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Strong roots help LRS grow

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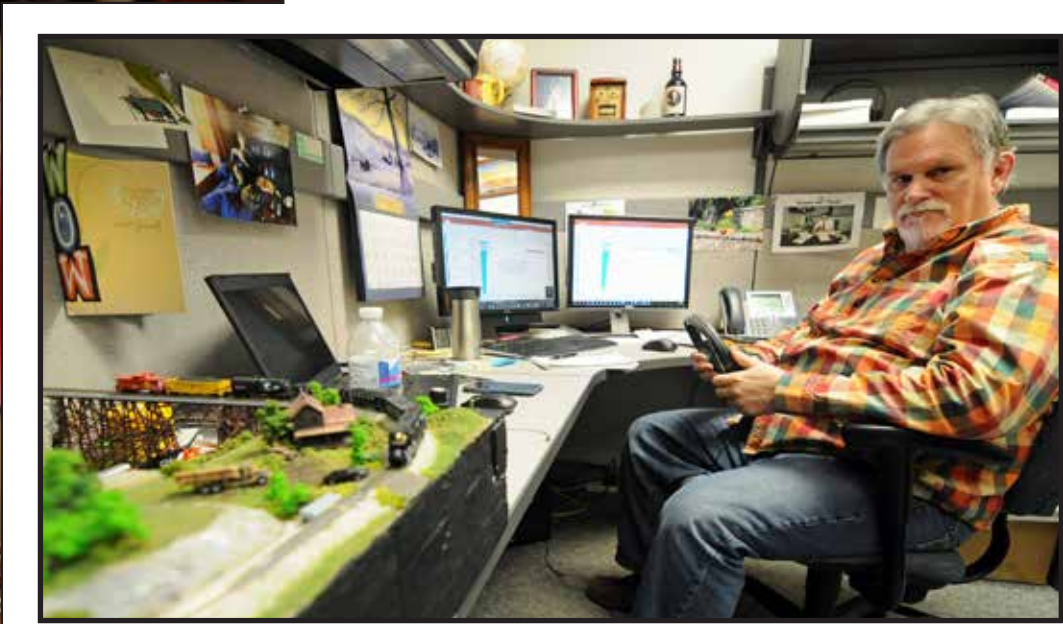
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LRS employees can personalize their work spaces, as demonstrated by Tom Payne (above) with his model railroad layout.
 Left: Owner Dick Levi at his desk, always ready with a smile.
 PHOTOS/ BY DAVID BLANCHETTE

Strong roots help LRS grow

Private ownership allows long-term attention to meeting customer needs

BY DAVID BLANCHETTE

LRS turns 39 years old this year and is going stronger than ever, with operations on five continents and the ongoing expansion of its world headquarters in Springfield. But the global leader of information technology solutions remains firmly rooted in the Springfield community and dedicated to the well-being of its employees, many of whom have been with the company since its founding.

“Employees get a Rolex watch on their 25th anniversary. It’s amazing the number of Rolex watches we’ve given out over the years,” said LRS Vice President Ryan Levi. “We appreciate the employees and we don’t take them for granted. Employees are what make the company great, and giving them benefits and extras are some of the ways we show our appreciation for their dedication and hard work.”

Dick Levi, Roger Ray and Bob Shoup founded Levi, Ray & Shoup Inc. in 1979 as a local computer consulting company. Known as LRS, the company employs more than 800 people, including about 300 in Springfield and offers numerous products and services including printing software, consulting services, pension administration software, computer hardware, education and technical training and website development and hosting.

The company began with a good idea and blossomed from there.

“My dad (Dick Levi) developed a product for CIPS, which is now Ameren, and they realized it was something they could market around the world,” Ryan Levi said. “He developed the first software so you could print from large IBM mainframe systems anywhere throughout the company. Before, if you did work on a computer and needed to have it printed, you had to go to the data center to get your print jobs.”

LRS bought the software rights from CIPS so it could market the software to other companies, then as LRS grew they added their own marketing, sales and distribution divisions. The initial printing software product is now used

by approximately 65 percent of the Fortune 500 companies, Levi said.

The LRS global headquarters is located on West Monroe in Springfield, where construction is underway on a \$25 million, 58,000-square-foot building with space for 177 offices and work stations, a 72-seat auditorium, and 10 meeting/conference rooms. Construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2018, and it will allow LRS to add from 45 to 70 new jobs, with the majority of those based in Springfield. Twenty-

Technologies and Cirrato, a company based in Sweden.

LRS is a privately held company that has experienced steady growth since its founding. It’s not the meteoric growth that stockholders of publicly traded companies seek, but LRS sees that as a good thing.

