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Springfield needs TIF guidelines in writing

BY PATRICK YEAGLE

Over the years, TIF money has done some good things in Springfield.

It has helped rehabilitate old buildings that had no other hope. It has given business owners the opportunity to expand. It has paid to demolish dangerous and unsightly buildings that bring down surrounding property values.

However, the use of TIF money in Springfield has often been inconsistent. One of the pillars of a civilized society is a written law which is available to everyone and which applies evenly to everyone – even those in charge. We don't seem to have that when it comes to TIF funding in Springfield.

The creation of TIF districts is governed by state law, and before state lawmakers will approve a district, the municipality must show that private investment in the district would be unlikely to occur without TIF incentives. While the law doesn't apply that test to deciding which projects are eligible for TIF funding, it's a good rule to follow.

Case in point: Horace Mann, one of the city's largest employers, has also been one of the biggest recipients of TIF money. In 2010, the Springfield City Council approved \$1.9 million from the city's Central Area TIF fund for Horace Mann to makeover

the exterior of its downtown headquarters. Horace Mann has contributed greatly to both the downtown and the TIF fund, but it's likely this publicly traded company with annual revenues topping \$1 billion could have paid for its own building beautification. In recent years, there have been frequent debates about whether it's appropriate to use TIF for maintenance or if it should be exclusively for new development. Considering that the Central Area TIF was just renewed for another 12 years, the debate is likely to continue until consistent guidelines are created.

Springfield also sometimes seems to lack consistency in awarding TIF funds. For years, city leadership has said TIF money can't be used twice on the same property. However, the city approved \$118,000 to renovate the now-defunct National Museum of Surveying at 521 E. Washington St. in 2008, then sought to use \$425,000 from TIF to purchase the building out of foreclosure in December of last year. That deal fell through amid concerns about using TIF to remove properties from the property tax rolls - another issue that needs to be resolved.

Now, the city council is poised to consider a new \$120,000 TIF request from a private developer for the same building. The latest deal appears to be a worthy use of TIF, but it seems to outside observers that the principle of not using TIF for the same property twice

has been abandoned.

Karen Davis, director of the city's Office of Planning and Economic Development, recently clarified to me that the city doesn't intend to use TIF money to fund something like rewiring the same building twice. That certainly makes sense, but note that a restaurateur is currently seeking approval to use \$55,000 in TIF money to buy the former Susie Q's restaurant in Enos Park even though TIF money was already used to buy it in 2011. Clearly, the details of this policy need to be spelled out - if for no other reason than to dispel misconceptions among the public about how the city makes its TIF decisions.

Springfield also needs to create standards for the appropriate level of public funding each project should receive. Should the limit be a dollar amount or a percentage of the project cost? The latest TIF request of \$120,000 to purchase the building at 521 E. Washington represents 30 percent of the project cost, while the purchase of the former Susie Q's building would be funded at 50 percent. Those might very well be the appropriate funding levels for each project, and certainly each TIF district is different, but how can the public confidently decide what's appropriate if there is no benchmark?

It's easy to understand why city officials wouldn't want to limit projects by putting TIF guidelines in writing. What if an objectively worthy


project arises but falls just short of meeting the new written criteria? Implementing a points system for grading TIF proposals would solve many of these problems and offer transparency in decision-making.

Different TIF districts could even have customized rubrics and funding thresholds. Any project that represented an eligible request under the state statute could still be considered, but requests that involved new development for new projects that would increase the equalized assessed value in the TIF district would score higher than those that addressed maintenance issues, required additional TIF dollars for a property that had already received funding in the past, or removed a property from the tax rolls. While not explicitly prohibiting the latter types of use, a points system would give preference to other types of requests. That could be particularly helpful for more active districts like the Central Area TIF, which sometimes have more project requests than available funds in a given fiscal year.

Any time a large amount of public money is spent, it naturally raises questions of fairness and appropriateness. The cost of avoiding accountability on TIF standards is a loss of trust from both developers and taxpayers. Like the wind, trust is intangible, but you feel it when it's there – and when it's not. ♦

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A new vision for an old block

BY PATRICK YEAGLE

Dan Senftner practically bursts with excitement when talking about Main Street Square, the public space he helped develop nearly a decade ago in Rapid City, South Dakota.

"It's been over the top – far more than we ever dreamed," he said.

Senftner is president and CEO of Destination Rapid City, a combination economic development corporation and visitor's bureau in this city of 75,000 people. He says Main Street Square is packed with people all summer, with more than 100,000 visitors per year. He even credits it with spurring redevelopment many blocks away. For Senftner, Main Street Square represents the rebirth of his city's downtown, and he believes it could be a model for Springfield.

"If it's working here," he said, "why shouldn't it work somewhere else?"

The North Mansion Block, or "Y Block," in Springfield's downtown has defied redevelopment for a decade. Plans to build apartments and commercial space there have repeatedly fallen through, usually because of squabbles over money – disagreements that stem from a lack of consensus about what should happen there.

Springfield Mayor Jim Langfelder hired Senftner as a consultant on the North Man-

sion Block earlier this year. Senftner visited Springfield in March, spending several days walking around downtown and talking to about 100 people he met on the street.

"I really enjoyed Springfield," he said. "You've got a lot of great things going on there. I didn't find anyone being negative about anything, except the State of Illinois. People like it there."

While in Springfield, Senftner addressed the Springfield City Council. He told the aldermen that he was working a retail job at a music store in downtown Rapid City decades ago when malls began to siphon away both shops and shoppers.

"It was a trying time," he said.

Rapid City began to examine ways to draw people downtown, Senftner said, and Main Street Square was the result. Senftner says his time in Springfield convinced him that the block here is no different.

"There isn't a question in my mind; I know you can do it," he said. "I've lived it now for 10 years. There's no question this will change lives in a really positive way."

In its heyday, the North Mansion Block was home to a church, a factory, a theatre, a large hotel and the recently demolished YWCA building. For many years after the other buildings were torn down, the YWCA sat alone on the block, overlooking a gravel parking lot.

Last year, Langfelder's administration solicited proposals for the entire block, but

the chosen proposal to reuse the YWCA for apartments ultimately fell through when its \$7 to \$9-million TIF price tag was deemed too steep. The city tore down the YWCA earlier this year, and Langfelder is currently seeking a new round of proposals for the block.

Enter Senftner and Main Street Square. His proposal to turn the North Mansion Block into a space similar to Rapid City's marks a turning point in Langfelder's thinking. Where the mayor favored the large mixed-use development from the last round of proposals, he now expresses a preference for a street-level event center and urban square.

Sue and Kent Massie, landscape architects who own Massie Massie Architects in Springfield, submitted a proposal for a public park concept during the last round of proposals. While it wasn't a formal offer to develop the site, Kent Massie sees it as a letter of suggestion, and he's considering submitting a similar letter before the May 15 deadline.

The Massies are also designing three related projects near the North Mansion Block: a proposed plaza at the Illinois Realtors building across Sixth Street, the landscaping portion of the ongoing Illinois Executive Mansion renovation, and a proposed Jackson Street corridor to connect the Abraham Lincoln National Historic Site with the Illinois Capitol Complex. The confluence of those projects occurring at the same time as the North Mansion Block is an opportunity to craft a large swath of

downtown with a unified vision.

"If we could provide that, we could attract a lot more people downtown, both residents and visitors," Massie said.

Senftner says about 80 percent of the visitors to Main Street Square are local residents who live within a one-hour drive of Rapid City.

"We get tourists, sure, but it's mostly local people," he said. "Imagine if you take care of your locals, and they have smiles on their faces. Visitors will go where the locals go."

Senftner told the Springfield City Council in March that Rapid City also dealt with parking concerns – a common gripe in Springfield – by building a large parking garage next to the square.

"Believe me, people were not too excited that we were looking at taking away 52 parking spaces," he said.

Senftner credits Main Street Square with totally revitalizing Rapid City's downtown, spurring reuse of several formerly empty buildings nearby. Residential developments have increased dramatically, he says, estimating the total private investment in redevelopment at around \$50 million over the past decade.

"People from the start said it's not going to last, it's not going to keep going," he said. "All those heads have turned now. We have the opposite now." ♦





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Top Left: The former Abraham Lincoln Hotel at Capitol Avenue and Fifth Street
Bottom Left: Jackson street, with the former YWCA on the left.
Above: Main Street Square in Rapid City, South Dakota, may be a model for Springfield's North Mansion block.



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Ryan budget threatens federal tax credit for historic preservation

BY MONICA STABILE

In 1981, President Ronald Reagan signed the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit into law as part of the Economic Recovery Act. Since then, the credits have been used to repurpose more than 40,000 historic buildings across the nation, including 253 such buildings in Illinois and several in Springfield.

“Our historic tax credits have made the preservation of our older buildings not only a matter of respect for beauty and history, but of course for economic good sense,” Reagan said in 1984.

Now, Republican legislation in Washington, D.C., would axe the credits among other cuts to the federal budget.

“If we eliminate this program, we are eliminating \$5 billion in additional investments that will come into the federal government, so it doesn’t make sense,” said Bonnie McDonald, president and CEO of historic preservation group Landmarks Illinois. “The program is good for the taxpayer; it actually makes more money than it costs.”

The federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, overseen by the National Park Service, provides a 20-percent tax credit for the qualifying expenses of rehabilitating historic buildings. It enables rehabilitation projects that may not be economically feasible otherwise, and proponents say it pays for itself many times over by generating new tax revenue.

The federal budget plan proposed by U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, would eliminate many federal tax credit programs,

including the historic tax credit. The proposal prompted Landmarks Illinois to include the credits on its 2017 Most Endangered Historic Places list, issued on April 6. The group is a nonprofit that advocates for the preservation of historic sites, and it’s pushing the state and federal government to keep the federal tax credits in order to maintain investment for historic places that results in more construction jobs and economic opportunities.

Between 2002 and 2015, Illinois received \$509 million in federal historic tax credits designated for restoring historic buildings, according to Landmarks Illinois. A total of 253 completed projects generated an estimated \$3 billion in total development and created roughly 40,000 jobs, the group says.

Illinois National Bank’s renovation of two buildings in downtown Springfield was made possible by the tax credit. INB renovated the former Jennings Ford Automobile Dealership at 431 S. Fourth Street in 2006 and the former Central Illinois Light Company Building at 322 E. Capitol Avenue in 1999.

Sarah Phalen, president and CEO of Illinois National Bank, said the historic tax credits played a key role for rehabbing both historic buildings – projects that cost several million dollars.

“We ended up rehabbing two buildings in downtown Springfield in order to house over 200 people that now work downtown on a daily basis, and so it was our commitment and our desire to do that for downtown Springfield, and it was a choice that we felt was important for the community,” Phalen said.

If it hadn’t had been for the tax credits, INB would have had to purchase a building outside of downtown to hold employees, she added.

Illinois currently ranks eighth in the nation for the number of historic projects that use federal tax credits, said a spokesman for the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. In 2015, Illinois was in first place.

Administered at the state level by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the 20-percent tax credit is awarded to owners of historical buildings which generate revenue and undergo significant rehabilitation.

To qualify for a federal tax credit, buildings must have been built at least 50 years ago and be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

According to the National Park Service, \$23.1 billion in federal tax credits have raked in more than \$28.1 billion in federal income from historic rehabilitation projects.

Ryan’s legislation to axe the federal historic tax credit will be debated by the House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by U.S. Rep. Peter Roskam, a Republican from Wheaton, Illinois.

When asked if Roskam supported eliminating the historic tax credit that benefited many communities in Illinois, Roskam’s office said it had no information on the proposed legislation.

The federal historic tax credits are strong tools for older downtown areas and neighborhoods, said Mike Jackson, an architect and former IHPA manager. Although supportive of the federal tax credits, Jackson recommends

that the state also pitch in and offer tax credits to owners of buildings that qualify to help boost preservation.

“A combination of state and federal would be the best incentive to use this program statewide,” Jackson said.

However, Illinois probably won’t embrace a state-sponsored historic tax credit due to the state’s fiscal budget crisis, he added.

Losing the federal historic tax credits could affect the 134 buildings located in downtown Springfield that would qualify for the credits, limiting the fiscal benefit of historic sites.

The YWCA building that occupied 421 E. Jackson Street since 1912 was a prime candidate to receive the historic tax credit before the City of Springfield opted to tear down the century-old building. A developer which had proposed reusing the building for apartments and building additional apartments on that block pulled out when the federal tax credit was no longer available to help offset costs. The city is currently seeking proposals for the site.

Frank Butterfield, Springfield area director of Landmarks Illinois and a Springfield resident, said it’s wonderful that Springfield has many historic buildings that house businesses and apartments.

“The community of Springfield continues to talk about ways to revitalize downtown,” he said, “and the tax credit is the key to making that happen.” ♦

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You are invited to join us in celebrating their achievements at a reception on Tuesday, May 9, at the Inn at 835. The reception will be held at 5 p.m. with an awards ceremony to follow at 6 p.m. Please let us know if you plan to attend by calling 217-726-6600 or emailing info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com.

