O'Fallon  
The Coffeehouse Company  
The Mail Box Store  
The Weingarten

## MEET YOUR CHAMBER STAFF



**Debbie Arnall-Martinez**  
President/CEO



**Doris Obernuefemann**  
Operations Manager



**Melissa Federhofer**  
Marketing & Communications Manager



**Jessica Lotz**  
Leadership & Development Coordinator



**Johnnie Hodges**  
Membership Coordinator



**Jonathan Simmons**  
Member Engagement





## Pardon our Progress

We are still open during our outpatient radiology project.



HSHS  
St. Elizabeth's  
Convenient Care



Common cold, seasonal allergies or the flu?

We are conveniently here for you.

1512 N. Green Mount Rd., O'Fallon | Open 7 days a week, 8 a.m.-7 p.m. No appointments necessary.

## PAYS TO BUY LOCAL

NOVEMBER 18 - DECEMBER 16



**Pays to Buy Local** is a campaign created to increase your business visibility while supporting local business.

Encourage customers to send in their receipts of **\$10 or more** for a chance to win *CASH* prizes!

Prize for Member with the **most receipts** submitted.

[LEARN MORE](#)



DOWN  
TOWN  
DISTRICT





# WING WALK

Take a walk, snap a picture, win  
some prizes!

**11.18.23**

**till**

**12.16.23**

**Come experience the  
art of O'Fallon-Shiloh  
businesses!**



O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of  
Commerce



[ofallonchamber.com/wingwalk](https://ofallonchamber.com/wingwalk)





# ADVERTISE WITH US!

## DIGITAL LED BILLBOARD ADS

### How Does It Work?

The Chamber of Commerce purchases a billboard ad which we split into 30 ad spots. Our members can purchase one (or more!) of those spots, allowing you to have a digital billboard ad at a **FRACTION** of the cost!

*Digital LED | 14x49' | Over 130,000 vehicles daily*

52 WEEKS  
\$1,350

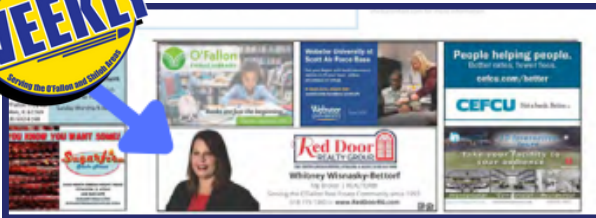
32 WEEKS  
\$900

20 WEEKS  
\$600



Have more questions?  
Reach out to the Chamber!

**CLAIM YOUR SPOT**



**CLAIM YOUR SPOT**



\$29/MO  
\$350/YEAR

RESERVE BY  
11/15/2023

SPOTS ARE  
LIMITED!

## O'FALLON WEEKLY ADS

Get your ad on the Chamber's EXCLUSIVE O'Fallon Weekly page! Every first Wednesday of the month, the O'Fallon Weekly highlights what's happening around town. Your ad supports the Chamber and this local publication!

## PODCAST SPONSORSHIP

The 618 Podcast is a weekly production of the O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce and the O'Fallon Weekly that highlights what's happening in the area! With a total of almost **19,000 listeners and growing**, this is THE place you'll want to advertise.



\$200/TWO  
WEEKS

20-SECOND  
SPOT

LET US TALK  
ABOUT YOUR  
BUSINESS!

**CLAIM YOUR SPOT**



# Leadership Institute

Class of 2024 applications are open



- Meet Monthly
- Identify and develop personalized leadership talents
- Learn about government, non-profits, education, and more
- Engage community leaders

“The friends and professional connections I've made through **Lead In** are **invaluable**. What's more, I feel so much more **connected** to the community than I did before this opportunity.”

—Ryan Johnson  
Director  
O'Fallon Public Library

## QUALIFICATIONS

Ages 21–40

Live or work in O'Fallon/Shiloh



**ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS  
THROUGH JANUARY 9TH**



We are now offering  
Red Light Therapy!  
THE FUTURE OF  
MEDICINE

---

# CHIRO-MED

**HEALTH & WELLNESS**



We are light based organisms. We are greatly affected by light. In fact, how we sleep, how we feel, how we function is directly controlled by light. Wouldn't it make sense that light was a significant part of your daily routine?

Red Light triggers the formation of small openings or pores in the fat cells, which releases fatty acids known as lipids. The fluid escapes into your lymphatic system, where your body processes it through your liver.

