



COMMUNITY BANKERS
OF IOWA

Winter 2024

COMMUNITY BANKER UPDATE

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2025 WEBINAR SCHEDULE

All webinars will be held at 10:00 a.m.
Central unless otherwise indicated.

1/6/2025 | MONDAY

Wisdom Gained from the EEOC's Biggest Rulings of 2024
Diane Reed, HR Doc

1/7/2025

BSA Officer Part 1: BSA Update for BSA Officers
Dawn Kincaid, Brode Consulting Services, Inc.

1/8/2025

Consumer Lending Regulatory Compliance
Mary-Lou Heighes, Compliance Plus, Inc.

1/9/2025

Regulatory Update for the Credit Analyst
Robert L. Viering, RiverPointUSA LLC

1/13/2025 | MONDAY | 60 MINUTES

2024 HMDA Submission Due March 1, 2025: Updates, Challenges & Real-Life Examples
Susan Costonis, Compliance Consulting & Training for Financial Institutions

1/14/2025

Call Report Series: 2025 Call Report Update & Avoiding Costly Mistakes
Michael Gordon, Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC

1/15/2025

Frontline Series: Comprehensive Teller Training: Checks, Compliance, Security & BSA
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

1/16/2025

2025 Compliance Outlook: Regulator Expectations
David A. Reed, Reed & Jolly, PLLC

1/21/2025

IRA Series: Final IRA RMD Regulations, Deadlines, Calculations, Reporting & More
Loni Porta, Convergent Retirement Plan Solutions, LLC

1/22/2025

Marijuana Update: Implications of Schedule III Change, onboarding, Payments & Monitoring
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

1/27/2025 | MONDAY

IRA Series: Monday IRA & HSA Update: The Latest Changes & Issues
Loni Porta, Convergent Retirement Plan Solutions, LLC

1/28/2025

Consumer Loan Documentation: Developing a Comprehensive Checklist
Dawn Kincaid, Brode Consulting Services, Inc.

1/29/2025 | 60 MINUTES

Simplifying the FFIEC's Architecture, Infrastructure & Operations (AIO) IT Booklet
John Moeller, CLA

1/30/2025 | 60 MINUTES

1071 Rule FAQs: Are You IN or OUT in 2025?
Susan Costonis, Compliance Consulting & Training for Financial Institutions

2/3/2025 | MONDAY

UCC Financing Statements: Completing, Filing, Amending & Renewing
Shelli Clarkston, Spencer Fane LLP

2/4/2025

Simplifying the Compliance Function: Tools & Checklists to Stay on Track
Molly Stull, Brode Consulting Services, Inc.

2/5/2025

BSA Exam Manual Series: History, Risk Assessments, Training, Audits, Internal Controls & BSA Officers
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

2/6/2025

Frontline Series: Opening Deposit Accounts for Nonprofit Organizations
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

2/11/2025

Deciphering Tax Returns Part 1: Form 1040, Schedules B & C
Timothy P. Harrington, TEAM Resources

2/12/2025

New Interagency Guidance on Reconsiderations of Value
Molly Stull, Brode Consulting Services, Inc.

2/13/2025

Website Compliance: ADA Requirements, Common Issues & Best Practices
Dawn Kincaid, Brode Consulting Services, Inc.

2/18/2025

Agricultural Lending Update
Robert L. Viering, RiverPointUSA LLC

2/19/2025

10 Ways to Prevent New Account Fraud
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

2/20/2025

Dealing with Employee Discipline, Complaints, Performance Issues & More
Diane Reed, HR Doc

2/24/2025 | MONDAY

Treasury Management: A Powerful Tool to Increase Deposits & Fee Income
Marcia Malzahn, Malzahn Strategic

2/25/2025

Deciphering Tax Returns Part 2: Form 1040, Schedules D, E & F
Timothy P. Harrington, TEAM Resources

2/26/2025

Business Accounts Beyond Basics: Multi-Tiered, Beneficial Ownership, CIP & CDD
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

2/27/2025

Beginning Collector: What to Know on Day 1 & Beyond
David A. Reed, Reed & Jolly, PLLC

3/3/2025

Beginning Security Officer: Dos, Don'ts & Compliance
Monday Barry Thompson, Thompson Consulting Group, LLC

3/4/2025

BSA Exam Manual Series: CIP, CDD & High-Risk Customers
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

3/5/2025

Writing a Teller Training Program
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

3/6/2025

TRID: Auditing the LE & CD for Compliance
Molly Stull, Brode Consulting Services, Inc.

3/10/2025 | MONDAY

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Frontline Series: Opening & Maintaining Consumer Accounts
Deborah L. Crawford, Gettechnical Inc.

3/13/2025

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Dawn Kincaid, Brode Consulting Services, Inc.

3/17/2025 | MONDAY

New Funds Availability Limit Update: Preparing for Reg CC Changes Effective July 1, 2025
Dawn Kincaid, Brode Consulting Services, Inc.

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Intermediate Collector: Refining Skills Beyond the Basics
David A. Reed, Reed & Jolly, PLLC

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Diane Reed, HR Doc

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Job-Specific BSA Training for Lenders
Mary-Lou Heighes, Compliance Plus, Inc.

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A FRESH CHAPTER FOR CBI:

Here for Good

— Michael Gathman, CEO of CBI



Hello, CBI members! Allow me to introduce myself—I'm Michael Gathman, and I'm honored to serve as the new CEO of Community Bankers of Iowa. As a former banker who began my banking career serving the people in my own hometown, I've seen firsthand the unique and essential role community banks play in strengthening Iowa's communities. Leading this organization is a privilege, and I'm deeply committed to ensuring that CBI continues to be a trusted partner, advocate, and resource for Iowa's community banks.

You may have already noticed a few exciting changes at CBI. One of the most obvious is that Dave Caris retired in April, and I've picked up where he left off, carrying forward the mission to support the culture of community banking in Iowa. Another change is a refreshed look for our organization, which reflects our forward-looking approach. As we provide advocacy, organize networking opportunities, and deliver high-quality education, we want our brand to show that we are committed to the future of Iowa's community banks. Our updated tagline, *Here for Good*, underscores that commitment—we're here to support you, your bank, and the communities you serve for the long haul.

This issue also marks the debut of the newly redesigned *Community Banker Update*. We've reimagined the magazine to be more engaging, relevant, and reflective of the incredible work you do. Inside, you'll find stories of community banks navigating challenges and thriving through resilience. Future issues will feature even more examples of how Iowa's banks and their teams are making a positive impact in their communities. I encourage you to share your stories with us—we want to spotlight the great work you're doing to strengthen your towns and neighborhoods. We're also proud to feature our member partners in each issue. These financial service providers play a crucial role in supporting Iowa's community banks, and we are deeply grateful for their partnership.