Molly Berendt

PHOTO / TERRY FARMER

BY COURTNEY ENLOW HALL

Molly Berendt was 23 years old when she started the program that would change both her life and the lives of Springfield's homeless children. Beginning as a ministry at Douglas Avenue Methodist Church, the Compass program – now Compass for Kids – sought to support homeless children at Dubois Middle School. Within a year, this volunteer project became her career. Five years later, it has expanded into an entire nonprofit organization.

Compass was an after-school program held at churches in several neighborhoods when it became part of Family Service Center in 2011. The after-school program provides transportation to the students, as well as an evening meal, mentorship and classes. Compass works with around 200 kids who are in low-income, at-risk situations, including homelessness, foster care and substandard housing.

The program has since expanded to include a summer camp, Camp Compass. The camp provides more than fun summer days; its purpose is to ensure children maintain the education provided during the school year.

"Low-income kids – especially homeless kids – lose a lot of ground over the summer

months that they're not in school," Berendt says. "This program helps provide necessary tools and enrichment so they don't fall behind."

In addition to education, the summer camp program provides much-needed consistency for children whose home situations are less stable. The program is set up like a typical school day, with breakfast and lunch in between reading, math and life skills classes, as well as field trips and swimming.

In 2016, Compass for Kids went out on its own. The parting of ways was the best decision for both groups: Family Service Center's focus is fostering and adoption, whereas Compass is wholly dedicated to homeless and at-risk youth, requiring a great deal of community engagement and fundraising. As an independent and distinct entity, Compass now has its own board of directors.

"You can only imagine the paperwork and filing that went into this, and there's no way I could do it myself," Berendt says. "Our board worked tirelessly to make sure we had our ducks in a row to make this happen. I'm just so grateful for our board of directors and volunteers and all the local organizations we partner with. This has become a community-wide effort."

Those efforts have opened the door for expanded programs. Camp Compass, formerly a four- to five-week program, is now six weeks long, thanks to funding from the United Way.

"Six weeks is the most effective amount of time for a program like this," Berendt says.

Compass is seeking additional funding to add 40 children to the usual 80 summer spots available. The after-school program has expanded to five elementary schools: Blackhawk, DuBois, Harvard Park, Graham and McClelland. With the exception of Graham, which is a year-round school, all of the 125 after-school program participants are invited to Camp Compass.

Along with the summer camp's usual theme weeks – focusing on art, health and STEM education – Camp Compass has added new ones such as Abraham Lincoln week and a cultural appreciation week. This is thanks, in part, to the interests and needs of the kids themselves.

"They were interested in the election and racism this past year, so we brought in people to discuss those issues," Berendt says. "They love camp. They talk about it all school year. They love sharing with other kids, and they thrive in the program."

Further expansion is in the pipeline for

Compass. Thanks to a grant from the Young Philanthropists, next year, Compass will begin piloting a home visit program at Blackhawk Elementary to better engage parents of Compass children with their teachers and school administration.

"Those are the families who are harder to reach and connect with school," Berendt says.

Compass will work with the parents and teachers, including providing transportation to parent-teacher conferences and events, to help make parents feel they can walk into the school and not be intimidated.

While Berendt is the executive director and developed the program, she is quick to share any accolades.

"I'm not the one who should be getting recognized; it's Compass and the hundreds of people who make it happen. If you look back to 2011, probably thousands," she said. "I'm constantly grateful to this community; that's why my husband and I decided to buy a house and stay here."

Berendt points out that Compass is only able to exist because there is a need for it.

"But there's also such a response," she said, "and it's such a genuine, heartfelt response." ♦

Dr. Susan J. Koch

PHOTO / TERRY FARMER

BY ROBERTA CODEMO

Dr. Susan J. Koch always looked up to her mother, who worked full-time while raising five children in a rural South Dakota town.

"She was a very courageous and dedicated person," Koch said. "She had high expectations for us. I didn't want to disappoint her."

Whenever she left the house, Koch's mother always told her, "I expect you to conduct yourself like a lady."

"I had a reputation to live up to," Koch recalls.

In 2011, Koch was named chancellor of the University of Illinois Springfield, where her leadership has led to the institution's steady growth and strengthening.

Koch and her brothers and sisters never questioned that they were supposed to do something with their lives. Her parents were well-educated professionals and came from large metropolitan areas. From an early age, they were exposed to opportunities outside their peer group. She recalls spending summers in Chicago and Denver, her parents' hometowns.

"It was clear to us the world was a big place," Koch said. "We were encouraged to explore."

A product of the Catholic school system in the 1950s, she credits the Presentation Sisters with instilling a love of learning in her. Every Saturday would find her at the local Carnegie Library.

"I learned to read at an early age," she said.

While she had a wonderful childhood, she also recalls the constraints that were placed on women in that era.

"It was a very gendered society," she said.

As a result, she feels she missed out on some opportunities reserved at that time only for boys. For example, after she married, her spouse asked her if she wanted to go pheasant hunting, a popular recreation in the Dakotas. She had never been hunting because it was something girls didn't do. She went and found she enjoyed it.

She graduated from Dakota State University in South Dakota with honors with a bachelor's degree in education and started her career as a high school teacher. She later

earned her master's and doctoral degrees in community health and education from the University of Northern Iowa.

Koch took on her current role at a time when both the Chicago and Urbana-Champaign campuses for University of Illinois were led by women.

"It was an amazing experience being chancellors together," she said.

Under Koch's leadership, enrollment at UIS has grown, diversity on campus has increased and the university is building its first student union. Koch, who retains a tenured faculty position in the College of Education and Human Services, has also led an effort to beautify the UIS campus, including the Shakespeare Garden, complete with a sculpture of the Bard himself.

Koch and her family have put down roots here, and it's important to her to be part of the community in which she lives. Among the organizations she belongs to are the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce's Q5 Strategic Leadership Council, United Way of Central Illinois and Memorial Health System's board of directors.

In addition, Koch writes a regular column

in the *State Journal-Register*. She is also very active on campus, saying, "I enjoy being part of a diverse intellectual community."

Nobody succeeds alone. A dedicated member of the Evelyn Brandt Thomas fan club, Koch credits the women she has met throughout her career with providing support, advice and mentoring along the way. Likewise, Koch's family is also very important to her.

"I have a wonderful spouse and partner in life," Koch said, adding that she has raised her children to be empathetic and kind, to aim high and to bring others along with them.

When Koch was asked to serve as chancellor at UIS six years ago, it was a natural career trajectory from dean to associate provost to provost. From an early age, she knew she was headed towards a leadership position.

"I was raised with the idea that everybody had an obligation to be all they could be," she said. ♦



PHOTO / TERRY FARMER

Margaret “Boony” Luparell

BY ROBERTA CODEMO

The odds were stacked against Margaret “Boony” Luparell of Dawson from day one. Born on the south side of Chicago, her family moved to Springfield when she was about four years old. She grew up on Springfield’s north side, the youngest of five children.

“I come from very humble beginnings,” she said. “It was tough.”

Luparell’s older siblings raised her, and she was expected to contribute financially to the household from a young age. She graduated from Lanphier High School but never attended college. Luparell says she has always felt she had to prove herself.

“I think this responsibility at such a young age instilled a very strong work ethic,” she said.

Luparell has used that work ethic to build two businesses, and she gives back by volunteering in several roles. Her contributions enrich the community by molding young people and supporting the

arts in Springfield.

Luparell was working for the State of Illinois when Connie Matrisch with the Credit Bureau of Springfield hired her in Luparell’s first managerial role – one for which she says she’s forever grateful. She left after four years to help her husband run CapiTel Communications.

“I had never balanced a checkbook,” Luparell, said, recalling the first time she opened Quickbooks and saw they were in the red. She says she cried for a month. “I thought, ‘I just quit a good paying job.’”

She credits three close friends with teaching her more than any business course could. She could bounce ideas off them, and they shared tidbits of wisdom with her.

“They were an oasis,” she said.

Within five years, CapiTel went from one store to 15, before they sold the business in 2008.

Luparell says it’s important for her to give back to the community because others helped her. A strong supporter of the Springfield Youth Hockey Association,

she hosts Springfield Junior Blues players in her home. She is also a mentor for high school students in the Sangamon CEO program and serves as social chairperson for the Springfield Old Capitol Art Fair.

When Luparell looks back on her childhood, she sees a lot of kids who are growing up now the way she did, who just need to know someone cares. She mentors at-risk children at Washington Middle School through a feeder program for the Sangamon CEO program.

“I’ve been where you are,” she said, explaining how she approaches students. “I’ve lived where you live. I want you to know there’s more out there.”

Luparell says children need support from the community, and she thinks often about the world she wants her sons to live in.

“They have to have hope,” she said. “My children are my whole life. My life went from black-and-white to color when I had them.”

Before having children, Luparell says, her life revolved around work. Now, she

doesn’t want to miss a second with them. In 2011, she bought another business, A Storage Box, because it allows her to spend more time with her kids.

“It fits me,” she said.

Luparell says it’s important for her children to know where they come from. She’s raising them not to be judgmental.

“Everyone has the right to live within their own skin,” she said, adding that she’s a firm believer in equality. “It’s important to step in when someone is not being treated fairly.”

For now, Luparell is focused on helping her sons navigate their way into adulthood. She wants to instill a clear understanding of right and wrong in them, along with compassion, empathy and love – and some sick hockey skills.

Luparell says that if someone had told her as a young woman that she would someday be a successful business woman and help improve her community, she wouldn’t have believed them.

“If I can do this, anyone can,” she said. “Don’t give up on your dreams.” ♦



PHOTO / TERRY FARMER

Dr. Tracey Smith

BY COURTNEY ENLOW HALL

As the director of population health and community outreach for the SIU Center for Family Medicine, Dr. Tracey Smith has devoted her professional life to providing access and equity to people in vulnerable situations.

"When I look at something, I always look at it in terms of a system," she said. "Whether it's nurses being satisfied in their jobs, or crime-rate reduction, to better the system itself opens doors to change."

Smith is at the forefront of a partnership between SIU and a handful of other groups in Springfield which is creating measurable, long-term change in communities – from better health to lower crime rates.

Smith's focus on systemic problems dates back to the beginning of her career as a nurse. As a case manager in the public health department in her hometown of Gillespie, Smith saw gaps that desperately needed to be filled.

"We have got to do something about the things we don't want to accept," she says.

Thanks to what she credits as great mentoring, Smith went back to school to get

her master's degree and doctor of nursing practice degree, which now provide her the tools to change the system herself.

Smith's focus on systemic issues came in adulthood, but her interest in social needs is lifelong. For that, she thanks her parents. Growing up on a farm, her family would often take in people who needed a job or a place to live, including young children.

"We didn't have a lot of material possessions, but we had a lot of wealth in terms of love," Smith said.

And like her parents, she chose to never shut doors on anyone or anything.

"I always just said 'sure.' I never said 'no,' and that opened up a lot of opportunities," she said.

One such opportunity was SIU School of Medicine. When she started at SIU 20 years ago, there was no role like hers – one with a focus on providing access to health care for populations which are vulnerable to systemic problems such as racism and poverty.

"That comes from having great mentors," Smith said. "They knew they needed to have something in this direction, but I was able to determine the path. I was always

able to connect with those who were helping those who were socially vulnerable. I could always investigate and take a different approach to educate, based on a person's individual needs."

Addressing those needs has developed into a series of endeavors implemented by SIU School of Medicine and spearheaded by Smith. The Enos Park Access to Care Collaborative, a program dedicated to increasing access to health care in the Enos Park neighborhood, began in the fall of 2015 as a three-year pilot program. Already, it has had far-reaching implications such as improvements in health care coverage and a decrease in emergency department visits. Beyond health care measures, the project has also spurred a decrease in parolee recidivism and neighborhood crime, as well as a 50-percent increase in employment.

As Smith would say, they changed the system, and the results are overwhelmingly positive – for both the community and for Smith.

"The excitement of young students who want change, the excitement of seeing my daughter who stands up for people being

bullied, the excitement of our patients – those little things keep me moving forward," she says. "How do we create systems based on what people bring to the table rather than conform and change who they are?"

As a mother of two daughters, ages 10 and 16, Smith sees a lot of herself in her girls. Her older daughter is gravitating toward Smith's drive to affect systemic issues.

"She's always questioning and wondering what the next steps are, how we can change things," Smith said.

Her younger daughter, who has autism, shares her love of people.

"You can walk into a crowded room and people just gravitate toward her," Smith said. "If there's anything you want your kids to have, it's the ability to love people."

Although Smith lives in Carlinville, she's grateful to the Springfield community and feels deeply connected to it.

"Springfield has been trusting and open with me. I don't just work here – I love Springfield," she said. "The support of this community has been so important and has allowed me to do what I do." ♦



Rasha Said

PHOTO / TERRY FARMER

BY COURTNEY ENLOW HALL

Necessity is the mother of invention, and Rasha Said is a mother whose invention was born out of necessity.

