



ALBION AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber Chat

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

January-March 2025

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Chamber Board meetings**
 - Feb 10, Mar 10, Apr 7
- **Chamber membership meeting**
 - Feb 12, 12-1PM
 - Farm Bureau Basement
- **Spring Yard Sales**
 - April 25
- **Shop Small Boutique Crawl**
 - May 1 & 2
 - Edwards, Richland, Wabash, Wayne, White, New Harmony
- **America250 Celebration**
 - Friday, July 3
 - Albion Amphitheater
 - 5PM



1st Annual Living Christmas Windows a SUCCESS!

A MAGICAL CHRISTMAS INDEED! Albion businesses and community came together to celebrate in a very special way on Saturday! The Grinch came to Albion Bobe's, Elf from the movie at Bailey's Bistro, Little House on the Prairie at the Prairie Albion Antique Mall, Nightmare Before Christmas at Albion 66 and a Live Nativity and Santa at Hilltop Bakery! They truly brought the first annual Christmas Windows to life!

Our own area families and many folks from out of town, came to experience the Albion Area Chamber's "Living Christmas Windows", Albion Done Bright festival of lights around the square, a Vendor Market at Social on Main, and genuine hospitality of an Albion Christmas like no other.



ELECTION DAY IS COMING



CHAMBER BOARD ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN FEBRUARY

Per Chamber by-laws, elections for board officers will take place during the February meeting on February 12. Meeting will be held in the Farm Bureau basement at 12PM. Positions available to be voted on per by-laws are position of Vice President and Treasurer. Should another position become available because an officer either steps down or runs for a different office, those positions will be voted on as well.

If you are interested in running for an officers position or to be a board member, please contact the Chamber at albionareachamber@gmail.com.



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH PROGRAM TO RETURN

We look forward to revamping our business of the month program this year! We will randomly select a business of the month for February-December. Business of the Month will get acknowledgement on our Facebook page and in at least one of our paid advertisements in the Prairie Press throughout that month. If you have been selected, our Business of the Month committee will be reaching out to you soon!

ALBION AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS *of the* **MONTH**



2025 RECAP



LOCAL BUSINESSES TRANSFORM DOWNTOWN FOR FIRST EVER LIVING CHRISTMAS WINDOWS EVENT

cont...Albion eateries were full and the streets crowded with families driving around to see the lights and beautifully decorated windows. Even the movie Frosty the Snowman could be seen at Fifteen West! The Chamber would like to thank each and every business for bringing so much fun and joy this Christmas!

CONGRATULATIONS Albion Bobe's on winning 1st place from the judges! Sponsored by Color Me Perfect Events. Congratulations to 2nd place winners Bailey's Bistro, Prairie Albion Antique Mall, Albion 66 and Hilltop Bakery! The judges said it was just too tough to decide as all entries were so great! So fun!

The out-of-town judges braved the cold to come to Albion for the first time and judge the Living Christmas Windows. Just a few of the comments they left for our community are: They were so impressed by how many small businesses and non-chain eateries we have uptown. Citing many small towns don't have that anymore. They really liked that there was so much traffic in town because it showed how involved the people are in our community events.

The judges didn't want to have to pick a "winner" because everyone deserved to win! They were impressed by all the details participants paid attention to. They truly enjoyed meeting everyone as they went in to see each business display and both judges commented about how friendly everyone is. They left with warm hearts and big plans to return!

With the Albion Done Bright lights around our historic, courthouse square, an early morning Breakfast With Santa, and so many other great Christmas events in town, it has already been a Christmas to remember in a truly wonderful community!

We will definitely revisit this event next year during the parade so be thinking of your living window ideas now!



LIVING WINDOWS



Pictured: Prairie Albion Antique Mall, Hilltop Bakery, Bailey's Bistro, and Phillips 66.



2025 RECAP



CHRISTMAS PARADE: HOMETOWN HEREOS

The weather outside was frightful resulting in the AACOC board choosing to cancel the 2025 lighted Christmas parade. Some were disappointed but the weather that evening proved too chilly for little ones.

We will most likely revisit the theme: Hometown Heroes for our 2026 parade theme and we hope you join us for Living Windows and Open Houses before and after the parade!



BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

What a great time we had with our community that morning! We appreciate our sponsors who provided all of the breakfast food (over 300 pancakes and 45lbs of bacon!), donuts, milks and juices! Thank you, Albion 66, Albion Dollar General, Albion Casey's and Olney Prairie Farms. The Edwards County Farm Bureau's Mackenzie Brake brought the kids a fun "Ugly Sweater" activity and sensory games! The Albion Fire Department hosted at the station and brought a fun inflatable photo area for the kids! Santa Claus (Rudy Beadles) brought out the most smiles and his helper, Adelyn passed out lots of candy canes.

As always, the Chamber's "Breakfast With Santa" is a warm and cozy way for families to gather, visit Santa and kick off their Christmas festivities! Thank you to all who came to make this the best one yet. Merry Christmas!



AWARDS BANQUET



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WINNERS AND NOMINEES!



Our 4th annual banquet was a success as we honored over 38 nominees for our seven awards.