In addition to this revamped publication, we're unveiling a new website at the end of the month. The site has been

designed with you in mind, offering a cleaner, easier-to-navigate layout. Education and networking events will be simpler to find, and registration is now a much smoother process. Be sure to check in regularly to stay up to date, explore the new blog, and see what's happening at CBI.

We're also making it easier than ever to stay informed on the go. Follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn for updates, news, and announcements about everything we're doing to support Iowa's community banks.

Looking ahead to 2025, we've got a packed calendar of events planned. Highlights include our Annual Convention in Okoboji, held at the historic Arnolds Park. It's a unique opportunity to hear from industry leaders, connect with your peers, and enjoy a fun, family-friendly atmosphere. We're also thrilled to introduce a brand-new Fall Management Conference, which will tackle key banking challenges and provide actionable solutions. Be sure to mark these events on your calendar—we'd love to see you there! As we embark on this exciting new chapter together, I'm eager to connect with you and work side by side to protect and strengthen the community banking model we all cherish. Let's continue building on the incredible legacy of Iowa's community banks—because together, we're *Here for Good*.

"We've reimagined the magazine to be more engaging, relevant, and reflective of the incredible work you do."

— Michael Gathman

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Follow us on LinkedIn.



2025 CBI EVENT DATES

CBI Legislative Reception: February 25, Iowa Tap Room, Des Moines

CBI Board Meetings: February 25, April 29, August 19 & December 2

ICBA Convention: March 11-14, Nashville

CBI LOT Conference: April 3-4, Park Hyatt, West Des Moines

ICBA Capital Summit: May 12-15, Washington D.C.

CBI Convention: July 16-18, Roof Garden, Okoboji

CBI Fall Golf: September 8, Hyperion Club, Johnston

CBI Fall Hunt: October 16, Doc's, Adel

CBI Midwest Ag Conference: November 6, Virtual

Fall Management Conference: November 13-14, Hyatt, Iowa City

**ICBA
LIVE**

March 11–14, 2025

Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center

NASHVILLE

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Together, community bankers amplify the power and successes of our industry at the largest annual gathering of community bankers—ICBA LIVE 2025.

Plug into a wide range of educational offerings to boost your knowledge and bring it back to your bank.

Synchronize with fellow community bankers and industry experts on the latest industry trends and innovations.

Celebrate the unique rhythm of our industry through energizing and inspiring general sessions and unparalleled networking events.

Register today at icba.org/live



Flourish

NURTURING THE COMMUNITY BANK ECOSYSTEM

— Rebeca Romero Rainey, CEO ICBA

As I reflect on the impact community banks have had this year, I revel in this notion that we have created something special, a dynamic ecosystem that centers on people. We have taken the time necessary to invest in relationships and their development, growth and long-term sustainability, and that is what sets us apart from others in financial services.

EMBRACING A LARGER COMMUNITY

I have attended numerous events across the country this year, and at each, I come together with community bankers, their board members, vendor partners, associate members, state executives and more. These are the people who make up our dynamic ecosystem. While there are some differences in their makeup and the challenges and opportunities they face, they share a common denominator: these strong connections, the relationships and people and the why behind what we do. I am always struck by the similarities despite the differences and how community bankers are committed to making sure our communities thrive.

Yet, those communities aren't insular. While our customers are our priorities, the people-first mentality we live by extends to all of our relationships. Community bankers invest the time in partnerships with vendor providers, regulators and others who offer unique insights into how to enhance this ecosystem. These organizations have worked in hundreds of different environments, and they provide a lens from which to see where our strengths lie and where we can enhance our efforts.

Our teams also make up an internal ecosystem. Community banks work to create an environment where everyone can succeed and thrive, and we witness both tangible and intangible results, and impacts on people and the community. We hire those who share our vision and values, and, by extension, we become great places to work.

IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL

Yet, building this kind of interconnected, thriving ecosystem does not happen overnight. It takes care and feeding and a

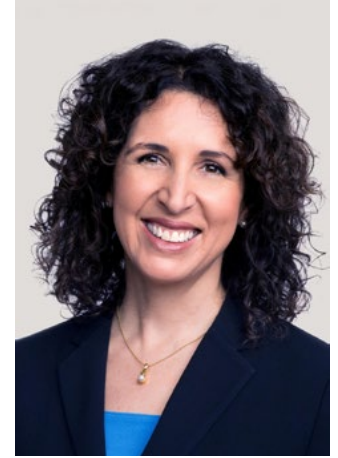
commitment to success. Fortunately, community bankers are focused on the long term. We cultivate an environment that grows and gets stronger each year as it's nurtured along the way. We focus on building connections that will stand the test of time. So, as we approach 2025, I look forward to what the future holds. I hope end-of-year reflections remind you of the profound effect you've had on your customers' and communities' lives, and you take time to honor that. From all of ICBA, I thank you for all you do for this ecosystem and wish you a wonderful holiday season!

"Community bankers are focused on the long term. We cultivate an environment that grows and gets stronger each year, as it's nurtured along the way. We focus on building connections that will stand the test of time."

— Rebeca Romero Rainey

WHERE I'LL BE THIS MONTH

I'll be supporting our ecosystem, first by hosting groups in Washington D.C. for meetings, including our ICBA and Community Bank State Association's leadership, and then heading to The Fountain Trust Company in Covington, Ind., to visit with ICBA chairman Lucas White. I'll also be visiting our offices in Sauk Centre, Minn., and TCM Bank in Tampa, Fla.



From the Top

THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY BANK

— Lucas White, ICBA Chairman, President, The Fountain Trust Company, Covington, IN



This year's list of Best Community Banks to Work For made me think about what it takes to be a great employer. No two community banks are exactly alike, but we share a common sense of purpose, a focus on relationship banking and a dedication to our roles—and those three elements boil down to caring about people.

As employers, community banks thrive because we put people first. Sure, we have to meet budget and achieve revenue goals, but at the end of the day, we care about people more. We focus on building relationships with our teams, customers and communities more than on maximizing profits.

A CULTURE OF CARING

This innate sense of connection drives community bank cultures. I look at my bank and see an environment that celebrates family, offers a collegial, playful atmosphere and encourages people to work hard *&* have fun while they do it. That lighthearted spirit is palpable in everything we do.

Of course, it's not all play, but when you value your team as individuals, not cogs in the banking wheel, they enjoy it that much more. Many businesses had to force their teams back to the office after COVID remote work, but members of our team asked to come back because they missed their colleagues. I imagine that many of you can say the same.

EVOLVING TO MEET NEEDS

That's all because we care about balancing the work of community banking with the people behind it. We don't want to be stagnant; we want to provide a flourishing environment that sparks enthusiasm from our employees and drives business engagement. From the board and leadership to every individual employee, it takes dedication and passion to enable our banks to grow, adapt and transform, and an enthusiastic, engaged team equals success in today's environment.

