

# The Skyhawk View

SAUK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## Medical Marijuana as an Additional Crop for Local Farmers

by Cindy Skiles-Hacker

Local farmers have said there is potential profit in medical marijuana but limited licenses and initial investment costs create barriers for most area farms who may consider it as an addition to their corn and soybean crops.

Governor Rauner's recent signing of the bill that will expand who could legally use medical marijuana to include those suffering from chronic pain once again sparked conversations about this controversial subject.

The recent changes in who could use medical marijuana didn't change who could grow the crop, or how many licenses are allowed in Illinois. Legislation only allows for 22 licensed cultivation centers – one in each of the Illinois State Police districts.

One of the issues is the non-refundable application fee of \$25,000. If approved the first year permit fee is \$200,000 with

the annual renewal fee of \$100,000. Applicants are required to demonstrate \$500,000 in liquid assets and a \$2,000,00 bond to the Department of Agriculture.

Construction costs for the high security facilities are not cheap. In 2015, the facility near Delavan reported that it cost \$23 million for the 75,000 square foot building surrounded by three strands of barbed wire atop the 8 foot high chain link fence.

The building warrants tight security. The crop growing inside produces medicine worth about \$3000 a pound. The Delevan facility expects to produce between 7,000 and 10,000 pounds of cannabis per year.

Regardless of the money to be made, most farmers and farm advisors would not go "on the record" in discussing medical marijuana. The stigma about this crop, and related ones such as hemp, is still strong in the local area.



Soybeans and corn dominate local farms today, could marijuana join them soon?

## The Sounds of Silence

by Kallie Timmons

Within the last couple of years, students and community members alike have noticed a hole in the curriculum offered here at SVCC. Music and theater, two programs that once thrived within the walls of the college, have slowly but surely started to become few and far between.

Beginning the search for the missing music, Kris Murray, an Assistant Professor of Humanities who also teaches music appreciation, claimed that the music program was discontinued two years ago. She said, "We did continue the band as a community offering but even that is gone, although I understand there is hope that a new director might be found for next semester." It seems that a school so seemingly invested in providing an array of opportunities to its students would not do away with such influential programs as music and theater unless it was the only option.

Next, the search was taken to the president himself, Dr. David Hellmich, who referred Michelle Barkley, the Dean of General Education and Transfer Programs. In the words of Dean Bark-

ley, "The music program has been scaled back to just our transfer courses, so just our music appreciation course and our performance courses related to band and choir. Those classes are open to community members to participate in, so we are able to draw enrollment from people outside of the college. Our lessons based courses have all been eliminated and deleted from our programming... For theater, we have tried to maintain the programming. Our basic acting course and intermediate acting courses are still on the books and available. We try to offer those every semester, but we currently do not have a faculty member qualified to teach those courses so they have been cancelled."

In spite of this great clarification, one big question still remains: Why? Dean Barkley said that the enrollment is unfortunately just not there. While the theater program is still sustainable with simply low enrollment, the music program has been on a steady decline for the last five years. Dean Barkley even spoke of the endowed scholarships that SVCC just cannot give away because there are zero music majors at this point in



This mural found in downtown Morrison, Illinois, painted by Theresa Brandon in 2009, shows that music and theater have a place in our community.

time. Just by knowing the beauty and knowledge that comes with immersion into the arts of music and theater, it is truly disheartening to know that SVCC students currently have very few options in these areas of study.

As Dean Barkley said, "We are trying really hard to stay comprehensive in the sense that we want to be a community college that has offerings for individuals of all interest areas and provide that sort of broad scale set of offerings for

students. But at the same time, when we do not have somebody willing to teach or when we do not have people interested in certain areas, it just naturally sort of dissolves and you become more focused in say agriculture or business than you do in theater or music for example."

It appears that SVCC is working hard to keep the arts alive in the school. The college has partnered with Woodlawn Arts Academy and Centennial Auditorium,

both in Sterling, to expand and share resources within the community. SVCC also has a thriving visual arts program with Glenn Bodish at the helm. Music performances take place at Centennial Auditorium at least once per semester, and the fall and spring musicals are directed by Tori Duffin. Currently, a performance of "A Christmas Carol" is in the works, and although auditions have already taken place, all students are encouraged to take part in

the spring show. Students can also sign up for band and choir credit classes in the spring, as there is an instructor slotted to teach them next semester.