When her young son started to lose his vision, Said began to realize how important it was for him to remain independent. On a family trip to Disney World, she found herself attempting to inform him of what was nearby, but there were understandable gaps while she focused on other children or missed things because they were from her own perspective, rather than his.

"I felt bad that it was up to me to tell him what he was near," she says. "Wouldn't it be cool if there was something that could tell you what was around, some app he could use himself?

And he told me, 'Mom, that's too good to be true.'"

After extensive research, it turned out he wasn't wrong. At the time, there was no such device or system that allowed people with visual impairments to explore the world on their own and gather easily digestible information about their surroundings.

Within a few years, there would be, because Said created it herself.

Using Apple's iBeacon technology, which features devices used in the retail market to alert shoppers of promotions and coupons, Said determined that the signals could be used for more than just sale notifications. She could use them for much, much more.

That's how she came up with Aware. Through her company, Sensible Innova-

tions, Said developed Aware in collaboration with the team at LRS Web Solutions. With a visual impairment-friendly display – think bright colors and large fonts – as well as Braille and audio-only functionality, Aware delivers accessible information about a person's surroundings, which Said points out is not the case with even the most well-intentioned Braille signs. Aware can also be used successfully by people with dyslexia and anyone else who has difficulties navigating an unfamiliar environment.

The app was first piloted at Glenwood High School, where her son now attends school, then installed without charge in the Mary Bryant Home. The system was also installed at Chicago Lighthouse, an organization for blind, visually impaired, disabled and veteran communities. Said

has appeared at and given demonstrations to national conferences and symposiums, appeared on Good Day Chicago and been interviewed by the American Foundation for the Blind's magazine.

"There are signs everywhere – multiple ways for me to get information, plenty of options," Said says. "But not for my son or anyone with a visual impairment. Their choices for getting information are limited. Aware gives them another option for living with independence."

What's next for Said and Sensible Innovations? She wants the entire world to talk.

"I want walls to talk, signs to talk," she says, so that everyone is able to get the same information – with or without their eyes. ♦



PHOTO / JOHN KERSTEIN

Mary Therese “M.T.” Vann 1961-2016

BY PATRICK YEAGLE

She grew up the only girl with five brothers. Maybe that was where Mary Therese Vann first learned to hold her own.

Known as M.T. to many, Mary Therese Vann of Springfield died Dec. 31, 2016, leaving a respected legacy of making her own way in the worlds of business and social justice.

M.T. Vann was partly known in Springfield for starting a real estate firm, Prairie Property Solutions. However, she was also a strong advocate for LGBT rights and animal rights, a generous philanthropist and a helping hand in times of need.

The Most Rev. Kevin Vann, who serves as bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange in California, is one of M.T. Vann's five brothers. Vann remembers his sister as larger than life and with a heart full of gratitude.

“She would do anything for anybody,” he said. “She would help all kinds of people on the margins of society.”

Vann notes that Mary Therese was committed to Springfield and took seriously the responsibility that comes with being part of a well-known family. When something needed to be done, he said, Mary Therese was “not just words; she was words and action.”

“She was socially engaged and went out of her way to do things for other folks,” he said. “That kind of presence will be greatly missed.”

Jonna Cooley, executive director of the Phoenix Center in Springfield, met Vann around 2006. Cooley says she and Vann instantly became friends, in part because of their shared passion for LGBT issues. Vann soon joined the Phoenix Center's board of directors and eventually served as board president for eight years and as an honorary board member afterward.

Cooley says Vann never hid who she was, but rather embraced it. In doing so, Vann created space for others to be themselves.

“She said things other people wanted to say but couldn't,” Cooley said. “She definitely opened doors for the LGBT community in Springfield.”

Cooley praises Vann's ability to stay cool, even during conflict.

“No matter if you were in a frenzy, she was always pretty even,” Cooley said. “She would listen even if she was ticked off, and most of the time, you would walk away with an understanding. She could bridge gaps like no one else.”

John Kerstein was Vann's business partner at Prairie Property Solutions, the residential real estate firm they created together in 2012. Kerstein says one of Vann's best qualities was her ability to lead people “without them feeling like they were being led.” He admired Vann's

tenacity, drive and perseverance, but like many who knew her, he emphasizes her eagerness to help others.

“M.T. touched countless lives,” he said, comparing to her St. Francis. “There was always somebody she was helping. That was her life's mission.”

Springfield real estate agent Sam Perks met Vann when she invited him to join Prairie Property Solutions in 2015. Perks said he was instantly drawn to Vann's charisma and trustworthiness.

“Whether it was a personal issue or a business issue, it didn't matter — day or night — she was one person I always knew I could count on,” he said. “It's sobering to realize the void that now exists. It's easy to take for granted the people who are most capable in your life. Not having her here makes it even more apparent that she was one of the most capable people I ever met.” ♦

Congratulations to the 2017 Women of Influence

From the Officers, Employees and Board of Directors of Security Bank

Molly Berendt - Dr. Susan Koch - Margaret "Boony" Luparell
Rasha Said - Dr. Tracey Smith - M.T. Vann (posthumously)



Front Row (L-R):

Kathy Law, AVP Loan Operations
Elly Mackus, President and CEO
Kristy Gue, Branch Manager Chatham Road
Teri Fleckenstein, VP Information Systems

Back Row (L-R):

Karen Hansen, VP, SB Financial
Casey Boggs, FVP Finance
Morgan Beck, VP Enterprise Risk
Mary Ann Dunn, VP Project Management
Bridget Moore, FVP Lending
Missy Willoughby, Financial Advisor

Security Bank is the founder and continuing sponsor of the Women of Influence program, which allows us to recognize area women for their outstanding contributions to our community. As a local bank with a woman President/CEO, and many women officers and directors, we are especially proud to recognize these women for their leadership, both in their professional and personal lives. Congratulations to this year's Women of Influence recipients.

"We are proud to invest in progressive leadership, both for Security Bank and for the Springfield community."

- Elly Mackus



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The active office of the future

BY COLIN PATRICK BRADY

Chris Davis says that sitting is the new smoking.

Research suggests that a sedentary lifestyle — the kind that often accompanies an office job — is hazardous to health. Davis, an account manager at Springfield office furniture supplier Resource One, is part of a growing movement to improve health by remodeling offices into active environments. The result can be a healthier, happier workforce.

Davis says there are measurable effects of sedentary time; office workers may be sedentary — mostly sitting, eating lunch, work, driving, dinner, TV and sleeping — for up to 88 percent of the day.

"It's a big problem," he said.

Diane Beauchamp, co-owner of Wiley Office Furniture in Springfield, says she and her staff are committed to creating more active office environments.

"I see people all day long that have ruined their bodies due to how they sit and stand in the office," she said.

Both Wiley Office Furniture and Resource One offer furnishings geared toward building activity into the work day. One such item is the treadmill desk — a flat workspace connected to a treadmill that feeds out a flurry of productivity and biomet-

rics. There's also the "sit-to-stand" desk, which workers can adjust between a sitting position and a standing position over the course of the day. Davis says Resource One even offers a desk with integrated pedals that allow a worker to do leg exercises while sitting.

Beauchamp says ailments like carpal tunnel may arise because of how workers position themselves during the day.

"The eye wins out," she said. "You place your body in a place where you can see your work, and it ultimately adjusts to the environment. That can mean placing yourself in a torturous position."

Davis says the active office movement is part of a larger trend toward more collaborative work environments.

"We are dedicated to changing the way that people work and work well," Davis said. "A collaborative ethic is taking over. More people are open to team-based meetings and group decision-making. You see meeting rooms peppered throughout office spaces."

Some businesses take more persuading than others, Davis notes.

"We have encountered some resistance towards the open-office plan, generally because of a lack of privacy," he said. "However, that does not mean we cannot have a productive office space.

In spite of some resistance to an open office plan, people have remained productive and accepting of it."

Davis says greater activity in the office should also focus on creating social connections.

"We have weighted balls that we place at a conference table or maybe distribute during a walking meeting in order to perk people up at a tiresome meeting," he said. "We find that a little bit of activity with the weighted balls can really wake people up."

Beauchamp says the active office concept goes beyond mere furniture. She urges workers to take regular "microbreaks" that involve getting up for coffee, walking to the printer or standing on an orthopedic mat.

"We can design coffee bars and collaborative work spaces, all of which encourage people to engage in different collaborative productivities," she said. "Walking and talking meetings can make you feel more creative, as well as encourage a non-sedentary work-style."

However, Beauchamp warns that standing all day can be just as bad as constant sitting.

"Both ends of the spectrum are not wonderful," she said, "but in between can be achievement." ♦



Chris Davis demonstrates how an existing desk can be converted to a standing desk.

PHOTO / PATRICK YEAGLE

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OFFICE EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE & SUPPLIES

Sources: The individual companies.
Ranked by number of local full-time employees.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=) / WEBSITE / EMAIL	NUMBER OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES	OWNER/ MANAGER	PRIMARY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES OFFERED	MAJOR BRANDS	YEAR EST'D
1	Watts Copy Systems, Inc. 2860 Stanton Ave Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-6697 217-529=7395 wattscopy.com watts@wattscopy.com	75	Carol Watts, President	Copiers / Multifunctional Devices (MFD's), Desktop Multifunction Printers (MFP's), Desktop Printers, Managed Print Services (MPS), Interactive Display Systems/Digital Signage, Software Solutions, Water Filtration Systems, Scanners	Authorized Sharp Dealer, Authorized Kyocera Dealer, HP	1981
3	Midwest Office 1999 W. Wabash, Suite 200 Springfield, IL 62704	866-978-5555 866-753=1417 MidwestOffice.com CustomerService@midwestoffice.com	72	Steve DeMarco, President	Consistent value, state-of-the-art technology, competitive pricing, world-class customer service, free next day shipping, office supplies, contract furniture, print services, promotional products, technology, break room supplies, interior design, space planning and more.	HP, 3M, Bic, Avery, Sharp, HON, Lorell, Genuine Joe, Business Source, Brother, Keurig, Scotch, Energizer, Expo, Fellowes, Quartet and more.	1989
2	CDS Office Technologies 612 S. Dirksen Pkwy. Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-8936 217-753=4867 cdsot.com info@cdsot.com sales@cdsot.com	63	Jay Watson, CEO, Mark Watson, President	Managed IT services, managed print solutions, copiers/ printers and office supplies.	Konica Minolta, Lexmark, HP, Lenovo, Samsung, Panasonic, Sharp, ShoreTel, Aruba, Ruckus Wireless, Ubiquity Wireless, Scala, Brother, M-Files and InfoDynamics document management, Microsoft Certified Gold Partner.	1971
4	GFI Digital, Inc. 1846 W. Jefferson Springfield, IL 62702	217-303-6776 gfidigital.com cgilstrap@gfidigital.com	30	Bruce Gibbs	IT services and hardware, copiers, printers, document management, scanning, data backup	Ricoh, Sharp, HP, Barracuda, Cisco, VMware, EMC, HP Enterprises	1999
5	Resource One 321 E. Adams Street Springfield, IL 62701	217-753-5742 217-753=5748 resourceoneoffice.com info@resourceoneoffice.com	18	Cindy Davis and Craig Mannschreck	Contract furniture, delivery and installation, design and space planning, modular interior walls, solar shades, flooring, sustainable design consulting, used furniture.	Knoll; DIRT walls, casework, electrical and raised flooring; Trendway; OFS Brands; Hon; Gunlocke; Neutral Posture; JSI; Global; Indiana Furniture; Spring Window Fashions; Integra; Aurora Steel Products, Via Seating.	1987
6	RK Dixon 2912 Stanton Street Springfield, IL 62703-5848	217-529-7899 217-529=8529 rkdixon.com	15	Stephen Hebel	Customized information and office technology.	Xerox, Samsung, Hewlett Packard and Lexmark.	1983
7	Wiley Office Furniture 301 E. Laurel Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-2766 217-544=8756 wileyoffice.com springfield@wileyoffice.com	14	Zachary Hoffman and Diane Beauchamp	Our sales, space planning, interior design and installation teams provide innovative solutions. We partner with our clients to create inspiring places to work by developing interior spaces that help them to achieve their goals – including greater efficiency, integration of emerging technologies, increased collaboration and employee attraction and retention.	Herman Miller, Geiger International, Kimball Office, National Office Furniture, Groupe Lacasse, United Chair, Via Seating, Eurotech	1958
8	NCI Business Systems, Inc. 1801 South 6th Street Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-2070 217-529=9489 ncibsi.com tbeverlin@ncibsi.com	9	Terry Beverlin, VP of Sales and Service	Sales and service of office imaging, scanning and document management systems.	Toshiba, Kyocera, HP and Lexmark	1988
9	Tom Day Business Machines 2125 Stevenson Drive Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-8282 217-529=9225 tomdaybusinessmachines.com	8	Dale Smith	MPS (Manage Print Service), Office Solutions	Lanier, HP, Brother and MBM	1981
10	Wade & Dowland Office Equipment, Inc. 202 North Sandy Street Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-243-3379 217-245=1323 wdooffice@frontier.com	7	Steven L. Quigg	Furniture, copiers, cash registers, fax machines, all office supplies along with a full service department.	Authorized Sharp dealer and furniture brands: Lorell, Hon, Premiera, Fireking and more.	1961
11	Digital Copy Systems LLC 2900 Stanton Street Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-0666 1-866-334-0700 217-529=7382 dcscopiers.com	2	Tim Lance, owner	We sell and service new and pre-owned Canon copiers, facsimiles, printers, scanners and wide format printers, digital duplicators, smart boards, new Duplo folding machines. We also offer digital signage; outdoor LEXD marquee signs, indoor touch screens, and directional screens, outdoor billboards as well as video scoreboards.	Canon, Toshiba, Samsung, Riso	2003
11	Work Space Solutions, Inc. 2340 North Third Street (warehouse) 3112 Kensington Drive (office) Springfield, IL 62702	217-553-0123 workspacesolutionsinc.net cjhrdh@sbcglobal.net	2	Robyn and Christie Hovey	Office, school, medical furniture – new and used – specification and sales, receiving, delivery, and installation of interior furnishings, window treatments, carpet, tile, interior accessories, re-upholstering and refinishing of existing furniture	Krueger International - KI, Lafayette Blinds, Pallas Textiles, HON, Tandus-Centiva, Xenali, Furniture Lab and Mayline	2004

Kuchar joins Springfield Reprographics with sale of All About Signs



Steve Wakefield (L) and Jim Kuchar (R) PHOTO / PATRICK YEAGLE

BY PATRICK YEAGLE

Business printing firm Springfield Reprographics announced in April the purchase of All About Signs, another Springfield printing company.