“Public companies are always based on ‘What have you done for me this quarter?’ and typically they have outside investors who are looking for double-digit returns and a constant

customers’ information secure.

“Typically, when a user prints a document the printer in large organizations is located in some shared space, so the document sits on the printer and then you would go and pick it up,” Matthews said. “But a lot of times someone else could walk by and pick up that document, either accidentally or on purpose, before you could get there.”

“One of the newest technologies that we are employing now as part of this new acquisition is the ability to print to a queue that holds it, then you go to the device, swipe your badge, and it gets printed with you standing right there,” Matthews said. “Health care is a big market for us, and this new system is a tremendous asset when you think about the security of patient information.”

Product reliability is also a focus for LRS, and the company has a large and well-trained support team to handle customer concerns, Matthews said. LRS software runs in the background but is key to driving crucial applications of a business.

“A printer problem at a hospital, for instance, could have people waiting to be admitted because there aren’t admission forms to sign. Or in the manufacturing industry, where printing of shipping documents and labels are important for the manufacturer to make sure the shipping of their products make it onto the trucks and out the door on time,” Matthews said. “Many of the largest manufacturers in the world utilize LRS software to make sure there is no delay in shipping their products.”

“For most businesses, time is money. When items don’t ship, trucks cannot depart or planes cannot leave the gate, and this can have a huge impact on the business and its ability to generate revenue,” Matthews said. “In a lot of cases, the printing of key documents typically is what drives the business and when those documents don’t print, the business stops.”

The global focus of LRS also comes with challenges that most people could never imagine. The two largest banks in Russia, for instance, use LRS software. But LRS must carefully negotiate through the United States sanctions that are in place against Russia.

Matthews said Southeast Asia is a difficult market because the cost of products is a lot cheaper there and they prefer to write their own



The health club for employees at LRS’ Springfield world headquarters. PHOTO/ BY DAVID BLANCHETTE

one new jobs have already been added since the building’s June 2017 groundbreaking.

LRS also has offices in Bloomington and Chicago, Illinois; Anaheim, California; Denver, Colorado; Glastonbury, Connecticut; Alpharetta, Georgia; San Jose, Costa Rica; Overland Park, Kansas; Minneapolis, Minnesota; St. Louis, Missouri; Dallas, Texas; Cheltenham, United Kingdom; Paris, France; Munich, Germany; Milano, Italy; Madrid, Spain; Stockholm, Sweden; Singapore; and North Sydney, Australia.

LRS distributors are located in Japan, Taiwan, Russia, Israel, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia and Venezuela.

Recent LRS acquisitions include the U.S.-based electronic printing security firm Capella

high growth pattern,” Levi said. “The nice thing about being a private company is, as long as we continue to grow, we are happy with a steady incline. And with our recent acquisitions, we don’t expect those dividends to be paid out for several years, so we can make those long-term decisions.”

Those long-term decisions that LRS can make because it is a privately held company have improved the way they help clients manage the flow of documents. The industry trend now is toward mobility, and employees need to be empowered to work from home, on the road or from multiple office locations. Vice President Greg Matthews said a recent acquisition of a software firm is helping LRS to keep its

COVER PHOTO

Pictured are Dusty Rademaker, left, and Eric Bradley of O’Shea Builders, working on the \$25 million addition to LRS headquarters in Springfield.

PHOTO/ BY JOHN MUCHOW

applications. However, Europe, South America, and especially Australia and Singapore, are hot markets right now, he said.

LRS has several different business divisions that are the direct result of the firm's work in the information technology (IT) industry.

LRS Consulting Services is where it all started, and since 1979 they have been at the forefront of the ever-evolving recruiting and consulting business. The Enterprise Output Management division was formed next, in 1981.

LRS Retirement Solutions has provided defined benefit pension administration software since 1987. They help public retirement systems across the U.S. to offer improved service to their members.

LRS IT Solutions, formed in 1995, focuses on providing infrastructure and cloud operations to meet the business needs of its customers.

LRS Education Services has offered technical training to more than 30,000 people since 1994. The division is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner for Learning and offers CompTIA, Cisco and VMware Certification Training, is a certified EC-Council Training Partner, and a Pearson VUE Authorized Test Center.

LRS Web Solutions provides complete website services for the business community, including design, mobile and app development, search engine optimization, creative services, multimedia and hosting.

LRS Network Support provides technical support services to businesses in central Illinois, including preventative maintenance, troubleshooting and emergency tech support.

LRS also has two divisions that are departures from information technology – Central Illinois Security (CIS) and Diversified Yacht Services (DYS).