In addition, we use a variety of weight loss kits designed to support metabolic hormones, increase fat metabolism, decrease unwanted food cravings, and increase overall health. Our weight loss program is simple, fast, and fun allowing you to have an autopilot program with quick, permanent results.

**Red Light Therapy benefits include:**

- Red Light Therapy creates a healthy glow about your face
  - Smooths overall skin tone
  - Supports building collagen, reducing wrinkles, including crow's feet
  - Wrinkles, forehead wrinkles & laugh lines
  - Speeds the healing of blemishes, like acne and rosacea
  - Repairs sun damage
  - Reduces redness, flushing, and broken capillaries
  - Fades scars and stretch marks
  - Brings more moisture to your skin
  - Prevents hair loss & stimulates regrowth
- Call to book your Red Light and weight loss consultation today!

***\$49 consultation***

2 inches loss in 20 mins  
or your money back

**1480 N Green Mount Rd  
Suite 300  
(618) 622-2222**



O'FALLON, IL

# NOVEMBER RIBBON CUTTINGS



## Le Ono

844 Cambridge Blvd, O'Fallon

## Harriett's Sweet Treats

630 West Hwy 50, O'Fallon



## Edward Jones - Charles Richards

813 W. Hwy 50, O'Fallon



BRIGHAM YOUNG

*Come out and support a fellow chamber member at our next Ribbon Cutting! Enjoy light refreshments and networking. You never know who you may meet!*

[CHECK OUT MORE](#)







**Your Best Medicine<sup>SM</sup> is Right Here.**

Memorial Hospital Shiloh is committed to meeting the needs of our community with everything you need available on the Shiloh campus:

- Inpatient, outpatient, emergency care, and diagnostic services
- Family Care Birthing Center
- Children's at Memorial
- Primary care and specialty services from BJC Medical Group
- Specialty care from Washington University Physicians in Illinois, Inc.
- Siteman Cancer Center—the only satellite facility in Illinois

And as part of BJC HealthCare, we are connected to Barnes-Jewish Hospital. It's the world's best medicine right where you live.



[memhosp.org](http://memhosp.org)



**2023 Holiday Parade Winners!**

**Most Epic**

**The Grinch! - Keller William's Pinnacle**

Epic Lighting – Walking Unit

The Nutcracker Suite – Dance Station

Epic Lighting – Float

Bakery Snowman – Woods Bakery

Epic Lighting – Vehicle Unit

Giant Snowman – Delmar Financial

**Most Spirited**

The Snowball fight – Moose Lodge

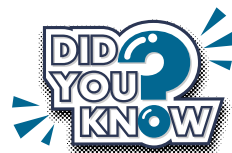
**Funniest**

Walking White Loofah Snowballs–

WaterSweets Soap Company.

*Congratulations to our 2023 Epic Snow Battle Parade Winners!*

*There were so many amazing -magical -creative parade units. The wonderful kid judges from the Children's Miracle Network sure had a hard job to do... so grateful for them and all of our participants!*



The O'Fallon Police Department puts out a monthly newsletter with great community information.

Click below to view the November newsletter:



# MEMBER NEWS

## MCKENDREE MAKES STRIDES TO SOLVE TEACHER SHORTAGE WITH NEW ONLINE PROGRAM, LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS



McKendree University is taking the reins to help solve the teacher shortage that is still present in Illinois.

This fall, McKendree University's School of Education rolled out an all-new Paraprofessional+ Pathway program, a fully online offering for paraprofessionals looking to become licensed teachers at the elementary level in only two years. This program also includes a special education endorsement option. Several teacher's aides and assistants enrolled in the program are already making positive changes to the local schools in which they work.

One local paraprofessional and current student in this program, Tommy Hagen, has more than 20 years of experience working with children and adults with disabilities in various settings. She has already seen the value of this program and has been able to apply what she's learned as a classroom aid in Breese School District No. 12. She anticipates completing the program in spring 2025 and hopes to pursue the special education endorsement as well.

"McKendree's Paraprofessional+ Pathway program works well for potential teacher candidates as it allows them to continue to work and apply the information they are learning in real time. In addition, the online classes allow students to work at their own pace week by week," said Hagen.

"My classes have given me ways that I can contribute to making a safe, inviting learning experience for my students by being mindful about classroom arrangement, rules and expectations. I would wholeheartedly recommend this program to paraprofessionals who are interested in furthering their education and taking that next step in becoming a teacher."