Steve Wakefield, owner of Springfield Reprographics, said his company's signage and graphics division is absorbing All About Signs and its owner, Jim Kuchar.

"Jim's 30-plus years of experience in the signage industry allows Springfield Reprographics to expand its menu of digital print and graphics services to include signage to help in communicating an organization's message," Wakefield said.

Kuchar says he started his career in graphic design in the mid-'80s, shortly

after graduating high school. He enjoyed drawing and painting, but he says he couldn't find a job as an artist in Springfield until his future father-in-law suggested checking out a local sign shop. Kuchar did so and was hired on the spot.

"The work is satisfying to me because we get to use our creativity," he said. "You might have to design on a computer, paint, draw or apply vinyl. There is no job exactly the same."

Kuchar says he decided to join Wakefield's team at Springfield Reprographics because of the 97-year-old company's depth of experience and ability to handle nearly every aspect of the business in-house.

"It was very beneficial to both our clients," he said. ♦

Springfield's Systemax wins another workplace award



It was only a couple of months ago that Springfield-based marketing and supply firm Systemax won a national award for its positive corporate culture. Now, the company is celebrating a separate but similar award.

Systemax was named among 29 other small Illinois companies as one of the Best Places to Work in Illinois. The list is created annually by the Human Resources Management Association of Chicago, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, MRA-The Management Association, the Small

Business Advocacy Council, the Greater Oak Brook Chamber of Commerce and Best Companies Group.

To compete for the award, Systemax underwent an evaluation of its workplace policies, practices and demographics, comprising 25 percent of the total score. The remaining 75 percent came from an employee experience survey. Systemax and the other winners will be honored at a ceremony in northern Illinois on May 18. ♦

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Source: The advertising agencies. * - Does not include entire employee count, only reflects those directly working with comprehensive marketing and media services. Listed by number of full-time employees.

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1	Systemax 4501 Alex Blvd. Suite A Springfield, IL 62711	217-546-6646 systemaxsolutions.com bjackson@systemaxsolutions.com	44	Brett Jackson, Steve Jackson	Memorial Health Systems, Brandt, Dot Foods, Bank of Springfield, Troxell, Brown, Hay and Stephens, HSHS, Renken Dentistry, Kidzeum, Sangamo Construction, The Hope Institute, Pie's the Limit, H.D. Smith, Cochran Construction, Illinois Municipal League, Town and Country Bank, Bank and Trust Company, Troxell Financial, Purdue Federal Credit Union, Gesa Credit Union, UNIFY Federal Credit Union, UT Federal Credit Union, Beacon Credit Union, Whitefish Credit Union, Members Exchange Credit Union, Western Growers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1982
2	HPR Marketing & Consulting Group 3130 Chatham Rd., Suite A Springfield, IL 62704	217-698-2023 217-698=2030 hprmarketing.com info@hprmarketing.com	12	Wally Hamlin	HPR Marketing Group serves over 150 automotive dealerships nation wide. Our services include digital and direct mail marketing	✓	✓					2001
3	HIP Advertising 2809 Mansion Road, Suite A Springfield, IL 62711	217-789-4447 217-789=4441 hipadvertising.com mhoffman@hipadvertising.com	9	Myra L. Hoffman	American Lung Association (Ill. Tobacco Quitline), BJ Grand Salon & Spa, Burrus Hybrids, Butler Funeral Homes, Central Illinois Builders Association, CES, Colorific, do. Active Products, Great River Entertainment, Halverson Construction, KEB, LLCC Foundation, Pro Salon Distribution Group, St. Agnes School / Parish, Sensible Innovations, TOIRMA, University of Spa & Cosmetology, Vision Care Associates, Zara's Collision Center	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1993
4	CYMB Consulting Agency, Inc. 427 E. Monroe, Suite 207 Springfield, IL 62703	323-800-1773 cymbconsulting.com hello@changeyourprospective.com	6	Charles Young	Springfield Sliders, Hy-Vee, Bailey Family Insurance, Fire & Ale, Leone Family Chiropractic, Living Well Chiropractic, Capati Dental, Let's Make Dinner, Donnie's B Comedy Club, Westide Pub & Grill, LaKeisha Purchase, Inc., Pure Performance Fitness, Children Matter First, Slim Jim, Plain White T's, Hi-Lifer	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	2016
5	The Illinois Press Association Advanced Media Placement (AMP) 900 Community Drive Springfield, IL 62703	217-241-1700 217-241=1701 illinoisamp.com jholman@illinoispress.org	5*	Illinois Newspapers	Ameren, Illinois Department of Public Aid, Illinois EPA, Illinois Secretary of State, Illinois State Bar Association, Subway, Office of the Illinois State Treasurer, Blue Cross Blue Shield Illinois State Board of Education Free Summer Food Service Program, Nicor Gas	✓	✓				✓	1865
5	Targeted Marketing Resources 3901 Wood Duck Drive, Ste A Springfield, IL 62711	217- 546-8194 targetedmarketingresources.com larissa@targetedmarketingresources.com	5	Larissa Hansen	Allegra Network/Alliance Franchise Brands; Central Illinois Community Blood Center; Craig A Backs, MD, LLC; Forever Home Feline Ranch; Formea Insurance Group; genHkids; It's a Wrap/My Name on Stuff; Jane Hay Sales & Staging; Lift & Firm Day Spa; School Specialty, Inc; Springfield Urban League; The Center for Prevention, Capitol Strategies Consulting; Strategic Hourglass Solutions; Valued Merchant Services; Bright Star Scrubs; Preacher's Aid Society & Benefit Fund, Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center, Write Right Editing	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	2009
6	Monticello Media LLC 104 N. 6th Street Springfield, IL 62701	217-585-0501 217-585=0507 monticellomedia.net info@monticellomedia.net	4	Scott Troehler	DND	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2009
7	YCN Media	217-520-1474 matt.minder@ycnmedia.com	3	Matt Minder	Portfolio includes: Crawford's Pizza & Pub, The Draft Sports Bar & Grill, Lincoln Land Charity Championship, Decatur Earthmover Credit Union, Dewitt Savings Bank.	✓	✓		✓		✓	2015
7	Gem PR & Media 2121 W. White Oaks Drive Suite B Springfield, IL 62704	217-391-4302 gemprmedia.com hello@gemprmedia.com	3	Gemma Long & Chris Long	AlignLife of Springfield Chiropractic & Natural Health Center, The Real Estate Group, Just Right Eating, Springfield Junior Blues, Sensible Innocations, Warren Boynton State Bank, Apostol Heirloom Portraitist, Sangamon County Fair, The Lincoln Academy of Illinois etc.	✓			✓	✓		2013
8	Encore Consulting 3309 Robbins Road, PMB 204 Springfield, IL 62704	217-816-5415 encoreconsulting@gmail.com	2	Terri Noel	More than 100 varied industries and non-profits have partnered with Encore Consulting in the past 15 years from event planning and fundraising, to start-up branding, image, traditional advertising and printed collateral. We offer full service printing and direct-mail. Industries highlights: automotive, auto dealerships, construction/remodeling, dining establishments, entertainment, accounting/financial planning, healthcare, manufacturing, publishing, real estate, and varied retail. Public relations, feature writing, and content curation services are also offered.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2003
9	Omni Ideas, A Branding Studio	217-741-2222 217-697=0499 omniideas.com info@omniideas.com	1	Jill Schuller-Kinnett	CQuest, NANO2, Illinois Symphony Orchestra, B&B Electric	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	1991
9	Fine Tune Creative 2228 Cloverfield Lane Springfield, IL 62711	217-622-6363 finetunecreative.com pzubeck@msn.com	1	Perry Zubeck	Arizona Tile Company, Knights Action Park, Tradewinds Pub and Eatery, Clearview Glass, Collision Concepts, The Curve Inn, Distinctive Designs, Chatham Collision Repair, Norb Andys, Weebles Bar and Grill, 3rd Base, Illinois Casino Gaming Association, The Creek Pub and Grill, Audio Technical Services (ATS), Munstock Construction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2013

Can co-working work in Springfield?

BY EMILY JANKAUSKI

Starting a business can be expensive. Start-up costs alone threaten a business' potential growth and future success. Co-working spaces offer a professional, low-cost shared environment for startup companies, small businesses, creators and entrepreneurs. Equipped with amenities and a professional atmosphere, co-working spaces supply business professionals with a collaborative working space that suits their customized needs.

The capital city currently has at least two co-working facilities: Your Corner Office and Innovate Springfield. Established in February 2016, Your Corner Office has three separate plans for local entrepreneurs and business professionals. Located on the second floor of 427 E. Monroe St., Your Corner Office offers furnished co-working environments at prices ranging from \$20 per day to \$150 per month. There are also private offices available for rent ranging from \$425-\$700 a month. For someone who simply needs event space or a conference room, those can be rented on an hourly basis.

Innovate Springfield, located at 15 S. Old State Capitol Plaza, offers various memberships which can include desks, workstations or office spaces ranging in price from \$50 to \$600 per month. Innovate Springfield also serves as a business incubator offering its entrepreneurial members concept development, collaborative networking, management development and

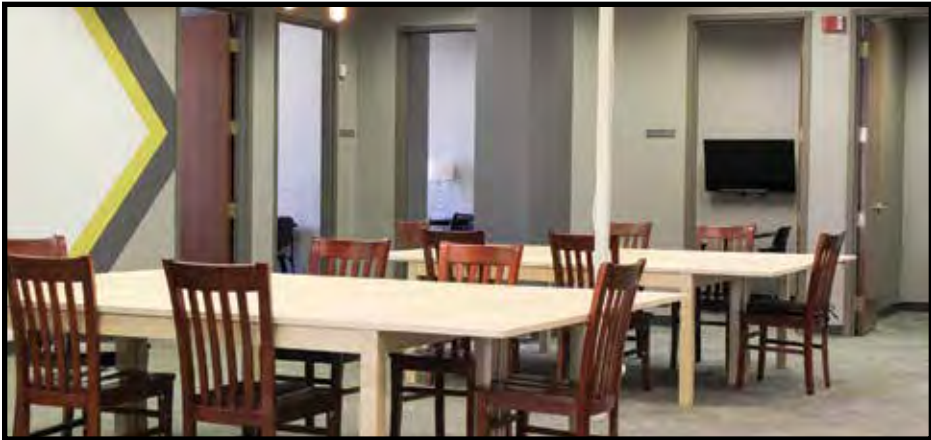
various amenities.

Imagine several varying businesses, creators and entrepreneurs in a single office space seated side-by-side where each professional has the opportunity to network and brainstorm with one another. Katie Davison, executive director of Innovate Springfield, describes the collaborative format as "a group of people that you work with that you can bounce ideas off of."

"You have that same atmosphere that you get with a larger company," she said, "but you can still have that when you're just starting a business."

Melissa Hamilton is president of Synergetic Solutions, Inc. which operates Your Corner Office. Hamilton says co-working allows businesses to work independently and network while reducing overhead costs. The collaborative spaces offer amenities such as Wi-Fi, printing, mail services and high speed Internet – costs which often prove challenging for startup companies or individuals to bear alone. Co-working facilities also provide event spaces, studios and conference rooms, which Hamilton says benefit startup businesses or smaller businesses which "want to have a larger appearance."

