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Starved Rock Country Welcome Center Ribbon Cutting

Utica, IL – The Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) hosted a ribbon cutting on Friday, February 11 with the Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the opening of the Starved Rock Country Welcome Center, An Illinois Made Gift Shoppe, in Utica, IL. The Starved Rock Country Welcome Center is a partnership with the Village of Utica. In 2021, Village officials began repurposing a former elementary school into the new Village Hall. Utica Mayor David Stewart had the vision to combine the village hall and Welcome Center belong in the same building.

The Starved Rock Country Welcome Center features items made in Illinois as well as items from local businesses. Three Illinois Made businesses have products in the store: Fine Field Pottery of Streator, Sue Regis Glass Art of Joliet, and August Hill Winery / Illinois Sparkling Co. of Utica (the Welcome Center does not sell alcohol, but carries branded items from August Hill.) Other local Heritage Corridor members with items for sale in the shop include Bruce & Ollie's, Cajun Connection, CatsEye Wine Bar, Hegeler Carus Mansion, Heritage Harbor, K's Secret Garden, LaSalle Canal Boat, Ottawa Visitors Center, Prairie Fox Books, Reddick Mansion, Star Union Spirits, Starved Rock Lodge, and Tangled Roots Brewing Company.

The Welcome Center also carries items from across the state, including decorative pillows, greeting cards, books, soup mixes, candles & wax melts, unique jewelry, bath crystals, soaps, glassware, apparel, art, and more.

The Welcome Center is open every day from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at 248 W. Canal Street in Utica (closed Tuesdays from January to March). The Welcome Center is staffed by Heritage Corridor CVB employees who are local experts. In addition to the items for sale, the Welcome Center also offers a robust selection of literature and informational material about Starved Rock Country.

About the Heritage Corridor Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) ignites, influences, and impacts the visitor experience through tourism partnerships within the communities and counties along the historic I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor. Starting just a few miles southwest of Chicago and extending southwest through Starved Rock Country. The Bureau is the officially certified bureau for the following counties: Bureau, Grundy, LaSalle, Princeton, Putnam, and Will. Visit HeritageCorridorCVB.com for more information.

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