## 54TH WAY OF LIGHTS DISPLAY AT NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

The Way of Lights Display starts on November 17 through December 31, 2023, depicting the journey of Mary and Joseph as they travel to Bethlehem using over 1.5 million beautiful lights. This year, we have added colored lights to celebrate the birth of Jesus and continue to offer activities such as camel rides, Kettle Corn, Selfie Station, Gift Shop and Shrine food stand with hot dogs, hamburgers, etc! Fun for young and old alike!

Cost: No charge for display, donations accepted and additional charges for some activities.

For more information, call 618-397-6700 or visit our website at <https://snows.org/wayoflights>

## BUNDLES FOR BABIES



"New moms, moms-to-be and families are invited to attend "Bundles for Babies," HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital's special holiday community event on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m. to noon in the main hospital lobby at 1 St. Elizabeth's Blvd., O'Fallon, Illinois.

Guests will meet St. Elizabeth's Women and Infants Center staff, receive health and safety information and learn about services available to help them welcome their bundle of joy. Guided tours will also be offered of the Women and Infants Center. The tours will be limited to small groups to respect current patients' privacy and safety.

Christmas activities are also planned for children, including free photos with Santa while sharing cookies and milk and creating a fun holiday craft project to take home.

Each family attending will receive a ticket to win an attendance prize. Additional tickets will be available for a \$1 donation. All funds collected will be used to support moms who need additional assistance for safe sleep space for their newborns. Prizes include a Medela breast pump, a car seat, a pack 'n play and more items.

"We are excited to host our special Bundles for Babies event again this year," said Amanda Schaefer, MSN, RN, nurse manager of St. Elizabeth's Women and Infants Center. "The event is an excellent opportunity for families, new moms and moms-to-be to ask questions, tour the Women and Infants Center, meet our staff, and learn about available safety and support resources in the region," she shared. "We truly encourage all expecting moms to stop by, even if they are newly pregnant and haven't yet decided where to deliver."

Child passenger safety technicians will also be in attendance to educate families about car seat safety and answer any questions parents may have about proper installation. The Pregnancy Care Center will have an informational booth to explain the free resources and assistance they offer to new and expectant mothers.

For questions about the Bundles for Babies community event, please call the Women and Infants Center at 618-234-2120, ext. 31260.

## SCOTT CREDIT UNION CELEBRATES 80 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH MORE THAN 80 ACTS OF KINDNESS



Scott Credit Union proudly announces the success of their 80 Acts of Kindness initiative, marking a milestone in their 80th-anniversary celebrations. This campaign, designed to give back to the communities they serve, commenced with the planting of trees in collaboration with Heartland Conservancy.

SCU has completed more than 80 Acts of Kindness and expects to complete 100 Acts of Kindness before the end of the year, a testament to their commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of those in need. Each of SCU's 25 branches and many departments have actively participated in various projects, showcasing the credit union's dedication to both members and the broader community. From tree planting to painting dugouts, and helping young, first-time mothers to unhoused veterans, SCU has reached many people this year.

"The overwhelming success of our 80 Acts of Kindness initiative truly reflects the generosity and compassion that defines Scott Credit Union," remarked Frank Padak, President and CEO of Scott Credit Union. "Our members, employees, and communities have been at the heart of our mission for the past 80 years, and this program is our way of expressing gratitude and giving back."

Employees donated needed items such as classroom supplies, canned goods, and pet toys along with their time, which was spent restoring furniture, playing with rescued dogs and beautifying local parks. SCU's multifaceted approach addressed a diverse range of community needs. The impact extends far beyond immediate assistance, fostering a renewed sense of purpose among SCU employees post-Covid.

"I love to see our employees engaged, giving their time, talents, and their own money to causes they believe in," said Padak. "This is not just a part of our mission; it's a big part of who we are as an organization. Our commitment to community service is unwavering, and the 80 Acts of Kindness initiative has rekindled the spirit of volunteerism within our team."

Do you have member news you'd like to share? Send it our way!

SUBMIT PRESS RELEASE

VIEW ALL NEWS





# EVENT TAKEWAYS

## BAKING BOWL AT SCOTT AFB

Our Military Affairs Committee had a heartfelt idea to create something meaningful for young families on the base—introducing the Baking Bowl! Packed with ingredients and a chocolate chip cookie recipe, we hope to offer these families not just a sweet treat but a taste of home and a reminder of O’Fallon-Shiloh’s appreciation during their time at Scott AFB. Thanks to Jaclyn Gross, TownePlace Suites by Marriott, for spearheading this event!