Reflecting on all of this, I'm realizing that every community bank is the best place to work. We put people first and challenge ourselves to grow for the betterment of our teams, customers and communities, and we stand apart from all other employers. I'm proud to be a community banker, not just for the work that we do but for the lives we touch. It's a true honor.

On a personal note, this holiday season, I hope you'll make the time to wind down, connect with loved ones and be truly present for those in your life. Because work will always be here, and after all, isn't it the people who make the difference?

"I'm realizing that every community bank is the best place to work. We put people first and challenge ourselves to grow for the betterment of our teams, customers and communities, and we stand apart from all other employers."

— Lucas White

MY TOP THREE

The holidays bring with them family traditions, including these personal favorites:

1. Seeing our Christmas tree lit up at night
2. Opening presents early in the morning with spiced tea
3. Making eggs benedict while having a mimosa

Innovation Station

BANKING AND STAFFING GEN Z INTO THE FUTURE

— Charles Potts, ICBA EVP and Chief Innovation Officer



As Gen Z (born between 1997 and 2012) graduates into the full-time workforce, they are looking to community banks as financial partners as well as potential employers. The characteristics this demographic seeks in both kinds of relationship are consistent: They want personal connection and digital solutions. Fortunately, that technology-forward, relationship banking model is community banks' sweet spot.

When it comes to identifying a financial partner, research shows Gen Z values a personalized banking relationship. In fact, according to a Capco study, 75% rated personalization as "highly important," making it a significant differentiator and opportunity for community banks.

In addition, Gen Zers are digitally influenced. They place much more emphasis on mobile banking than other generations; Fiserv notes that 56% of them cite it as their top priority when selecting a primary financial institution.

These numbers tell a story and give community banks clear direction: Digital solutions and a personalized experience matter. That's one reason ICBA brought Rego Payments, a white-labeled family digital wallet for financial institutions and their customers, into the latest ThinkTECH Accelerator cohort. Rego gives community banks a platform to create a continuum of services that progress experiences from teenagers to senior citizens with a curated journey.

But this journey also needs to apply to Gen Z as employees. Community banks need to consider how this generation will support them from a staffing perspective. Thankfully, the customer of the future and the employee of the future are not dissimilar. Both are digital natives, tech-forward and tech-enabled, and with a high-tech, high-touch model, community banks are well positioned to establish themselves in a desirable place to lead the financial needs of this generation.

As the competitive job market continues, offering a work environment that speaks to Gen Z's core needs will draw them in as employees. Community banks already share values with this generation by offering a community-centric, local-based approach to banking. A recent study from American Student Assistance reported that one-third of Gen Z would define a successful career by the ability to help their community—which bodes well for community banks as employers.

So, as we move into the new year, do so with optimism about what your future holds. Your digitally supported, personal relationship banking model resonates more than ever, solidifying you in the minds and hearts of current and future generations. And as 2024 winds down, I hope you take the time to reflect on your successes and look forward to what's to come, because community banks are poised to lead financial services in the new year. In the meantime, have a very happy holiday season!

"When it comes to identifying a financial partner, research shows Gen Z values a personalized banking relationship."

— Charles Potts

Checks & Balances

IS A FAVORABLE NEW FARM BILL ON THE HORIZON?

— Mark Scanlan and Scott Marks, ICBA

A comprehensive piece of legislation, the farm bill, is currently being redrafted after its 2023 expiration and extension through September, 30, 2024. Signed into law in 2018, the farm bill covers a range of programs that support American farmers, ranchers, consumers and the environment as a whole. Commodity programs like margin protection for dairy farmers and initiatives like the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), local and regional food aid procurement, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—to name just a few—all fall under the farm bill umbrella.

With the redraft in mind, the House and Senate Agriculture Committees have held multiple hearings this year and conducted research and solicited input from stakeholders. Timing is crucial, given the outcome of the presidential election could play a role in the updated bill's final draft.

The redrafted farm bill could include changes to the commodity and conservation program reforms, low-income food assistance programs; new agricultural trade policies (for example, market access and tariffs); and other programs focused on the nation's agricultural industries.

WHAT THE FARM BILL COULD HAVE IN STORE FOR COMMUNITY BANKS

In May, the House Agriculture Committee passed its new version of the farm bill with a 33-21 vote. However, the bill may require another extension, with consideration for current issues like the multiple hurricanes that affected the Southeast as well as low commodity prices. For example, Congress might consider an emergency aid package meant to help producers deal with the hurricane fallout and the falling commodity prices.

Here at ICBA, we're concerned about a Farm Credit System (FCS) agenda that may push community banks to the sideline on multiple fronts, including housing, regulation disproportion and essential community facility loans. While most stakeholders have outlined two or three priorities, FCS has released six or

seven anti-community bank proposals. That some of these could be included in the final farm bill package could be of concern to our membership.

That said, ICBA supports several key farm bill principles:

- Provide ample funding. Ensure the new farm bill maintains a robust commodity price safety net, boosts rural broadband capabilities and provides USDA upgraded technology to meet stakeholder needs more efficiently, particularly for farm loan programs.
- Maintain a strong crop insurance program. Provide funding and flexibility to ensure all producers have access to sound risk management tools that can help them withstand severe weather events.
- Enhance USDA-guaranteed loan programs. Increase loan limits on USDA-guaranteed farm loans (\$3.5 million for ag real estate and \$3 million for annual production loans) while streamlining paperwork and application processes for USDA farm and rural development loans.
- No expansion of powers for the FCS. ICBA opposes broad approval authorities for FCS non-farm lending, which is inconsistent with its charter as a government-sponsored enterprise (GSE) established to serve agriculture and would shrink community banks' loan portfolios.
- Ensure community bank access to general credit programs. Allow community banks to serve rural America without enhancing the competitive advantages of privileged nonbank competitors.
- Reduce regulatory burden and ensure fairness. Federal agencies are required to implement regulations fairly and equitably for all programs while reducing regulatory burdens on rural America.

HOW ICBA IS TAKING ACTION

ICBA signed a letter with 300 farm organizations urging that the new farm bill be drafted and completed this year. We'll also be supporting legislation for an emergency farm aid package.



As Congress writes a new farm bill, there's a clear opportunity to address the challenges that rural America and our farmers and ranchers face. A strong farm bill allows producers and their community bank lenders to work together for long-term business planning purposes to ensure producers remain viable regardless of the financial challenges they may face. Incorporating the above principles will ensure a successful farm bill that meets the challenges facing rural America.

*Mark Scanlan is SVP of agriculture and rural policy at ICBA.
Scott Marks is assistant VP of congressional relations at ICBA*

"A strong farm bill allows producers and their community bank lenders to work together for long-term business planning purposes to ensure producers remain viable regardless of the financial challenges they may face."