Nominations for our trophy awards were submitted via our web site by the public and voted on by the Robinson Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Certificate awards were nominated by the public via our Facebook page in January and voted on by our membership.

What an honor it is to live in such a wonderful community that we have so many people that deserve recognition for their contributions!

NOMINEES



BRICK PILLAR AWARD

LEROY MOORE

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

618 SUPPLY

BARE'S FLOORING

DOLLAR GENERAL MARKET

JW EQUIPMENT

THE LUMBERYARD OF WEST SALEM

WABASH VALLEY SERVICES

PERSON OF THE YEAR

DON ST. LEDGER

JO RECTOR

SHEILA COLBERT

•

NON-PROFIT OF THE YEAR

ALBION DONE BRIGHT

EDWARDS COUNTY COUNCIL OF AGING

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

•

NOMINEES



BEST HOMEBASED BUSINESS

APPLE TREE BOUTIQUE, STACY THOMPSON
DOUBLE R BAKERY, REANNA ROGERS
JENNA'S COOKIES, JENNA SHAW
MAMMA'S LITTLE KITCHEN, RYAN SCOTT

COMMUNITY IMPACT

EDWARDS COUNTY HEAD START, WADI
JENNY HORTIN, PRAIRIE PRESS NEWSPAPER

SOCIAL MEDIA STAR

MICHAELA GREATHOUSE, GREATHOUSE GRAZING ACRES
NATHAN GENZ, THE WATERING CAN
SARA REID, REID HOMESTEAD

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

ABBI COOK, ABBI'S SALADS TO GO-GO
ALLIE BOBE, BOBE'S PIZZA
AVERI GOODMAN, COLOR ME PERFECT EVENTS & CNB ASST. VP
BREE PFLAUM, ALBION MEDICAL CLINIC
DIONNA PICKERING, 5TH STREET BEAUTY & WELLNESS
JOLENE KNIGHT, BRICK STREET INN
KATE SPEIR, HILLTOP BAKERY
KATY DOERSAM, KD DECOR & SOCIAL ON MAIN
KELLY ALEXANDER, TJ MARCHE
KRISTEN SPEIR, K'S ON MAIN
MAGGIE KIRKPATRICK, THE LUMBERYARD
MEREDITH MILLER, COLYER COFFEE HOUSE
MICHAELA GREATHOUSE, GGA MARKET
MORGAN BAILEY, BAILEY'S BISTRO
NANCY NELSON, FORMER ECHS BUSINESS EDUCATOR
SHARLEE AARON, ALBION EQUIPMENT COMPANY
TARA BUERSTER, U OF I EXTENSION

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WINNERS



WOMEN IN BUSINESS

SHARLEE AARON



COMMUNITY IMPACT

JENNY HORTIN, PRAIRIE PRESS



BEST HOME BASED BUSINESS

MAMMA'S LITTLE BAKERY, RYAN SCOTT

NOT PICTURED

SOCIAL MEDIA STAR
SARA REID,
REID HOMESTEAD

CERTIFICATE AWARDS ARE
NOMINATED BY THE
COMMUNITY VIA OUR
FACEBOOK PAGE AND
WERE VOTED ON BY THE
AACOC CHAMBER
MEMBERS

WINNERS



BUSINESS OF THE YEAR
WABASH VALLEY SERVICES



PERSON OF THE YEAR
DR. DON ST. LEDGER



NON-PROFIT OF THE YEAR
EDWARDS COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING

TROPHY AWARDS ARE NOMINATED
BY THE COMMUNITY VIA ESSAY
SUBMITTED ON OUR WEBSITE AND
WERE VOTED ON BY THE
ROBINSON CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BANQUET SPECIAL THANKS



SPECIAL THANKS TO

- SPONSORS: FARM BUREAU & COLOR ME PERFECT EVENTS
- PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEX MILHEISER
- PRESENTATIONS: FAIR QUEEN, ALICE ROBB & MOORE FAMILY
- FOOD: BAILEY'S BISTRO, GGA MARKET, HILLTOP BAKERY, & AACOC BOARD MEMBERS
- DRINKS: BOBE'S PIZZA, ALBION
- TROHPIES: TJ MARCHE
- SETUP: BLUE RIBBON 4H CLUB
- TEARDOWN: TOM GOODMAN, QUENTIN SPEIR

ORDER NOW!



The Albion Area Chamber of Commerce will be selling T-shirts as a fundraiser for our next Welcome Sign renovation project. Shirts resemble the design created by Jenny Hortin Designs found on the newly redone sign south of Albion on Rt. 130.

Head to historicalalbion.square.site today to order!

HISTORIC ALBION SALE!!



HISTORIC ALBION T-SHIRT
\$20.00 - \$23.00 SIZES SM-3XL

HISTORIC ALBION CREWNECK
\$28.00 - \$31.00 SIZES SM-3XL



HISTORIC ALBION
COFFEE MUG \$12.00



BUY NOW!! GO TO



historicalalbion.square.site

STAY IN THE KNOW



NEW EVENT: SHOP SMALL BOUTIQUE CRAWL!