# EVENT TAKEWAYS

## PRESIDENTS' LUNCHEON

The Chamber played host to a cherished tradition - our annual gathering of Past Presidents. Last year we invited our current Chamber board members to this event. What started as an exclusive affair for Past Presidents has evolved into a celebrated occasion that bridges the decades.

The charm of this event lies in the fascinating interactions between Chamber Presidents from over 40 years ago and our current dynamic leaders. It's intriguing to witness the resonance of certain topics that echo through time, proving that some matters truly stand the test of it.



This year's luncheon was held at Downtown O'Fallon's newest restaurant, Le Ono, adding an extra layer of enjoyment to the event. Le Ono, not typically open for lunch, graciously opened its doors for this special event, making it an unforgettable experience for all attendees.

What truly sets our Chamber apart is the enduring engagement of our Past Presidents. Far beyond symbolic roles, they actively contribute to committees, spearhead initiatives, lend a hand in organizing events, and immerse themselves in the dynamic fabric of Chamber life. Their unwavering commitment is a testament to their enduring care for our Chamber and the community we serve. We consider ourselves truly blessed to have such dedicated individuals shaping the legacy of our organization.





# HOLIDAY PARTY

MUSIC PROVIDED BY THE SZWEDOS

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**5:00 PM** PARTY TIME!

**5:15 PM** ENJOY SOME APPETIZERS!

**5:30 - 6 PM** JOIN US IN PACKAGING DIAPERS FOR DONATION TO SCOTT AFB, FOOD PANTRY, AND O'FALLON PUBLIC LIBRARY

**5:45 PM** FOOD STATIONS ARE OPEN! ENJOY OUR PASTA BAR, CARVING STATION, AND DESSERTS

**6:00 PM** MESSAGE FROM BOARD PRESIDENT JEFF DOSSETT

**6:15 PM** EVENT SPONSORS ARE INVITED FOR A PHOTO OP OUT FRONT!

**7:30 PM** WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED YOURSELF. THE PARTY'S OVER!!

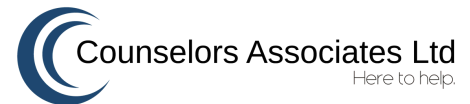
TAKE A SELFIE WITH  
SANTA AND SEND US  
YOUR PICS!



# HEALTHCARE & WELLNESS

The Healthcare & Wellness Committee promotes healthcare and wellness in the O'Fallon-Shiloh communities throughout health care leadership, partnerships, education and advocacy. This committee is made up of chamber members who are in the health and wellness industry. This month, committee member Melissa Tinsman tells us about the important work at Counselors Associates Ltd.

**You don't have to wait for a crisis to take care of your mental health, and you don't have to do it alone. We are here to help.**



Therapy isn't just about treating major depression; it's also learning more about yourself, building emotional intelligence, improving communication skills, improving relationship skills, and developing coping skills. Therapy can help you respond vs. react to stressful situations.

Founded in 2010, Counselors Associates Ltd is a woman owned & operated local business. Our goal is to empower our clients to live life to the fullest and promote mental health in our community. We treat emotional and behavioral concerns. We provide a safe space for self-exploration and personal growth. Our exemplary group of licensed, experienced counseling professionals provide mental health services to children, adolescents, and adults.



With over 40 clinicians and close ties to our community, we offer complete collaborative care. With our patient's permission, our clinicians can consult with your doctor, your child's school or pediatrician, and another family member's therapist. ***In addition, we can provide direct referrals to our in-house Pediatric and Adult Mental Health Medication Prescribers.*** We assist with anxiety, depression, grief & loss, trauma, ADHD, school concerns, relationship concerns, setting boundaries, social skills, navigating life transitions, reaching goals, and more.

We are dedicated to serving you in both a professional and caring environment. We serve individuals, couples, and families in Illinois & Missouri. (*In Person & Tele-Health sessions available.*)

The hustle and bustle of the holidays can bring togetherness & joy, but the holidays aren't always happy or easy for everyone. We can help you to navigate your first holiday season without a loved one, learn to effectively handle a complicated relationship/family dynamic, help to process the additional financial strain holidays may bring.