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We're urging ICBA members to send letters through our grassroots website icba.org/grassroots. There, you can also find materials highlighting the key areas of concern and where community bankers stand on this issue. Talk about ICBA's goal of taking a piece of legislation that's "lopsided" and making it better for community banks. For more guidance or insight, visit the Lobbying 101 module on our grassroots homepage.

Also, over the next few months, we'll be gearing up an amendment process, so any existing relationships that you have with members of Congress will be valuable during that phase.

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

FOMC's 2025 roster has some new voters.

— Jim Reber, CEO, ICBA Securities



While we in the financial services sector start thinking about monetary policy in the coming year, there's a new wrinkle to consider. Many Fed-watchers, rate prognosticators, economists and even investors had been betting on substantially lower rates in 2025 for many months. It looked like the corner had been turned with the 50 basis-point (0.50%) cut to fed funds on September 18. Almost immediately thereafter, persistently strong economic data caused members of the Federal Reserve Board to at least orally tamp down market expectations for aggressive cutting in the near future.

The “wrinkle” is the makeup of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) next year. The people who actually cast a vote for our central bank's monetary policy are a subset of the entire Federal Reserve Board. The FOMC consists of 12 members from two separate groups. The seven governors—who are nominated by the U. S. President and confirmed by the Senate, including Chairman Jay Powell—vote at each of the meetings. The remaining five members are, most of the time, an annually rotating set of regional Federal Reserve district presidents elected by their constituents.

NEW FOR 2025

Next year, the five regional bank presidents on the committee are:

- **John Williams, New York**
- **Austan Goolsbee, Chicago**
- **Susan Collins, Boston**
- **Alberto Musalem, St. Louis**
- **Jeff Schmid, Kansas City**

The New York Fed president is the only permanently-voting member in the group. The Fed's open market operations, which is where rubber meets the road on interest rates, are conducted through the New York bank, and hence the permanent spot on the FOMC.

The other four are perhaps wild cards, at least as Fed-watchers are concerned. Susan Collins has voted for only one year since her election in 2022; the same goes for Austan Goolsbee in 2023. The other two have not yet voted, given their elections since 2022. So, these voters will have their words and actions very closely parsed for “dovish” or “hawkish” leanings relative to interest rates.

But let's not oversell the impact: The votes at the conclusion of the FOMC's meetings are usually unanimous. I can't think of the last time there was more than one dissenting vote. It's also true that the other seven regional bank presidents who are not voters in a given year participate in the discussions and deliberations. Still, it's unusual for the FOMC to have this number of voters with little or no track record.

TOOLS IN THE SHED

Now that we've had a refresher course, let's talk about what the Fed can do regarding interest rates, which certainly have direct impact on community bank profitability. The most visible (and talked about) rate is fed funds, which is what financial institutions charge one another for overnight borrowings. The Fed controls that rate through the setting of reserve requirements; if it wants Fed Funds to drop, it decreases the level of reserves required in the system, thereby freeing up more money to be lent and invested.

It also runs the discount window as part of its mission of being the “lender of last resort.” Fed members, including community banks, have access to these short-term borrowing which can help manage liquidity risk, especially during times of market disruptions. The discount rate is set by the Fed and highly correlated to fed funds.

Not least among its kit is the open market operations mentioned previously. If the Fed decides it needs to impact interest rates that have longer terms than money markets, it has

capacity to invest vast sums in securities to bring down costs of borrowing. In doing so, the Fed effectively subsidizes all manner of debtors: consumers, homeowners, corporations, municipalities and even the largest borrower on earth: the federal government. Never was this more visible than in the early stages of the COVID pandemic, when the Fed purchased over \$4 trillion in treasuries and mortgage-backed securities—most of which it still owns—in 2020 alone.

CURRENT FORECAST

As we get ready to close out another year, what do the financial markets expect in 2025? This time last year, around 175 basis points in rate cuts were in the 2024 futures numbers. Perhaps because of that (i. e., grossly overestimating the decrease in fed funds), the U. S. economy’s impressive resilience, and inflation’s refusal to get back into its 2% box, we’re still singing from the “higher for longer” hymnal.

But that should bode well for community banks. It appears that cost of funds has finally started to level off as the effects of the first-rate cut take hold. Overall, borrower financial health appears to be holding up, so loan demand should be at

least average. And maybe, if the interest rate curve ever returns to a normal slope, community bankers can get back to pricing relative risk into their balance sheets. Perhaps the first lap for several new FOMC voters will be steady as she goes.

Jim Reber (jreber@icbasecurities.com) is president and CEO of ICBA Securities, ICBA’s institutional, fixed-income broker-dealer for community banks.

RESEARCH RESOURCE

Most of the data used in this column is from the Federal Reserve’s website. It contains a wealth of information on the history and structure of the central bank, as well as archival facts on FOMC meetings and the execution of monetary policy.

Visit [federalreserve.gov/monetarypolicy](https://www.federalreserve.gov/monetarypolicy)



A CLOSE-UP LOOK AT BHG'S EYE-OPENING LOAN GENEALOGY

— Dan Richard, VP, Predictive Analytics, BHG Financial

I've spent the past two decades analyzing and developing predictive credit models for decision-making in loan originations. While it's a passion of mine, I don't expect everyone to spend as much time considering BHG Financial's loan origination process as I do. Nonetheless, it's a fascinating exercise when one considers all the science, technology, data, and human ingenuity that are deeply ingrained in the origination of each loan. In fact, our process is surprisingly similar to that of another item people may take for granted—a pencil.

I have long been inspired by "I, Pencil", an essay published by economist Leonard Reed in 1958. There is also a children's book adaptation by Connor Boyack that my three children adore. In Reed's essay, he speaks from the perspective of a pencil and says, "Think about the world of activity that goes into making me. All the raw materials. The wood that was sawed and transported. The engineering that went into the logging truck. All the people and knowledge needed to mine graphite for the pencil lead and harvest rubber for erasers. All to make a pencil you can easily buy in any store."

In that same respect, it takes a conflux of raw materials and human expertise from all over the world to make a high-performing loan that banks can easily buy on BHG's Loan Hub. Allow me to narrate the genealogy of a BHG loan.

LIKELIHOOD TO RESPOND, BORROW, AND PAY

Every month, BHG reviews over 300 million records and analyzes the data of approximately 100 million potential prospects who might fit our profile. In addition to our own 21 years of loan data, we also buy data from 50+ external data providers. Ultimately, our discovery process seeks to answer the following questions with a high level of confidence:

What is a consumer's likelihood to respond to our marketing? Once they respond, what's their likelihood to navigate the process and take a loan? Once funded, what is their propensity to pay?

Continuing with the pencil metaphor, I will walk through the "manufacturing" process of BHG loans to highlight the thousands of data points and the human ingenuity we leverage to optimize our lending decision strategies.