In the end, from an economic standpoint, the music and theater programs at SVCC are just not viable right now. As much as the arts mean in this community, courses cannot be offered without interested students. It may seem as if music and theater are lost causes for now, but there is certainly always hope for the future.

# Commitment to Win Big Difference in Playing College Volleyball



Intense focus and teamwork help Sauk Valley set up a return against the Parkland team at the Kirkwood Invitational Tournament

by Cindy Skiles-Hacker

Faster playing speed and increased intensity are two differences in stepping up to play college volleyball when compared to playing high school volleyball. But, focus on the game and really wanting to play this game and win was by far the biggest difference, according to three Sauk Valley volleyball players at the Kirkwood Invitational Tournament held September 7-8 at the Cedar Rapids campus.

“The fundamentals are the same at both levels, but in college the play is faster. Some of the girls can struggle with that in the beginning,” was the biggest difference according to Olivia Pilgrim, the sophomore co-captain who plays as the team’s libero or defensive spe-

cialist. “Most of the focus is on team work instead of individual positions. We run lots of team drills during practice.”

Her co-captain, Paige Conner, agreed. “We’re all here to play, to win. We all have to work hard to stay focused and keep our heads in the game. It’s 70% mental – move on after a mistake – concentrate on getting the next point.” Paige’s experience playing on her high school co-op team of LaMoille/Ohio may have given her a preview of what it was like to play with team mates who were there for the game, instead of for the social aspect that comes with some high school sports. However, one of the things she said she liked most about volleyball is being part of a team and making lasting friendships.

Aubree Schmitt, who is an outside hitter or setter for the team has a slightly different viewpoint, but comes to the same conclusion as her teammates. Already a graduate from the University of Iowa, she’s taking some prerequisite courses at Sauk before continuing her education to become a Physician’s Assistant. Although she’s the oldest team member and has more experience than her teammates, she also talked about focus. “The intensity is higher. It’s way more competitive. You can see girls that want to go on to play D1, D2, D3 schools after they play here. You can tell they want to be here. Sometimes in high school it’s hard to see that. At this level we have to focus on our mental game and staying confident.”

# Phi Theta Kappa at Sauk

by Daniela Cervantes

If you received an invitation to join Phi Theta Kappa you may be asking yourself, “What is Phi Theta Kappa and why should I join?” If this is you, allow me to tell you how Phi Theta Kappa will help you improve your college experience.

Phi Theta Kappa is an academic honor society for two-year colleges. There are Phi Theta Kappa chapters all across the country, as well as in Canada, Japan, Germany, and Puerto Rico. Although there is a one-time fee required to become a member, it truly pays off. Being part of Phi Theta Kappa offers numerous benefits, such as scholarships, community involvement, and travel opportunities. If you choose to join Phi Theta Kappa, you can be as involved as you want. Just by being a member, you instant-

ly gain access to several scholarships, plus you are automatically considered for Phi Theta Kappa exclusive scholarships if you decide to transfer to a four-year institution. Moreover, being a member of Phi Theta Kappa will undoubtedly make your transfer applications stand out.

While it is not necessary to be actively involved in Phi Theta Kappa to receive these benefits, being an active member is a great way to meet new people on campus and find volunteer opportunities. Phi Theta Kappa is committed to helping our college grow and has made significant contributions to our campus such as the Bee Friendly garden by the East parking lot, and the fire pit behind Dillon Mall. We also organize a Destress Event during finals week every semester to help students relax with dogs

and other fun activities. Being a member of Phi Theta Kappa also gives you the opportunity to attend the annual international convention, which will be held in Florida this year. The convention is a unique experience to learn more about Phi Theta Kappa, listen to notable speakers, and interact with other chapters.

More than anything, Phi Theta Kappa will give you an opportunity to improve your college experience by being involved, making friends, and recognizing your academic success. Phi Theta Kappa members meet every other Monday at 12:45 in room 2C10. The next two meetings will be held September 24th and October 8th. If you’d like to know more about Phi Theta Kappa, don’t hesitate to contact any of our advisors: Rachel Brunner, Maggie Young, Tom Irish, and Audrey Smith.