Local entrepreneurs and startup companies certainly have a home in Springfield with the growing need for co-working spaces. Jeff Sommers, an architect and founding principal of Square Root Architecture + Design, uses co-working spaces both in the Chicago and



A workspace inside Innovate Springfield

PHOTO / COURTESY OF INNOVATE SPRINGFIELD

Springfield areas. Sommers describes the atmosphere of co-working spaces as "a step above working out of a coffee shop" – in other words, the fun without the frustrations.

"It's difficult to have a professional conversation with hip-hop music and babies crying in the background," he said.

In terms of who benefits from a collaborative space, Sommers says frequent co-working users include graphic designers, web designers, coders, creatives, online entrepreneurs on websites like Etsy and even mothers seeking to get back into the workforce.

"I think it could attract anyone who doesn't want to work around their kitchen table," he said.

Hamilton and Davison agree that the

capital city has yet to reach its saturation point of co-working spaces. Hamilton says the challenge with the Springfield market is the lack of awareness about the benefits of co-working.

"It's getting them (businesses and entrepreneurs) into the mindset of collaboration and out of the traditional office space," she said.

She notes education is a vital element for Springfield's co-working growth, as several entrepreneurs who work from home – and even a few downsizing businesses – may not know about the collaborative workspace concept.

Likewise, Davis sees room for growth in Springfield's relatively young co-working sector.

"There's definitely a need for it," Davison said. "I don't think we've even started yet." ♦

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STAFFING FIRMS

Sources: The Staffing Firms.
Ranked by number of full-time in-office employees.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=)	WEBSITE / EMAIL	FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	PART-TIME EMPLOYEES	LOCAL EXECUTIVE(S)	AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION	YEAR EST'D
1	Express Employment Professionals 3000 Professional Drive Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-3000 217-528=3400	springfieldil.expresspros.com jobs.springfieldil@expresspros.com	22	1	Jim & Carole Britton, owners; Kayla Edwards, manager; J.T. Britton, manager	Administrative, accounting, customer service, industrial, information technology, specialized recruiting, on-site services, HR services, payroll services	1980
2	Manpower 2719A W. Monroe St. Springfield, IL 62704	217-528-2323 866-687=8330	manpowerillinois.com springfield.il@manpower.com	14	0	Ginette Comstock, regional director; Rick Lenhart, branch manager	Professional, administrative, industrial, accounting, customer service, HR services, direct hire, on-site services, recruitment process outsourcing	1948
3	Alice Campbell Staffing Inc. 2121 W. White Oaks Drive, Suite D Springfield, IL 62704	217-793-5522 217-793=5527	acstaffing.com jean@acstaffing.com	4	1	Alice Campbell, president; Jean Campbell, manager	Administrative, clerical, professional, financial, customer service; temporary, temp-to-hire, direct placement, payroll services, skills assessment.	1981
3	Innovative Staff Solutions 1405 Stevenson Drive, Suite 20 Springfield, IL 62703	217-585-1620 217-585=1628	www.staffsolutions.com	4	2	Wayne Meinhart, owner Robyn Harms, branch manager	Workforce management company offering staffing solutions for temporary, temp-to-hire, direct hire and on-site management. We place candidates for professional, administrative and light industrial positions.	1994
4	Kelly Services, Inc. 3001 Montvale Drive, Suite B Springfield, IL 62704	217-793-1226 217-793=0101	kellyservices.com 2442@kellyservices.com	3	0	Sean J. Walker, senior district manager	Staffing solutions-temporary, temporary to hire, direct placement, vendor on site, clerical, light industrial	1946
4	StaffQuick 681 E. Linton Ave. Springfield, IL 62703	217-787-9400 217-787=9991	staffquick.com diane@staffquick.com	3	0	Diana Eldridge, branch manager	Full service staffing agency including temp and direct-hire, clerical, light industrial, professional and executive HR consulting and outplacement services	2002



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Buckle up for cybersecurity



BY MICHAEL KOKAL

Remember when cars didn't have seat belts and kids piled into the back seat? Today, that could be considered child abuse.

Our attitudes about wearing seat belts changed. We are now seeing a similar transformation in the area of cybersecurity. Cybercrime is a growing problem, and new laws, regulations, and lawsuits are going to make cybersecurity measures for computer networks as commonplace as using seat belts.

We really don't have a choice but to change our attitudes. Cybercrime is the fastest growing criminal enterprise on the planet. Last year, more than two billion records were lost or stolen, amounting to a global cost of \$500 billion. That number is expected to quadruple in the next three years. The ultra-sophisticated criminal enterprises and nation states behind the crimes have been reaping profits in excess

of the global drug trade. Surprisingly, small businesses with fewer than 200 employees have been the hardest hit.

Being the victim of a cybercrime may be only the start of your woes. When the department store Target suffered a well-publicized data breach, it was then hit by more than 140 lawsuits from consumers and banks whose personal and financial data were compromised. And it's not just large retailers or financial institutions which are potentially liable to customers: it is any company or business that possesses or safeguards confidential client information or customer data.

Chicago law firm Johnson & Bell was recently sued in what was believed to be the nation's first data security class action lawsuit against a law firm brought by its clients. The lawsuit alleged that Johnson & Bell's internal VPN (virtual private network) and email systems were prone to "man-in-the middle" or "DROWN"

cyberattacks which could allow hackers to eavesdrop and steal confidential client information. Interestingly, the Johnson & Bell lawsuit did not allege that any actual data breach occurred.

In response to cybercrime, the state of New York just enacted unprecedented requirements for financial firms and insurance companies to protect their networks and customer data from hackers and to disclose data breaches to state regulators. Other states are expected to follow suit. Last year, Illinois passed the Personal Information Protection Act, which placed requirements on "data collectors" – broadly defined to encompass corporations, financial institutions and retail operators to use "reasonable security measures" to protect customer information from disclosure. The failure to do so could constitute an unlawful practice under the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act.

Depending on the nature of your business, there may already be industry self-regulation

and governmental cybersecurity guidelines that apply to you. For instance, financial services have the Financial Industry Regulation Authority (FIRA), retail has the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard, healthcare has several standards like HIPAA and HITECH, banking has the Federal Financial Institutions Examinations Counsel (FFIEC), and insurance has the NAIC Model Cybersecurity Law.

Indeed, compliance with the myriad overlapping industry, state and federal statutes and regulations presents a daunting task for any business looking toward the future. But make no mistake: it's only a matter of time before we all are "buckled up" with cybersecurity. ♦

Michael Kokal is a partner at the lawfirm of Heyl, Royster, Voelker and Allen P.C. in Springfield.

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LAW FIRMS

Sources: The Law Firms.
Ranked by number of local lawyers.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=)	WEBSITE / EMAIL	NUMBER OF LOCAL LAWYERS	NUMBER OF PARTNERS	MANAGING PARTNER(S)	PARTIAL LIST OF PRIMARY AREAS OF PRACTICE	YEAR EST'D
1	Sorling, Northrup, Hanna, Cullen & Cochran Ltd. 1 N. Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 200 Springfield, IL 62701	217-544-1144 217-522=3173	sorlinglaw.com businessdevelopment@ sorlinglaw.com	34	18	Michelle L. Blackburn, Michael G. Hortsman Jr., Jeffery R. Jurgens, John A. Kauerauf, Lisa A. Petrilli	General business law, estate planning, litigation, governmental relations, insurance, banking, utility regulation, environmental, health care, family, employment	1945
2	Brown, Hay & Stephens LLP 205 S. Fifth St., Suite 700 Springfield, IL 62701	217-544-8491 217-544=9609	bhslaw.com	32	18	Jeffery M. Wilday	General civil litigation and appellate practice, real estate, education, probate, estate planning, banking, family, employment, environmental, business and health care, traffic/criminal	1828
3	HeplerBroom, LLC 4340 Acer Grove Drive Springfield, IL 62711	217-528-3674 217-528=3964	heplerbroom.com srk@heplerbroom.com kdh@heplerbroom.com	15	8	Stephen R. Kaufmann, Katherine D. Hodge	Insurance defense, personal injury, corporate and business law, probate, utilities, banking, medical malpractice defense, employment, commercial litigation, environmental	1894
4	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP 400 S. Ninth St., Suite 200 Springfield, IL 62701	217-528-7375 217-528=0075	hinshawlaw.com	12	11	Charles Schmadeke	Business and corporate practice, governmental affairs, insurance litigation, real estate, estate and asset protection planning, trust and probate administration, business formation, financing and other transactions	1934
4	Heyl, Royster, Voelker & Allen 3731 Wabash Ave. Springfield, IL 62711	217-522-8822 217-523=3902	firm@heyloyster.com	12	6	Theresa M. Powell	Personal injury defense litigation, workers' compen- sation, employment law, medical and professional lia- bility defense, insurance litigation, appellate practice, business and transactional law, civil rights	1970
4	Giffin, Winning, Cohen & Bodewes PC 1 W. Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 600 Springfield, IL 62701	217-525-1571 217-525=1710	giffinwinning.com kwalbert@giffinwinning.com	12	5	Creighton Castle	Litigation practice, legislative/governmental affairs, real estate development, business, commercial, banking, estate planning, probate, family law, election law	1911
5	Rammelkamp Bradney, P.C. 741 South Grand Ave West Springfield, IL 62704	217-522-6000 217-522=6018	rammelkamp.com elderlawspringfield.com info@rammelkamp.com	11	7	H. Allen Yow	Business and corporate, elder law, real estate, estate planning, probate, general litigation, insurance, employment, municipal, utilities, education	1895
6	Kanoski Bresney 2730 S. MacArthur Blvd. Springfield, IL 62704	217-523-7742 217-523=1412	kanoski.com info@kanoski.com	10	2	Ron Kanoski, Todd Bresney	Personal injury, medical and professional mal- practice, workers' compensation, wrongful death, product liability, nursing home negligence	1979
7	FeldmanWasser 1307 S. Seventh St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-3403 217-544=1593	feldman-wasser.com info@feldman-wasser.com	8	5	Howard Feldman	Civil litigation, criminal defense - state and federal courts, construction law, divorce, related family law, wills, estates, civil rights, employment law	1987
7	Strong Law 913 S. 6th St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-9005 309-688=5340	stronglawoffices.com	8		Todd A. Strong	Plaintiff's personal injury and worker's compensation.	1999
8	Barber, Segatto, Hoffee, Wilke & Cate, LLP 831 E. Monroe St. Springfield, IL 62701	217-544-4868 217-544=5225	barberlaw.com	7	5	Matthew J. Cate	General civil litigation and appellate practice, estate planning, probate, banking, corporate, business and family law, real estate, media, tax, bankruptcy, workers' compensation	1897
8	Delano Law Offices, LLC 1 SE Old State Capitol Plaza Springfield, IL 62701	217-544-2703 217-544=4664	delanolaw.com delano@delanolaw.com	7	N/A	Sarah Delano Pavlik	General practice, personal injury, workers' compensation, medical malpractice, estate planning and probate, business litigation, business planning and transactions, real estate, criminal	1967
8	Sgro, Hanrahan, Durr, Rabin & Bruce, LLP 1119 S. Sixth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-789-1200 217-744=1711	casevista.com greg@casevista.com	7	5	Gregory P. Sgro	A general practice law firm representing individuals and businesses	1999
9	Stratton, Moran, Giganti, Reichert Sronce & Appleton 725 S. Fourth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-2183 217-528=1874		6	6	Bruce Stratton, William F. Moran III, Greg Sronce, Justin Reichert, August Appleton, Adam Giganti	Family law, estate planning, criminal law, traffic, real estate, health care, appeals, corporate and business law, labor law, elder law, personal injury, municipal law, workers compensation, DUI	1980
9	Londrigan, Potter & Randle PC 1227 S. Seventh St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-9823 217-544=9826	lprpc.com info@lprpc.com	6	4	James R. Potter	Personal injury, products liability, medical malpractice, corporate, job discrimination, family law	1923
9	Gates, Wise, Schlosser & Goebel 1231 S. Eighth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-522-9010 217-522=9020	gwspc.com gordon@gwspc.com	6	4	Gordon W. Gates	Commercial and real estate transactions, commercial litigation, employment issues, business bankruptcies, criminal defense, drivers license reinstatement, personal injury and malpractice, dui and traffic	1997



