

Contact Information

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Upcoming Events

[Click event title for more information.](#)

CEO Trade Show


May 3 and 4, 2016
4-8 PM

Northland Mall
2900 East Lincolnway
Sterling, IL 61046

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BLACKHAWK HILLS Regional Council



Jo Daviess • Stephenson • Carroll • Ogle • Whiteside • Lee

Thank you for your interest in Blackhawk Hills Regional Council. You are receiving this newsletter because we would like to keep you up-to-date on projects and initiatives in the six-county region of Blackhawk Hills. We serve Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside Counties in northwestern Illinois.

If you have a project that you would like our assistance with, please contact our office at 815-625-3854 or submit a [Project Proposal Form](#) on our website.

If you have news or upcoming events that you would like us to share in our newsletter, on Facebook, or our website, please contact us at 815-625-3854 or by email at info@blackhawkhills.com.

Stillman Valley High School Wins the 2016 Envirothon

The 2016 Land Use Council 1 Envirothon Competition was held on March 8, 2016, at Highland Community College, and was hosted by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson and Whiteside Counties. Twenty teams participated in the competition, with Stillman Valley High School taking 1st place. Members of Stillman Valley's team each receive a \$500 college scholarship and advance to the State Envirothon Competition to be held on April 27 and 28, 2016, at Allerton 4-H Memorial Camp in Monticello, Illinois. Julie Jacobs, Blackhawk Hills' Office Manager, served as the emcee and a timer at the competition.

The top three schools were:

- 1st Place - Stillman Valley High School
- 2nd Place - Pearl City High School
- 3rd Place - Forrester High School Team 2



Stillman Valley High School team members
Ethan Roberts, Austin Atchison, Advisor Jay
Williams, Paige Adams, and Michelle Johnson.

Funding Opportunities

Visit blackhawkhills.com/grants or contact our office for more information on these and other funding opportunities.

[Community Economic Development Projects](#) - The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Community Services (OCS) will award up to \$17.7 million in Community Economic Development (CED) discretionary grant funds to Community Development Corporations (CDC) for well-planned, financially viable, and innovative projects to enhance job creation and business development for low-income individuals. Deadline: April 27, 2016. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Entertainment Software Association \(ESA\) Foundation Grant](#) - The ESA Foundation is dedicated to supporting positive programs and opportunities that make a difference in the lives of today's youth. The Foundation seeks to harness the collective power of the interactive entertainment industry to create positive social impact. Grants of up to \$50,000 are provided to nonprofit organizations for programs that serve youth ages seven to 18. Funded programs and services should utilize technology or computer and video games to educate America's youth and young adults. Programs must be available nationwide, or reach at least two or more states. Deadline: May 2, 2016. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Carol M. White Physical Education Program](#) - Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education provides grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) to initiate, expand, and improve physical education for students in grades K-12. Grant recipients must implement programs that help students make progress toward meeting State physical education standards. Deadline: May 20, 2016. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Initiatives to Create a Path to the Economic Mainstream Supported](#) - The Kresge Foundation: Human Services Program works to improve the life circumstances of poor and low-income children and adults and those living in underserved communities. Through the Human Services Program, the Foundation seeks to expand access and opportunity for individuals and families who are vulnerable and low-income by strengthening human services organizations and promoting new responses to challenges in the sector. One of the program's focus areas, "Advancing the effectiveness of human-serving organizations," provides grants to enhance the ability of high-performing organizations to innovate and effectively support individuals and families on the path to self-sufficient, self-determined lives. Preference is given to nonprofit organizations and government entities that employ integrated, innovative, culturally responsive approaches to change the circumstances of people outside the economic mainstream. Preliminary inquiries may be submitted throughout the year. Click [here](#) for more information.

Center for Small Business Development Launched

Sauk Valley Community College (SVCC) Center for Small Business Development (CSBD) opened in February. Services provided include one-to-one small business counseling, workshops, and seminars, partnership development to help improve the small business and entrepreneurship culture of the region, and the development of local, regional, and state resources to help small business communities.

The Center was made possible by a partnership between SVCC and the cities of Dixon, Rock Falls, and Sterling, Lee and Whiteside Counties, and Community State Bank, First National Bank in Amboy, Sauk Valley Bank, Sterling Federal Bank, and Triumph Community Bank.

The CSBD will be hosting a First Steps Workshop on April 20, 2016, at 5:30 PM at the Odell Public Library in Morrison, IL. Workshop topics include:

- CSBD Services - Become familiar with what is offered and what is available throughout the state and nation.
- Feasibility - Evaluate your idea.
- Legal Structures - Determine which structure is right for you.
- Registration & Licensing - Review state and local rules, regulations, and licensing requirements.
- Business Plan Basics - Find out what goes into a business plan.

For more information on the CSBD click [here](#) or contact David Buchen, CSBD Executive Director, at 815-835-6248.

Fish Sale is Underway

Thinking about stocking your pond or lake? The Soil and Water Conservation Districts spring fish sales are underway. To view a list of SWCD contacts in the Blackhawk Hills region, please visit the Environment section of our website by clicking [here](#).

Managing Forests for Wildlife

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) experts will lead a discussion and viewing of several forestry practices beneficial to native wildlife and consider the effects of each practice. They will also identify various species native to northwestern Illinois and which practices can improve their habitat and presence. The event will take place on April 6, 2016, at 9 AM at Timber Valley View Tree Farm near Galena.

Leading this session will be SWCD Resource Conservationist Dave Harrison and IDNR Wildlife Biologists Jeff Horn and Scott Schaeffer.

For directions and more information click [here](#).

Jump Start to a Good Year - 2016 Grazing Conference Held

Blackhawk Hills was one of the sponsors of the Northwest Illinois Grazing Conference. The event was held on March 2, 2016. There were 36 participants. The program featured five speakers and covered various topics, including: Transitioning from Winter Feed to Summer Grazing, Who Manages Forage on Your Spread, Forage Options for Better Grazing, Economic Perspectives of Transition and Forage Management Options, Grazing and Water Quality: More Compatible than Portrayed, and Lessons Learn in Contract Grazing and Niche Marketing.



Participants at the Grazing Conference were able to visit with exhibitors.

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