*If you, or someone you know, might benefit from support, please reach out to us at 618-972-1568 or email [info@counselorsassociates.com](mailto:info@counselorsassociates.com).*



**CONTACT US**

**Counselors Associates Ltd**  
1941 Frank Scott Parkway East,  
Suite C  
Shiloh, IL 62269  
618-972-1568  
[www.counselorsassociates.com](http://www.counselorsassociates.com)



# LIVE2LEAD

## PERSONAL GROWTH & LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



**HOSTED BY: DURRAH DEVELOPMENT, LLC**



**THEME: LEAD WITH LOVE IN BUSINESS AND OUR COMMUNITY**

### SIMULCAST SPEAKERS



**John  
Maxwell**

**AUTHOR  
LEADERSHIP  
EXPERT**



**Kendra  
Scott**

**ENTREPRENEUR  
AUTHOR  
PHILANTHROPIST**



**Marcus  
Buckingham**

**GLOBAL  
RESEARCHER ON  
PEOPLE +  
PERFORMANCE**



**Ryan  
Leak**

**COACH  
AUTHOR**

**A FULL DAY LEADERSHIP EVENT TO INTENTIONALLY  
GROW YOU AND YOUR TEAM**

**Thursday, February 8th, 2024**

**Registration: 8 a.m. - 9 a.m.**

**Conference: 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**Networking Event: 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

**The Regency**

**400 Regency Park Dr., O'Fallon, IL 62269**

**SCAN QR CODE TO PAY  
WITH MOBILE DEVICE**



**ADDITIONAL  
CONFERENCE  
DETAILS  
PROVIDED ON  
BACK**

**EARLY BIRD DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE UNTIL DEC. 29TH**

# BUSINESS TRACK INSIGHTS

## 8 Ways to Get a Competitive Edge and the Best Way to Keep It

by Gene Marks | *The Hartford*

FA competitive edge is what supposedly differentiates you from your competitors. It should be the reason why customers choose to buy your products or services over others. In my experience of running a business for over 20 years, I've found that most companies can have the following eight types of advantages.

### 1. COST

This is simple. Your product is simply the cheapest. People oftentimes use price alone to guide their buying decisions. If your cost is lowest among a bunch of other commoditized competitors, then you've got a good chance of having an edge.

### 2. VALUE

Value is a customer's perceived return on investment. Sometimes it's a tangible, measurable result and sometimes it's not. Some businesses can calculate the value of an investment over a period of time, while others may just say it feels right. Someone may get a cheap fast food meal but then feel a little nauseous afterward, so the value isn't high. Other people like to pay a little more for a car because they simply like how it drives. What one customer considers value may differ from another's point of view. Value is subjective, but it can be a significant competitive edge.

### 3. COMPETENCY

You may have a reputation as a service provider for really knowing your stuff. For instance, "That firm is a great kitchen remodeler," or, "That guy is one of the best plumbers I know." Your competency will set you apart, for sure. The challenge is communicating your skillsets to new customers — this is where reviews come in handy. A good reputation for competent work is earned over time, but once you have it, you'll have a better chance of being chosen over your competitors.

### 4. SPEED

Most customers really don't care about actually being your customer. They're buying your product or service to fulfill a need. The less interaction they have with you the better, which is why companies that deliver their wares fast and without any drama are preferred. Obviously, this isn't every case. Sometimes, people like to linger over a long dinner or enjoy the process of watching their ice cream being scooped, but that's generally not the norm. People want their stuff, and they want it fast. Speed of delivery, therefore, is usually a big competitive advantage.



“ —

Act responsibly and fairly. Take enjoyment from what you're doing, and go to work every day with the goal of making the lives of your employees and customers better. Do that long enough, and you'll never have to worry about succeeding.



## 5. RELIABILITY

No one wants to buy a sub-standard product. We don't want to receive less than the highest quality service. When customers have a problem, they want someone at the help desk to be available to help solve it. When you pay for your internet service, you expect your internet service to be up and running 99.99% of the time. We want to depend on the airline to take us to our destination as planned and the plumber to show up at the appointed time. Reliability is a competitive advantage.

## 6. LOCATION

I live in the middle of a city, and I like sushi. There are literally five sushi restaurants within a half mile of where I live. And yet, I tend to go the one closest. The food is fine. But their location is the big attraction because, well, I'm lazy. A competitive advantage can be as simple as where your business is located. As long as I'm getting something satisfactory, I'm even willing to sacrifice some of the things like cost or reliability if it's easier to get what I want.