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Matthew J. Cate	Barber Segatto Hoffee Wilke & Cate	217.544.4868	Creditor Rights/Comm Collect; Real Estate: Commercial; Real Estate: Residential
Bernard G. Segatto, III	Barber Segatto Hoffee Wilke & Cate	217.544.4868	Close/Private Held; Commercial Litigation; Land Use/Zoning/Condemn; Real Estate: Commercial
Randall W. Segatto	Barber Segatto Hoffee Wilke & Cate	217.544.4868	Elder; Real Estate: Commercial
R. Kurt Wilke	Barber Segatto Hoffee Wilke & Cate	217.544.4868	Civil Appellate; Close/Private Held; Real Estate: Commercial
Barry Hines	Barry Hines - Attorney at Law	217.698.8444	Agriculture; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate
Michael Glenn Barton	Bellatti Barton & Cochran LLC	217.793.9300	Agriculture; Close/Private Held; Real Estate: Commercial; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate
Daniel L. Fultz	Brown Hay & Stephens LLP	217.544.8491	Criml Defense: Felonies/Misd
Claire A. Manning	Brown Hay & Stephens LLP	217.544.8491	Employment: Management; Environmental; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
Amy K. Schmidt	Brown Hay & Stephens LLP	217.544.8491	Family
Robert A. Stuart, Jr.	Brown Hay & Stephens LLP	217.544.8491	Association/Non-Profit; Close/Private Held; Trust/Will/Estate
J. Randall Cox	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Commercial Litigation; Criminal Defense: DUI; Criml Defense: Felonies/Misd
Carl R. Draper	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Civil Rights/Constitutional; Employment: Employee; False Claims Act/Whistle Blower
Howard W. Feldman	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Construction; Family; ADR: Family
Kelli Ellen Gordon	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Family
Stanley N. Wasser	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Construction
John E. Stevens	Freeborn & Peters LLP	217.535.1060	Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
James R. Enlow	Gates Wise Schlosser & Goebel	217.522.9010	Bankruptcy: Individual; Bankruptcy/Workout: Comm; Commercial Litigation
Gordon W. Gates	Gates Wise Schlosser & Goebel	217.522.9010	Bankruptcy/Workout: Comm; Close/Private Held; Comm Lit; Land Use/Zoning/Condemn; Real Estate: Comm
Todd M. Goebel	Gates Wise Schlosser & Goebel	217.522.9010	Criminal Defense: DUI; Criml Defense: Felonies/Misd
Frederick J. Schlosser	Gates Wise Schlosser & Goebel	217.522.9010	Criminal Defense: DUI; Criml Defense: Felonies/Misd
Bradley B. Wilson	Gates Wise Schlosser & Goebel	217.522.9010	Civil Rights/Constitutional; Employment: Employee
D. Peter Wise	Gates Wise Schlosser & Goebel	217.522.9010	Criminal Defense: DUI; Criml Defense: Felonies/Misd; Criminal Defense: White Collar
Herman G. Bodewes	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Association/Non-Profit; Close/Private Held; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin; Trust/Will/Estate
Creighton R. Castle	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Close/Private Held; Real Estate: Commercial; Tax: Business; Tax: Individual
David A. Herman	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Commercial Litigation; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
R. Mark Mifflin	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Commercial Litigation; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
Christopher E. Sherer	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Civil Appellate; Election/Political/Campaign; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
John L. Swartz	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Bankruptcy/Workout: Comm; Comm Lit; Creditor Rights/Comm Collect; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin; Real Estate: Comm
Thomas G. Hamill	Harrison & Held LLP	217.546.7777	Trust/Will/Estate
N. LaDonna Driver	HeplerBroom LLC	217.321.0362	Environmental
Edward W. Dwyer	HeplerBroom LLC	217.321.0361	Environmental
Katherine D. Hodge	HeplerBroom LLC	217.321.0360	Environmental
Lance T. Jones	HeplerBroom LLC	217.993.7151	Commercial Litigation; Employment: Management; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
Stephen R. Kaufmann	HeplerBroom LLC	217.528.3674	Class Action/Mass Tort Def; Ins/Ins Cov/Reinsurance; PI Def: General; Product Liab Def; Tox Tort Def
Jennifer M. Martin	HeplerBroom LLC	217.321.0368	Environmental
Thomas H. Wilson	HeplerBroom LLC	217.528.3674	Civil Appellate; Commercial Litigation
Adrian E. Harless	Heyl Royster Voelker & Allen PC	217.522.8822	Health; Med-Mal Defense
Michael T. Kokal	Heyl Royster Voelker & Allen PC	217.522.8822	Products Liability Defense; Toxic Torts Defense
Theresa M. Powell	Heyl Royster Voelker & Allen PC	217.522.8822	Employment: Management; Med-Mal Defense; Prof'l Malpractice Defense
Gary S. Schwab	Heyl Royster Voelker & Allen PC	217.522.8822	PI Def: General; Prof'l Malpractice Defense
Daniel R. Simmons	Heyl Royster Voelker & Allen PC	217.522.8822	PI Def: General; Workers' Compensation Defense
Edward R. Gower	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	Commercial Litigation; Construction; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
Raylene DeWitte Grischow	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	PI Def: General; Workers' Compensation Defense
William P. Hardy	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	Civil Appellate
James M. Lestikow	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	Close/Private Held; Trust/Will/Estate
Michael D. Morehead	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	Banking & Financial Institutions
Russell L. Reed	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	PI Def: General; Prof'l Malpractice Defense
J. William Roberts	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	Commercial Litigation; Criminal Defense: White Collar; Gaming/Casino; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
Charles R. Schmadeke	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	Civil Rights/Constitutional; Employment: Management; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin; School
Robert E. Wagner	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin; Ins/Ins Coverage/Reinsurance
Ronald J. Kanoski	Kanoski Bresney	217.523.7742	Personal Injury: General
Stephen Scott Morrill	Morrill and Associates PC	217.789.5411	Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
James E. Neville	Neville Richards & Wuller LLC	618.277.0900	Med-Mal Defense; PI Def: General; Product Liab Def; Transportation Defense; Tox Tort Def
Timothy S. Richards	Neville Richards & Wuller LLC	618.277.0900	Med-Mal Defense; PI Def: General; Product Liab Def; Toxic Torts Defense
Robert G. Wuller, Jr.	Neville Richards & Wuller LLC	618.277.0900	PI Def: General; Real Estate: Tax
Cheryl S. Neal	PNC Wealth Mgmt/Estate Settlement	217.753.7130	Trust/Will/Estate
James A. Borland	Quinn Johnston Henderson, et al.	217.753.1133	PI Def: General; Products Liability Defense
Matthew J. Maddox	Quinn Johnston Henderson, et al.	217.753.1133	Med-Mal Defense; PI Def: General; Prof'l Malpractice Defense
Larry D. Kuster	Rammelkamp Bradney PC	217.245.6177	Commercial Litigation; PI Def: General; School; Workers' Compensation Defense

LAW FIRMS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31)

Sources: The Law Firms.
Ranked by number of local lawyers.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=)	WEBSITE / EMAIL	NUMBER OF LOCAL LAWYERS	NUMBER OF PARTNERS	MANAGING PARTNER(S)	PARTIAL LIST OF PRIMARY AREAS OF PRACTICE	YEAR EST'D
10	Scott & Scott PC 611 E. Monroe, Suite 200 Springfield, IL 62701	217-753-8200 217-753=8206	scottandscottlaw.com	5	5	R. Stephen Scott, Gregory A. Scott	Family, tax, commercial, bankruptcy, real estate, personal injury, estate planning, probate, corporate, general litigation	1947
10	Drake, Narup & Mead PC 107 E. Allen St. Springfield, IL 62704	217-528-9776 217-528=9401	dnmpc.com	5	5	David L. Drake, Richard H. Narup, Randall A. Mead, Christian D. Biswell and Steven C. Ward.	Trial attorneys, personal injury, insurance defense, general practice, medical malpractice	1989
10	Wolter, Beeman, Lynch & Londrigan 1001 S. Sixth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-753-4220 217-753=4456	wblawyers.com wbl@wblawyers.com	5	5	Randall Wolter, Bruce Beeman, Francis Lynch, Brent Beeman, Tim Londrigan	Personal injury, professional malpractice, workers' compensation	1997
10	Bellatti, Fay, Bellatti & Beard, LLP 816 West State Street P.O. Box 696 Jacksonville, IL 62651	217-245-7111 217-245=2832	bellattilaw.com	5	4	Daniel J. Beard	Bankruptcy, business and commercial, estate planning, probate, real estate, family law, banking, municipal, tax civil litigation	1876
10	Hart, Southworth & Witsman 1 N. Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 501 Springfield, IL 62701	217-753-0055 217-753=1056		5	4	Richard Hart, Mike Southworth, Samuel J. Witsman and Timothy J. Rigby	Business law, real estate, banking, corporate, probate, estate planning, special needs estate planning, municipal tax-exempt financing	1985
10	Cherry, Frazier & Sabin, LLP 1 W. Old State Capitol Plaza, Myers Bldg., Suite 800 Springfield, IL 62701	217-753-4242 217-753=4642	springfieldlawfirm.com	5	3	Diana N. Cherry, Richard D. Frazier, Scott A. Sabin	Family, criminal defense, personal injury, workers' compensation, federal and state appeals, civil litigation	1983
10	Graham & Graham Ltd. 1201 S. Eighth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-523-4569 217-523=4656		5	3	Richard Wilderson, Bradley Huff, Nancy Eckert-Martin	General trial practice, medical-related litigation, business transactions, real estate, health law, probate	1897
10	Hennessy & Roach, P.C. 2501 Chatham Road, Suite 220 Springfield, IL 62704	217-726-0037 217-726=0137	hennessyroach.com	5	3	Michael J. Holt	Workers' compensation, general liability and civil litigation, labor and employment	1993
10	Cassiday Schade LLP 111 N. 6th St., Suite 200 Springfield, IL 62701	217-572-1714 217-572=1613	cassiday.com phalliday@cassiday.com	5	2	Patrick Halliday	Personal injury defense litigation, workers' compensation, employment law, medical and professional liability defense, insurance litigation, appellate practice, business and transactional law, civil rights	2014
11	Livingstone, Mueller, O'Brien & Davlin PC 620 E. Edwards St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-525-1070 217-525=1080	livingstonelaw.com lmobd@livingstonelaw.com	4	3	L. Robert Mueller, Dennis S. O'Brien	General litigation, negligence, workers' compensation law	1953
11	The Law Offices of Frederic W. Nessler & Associates, Ltd. 536 N. Bruns Lane, Suite 1 Springfield, IL 62702	217-698-0202 217-698=0203	nesslerlaw.com	4	1	Frederic W. Nessler	Personal injury, workers' compensation, medical malpractice, wrongful death, clergy misconduct, nursing home abuse	1977
12	Zack Stamp, Ltd. 601 W. Monroe St. Springfield, IL 62704	217-525-0700 217-525=0780	zackstamp.net kmcfadden@601w.com	3	2	Kevin J. McFadden	Government relations, insurance regulatory, civil litigation, business and corporate law, military law, tax law	1997
12	Edwards Group LLC 3223 S. Meadowbrook, Suite A Springfield, IL 62711	217-726-9200 877-866=1737	edwardsgroupllc.com david@edwardsgroupllc.com	3	1	David Edwards	Estate planning and elder law	2008
12	Sheehan & Sheehan, Lawyers, P.C. 1215 S. 4th Street Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-0701 217-544=0750	sheehanlaw.net jr@sheehanlaw.net pat@sheehanlaw.net bill@sheehanlaw.net	3	2	Patrick J. Sheehan	Adoption, agricultural law, business/commercial law, estate planning and administration, probate, real estate, taxation, traffic and minor criminal offenses	1960
12	Kopec, White & Spooner 801 S. MacArthur Blvd. Springfield, IL 62704	217-726-7540 217-726=7543	springfield-law.com mkopec@kws-law.com dwhite@kws-law.com sspooner@kws-law.com	3	3	A. Michael Kopec David V. White Scott D. Spooner	Civil litigation and trials, divorce and family law, business planning, formation and transactions, franchise law, estate planning and probate, real estate	2008
12	Hesse Martone, P.C. 1224 Centre West Drive, Suite 200E Springfield, IL 62704	217-679-0919 314-862=7010	www.hessemartone.com rickstewart@hessemartone.com	3	2	Andrew Martone Chris Hesse	Employment issues, collective bargaining, labor law, municipal, administrative, regulatory and legislative issues and association management	1995





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(Continued from page 24)

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Jared M. Scott	Scott & Scott PC	217.753.8200	Family; Personal Injury: General
R. Stephen Scott	Scott & Scott PC	217.753.8200	Bankruptcy/Workout: Comm; Close/Private Held; Tax: Bus; Tax: Indiv; Trust/Will/Estate
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Michael M. Durr	Sgro Hanrahan Durr Rabin & Bruce LLP	217.789.1200	Real Estate: Assoc/Condo; Real Estate: Commercial; Real Estate: Residential
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Gregory P. Sgro	Sgro Hanrahan Durr Rabin & Bruce LLP	217.789.1200	Land Use/Zoning/Condemn; Real Estate: Commercial; Workers' Compensation
Timothy M. Shay	Shay and Associates	217.523.5900	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury: Prof'l Malpractice; Workers' Compensation
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James D. Broadway	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Close/Private Held; Commercial Litigation; Health; Real Estate: Commercial
Michael C. Connelly	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Close/Private Held; Real Estate: Commercial; Real Estate: Tax; Tax: Business; Trust/Will/Estate
E. Zachary Dinardo	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Close/Private Held; Health
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Ashley D. DiFilippo	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Civil Rights/Constitutional; Family
Jason E. Brokaw	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
Abby L. Sgro	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Criminal Defense: DUI; Crim Defense: Felonies/Misdemeanors; Enviro; Family; PI Defense: Gen
Matthew R. Trapp	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Commercial Litigation; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
Michael P. Murphy	HeplerBroom LLC	217.993.7156	Ins/Ins Cov/Reinsurance; Personal Injury Defense: General; Products Liability Defense
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Esther J. Seitz	Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP	217.528.7375	Advertising/Media; Copyright/Trademark; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
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Colleen R. Lawless	Londrigan Potter & Randle PC	217.544.9823	Family
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Pamela E. Hart	Scott & Scott PC	217.753.8200	Elder; Trust/Will/Estate
Jeffrey T. Baker	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Close/Private Held; Election/Political/Campaign
Brian D. Jones	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Banking; Close/Private Held; Employee Benefits; Real Estate: Commercial
Lisa A. Petrilli	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Comm Lit; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin; Land Use/Zoning/Condemn; Real Estate: Commercial
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Legal: Get it in writing

BY SARAH DELANO PAVLIK

Everyone has heard the saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." When it comes to your business, where just one bad deal can spell doom and disaster, this is especially true. Written contracts are that ounce of prevention in the business world.