Mark your calendars! New this year the Chamber will be hosting the Southern Illinois Shop Small Boutique Crawl. The boutique crawl is open to businesses in Edwards, Richland, Wabash, Wayne, White, and New Harmony.

The 'crawl' will take place on Friday and Saturday May 1 & 2. Businesses & interesting in getting on the "map" for the event can sign up and pay on our website, Cost is \$20 per business location for non-members, and free for paid AACOC 2026 Members. Members still have to register to be included.

This will serve as a fundraiser for the AACOC. We will facilitate creating the map and businesses are in charge of making the day as fun as they want inside their own businesses. Patrons can get a car full of friends and drive to the businesses of their choice at their own pace. Businesses are encouraged to offer discounts, giveaways, and refreshments.

The poster for the Southern Illinois Shop Small Boutique Crawl features a green and white striped background. At the top left is the Albion Area Chamber of Commerce logo. The main title "SHOP SMALL BOUTIQUE CRAWL" is in large, bold, pink letters, with "SOUTHERN ILLINOIS" in green above it. Below the title, the locations "EDWARDS, RICHLAND, WABASH, WAYNE, WHITE, NEW HARMONY AND MORE!" are listed in green. The dates "FRIDAY May 1 & 2 SATURDAY" are prominently displayed in green and pink. A green text block encourages participation: "GRAB THE GIRLS AND FILL UP THE TANK TO ENJOY TWO DAYS OF SHOPPING, DINING, AND EXPLORING SOUTH EASTERN ILLINOIS BOUTIQUES AND RESTAURANTS AT YOUR OWN PACE. EXPECT DISCOUNTS, GIVEAWAYS, AND FUN!". Below this, a pink text block says "VIEW MAP OF PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES, THEIR STORE HOURS AND SPECIALS AT ALBIONAREACHAMBER.COM STARTING ON APRIL 25TH". At the bottom, there are four pink line-art illustrations of different types of businesses: a general store, a cafe, a supermarket, and a boutique.

 **SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**
SHOP SMALL
BOUTIQUE CRAWL

**EDWARDS, RICHLAND, WABASH, WAYNE,
WHITE, NEW HARMONY AND MORE!**

FRIDAY *May* **1 & 2** **SATURDAY**

**GRAB THE GIRLS AND FILL UP THE TANK TO ENJOY TWO
DAYS OF SHOPPING, DINING, AND EXPLORING SOUTH
EASTERN ILLINOIS BOUTIQUES AND RESTAURANTS AT
YOUR OWN PACE.
EXPECT DISCOUNTS, GIVEAWAYS, AND FUN!**

**VIEW MAP OF PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES, THEIR
STORE HOURS AND SPECIALS AT
ALBIONAREACHAMBER.COM
STARTING ON APRIL 25TH**



UPCOMING EVENTS



LET'S CELEBRATE
OUR FREEDOM

★ ★ ALBION'S ★ ★
AMERICA
250 *Celebration*
HOSTED BY THE ALBION AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

LIVE MUSIC, FOOD, LITTLE
MISS/MISTER PAGEANT
AMERICA'S 250 TRIBUTE



ALBION
AMPHITHEATER &
SQUARE

JULY 3 5PM



ALBION AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

LAST CHANCE!

SPEND IT IF YOU GOT IT!

CHAMBER BUCKS WILL BE ACCEPTED AT PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES UNTIL **DECEMBER 31, 2025**

STARTING 2026 CHAMBER BUCKS WILL NO LONGER BE ACCEPTED AT LOCAL BUSINESSES.

*BUSINESSES CAN REDEEM CHAMBER BUCKS FOR CASH UNTIL JANUARY 31, 2026



 **SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**

SHOP SMALL
BOUTIQUE CRAWL

**EDWARDS, RICHLAND, WABASH, WAYNE,
WHITE, NEW HARMONY AND MORE!**

FRIDAY *May* **1 & 2** **SATURDAY**

GRAB THE GIRLS AND FILL UP THE TANK TO ENJOY TWO DAYS OF SHOPPING, DINING, AND EXPLORING SOUTH EASTERN ILLINOIS BOUTIQUES AND RESTAURANTS AT YOUR OWN PACE.
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VIEW MAP OF PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES, THEIR STORE HOURS AND SPECIALS AT
ALBIONAREACHAMBER.COM
STARTING ON APRIL 25TH

NOTICE: We will be discontinuing our “Chamber Bucks” program for 2026. All unspent Chamber Bucks must be used by December 31st. Businesses with bucks can contact the Chamber until January 30th to receive reimbursement.

UPCOMING EVENTS CONT.



ALBION AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MEMBER MEETING

THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 12

FARM BUREAU BASEMENT
12 PM

ALBION AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



What's New?

SALES, ANNIVERSARIES, SPECIALS, NEW PRODUCTS,
EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS, RENOVATIONS, ETC?
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

EMAIL US AT
ALBIONAREACHAMBER@GMAIL.COM
WE'D LOVE TO SUPPORT YOU!

ALBIONAREACHAMBER.ORG