DATA—OUR RAW MATERIAL

BHG tends to target higher-income, more creditworthy individuals. Many of the borrowers we target are licensed professionals, doctors, engineers, CPAs, and attorneys with approximately 18-20 years of experience in their industries. We proactively reach out to those with whom we wish to transact, using marketing data from multiple internal and external sources to identify potential borrowers with the highest likelihood to respond, borrow, and pay.

Before we reach out to a prospect, we don't necessarily know their actual income. So, we use marketing data companies to find estimates of a consumer's income based on Census data and other survey data. We can also see in a marketing file if somebody has a professional license or a particular business association. Data like that helps us figure out what type of marketing creative we'll tag that consumer with. We also analyze public records to discover major events such as bankruptcies, tax liens, or other negative judgments.

We acquire and analyze any data point that can drive our understanding of who our customers are. For example, we know certain occupations have higher response rates to our marketing than others, while some occupations tend to have a higher level of risk. Taken together, all this intelligence in the marketing stage helps decide who should be on our mailing list.

A prospect's credit file is the most important factor in our decision process. For instance, when we analyze the likelihood of someone defaulting on an unsecured loan, some of the most valuable information for predicting that outcome is their earlier performance on unsecured loans. It is not a guarantee of future performance, but there is a high level of correlation.

If a prospect has a mortgage, our credit models will look at the dollar amount of their mortgage, how much has been paid down, and the time left on the mortgage. We'll also look at their prior mortgage history. Same with credit cards, which are uniquely insightful in terms of understanding a consumer's credit utilization. Historically, the higher the utilization rate on revolving credit, the higher the risk is.

THE HUMAN TOUCH

In “I, Pencil,” Reed highlighted the significant human contribution in pencil manufacturing. The same is true of every loan originated by BHG. Our loans are the manifestation of skilled craftspeople and engineers from all over the world. Their professional acumen covers the gamut of loan origination expertise, from credit underwriters who synthesize the data we pull to salespeople who supply white glove treatment through every step of the loan process.

Our staff includes data scientists, data analysts and data engineers, as well as highly quantitative business analytics professionals. We also employ several PhDs who elevate BHG to ever-increasing heights of sophistication in model development, model validation, current expected credit loss (CECL) methodology, pricing optimization, and cloud computing technology.

Here’s a closer look at the 500+ people who make up our loan origination team:

- **Data Analytics** – 170+ individuals who develop and monitor the performance of models, targeted marketing campaigns, lead routing strategies, and credit and pricing policies all based on extensive data resources.

- **Credit Specialists** – 60+ experts performing comprehensive analyses of financial histories to determine whether a prospect qualifies for funding. Additionally, we have another 20+ people on our fraud management team.
- **Closing Team** – 50+ professionals who sell the value of our loans and can adjust the interest rate of our loans within an approved range.
- **Sales Force** – This 200+ person team is in constant communication with potential and incoming borrowers.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Like a pencil, there is much more to constructing a BHG loan than meets the eye. When banks buy BHG loans, they get the end product of a confluence of data, technology, mathematics, and predictive analytics, all intelligently synthesized by expert data scientists and engineers from across the globe. As such, I believe the loans we make available to community banks have been scrutinized to a deeper degree than any other unsecured loans you will find in the market. Our bank customers have benefited tremendously: since 2001, banks that have purchased BHG loans have earned over \$1 billion in combined interest income, and our network of more than 1,500 community banks keeps growing.



**SERVICE
YOU CAN
BANK ON**

**LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE
SOMETHING IN COMMON.**

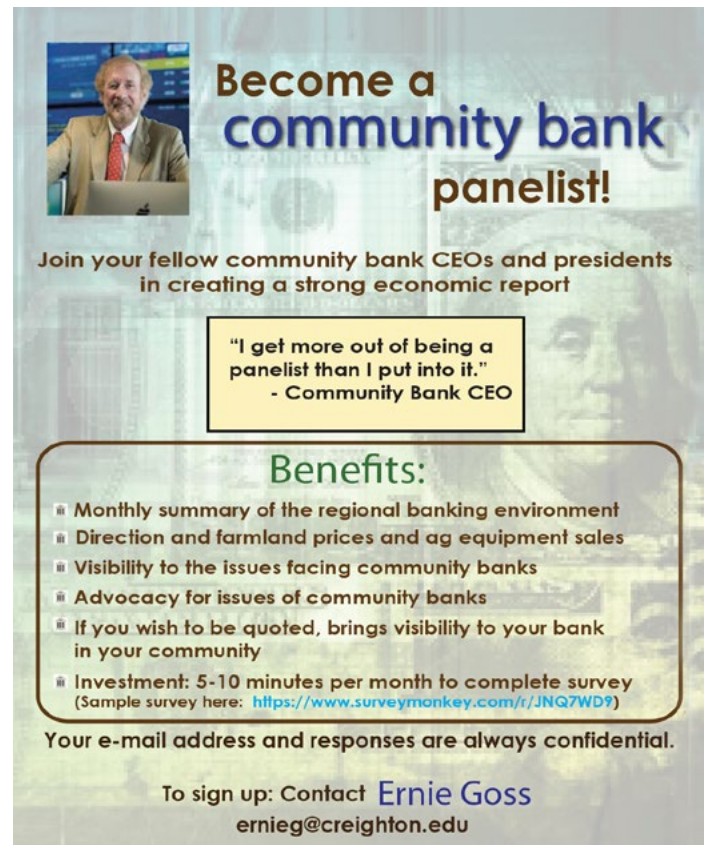
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FIRST HERITAGE BANK:

150 Years of Family and Community Legacy

In 1873, a humble bank began serving customers from a corner inside Crosser & Chandler Grocery on Hartford Avenue in Farragut, Iowa. That small operation would eventually grow into what we now know as First Heritage Bank, a cornerstone of strength and trust for three generations and over 150 years. With deep roots in Southwest Iowa and an enduring commitment to the community, First Heritage Bank has seen countless transformations—beginning as the Exchange Bank of Crosser & Rogers and later earning its national charter in 1903 as First National Bank of Farragut. The bank expanded to Shenandoah in 1996 and adopted its current name, First Heritage Bank, when it became state-chartered in 2012. Yet through every change, it has remained locally owned, independent, and dedicated to serving its neighbors across Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska.

“It wasn’t just about a career; it was about carrying forward a legacy of service.”

— Kurt Henstorf



At the heart of First Heritage Bank's story is the Henstorf family's remarkable 116-year legacy. Since Kurt Henstorf's grandfather joined the bank as a teller, the Henstorf name has been synonymous with service, stability, and stewardship. For 78 of these years, a Henstorf has held the role of president, guiding the bank through historic events with a personal commitment to community and customer needs. While Kurt Henstorf initially pursued a career in medicine, his love for finance—and a powerful sense of duty to the family legacy—drew him back to Farragut. "It wasn't just about a career," Kurt reflects, "it was about carrying forward a legacy of service." His dedication to First Heritage Bank exemplifies the Henstorfs' commitment to preserving local, community-focused banking.