I am constantly amazed at how many litigation matters could have been avoided had a well-written contract - or sometimes any contract at all - been in place from the start. Although no contract can contemplate every eventuality, some effort and attention directed toward spelling out the parties' agreement on paper can go a long way toward saving pain and expense down the road.

The process of describing in writing how the business transaction or relationship will take place and the obligations each party has to the other will often reveal important issues that are best resolved before the money is paid and the venture started. The contract should be a road map in which the parties spell out all of the various needs and requirements each has, describe in clear terms how those needs and requirements are to be met, and provide the necessary assurance that both parts of the bargain will be fulfilled. Sometimes the parties realize, to their surprise, that the expectations each had for the other were so different that it is best not to enter into a relationship at all.

Pre-printed contracts or contracts from previous deals, although often good starting points, will rarely provide the protection you want and need. I often advise clients, "See me now, or see me later." In other words, do it right from the beginning.

With that in mind, the following are some - but by no means all - of the issues that should be addressed in any contract documenting a business deal.

Termination is especially important in a business venture involving "partners." Although everyone starts out as the best of friends and with the noblest of intentions, often the relationship sours. You should have a fair and equitable exit strategy. For other contracts, decide whether termination should be permitted only "for cause," or for any reason. How much notice must be given prior to the termination? If the termination is due to non-performance or poor performance, will the other party be given an opportunity to correct any deficiencies?

If the contract is terminated or breached, the parties should consider how any remedies for damages will be addressed. Will the person responsible for the breach be responsible for compensating the other person for all actual damages? How will those damages be determined? Even though the parties might provide for "liquidated damages" (a set sum for a breach), courts often find such provisions unenforceable when the actual damages can be determined with reasonable accuracy. A party might also want to limit his or her potential exposure by limiting any recovery to a deposit previously given, or by limiting damages to the price paid for the goods or services that should have been provided. Time spent attempting to manage your worst-case scenario may let you sleep better at night.

Nobody wants to finance clients or business partners, even with today's low interest rates. Accordingly, if you want to charge interest on unpaid fees or bills, your contract must state an interest rate and when it will start to

accrue. Likewise, if you want to recover attorneys' fees in the event of litigation, your contract must state that intent. Otherwise, even if payment is wrongfully withheld, you probably won't be able to recover interest or attorneys' fees. This becomes particularly crucial when, absent that ability, it would otherwise not be cost effective to litigate.

In some instances, litigation cannot be avoided. Especially when dealing with other parties who are not local, the parties often spell out the location for any resulting litigation. This is known as venue. In general, if litigation is necessary, you want to have it in your back yard. When dealing with out-of-state parties, decide which state's law will apply. In some instances, various state laws offer dramatically different answers to certain legal issues.

A contract should also identify a standard to measure performance. If a product is being manufactured or delivered, what specifications should the product meet? If services are being performed, what standard should be met? The parties may also want to identify how they will decide whether the services are satisfactory. Sometimes an independent third party, such as an architect or engineer, may be designated as the one who determines satisfactory performance. In other instances, there may be an industry standard that must be met. Whatever the criteria, each side should understand the performance expectations before entering into the agreement.

Today, information is more important than ever. Protect your proprietary information by setting restrictions on the other party's disclosure and use of that information. Likewise, consider provisions that restrict the other party's ability to poach your valuable customers through a non-compete clause.

In the increasingly competitive business environment, customers often demand that services and products meet certain specifications - what lawyers refer to as warranties. If you do offer express warranties, your contract should specifically define those warranties and state that no warranties beyond those stated are being offered. Or, if no express warranties are offered, the contract should state that. But even if you disclaim any express warranties, the law sometimes implies certain warranties that require you to stand behind your product or service.

One type of warranty is the implied warranty of merchantability. It exists in every sale of a product and requires that the product be reasonably satisfactory to the typical customer. Another such warranty is the implied warranty of fitness for a particular purpose. If neither warranty is part of your deal, language should be included to the effect that the deal is "as is" and that there are no warranties beyond those specifically contained in the contract.

The law might require specific things to be in writing for your particular business. For example, there are many more requirements for consumer transactions than for business-to-business transactions. Make sure you know the particular rules for your business, as violating them may not only void your contract, it may subject you to penalties.

Consider a contract like an insurance policy: a little forethought may save you a big headache. ♦

Sarah Delano Pavlik is an attorney at Delano Law Offices, LLC.

E-filing on horizon for all civil cases



BY PATRICK YEAGLE

Illinois' electronic filing system for civil cases in state courts hit a milestone in April with 2,000 users and 400 cases filed, but that's just the start. Soon, all civil case documents in Illinois will be filed electronically.

The Illinois Supreme Court first authorized electronic filing in 2002 and set deadlines last year for all Illinois courts to adopt "e-filing" systems for civil cases. The third and final phase of adoption began April 1, and counties around Illinois will begin mandatory e-filing for all types of civil cases by Jan. 1, 2018.

Sangamon County was an early adopter when it began allowing attorneys to file documents electronically in certain civil cases about six years ago. Because Sangamon County implemented its own e-filing system, it is one of 15 counties exempted from the Illinois Supreme Court's 2016 order which mandates e-filing.

Suzanne Ushman, supervisor of the Family Civil Department in the Office of the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk, says the county currently accepts electronically filed documents in two types of civil cases: chancery and law. That will expand to cover the other types of civil cases by the 2018 deadline, she said.

"It's been great," she said. "There haven't been many problems, and when there are, we've got a technician to help."

Many attorneys still opt to file paper documents in Sangamon County because of a fee associated with e-filing, but Ushman says

e-filing will be mandatory in 2018, except in emergency cases. Ushman says the county currently prints copies of e-filed documents to put in the circuit court's physical files, but that could change after e-filing becomes mandatory.

Christopher Bonjean, communications director for the Illinois Supreme Court, says the Supreme Court and Illinois appellate courts will adopt mandatory e-filing on July 1 of this year.

"Overall, attorneys love it because they can file 24/7," he said. "They can file from anywhere, anytime, without having to go to the courthouse."

Adoption of e-filing has been hindered by a lack of funding among circuit courts, as well as the difficulty of creating a standardized system that works across different jurisdictions. The Illinois Supreme Court, Illinois appellate courts and many circuit courts use an e-filing system created by Plano, Texas-based Tyler Technologies. The Sangamon County Circuit Clerk's office uses a different system created by Irving, Texas-based File & ServeXpress. Each court's system must meet certain technical standards before being approved by the Supreme Court.

Bonjean says some details are still being worked out, such as whether courts will still print physical copies of electronic documents. Eventually, he says, Illinois courts may offer online public access to electronic documents, similar to the PACER website created in 2001 by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

"We're definitely looking at it," he said. ♦

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MEDICAL NEWS

McCaffrey Family Health Center planning expansion

A holistic health clinic in Springfield is planning an expansion to its space and its services this summer.

McCaffrey Family Health Center plans to add about 2,000 square feet of space to its existing facility at 3330 Hedley Road in Springfield. The new space will be used to offer additional laboratory services, patient education and weight loss programming.

Dr. Sean McCaffrey is a chiropractic physician who owns McCaffrey Family Health Center and appears regularly on radio and TV. Beyond spinal adjustment, however, McCaffrey also focuses on weight loss, joint pain and internal health like digestive problems.

McCaffrey's business partner and wife, Rebecca McCaffrey, says the clinic is expanding in June or July of this year. The addition provides space to expand the clinic's laboratory for urinalysis and offer educational seminars to train other doctors in that diagnostic technique, she says.

The expansion was prompted by growing demand for holistic care, Rebecca says. Dr. Stephanie Griffiths currently practices with Sean McCaffrey, and the clinic hopes to employ additional physicians in the future.

"This is groundbreaking work that could change the profession," Rebecca said.

DaVita to relocate dialysis center from Rutledge to North Grand

A healthcare company which operates dialysis centers in several countries is relocating one of its centers in Springfield.

Denver-based DaVita, Inc. has obtained a permit to build DaVita Dialysis Springfield Central, a new dialysis center to be located at 600 North Grand Avenue West. Davita's existing location at 932 N. Rutledge St. will relocate to the new building.

Charles Ferrer, a spokesman for DaVita, says groundbreaking is expected later this spring, and it's slated to be ready by early 2018.

"The new address is in close proximity to the current location," he said, "and the local team looks forward to serving those patients in the nearby area."

The contractor for the 8,434-square-foot facility is TRK Construction, based in Missouri. The Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approved the center in January 2017. The board's permit letter estimates the center's cost at \$5.1 million.

Palastra Real Estate Partners, based in Pennsylvania, purchased the land for the dialysis center from Charles Salvo and Peter Salvo of Springfield. Charles Salvo, owner of Charles P. Salvo & Associates real estate management firm, says the new center should be a catalyst for further development on that block, which he notes is along the route coming from Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport.

"DaVita will be an anchor for the whole street," he said.

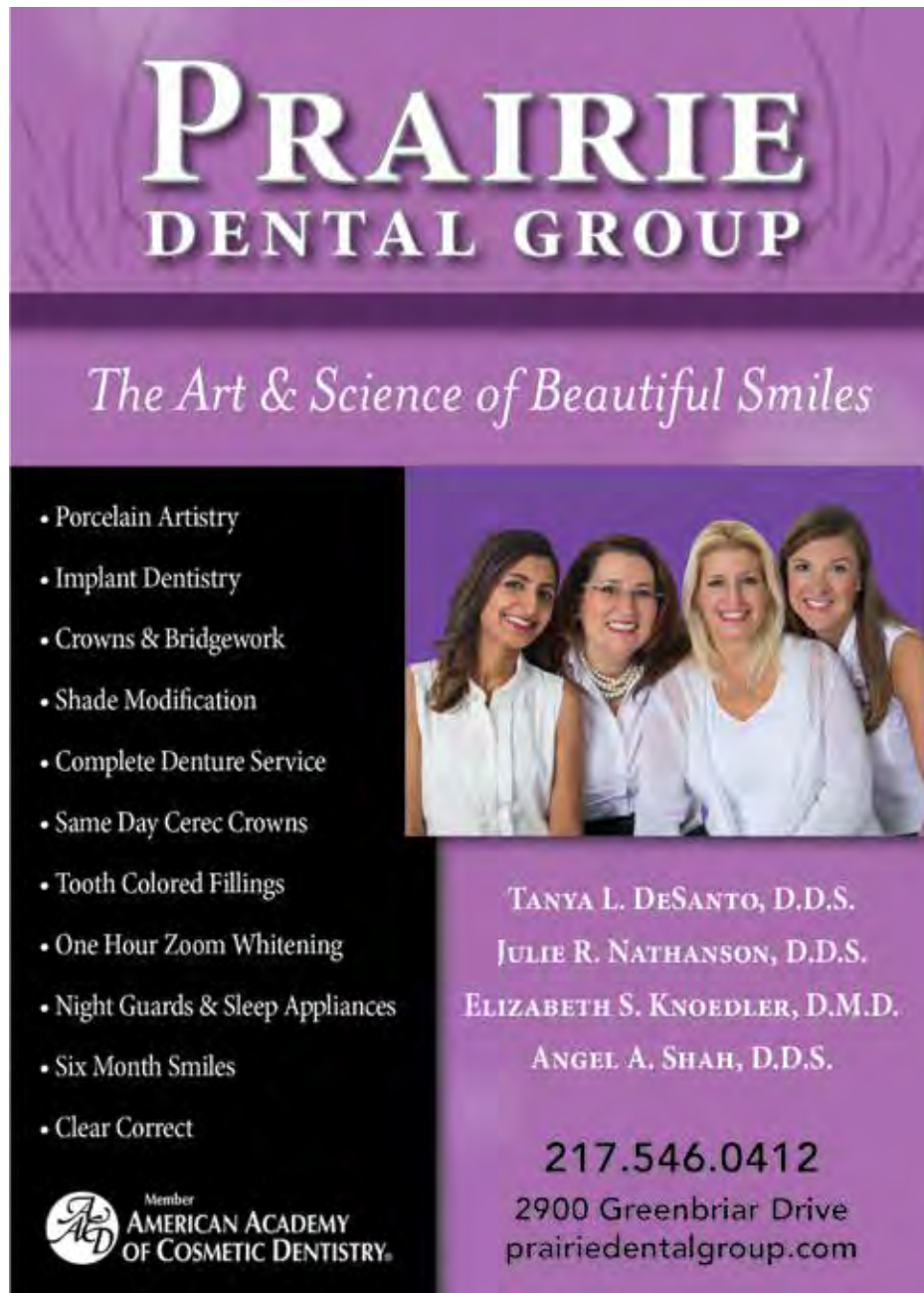


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Report says cutting workers' comp benefits doesn't help economy

BY MONICA STABILE

A new report calls Governor Bruce Rauner's proposed changes to workers' compensation "flawed," refuting the claim that lower benefits paid to injured workers have a positive effect on Illinois' economy.