## 7. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

You might have something that no one else has, and that gives you a competitive advantage too. Netflix has proprietary compression technology that has made it easier and reliable to stream movies. A car wash near me advertises its "patented simonizing" technology. OpenAI's large language model has proprietary algorithms, which — at least initially — gives its ChatGPT chatbot a competitive advantage over other generative AI platforms. Google has a proprietary way of searching the internet. Obviously, these kinds of intellectual property are a plus, but — as most companies will tell you — it doesn't last forever!

## 8. BRAND

My company sells customer relationship management software, including Salesforce.com, which is an industry leader. People who own BMWs would never drive anything else. My wife loves to shop at DSW for shoes because she expects great and affordable products. When I go into any McDonald's in the world, I know my Big Mac is going to be awesome. These companies have worked hard to build their brands, and because of that, they've established trust. People choose these products because they know what they're going to get, and that's a comfort. Having a great brand is a powerful competitive advantage.

And yet, even a great brand is transitory. And so are all of the other competitive advantages I've listed above. They're all fleeting, and they're all subject to change. You might have built a strong brand over the years but one incident can destroy it. Your location may be a competitive advantage until a competitor opens up across the street. You might be the low-cost provider until a competitor buys materials from a new supplier overseas and can sell their product for less. Nothing stays the same.

So, how do you keep that competitive edge? My theory, as a business owner, is that you don't worry too much about having a competitive edge! Don't obsess over your competition. Instead, do what you say you're going to do at a reasonable price. Act responsibly and fairly. Take enjoyment from what you're doing, and go to work every day with the goal of making the lives of your employees and customers better. Do that long enough, and you'll never have to worry about succeeding. There's a shortage of businesses behaving this way.

*Next steps: Want more small business tips as you work toward your entrepreneurial goals? [Sign up](#) for the Small Biz Ahead newsletter today.*



- 6 ..... [Healthcare and Wellness Committee Meeting](#)  
8:15 a.m. | The Rehabilitation Institute of Southern Illinois
- 6 ..... [O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce Annual Holiday Party](#)  
5:00 p.m. | Regency Conference Center
- 11 ..... [Executive Board Meeting](#)  
1:15 p.m. | Chamber Depot
- 12 ..... [Ribbon Cutting - O-Town Food Hall & Tap House](#)  
10:45 a.m. | 1214 Central Park Drive, O'Fallon
- 13 ..... [Downtown District Committee Meeting](#)  
8:45 a.m. | City Hall Council Chambers
- 13 ..... [Ambassador Meeting](#)  
11:15 a.m. | Southern Illinois Builders Association, O'Fallon
- 14 ..... [Board of Directors Meeting](#)  
8:15 a.m. | City Hall Council Chambers

**Chamber Bonus!**

## HOW TO WINTERIZE YOUR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

Knowing the value of Preventative Maintenance, we wish to pass along a friendly reminder that your buildings, should be winterized, particularly if it is not occupied. Check out these helpful tips!\*

### GROUNDS

- All hoses have been disconnected from the outside faucets
- Back check valve on outside spigot drained
- Drain or blow out the lawn irrigation system
- Close and drain all outside fountains and drinking facilities
- Shut off all water going to the exterior of the building
- Ensure grates and water drainage areas are clear of debris
- Plants are protected with dirt or mulch around the base
- Stock sand/ice-melt for sidewalks and ensure snow shovels and snow blowers are ready
- Line up all snow removal equipment for sidewalks and parking lots
- All water cooled engines have anti-freeze, oil and battery water; ensuring they are ready for winter weather storage

### FIRE/LIFE SAFETY

- Test building sprinkler system before freezing weather comes
- Fresh batteries in all smoke detectors
- Fire extinguishers are fully charged

### VACANT PROPERTY

- Shut off Water
- Winterize pipes, toilets and sprinkler system
- Check thermostat settings

### ROOF

- Clear all gutters of debris
- Ensure roof drains are clear
- Inspect B.T.U.'s and rubber roofs for any water penetration. Check all flashings
- Check metal roofs to make sure everything is sealed and all debris is removed

### BUILDING STRUCTURE

- All insulation in the attic or above the ceiling is in place
- Brick caulked joints and expansion joints around the windows are in place
- Check and regulate all door closures

### BUILDING MECHANICS AND OPERATING SYSTEMS

- Ensure roof top units are functioning for winter
- Clean roof top filters
- Check any exterior boiler or cooling systems
- Ensure inside furnace systems are ready for winter
- Thermostat batteries charged/replaced
- Check all electric motors to be sure they are clean and free of lint
- Oil and lubricate motors as needed

*\*courtesy of BarberMurphy*





# upcoming events

## DECEMBER

### Annual Holiday Party & Diaper Drive | Dec 6

The year we will be supporting the Metro East Diaper Bank, O'Fallon Food Pantry and airmen at Scott Air Force Base by collecting diapers.