STORIES OF RESILIENCE AND COMMUNITY TIES

Over the years, the Henstorfs have led the bank through extraordinary moments. During the farm crisis of the 1980s, Kurt took bold steps to secure the bank's future, keeping it independent when many rural banks struggled. In 1969, when three robbers broke into the bank's vault, the community banded together to support the bank's recovery. Tales of that incident have become local legend—particularly the "money laundering" story, when employees took damp, smoky bills to a laundromat to dry out, and a guard with a shotgun watched over the bank until repairs were made.

Another story woven into the Henstorf legacy involves a revolver once owned by Polk Wells, a notorious outlaw linked to Buffalo Bill. Passed down in the family and displayed proudly at the bank, the revolver was among the valuables stolen in the 1969 robbery. Remarkably, years later, a Texas Ranger recovered it and returned it to the bank—a fitting tribute to the Henstorfs' dedication to preserving both their family history and the bank's heritage.

LOOKING FORWARD WITH THE HENSTORF LEGACY

As Kurt looks to the future, he has carefully planned for the continued success of First Heritage Bank, ensuring it will stay true to the values of community and integrity that the Henstorf family has championed for over a century. With Mandy Fielder as CEO/CFO and Rusty Hunter as president and senior leader, the bank remains in capable hands. These leaders embody the bank's principles, working to honor its rich heritage while guiding it into a new era of service.

First Heritage Bank's 150th anniversary last year was a celebration of more than just time—it was a tribute to generations of trust and support from the communities it serves. Partnering with the Cattlemen's Association, the bank hosted a community cookout where friends, family, and loyal customers gathered to mark this extraordinary milestone. Even beyond the anniversary year, the bank continues to celebrate its century-and-a-half of service, reflecting on the Henstorfs' contributions and the role they've played in sustaining the bank's mission.

A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY, THEN AND NOW

With a Henstorf at the helm for most of its history, First Heritage Bank has always been more than a financial institution—it has been a family's promise to its community. As a former president of the Community Bankers of Iowa (CBI) and an advocate for community banking, Kurt Henstorf exemplifies the commitment that has sustained the bank for 150 years. In a landscape where banking often feels impersonal, First Heritage Bank stands as a beacon of trust, service, and family legacy—a tradition of community banking that the Henstorfs have kept strong for more than a century.



HEART OF THE STORM: *Union State Bank's Role in Greenfield's Resilience*

A TRAGIC DAY IN GREENFIELD

May 21, 2024, was a day that residents of Greenfield, Iowa, won't soon forget. The storm sirens began in the morning in surrounding communities, but by midday, the skies had cleared, and calm set over the area. By 3:00 PM, however, everything had changed. What began as a small speck on the radar grew into a monstrous tornado that tore through Greenfield, destroying hundreds of homes, claiming five lives, and leaving nearly 20% of the town's housing in ruins.

In the sudden tragic aftermath, Union State Bank's presence as a pillar in the community served not only as a place of financial support but as a beacon of hope and help.

"What began as a small speck on the radar grew into a monstrous tornado that tore through Greenfield, destroying hundreds of homes, claiming five lives, and leaving nearly 20% of the town's housing in ruins."

HISTORY AND LOCAL TIES OF UNION STATE BANK

Union State Bank has been an institution in Adair County since 1890, weathering decades of change and growing alongside the community it serves. Though ownership has shifted a few times over the years, the bank's commitment to the community has remained loyal. Most recently in 2008, a group of local shareholders took ownership, determined to keep the bank's focus local and dedicated to serving their neighbors.

For bank President Matt Mensing, the connection runs deep. Raised on a nearby family farm and an Iowa State graduate, Matt joined Union State Bank in 2010. He appreciates the close-knit community and feels strongly about giving back. "Growing up here and now raising my own family on the farm, I understand how valuable it is to have a place that's both rooted in tradition and committed to progress," he says.

PREPARING FOR THE UNTHINKABLE: THE DAY OF THE STORM

Union State Bank prepared to close early on May 21, after forecasters warned of tornadic weather. By early afternoon, there wasn't a cloud in the sky, but by 3:15, darkness rolled in from the southwest. Matt recalls standing in his driveway, watching as the tornado formed—a massive wedge, miles away yet frighteningly clear.

Rushing his family into the basement, Matt felt an unmistakable dread as the wind roared closer. "That sound... I'll never forget it," he recalls. By the time they came out from shelter, his phone was already buzzing. The tornado had left Greenfield in shambles, and Matt's first thought was the bank: Was it intact?

RISING FROM RUBBLE: UNION STATE BANK'S IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

The day after the tornado, Union State Bank reopened and was ready to hit the ground running with support of all forms. Every morning in the following days, the bank team gathered early, assigning roles and determining what people needed most. "We could have closed, but people needed us," says Matt. "Looking back, I'm grateful we stayed open. Just seeing a familiar face made a difference for many."

Despite the unforeseen scale of the tornado's damage, Union State Bank already had a previously-created disaster recovery plan in place—a measure they never thought they'd need to put into action. Though it didn't perfectly fit the unpredictable circumstances they faced, the team was able to use parts of the plan to organize their reopening. "There's no way to predict the magnitude of something like this," Matt admits, "but having bits and pieces of the plan gave us the framework to open the next day. We were thankful we had it." He wants to urge other

banks to create a disaster recovery plan for themselves. He hopes they never need to use it, but if they ever do, they at least have something solid and logical to pull from in the midst of confusion and chaos.

As volunteers poured following the storm, the bank shifted to become an organizing point, gathering donations, distributing essentials, and helping connect people with resources. The bank's employees didn't just provide financial assistance; they walked alongside their neighbors, helping them navigate immediate decisions on insurance and FEMA aid, as well as dealing with the overwhelming feelings of loss.

ACTS OF KINDNESS: THE PEOPLE WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

The tornado's destruction brought out acts of generosity from all corners. Just hours after the storm, an out-of-town business owner, eager to help, donated \$15,000 in gift cards to support families affected by the disaster. With mutual contacts at Union State Bank, the donor asked bank employees to assist in distributing the gift cards to those in need.

"We went house to house, distributing those cards," says Matt. "It was both uplifting and heartbreaking to meet each person face-to-face and hear their story. We saw firsthand the toll of loss but also the gratitude and strength that defined our community."



REBUILDING THE COMMUNITY

Months after the tornado, Greenfield was filled with the sounds of steady hammering of nails and the buzzing of saws. While some homes were being rebuilt, the impact of losing 200 houses, many of them rentals, intensified the housing shortage that had already existed.