# SVCC Makes Shortlist of Best Community Colleges in US



by Caleb Plumb

Every two years over 1,000 community colleges are selected for review from the Aspen Institute to be eligible to win \$1,000,000, and this year Sauk Valley Community College made the shortlist. From the selection of 1,000 only 150 make it to the second stage, which is where Sauk made it, before the list is slimmed down to the final 10.

Now based out of Washington, DC, but originating from Aspen, Colorado, the Aspen Institute is a nonprofit organization that has been around since 1949 and is made up of leaders from political, governmental, and business based backgrounds.

The contest has been running since 2011 having crowned five winners already. The website for the Aspen Prize

says that the award is the “nation’s signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America’s community colleges.” When looking at the colleges the selection committee looks into four distinct areas to narrow down the finalists with those areas being, “Student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and high-levels of access and success for minority and low-income students.”

In previous years Sauk did not make it past the first stage, meaning that the 2019 award is the furthest that Sauk has made it in the competition. The continuation onto the next stage shows that in recent years Sauk has been improving itself. The final winner is scheduled to be announced in early 2019 on the website for the Aspen Institute, with the next award process starting in 2020.

# Get Smart with Project Vote Smart

by Kallie Timmons

In a society constantly bombarded by controversial political news, voting is more important than ever. For this reason, organizations such as Project Vote Smart are working to better America’s voting system. According to Marie Popkin, a Vote Smart Ambassador from Morrison, Illinois, “Project Vote Smart is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that is dedicated to providing the most factual political information anywhere. It is located in a remote area of Montana and the work of gathering the information is done by volunteers, paid staff, and interns. When they show up at the ranch for the year round work, all personal politics must be checked at the door so the gathered information is untainted. It takes no money from special interest groups, unions, corporations, or the government.”

Although the organization is a national group, it includes information on national, state, and local politicians. In other words, voting matters in each and every level of government. On the website, individuals of voting age can find all the information they need to make informed decisions on voting. By visiting [votesmart.org](http://votesmart.org), biographical information, voting records, positions, ratings by special interest groups, speeches, and all of a politician’s funding sources immediately be-



As shown in this image captured in Lyndon, Illinois, voters in our area are passionate about the upcoming election where informed voting will be undoubtedly important.

come available. With the use of Vote Smart a voter can find candidates that support the issues that are important to them.

Popkin believes that facilities dedicated to education, such as Sauk Valley Community College (SVCC) and any other local schools, go hand in hand with informed voting. During an interview she stated, “I believe that many times people vote with their emotions and their connections to friends and family, rather than with facts. They are not aware of the actual issues and how various candidates feel about these issues. Knowledgeable decisions can only be made if one is well informed.”

As young adults will soon be shaping the face of politics, Popkin feels that students should learn to recognize the difference between fact and opinion. When asked what SVCC

students and faculty can do to support Project Vote Smart’s agenda as well as local politics in general, Popkin replied, “The most important thing for all students to do is to register to vote and actually go to the polls! Hopefully, through education voters will make informed factual decisions.”

Project Vote Smart wants citizens to be properly represented by people of their own choosing. Therefore, the belief of the organization is that a well-informed public is essential to a successful democracy. All voters and future voters are encouraged to visit Project Vote Smart’s website to get educated about candidates. Take an interest in the political decisions being made in your area. In the words of Popkin, “With a site like this available for free, there is no excuse to be uninformed at the polls.”



# A Program Good Enough To Eat



by Nicole Arduini

Sauk Valley Community College’s Agriculture (Ag) program is now home to 10 chickens. The 10 hens are the first step in what Professor Anderson’s plans to expand the Farm to Fork program at the college. Once the hens come of the laying age,

their eggs will be used in the College’s Cafeteria. Soon students will be able to get a taste of a farm fresh egg in the cafeteria cookies. The Ag program has big plans for the future of the Food to Fork program for Sauk Valley Community College students. In the near future, the Ag program has plans to expand their horizons and infrastructure. Dr. Anderson has future plans of the addition of green houses and even more livestock for the future of the Farm to Fork program. This would mean farm fresh salad bar, and other ingredients in the Sauk Cafeteria for all the students to enjoy. The addition of the Farm to Fork program is one of many programs offered by the Ag program at Sauk Valley Community College that offers their students real world experience and hands on learning in the classroom. You can find the chickens on campus in a coop, or roaming around behind the soccer field at the Ag building. The hens are look after by the Ag students and staff. When class is in session, the staff let the chickens out to roam, eat, and explore on the campus grounds.