Both monetary and actual diaper donations will be accepted.

[\*Set a Reminder\*](#)

### Cookie Drop

The Scott Spouses Club will continue its annual tradition of the Cookie Drop at Scott AFB.

Consider donating homemade cookies for airmen who are staying in the dorms and those working 24/7 shifts.

Donations can be dropped off at the Chamber office on Dec 13th, 9 am - 2 pm.

[\*Find Out More\*](#)

## WINTER CAMPAIGNS

### It Pays to Buy Local

Support our local downtown shops and win great prizes! Are you a local business? Increase visibility and promotion.

Encourage customers to send in their receipts of \$10 or more for a chance to win CASH prizes! YOU can win for most receipts submitted!

[\*Learn More\*](#)

### Wing Walk

Snap a selfie with the wings display at participating businesses and win cash prizes!

[\*Check Out the List\*](#)

STAY CONNECTED WITH US THROUGH OUR WEBSITE AND ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR MORE DETAILS ON ALL EVENTS! BE SURE TO CHECK THE EVENTS CALENDAR OFTEN AND REGISTER FOR EVENTS YOU'RE INTERESTED IN.



[OfallonChamber.com](http://OfallonChamber.com)



[Facebook.com/OfallonShilohChamber](https://Facebook.com/OfallonShilohChamber)

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Merrill Lynch | Woody Gray  
Mid America Oral Surgery Center  
Morrison Plumbing, Heating and Air

Navy Federal Credit Union  
O'Fallon Shiloh Towing  
OST Container  
Premier Remodeling  
Regency Manor  
Regions Bank  
Revela at O'Fallon  
Revity Credit Union  
Sandberg Phoenix  
Serra Honda of O'Fallon  
Schaefer Auto Body Centers  
Scott Credit Union  
Scott Family Housing  
Sigman Heating and Air Conditioning  
Spectra Graphics  
Taylor Roofing  
The Record Madison/St. Clair  
The Regency Conference Center  
The Rehabilitation Institute of Southern Illinois  
Together Credit Union  
TownePlace Suites by Marriott  
U.S. Bank  
Washington University Physicians | Pediatric Specialty Care  
Water Sweets Soap Company, Inc.  
Webster University



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Nathan Klitzing, Vice Chair  
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Dan Jackson, Treasurer  
Carrollton Bank

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United Way of Greater St. Louis

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Southern Illinois

Chris Klay  
HSBS St. Elizabeth's Hospital

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Susan Schultz  
Holland Construction

Kevin Welch  
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City of O'Fallon

Mayor Robert Weilmuenster  
Village of Shiloh

Josh Kinney | Lead In  
Cornerstone Christian Church

### Mayoral Representative

Brenda Kern  
Village of Shiloh

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## CHAMBER AMBASSADORS

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John Grissom  
Berkshire Hathaway

Jaclyn Gross  
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Cindy Hill  
Home Instead

Erik Huber  
Bank of Springfield

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Horner & Shiffrin

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O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce  
P.O. Box 371  
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www.OFallonChamber.com

Services: Maps: First one is free, each additional is \$1

This month's newsletter sponsors is:  
**SSM Health of O'Fallon, IL**

Would you like to be the first page of our next newsletter?  
Let us know! [chamber@ofallonchamber.com](mailto:chamber@ofallonchamber.com) | 618-632-3377

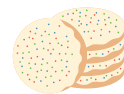
**December 2023**  
**SAVE THE DATES**



### ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY & DIAPER DRIVE\*

Wednesday, December 6  
5:00 p.m - 7:30 p.m.  
Regency Conference Center

*\*Call to see if there is any  
ticket availability! 618-632-3377*



### COOKIE DROP FOR SCOTT AFB AIRMEN

Wednesday, December 13  
Donations can be dropped off  
9:00am - 2:00pm

**MORE INFORMATION** >