The bank worked closely with residents needing assistance with mortgages while also supporting local initiatives to rebuild affordable multi-family housing. “It’s an uphill battle,” Matt acknowledges, “but every new roof and freshly painted wall brings hope and progress.” Today, Greenfield is slowly healing, one home and building at a time, with Union State Bank continuing to serve as a cornerstone of this recovery.

WHY COMMUNITY BANKS MATTER: UNION STATE BANK AS A PILLAR OF GREENFIELD

Union State Bank exemplifies what it means to be more than a financial institution. In Greenfield, the bank is part of the community’s lifeblood, connected by personal bonds and common hardships.

“It wasn’t something we planned for, but we knew we needed to be here for our neighbors,” Matt reflects. “This is our community, our family. Standing by them wasn’t just an option; it was a privilege.”

“It wasn’t something we planned for, but we knew we needed to be here for our neighbors. This is our community, our family.”

— *Matt Mensing*

A TESTAMENT TO COMMUNITY AND RESILIENCE

The rebuilding in Greenfield will take years, but as Union State Bank’s team shows up each day, they remind everyone that recovery is possible. Though unexpected, the tornado became a catalyst for the town to rebuild with fresh energy. With Union State Bank’s guidance, Greenfield is finding its way back, stronger and more unified, knowing that they’re not just customers—they’re family.



WHY MIB?

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Stacy Snyder with John Rigler III of Clive, IA



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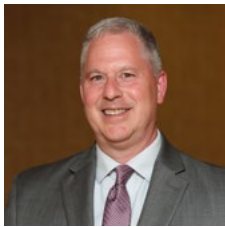


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Meet the 2024-2025 CBI BOARD OF DIRECTORS



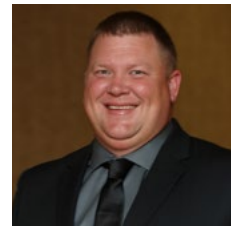
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President
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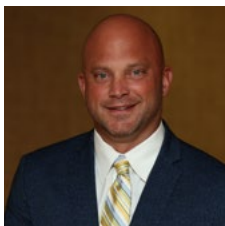
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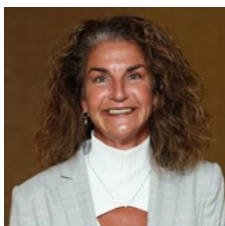
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Corporate Secretary
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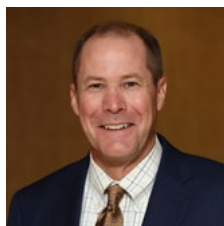
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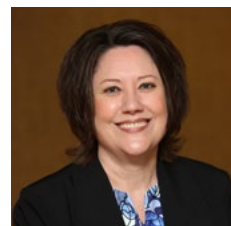
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Member Director
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Sheldon



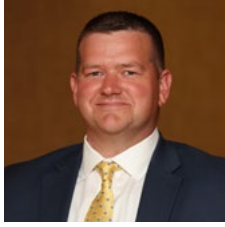
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Glenwood State Bank
Glenwood



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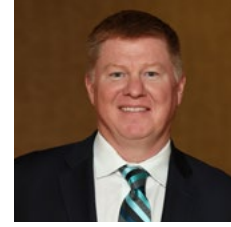
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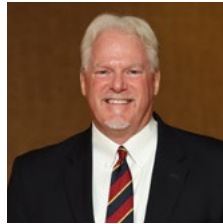
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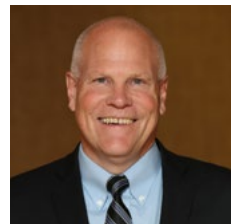
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Cindy is the voice on the other end of the phone when bankers call about ICBA Education's bank director program, webinars, and other educational offerings. She takes the time to talk through bankers' professional goals, next steps, and ICBA's available options (all at a discount to members).

In the evenings and on the weekends, she can be found on her 150-acre farm in Central Minnesota or spending time with family and friends visiting and supporting our community.

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2025 ICBA Educational Events

MARCH

11-14 ICBA LIVE (In-person, Nashville, TN)

APRIL

1 Identifying and Addressing Distressed Loans Seminar (Livestream)
 2 Commercial Loan Processor Seminar (Livestream)
 3 Bank Director Forum 1 (Livestream)
 8-10 Fraud Seminar (Livestream)
 15-17 BSA/AML Institute (Livestream)
 22-24 Bank Security Institute (Livestream)
 22-23 Loan Review Seminar (Livestream)
 24-25 Advanced Loan Review Seminar (Livestream)
 29-30 FDICIA Seminar (Livestream)
 30 Agricultural Credit Analysis Seminar (Livestream)

MAY

4-9 Audit Institute (In-person, Bloomington, MN)
 6 Financial Statement Analysis Seminar (Livestream)
 7 Cash Flow Analysis Seminar (Livestream)
 12-16 ICBA Capital Summit (In-person, National Harbor, MD)
 13 Call Report Seminar (Livestream)
 14 Advanced Call Report Seminar (Livestream)
 19-22 Credit Analyst Institute (In-person, Bloomington, MN)
 20-22 Consumer Lending Institute (Livestream)

JUNE

1-6 Commercial Lending Institute (In-person, TBD)
 3-5 & 10-12 Compliance Institute (Livestream)
 5 Bank Director Forum 2 (Livestream)
 10-12 NEW Data & Analytics Institute (In-person, Bloomington, MN)
 17 Commercial Real Estate Lending Seminar (Livestream)
 18 Analyzing Your Bank's Financial Statement Seminar (Livestream)
 23-25 Community Bank Human Resources Seminar (Livestream)

JULY

29-30 Vendor Management Seminar (Livestream)
 31 Agricultural Credit Analysis Seminar (Livestream)

AUGUST

5 Identifying and Addressing Distressed Loans Seminar (Livestream)
 5-7 BSA/AML Institute (In-person, Dallas, TX)
 12-14 Credit Analyst Institute (Livestream)
 12-14 Bank Security Institute (In-person, Bloomington, MN)
 25-26 CFO Forum (Livestream)

SEPTEMBER

9-11 Fraud Seminar (Livestream)
 11 Bank Director Forum 3 (Livestream)
 9-11 & 16-18 Audit Institute (Livestream)
 14-19 Compliance Institute (In-person, Bloomington, MN)
 22-25 Annual Current Issues Certification Conference (In-person, TBD)
 Sept 29-Oct 1 Enterprise Risk Management Institute (In-person, Bloomington, MN)

OCTOBER

2-3 Auditing IT General Controls Seminar (Livestream)
 6-9 IT Institute (In-person, Atlanta, GA)
 19 Community Bank Treasury Management Seminar (Livestream)
 20-23 Annual Current Issues Certification Conference (Livestream)

NOVEMBER

4-6 BSA/AML Institute (Livestream)

DECEMBER

4 Bank Director Forum 4 (Livestream)

Dates and locations for the following events TBD:

TBD NEW Marketing Institute
 TBD Enhancing Organizational Value Conference

Dates and locations are subject to change. Registration for the 2025 events will be open soon, watch the [icba.org](https://www.icba.org) website for more!