## “Crazy Rich Asians” is a crazy good time



The local AMC Theater located in Sterling is open seven days a week.

by Caleb Plumb

The 2018 romantic comedy “Crazy Rich Asians” directed by Jon Chu is striking up conversation all over the world for what many may believe to be all the right reasons. The film centers around a young female named Rachel Chu (Constance Wu) who falls in love with Nick Young (Henry Golding). A couple months into their relationship Nick decides that he would like to take Rachel back home with him to Singapore for his best friend’s wedding. The main conflict of the film comes from the fact that Rachel had no clue that Nick’s family is one of the richest families in the Eastern hemisphere. Upon taking her home she has to fight for the approval

of Nick’s family, while also staying true to her own. Romantic comedies aren’t for everyone, but “Crazy Rich Asians” manages to subvert the typical shortcomings of the romantic comedy genre by creating a truly interesting story even if you were to look past the relationship aspect of it. Of course there are some issues, some of the characters maybe did not get enough screen time as many of the smaller storylines started to become more interesting than the main one. The pacing felt off at points, especially around the second act as a whole, which seemed to make the entire movie drag, making the two hour run time stretch further than necessary. Another minor criticism would be that some of the jokes don’t land perfectly, but a larger majority of them did than those that did not. A big part of why “Crazy Rich Asians” has become such a big film now is primarily due to the fact that it is one of the first Hollywood produced films with an all Asian cast, targeted at Western audiences. Even know, a month after the film has come out, it is still holding a top spot in the box office, breaking records, and becoming one of the most profitable romantic comedies of this generation. The release of “Crazy Rich Asians” is truly an exciting situation for everyone, because not only does it show that romantic comedies have to all be copies of those that came before it, but it calls for more diversity in Hollywood.



# The Con of Loyalty in American Politics

by James Hutchison

We all have loyalty to something. Whether it’s football teams, brand names, family, friends, or even specific actors in media, Americans are often-times unshaking in their loyalty. But these loyalties are mostly benign. They’re fun, harmless, and often even serve to bring us all together because, when the game is over we’re all still friends, right? Consider now the nature of American politics and how fierce, often times even rabid, loyalty to this party or that person has poisoned the well of the democratic process. The powerful partisan divide between politicians and the people who vote for them is widening at a staggering rate. How much of this can be attributed to voters who cast their ballots for candidates for little other reason than some feeble, personal identification of “republican” or “democrat”? But the problem of loyalty isn’t restricted to the citizen voter; it affects even the most elite men and women in political office. These are the people that are responsible for governing the system that the citizen lives and dies in yet they’re increasingly taking part in a repetitive process called party-line voting. David Davenport, a contributor at forbes.com says party-line voting is “a cancer that is eating at the effectiveness of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. As a consequence, what was once the world’s most deliberative body, the US Senate, hardly deliberates at all, and what little is accomplished in Washington is done through party-line votes and executive orders, with devastating consequences.” It seems the days of politicians doing work in favor of the citizen, if those days existed at all, are nearly gone, replaced by rampant party loyalty, and what few things get done that favor the people are barely enough to keep people from rioting in the streets. Of course, if that had ever been a practice, it has failed miserably in the most recent years if new data put together by Tommy Leung and Nathan Perkins is any indication of how unsatisfied people have become with their government. This data notes that “Since January 20, 2017, the pair has recorded about 4,296 protests with over 5,402,011 attendees”. And its data like this that offers another side of loyalty that people have already, and should continue, to embrace if we are to ever rise above what we have become as a country. It’s time to abandon the very idea of being loyal to people and instead set our loyalties on whatever ideas are right. Stop waving banners because it bears the name of some person or organization and start waving banners that represent ideas that make the country and lives better than it was yesterday. The days of supporting a candidate because of some imaginary divide that’s always been an expectation or some family tradition to honor are over. Now, we support who fights for what is right and if they fall from that, we abandon them too.

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