The March 16 report released by the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, a statewide independent research group based in Chicago, found no connection between workers' compensation costs and economic growth and employment. The report comes as state lawmakers fight over proposed changes to the Illinois workers' compensation system as part of a possible budget deal.

A staunch proponent of cutting workers' compensation costs and benefits, Rauner claims that reducing payments for workers' compensation would help businesses save money, improving job growth and competitiveness.

Daniel Hertz, a senior policy analyst for the CTBA, said the report analyzed workers' compensation costs and benefits on both a statewide and national level.

"Evidence contradicts the governor's claim to use workers' compensation reforms to set the stage for economic growth," Hertz said.

In response to the CTBA report, a spokeswoman for Rauner said the governor wants a fair and equitable workers' compensation system, but she cast doubt on the

CTBA study.

"There have not been any sufficiently rigorous econometric studies that show the magnitude of economic harm caused by rates that are systematically too high in Illinois," said Rauner spokeswoman Eleni Demertzis. "Any such study would have to specifically consider the impact on specific industries within specific states, geographies and times."

Rauner often compares Illinois to Indiana, which pays 49 cents in workers' compensation benefits for every \$100 of payroll, compared to 90 cents in Illinois.

Between 2010 and 2014, benefits for Illinois workers have fallen 20 percent from \$1.13 to 90 cents per \$100 of payroll, the study showed. Simultaneously, employer costs have dropped by 4.4 percent, from \$1.37 to \$1.31 per \$100 of payroll.

While workers' compensation costs in Illinois have fallen, employer costs have risen at the national level. Illinois currently has the eighth highest workers' compensation insurance rates in the country, despite the fact that workers' compensation costs and benefits in Illinois are both slightly under the national average, according to the National Academy of Social Insurance.

According to his Turnaround Agenda, Rauner is proposing that an accident at work must be mainly responsible for the injury compared to any other causes. Opponents like the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association, which represents attorneys for injured

workers, say proving the cause of an injury is often difficult or impossible, especially for degenerative diseases that can be aggravated by work.

Rauner has insisted that before negotiating a state budget, which Illinois has lacked for almost two years, the Democrat-controlled General Assembly must approve the policy items in his agenda.

"This seriously calls into question the appropriateness of making workers' compensation reform a critical part of a budget deal," the CTBA report said.

Despite the decreased worker benefits and lower employer costs in Illinois' workers' compensation system, Demertzis reasons that high costs inevitably harm employers.

"If you make something more expensive, you get less demand for it," she said. "That's a foundational finding of economics. That the CTBA is going to try and credibly argue that adding a lawyer tax to the cost of hiring a worker doesn't result in less hiring of workers strains credulity." ♦



Professional Women's Calendar of Events
You play a key role and we thank you for your contributions to our community.

Illinois Women in Leadership (IWIL)

IWIL will hold a luncheon on Thursday, May 18 from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Sangamo Club. IWIL offers three \$1000 college scholarships to high school senior women from Sangamon County, which will be presented at the May meeting. To register or for more information, visit www.iwil.biz.

Women Entrepreneurs of Central Illinois (WE-CI)

WE-CI will hold its monthly meeting on Wednesday, May 10 from 1130 a.m.-1 p.m. at Sangamon Club. Join us on May 10th for an inspirational presentation by Desiree Logsdon of Bunn called "Live, Learn, & Upgrade." Guests are welcome! Please note that cost of admission is waived for first time guests. Additional information about this event is available by contacting Stephanie McDannald at emersonpress@comcast.net. We ask that you RSVP by May 5 to reservations@we-ci.org, or reserve a spot online at www.we-ci.org.

Association for Women in Communications (AWC)

AWC will hold a luncheon on Wednesday, May 3 from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Sangamo Club. Dana Saal will speak on "Ways to Take the Boring Out of Your Meetings." All meetings share the same objective—to gather people together with a common mission, objective or interest. Unfortunately, many meetings also share a common characteristic of being boring. Dana Saal will share ways to bring that zip and zing into your meetings that will make people want to attend and have them looking forward to the next one. For more information or to make a reservation, visit www.awcspRINGfield.org.

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Savor your time at Long Nine

BY THOMAS C. PAVLIK JR.

The downtown dining scene has benefited from a handful of new restaurants over the last few months. One of the more recent entrants is Long Nine Junction, described by its owners as a “chef-driven, fast casual restaurant.” We’re not so sure about the fast part, but as a downtown denizen I’m otherwise happy to welcome Long Nine to the neighborhood.

Long Nine is located on the west side of the Old State Capitol Plaza near the corner of Fifth and Adams streets. The interior is a bit quirky but, like the menu, it works. Long and narrow, the space is dominated by a large wooden bar where orders are taken and food is prepped. Along the other wall are some neat wooden tables for those who opt to dine in. The day we visited, take-out seemed to dominate. There’s also seating along the windows if you’re interested in people-watching. Be advised that there aren’t a lot of seats.

In terms of décor, Long Nine has a bit of an industrial feel, coupled with a nod to Springfield’s historic past. Perhaps that’s because it took its name from the nine Illinois lawmakers (including Honest Abe himself) who lobbied to make Springfield the state capital.

Long Nine’s menu also plays on Springfield’s historic past – offerings are broken into categories like Opening Statements (appetizers), Statutes (sandwiches), Motions (entrees), and Recess (soups). There are also ever changing daily specials, which make up “The Docket.” Beyond the naming construct, Long Nine has put together an enticing menu.

We noted with interest the Parisian (\$10 – sandwich with country sausage, goat cheese, farmer cheese and apple butter, served with chips), the half roasted chicken (\$10 lunch size, \$12 for dinner size, served with greens), and the Tom “Lincoln” KHA (\$8 brunch size, \$10 dinner size – coconut ginger broth, mushrooms, cilantro and rice).

The day we visited, Long Nine was doing a booming business. Almost all of our fellow diners appeared to be part of the downtown business crowd. The menu is along the wall right when you walk in. If there’s a cluster of people, it can get somewhat jumbled, as there’s not much room between the door and the counter where orders are placed.

Long Nine hasn’t been open that long, so we hope that, in terms of the ordering and food prep process, they’re still working out the kinks. Although the time from ordering to delivery isn’t all that different from any other restaurant, we wouldn’t call

it fast. In any event, my guests and I agreed that it’s better to have food made to order. Just be prepared if you arrive at Long Nine during the peak lunch rush and expect a quick turn.

My guests and I opted for the Pork Pazole Verde (\$8 or \$10 – potatoes, pork, green beans, queso fresco and cilantro, served with bread), the Garlic Bread Grilled Cheese (\$10 – cheddar, provolone and pub cheese, served with chips), and the Moroccan Beef Stew (\$10, served with bread) which were on daily special.

But first, a word about Long Nine’s bread. It’s good – really good. And it’s apparently made on premises. Just recently, I noticed that Long Nine has started selling its bread, so we obviously aren’t the only ones who are fans.

The Moroccan Beef Stew really should be on the menu full-time. The generous portion was served with a side of honey yogurt to help add some brightness and to cut through the richness of the stew. Seasoned with cumin, paprika and cinnamon, Long Nine hit the nail on the head with the flavor profile. I particularly appreciated that they were liberal with the meat and used locally sourced produce in the dish with the addition of radishes from the locally owned Small Acts Market Garden.

My guest who ordered the Pazole also

commented that there was quite a bit of pork in the dish. He thought that although the dish had pizzazz, there wasn’t enough heat to deter more timid diners. He was a bit curious about the spelling; we all thought it should have been “pozole.” And he was somewhat puzzled by the addition of green beans. In any event, he was pleased with the dish. We appreciated that Long Nine marches to the beat of its own drum. Who needs slavish devotion to classic recipes?

The grilled cheese tickled my other guest. It was a brilliant move to use garlic bread for a grilled cheese sandwich. She reported that the pub cheese added some zing to the dish and complimented the more pedestrian cheddar and provolone. Likewise, the garlic – although not overpowering – helped elevate the dish beyond the classic grilled cheese we all know.

Drink options include a variety of specialty sodas. Although we passed, there are a variety of desserts available like Nutella brownies and banana raisin chocolate chip bread pudding.

Although the price point is a bit high for a Springfield lunch, Long Nine Junction has put together a recipe that we hope leads to long lasting success. ♦

Thomas C. Pavlik Jr. is an attorney at Delano Law Offices, LLC in Springfield.

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Top Left: The Mojo Pork Torta served with tortilla chips and a soda.
Top Right: The Bavarian plate with Polish sausage and German potato salad.
Bottom: Long Nine Junction owner and chef Corey Faucon, along with his fiancée Emily Phillips.

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2304 S. 12th St.
415-5560
Owner: Lana M Bauman

Truth of Genesis
3120 Saddle Mill Dr.
891-6298
Owner: David Powell

CG Lawn Pros
1020 W. Elliott Ave.
670-9756
Owner: Chad A. Gerstung

Queen's
1812 S. MacArthur Blvd.
441-3403
Owner: Vilavan Weeks

Elite Bridal Gown Care & Preservation
2831 Farmers Market Road
525-4740
Owner: Evans Services, Inc.

Britz Property Management
268 Brookview Road, Dawson
364-5304
Owner: James E. Britz Jr.

Table 3 Solutions
3755 Stagecoach Road
891-7614
Owner: David M Ervin

Michael Foster B.A.S.S.E.T. Training
5481 Riverview Dr., Spaulding
381-4846
Owner: Michael Foster

Outdoor Christian Ministry
2304 Blackhawk Road
341-7793
Owner: Larry Tebrugge Jr

129 Investments
1829 East Bertman Ave.
971-5020
Owner: Adam J Richey

Whatz Itz
2521 Shawnee Dr.
685-4918
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14335 Frazee Road, Divernon
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553-9041
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The Kreative Lounge & Social Collective
1116 Koufax Dr., Chatham
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638-1539
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The business of art: Crystal Apostol

BY ROBERTA CODEMO

Crystal Apostol of Springfield never knew she had a special talent for painting, even though she comes from a family of artists. Her grandparents, great-grandfather and mother were all painters.

"I took it for granted," she said. While in college, she painted to clear her head but didn't pursue it as a career. In hindsight, she says, this is what she was supposed to do.

It wasn't until Apostol, a stay-at-home mom, became sick while pregnant with her fourth child and was hospitalized that she learned how to stop and breathe again. She and her husband had spent the past three years in survival mode caring for their youngest son when he was ill.

"It was an amazing thing for me," she said. "I never get sick."

Apostol's sickness gave her time to reflect, allowing her to realize she had so much more to do in life.

"It gave me a sense of purpose," she said. "I didn't know what I was supposed to do, but I knew I had to do something beautiful and amazing."

She started taking photos because she was afraid something would happen to her.

"I didn't have anything to leave my family," she said.

After her child was born, she studied with

photographers Zach and Jody Gray.

"It was an amazing experience," she said, but she knew she needed to paint.

One night she took out her paints. She now describes her first attempt as rough but beautiful.

Now a portraitist and photographer, she works with clients to create heirloom portraits that can be passed down from generation to generation.

"It's a reminder of the most important thing in our life," she said. "We remember the people we love when we walk by a room and see their portrait."

When Apostol meets with clients, she enjoys getting to know them.

"Everybody has a story to tell," she said.

Apostol has each piece designed in her mind before she takes a series of photos as a reference.

Once she finishes a painting, she sends it to be preserved between coats of lacquer.

"It creates a beautiful sense of depth," she said. "When you stand in front of it, you fall in love with that person."

The entire process takes about six months.

When Apostol paints, she gets lost in her own world.



A selection of paintings in Crystal Apostol's gallery

PHOTO / COURTESY OF CRYSTAL APOSTOL

"I love doing this," she said. "It's peaceful."

While she's working, she listens to classical music. She has a piano in her studio which her children often play while she's working.

When clients see their portraits, they sometimes cry.

"It's nothing like they imagined," she said. "They're shocked."

For Apostol, that's the best part.

"It makes all the hard work worth it," she said. ♦

Apostol's gallery in The Gables is open weekends only, by appointment. For more information, visit crystalapostol.com.

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