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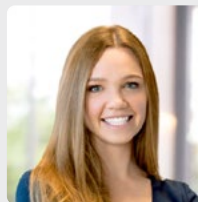
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WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST CBI MEMBER, PERFORMANCE TRUST!

ABOUT PERFORMANCE TRUST:

Performance Trust was built on the vision and passion of our founders. A former math teacher, Rich Berg, and bank regulator, Phil Nussbaum, saw the main street mission of community financial institutions threatened by Wall Street financial engineering. Driven by an unwavering commitment to analytical truth, they exposed critical flaws in the tools used to measure risk and reward and provided analysis and insights that led to better decisions.

From its inception in 1994, our firm has been focused on two objectives: building accurate and revolutionary analytics that measure the risks and rewards of investment portfolio securities and building an educational platform that identifies ways to achieve improved results.

As time passed, our analytical capabilities grew alongside our clients and team. We now provide advice on decisions affecting the entire balance sheet and capital stack of an institution, and have expanded our expertise to helping institutional clients and capital market partners. Our analytics continue to evolve, and commitment to education has become fundamental to our business and clients. In addition to hosting custom strategy sessions for over fifty management teams per year, we also create educational programs for executive boards and other stakeholders across the country.

Today, Performance Trust is the largest full-service investment bank focused on community depository institutions. Our scale and capabilities have increased significantly, but we still get up each morning with the same mission we had in 1994:

We're here to help community financial institutions make better decisions.

Chris Notari, *Performance Trust*

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Community bankers are a part of the backbone of Iowa's local economies, going beyond banking to make a real impact. No matter if it's donating to local organizations or causes, hosting or sponsoring events that give back, or serving as a community hub, they create positive opportunities that ripple far and wide. At CBI, we're honored to work alongside you—providing the advocacy, education, and connections your bank needs to keep thriving.

We're here for Iowa's community banks. And we're here for good.

FARMERS STATE BANK ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

MARION, IA – Farmers State Bank (FSB) is proud to announce a pivotal leadership transition effective January 1, 2025. Steven K. Neighbor, a seasoned leader with over 35 years at FSB, will assume the role of President & Chief Executive Officer, succeeding Gene R. Neighbor.

Gene, who has served as President & CEO for the past decade, will continue to play a vital role at FSB by leading the Wealth Management division. Under Gene's leadership, FSB achieved remarkable growth, expanding from over \$676 million to over \$1 billion in assets, and earned the distinction of being named a Top Workplace for eight consecutive years.

"Gene's dedication and vision have been instrumental in shaping FSB into the thriving community financial institution it is today. We are deeply grateful for his contributions and look forward to his continued impact at FSB," said the FSB Board of Directors.

Steven K. Neighbor, currently Executive Vice President, brings unparalleled expertise and a deep commitment to FSB's mission. His promotion marks a historic milestone, as he becomes the third generation of the Neighbor family to lead FSB.

"Steve's leadership reflects our values and commitment to the communities we serve. His expertise ensures FSB's continued success as a locally owned and family-led institution," said Gene Neighbor.

Since 1968, the Neighbor family has owned and led FSB, focusing on exceptional customer service and innovative banking solutions while being community-focused. This leadership transition reaffirms FSB's dedication to its customers and the community.

FSB is Linn County's largest family-owned financial institution, with assets exceeding \$1 billion. FSB has seven locations, including its main facility in Marion and offices at Collins Road Square, Edgewood Plaza Mall, Van Buren Village, Hiawatha, Alburnett, and Tiffin.

BARB FUGATE RETIRES AS UNITED BANKERS' BANK (UBB) CIO, CRAIG BANTZ APPOINTED AS NEW CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

BLOOMINGTON, MN—Barb Fugate, Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer, retired from United Bankers' Bank on November 4th, 2024. "We have been fortunate to have Barb as a key member of our team these past eight years," commented Dwight Larsen, President and CEO. "Her unwavering dedication to UBB's mission, vision, and values was evident in every project she led for our bank. We express our heartfelt gratitude for her service and wish her the best in her future endeavors."

Craig Bantz joined UBB in September to succeed Barb as the Chief Information Officer. Craig brings over 20 years of IT experience, most recently with CB Shared Service and the Metropolitan Council. He graduated with a Master of Science in Management of Technology and a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from the University of Minnesota. He is a member of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA), the Internet2 consortium, and Educause.

"Craig's vast knowledge and experience in the Information Technology sector have paved the way for a smooth transition for our IT team," explains Dwight Larsen. "We are eager to see how UBB's technology and security will continue to progress under his leadership."

ABOUT UNITED BANKERS' BANK

Headquartered in Bloomington, MN, UBB is the nation's first bankers' bank. Since 1975, they have placed the needs and success of their community bank customers first. UBB is a full-service bankers' bank providing a comprehensive suite of correspondent banking services to over 1,000 financial institutions throughout the US. For more information, please visit www.ubb.com or follow us on LinkedIn or Facebook.



FARMERS SAVINGS BANK WILL ACQUIRE AND MERGE WITH ELGIN STATE BANK

Farmers Savings Bank will acquire and merge with Elgin State Bank, officials announced today.

Farmers Savings Bank is a family-owned community bank with offices in Colesburg, Elkport/Garber, Strawberry Point, and Arlington. The addition of the two Elgin State Bank locations in Elgin and Wadena will bring the total locations of Farmers Savings Bank to six.

Elgin State Bank is proud to have served their local friends and neighbors for 94 years and looks forward to bringing Farmers Savings Bank into their communities. This merger will enable Elgin State Bank customers access to a wider variety of products and services including mobile banking, mobile deposit, and expanded lending services. Furthermore, the merger will allow Elgin State Bank employees to be even more involved and visible in community events and activities. Employees from both organizations feel the merger/acquisition is a great fit due to the similarities of the small agricultural communities that they serve. Customer service has always been a priority and will continue to be so during this transitional time. Customers can look forward to seeing the same friendly faces with the same business hours throughout this change.

Elgin State Bank's owner, Catherine T. Britt, offers this statement in response to the news: "Verlon and Catherine would like to thank you, our Elgin and Wadena communities for the loyalty, friendship and support over the past 52 years. Even though the Elgin and Wadena banks will operate under a new name and ownership, the current staff looks forward to continuing to serve you in the same neighborly manner they always have. I again express my heartfelt thanks for the years spent with all of you." It was also confirmed that Catherine plans to retire when the merger takes place.

The transaction will be finalized January 31st, 2025, pending regulatory approval.

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