CIS designs and installs security systems, fire alarms, video surveillance and access control systems for both residential and commercial applications. DYS is a one-stop shop for comprehensive marine services for the Southwest Florida coast. It offers yacht repair

and service, design and construction, marine installation and rigging.

"Dad had bought a boat and needed someone to captain it," Levi said. "The gentleman who captained his previous vessel did small repairs on boats, but he wanted to get out of that business. So my dad and several others at the company thought, 'I wonder if this is something we can acquire and grow in scale?'"

"So, once we decided, we went all in. I was in banking in St. Louis at the time, and I was told that LRS was looking to invest heavily in Florida, and would I go down there for two years to get it up and running," Levi said. "It ultimately ended up being closer to eight years, but now I'm back up here full time. Currently, I'm in Florida for about a week every other month to oversee those operations."

LRS was named one of the best places to work in 2014 by the *Springfield Business Journal*. The company also strives to hire veterans through its Heroes at Work program.

"It's hard for a company to grow the way that LRS has and to continue to maintain that small-company feel," said LRS senior manager Shannon Heisler. "LRS has somehow figured out how to do that. There's a close-knit feeling with the employees."

"The average length of employment is 12 years. That's unheard of, especially in the technology industry," Heisler said. "And our overall retention is 90 percent."

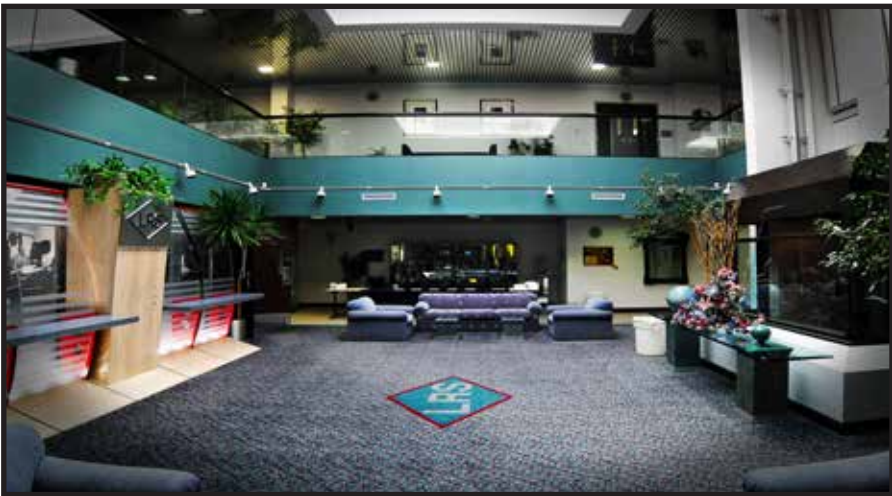
Levi, Ray & Shoup, Inc. had a Springfield



At LRS headquarters construction is underway on a \$25 million, 58,000 square foot expansion.

Below: The Atrium at the existing headquarters building.

PHOTOS/ BY DAVID BLANCHETTE



focus from day one. Their first community sponsorship was a Little League team. Since then, LRS has been a major supporter of local causes and organizations including Habitat for Humanity, Hoogland Center for the Arts, Kidzeum, Memorial Center for Learning and Innovation and Relay for Life.

In addition, LRS officials have just announced that they have signed a three-year agreement to be the presenting sponsor of the local Web.com golf tournament. It will be called the Lincoln Land Championship Tournament presented by LRS.

LRS sponsors several scholarships for high school and college students pursuing a career in the information technology field.

Annual scholarships are presented to selected high school seniors at several Springfield-area high schools. The company also has named scholarships for selected Computer Science majors each year at University of Illinois Springfield and at Illinois College in Jacksonville.

"We are very fortunate to be in the position that we are in making Springfield our home, so we want to continue to contribute and give back to the things that make Springfield what it is," Matthews said. ♦

David Blanchette is a freelance writer from Jacksonville and is also the co-owner of Studio 131 Photography in Springfield.

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New at the top of Central Illinois Builders



New to the desk of Executive Vice President at Central Illinois Builders' headquarters on Edwards Street, Roger Huebner enjoys a nice view of the State Capitol.

PHOTO/ BY RACHEL JOHNSON

Roger Huebner discusses trends in the changing world of construction

BY RACHEL JOHNSON

After 28 years with the Illinois Municipal League, Roger Huebner had had enough of state politics and made a move to return to what he considered his roots. Originally from Redbud, Illinois, south of Belleville, he came from a family of electricians, operating engineers and other tradesmen. "My dad was a carpenter," he said. "I was actually a union carpenter at one point. That's how I paid for law school."

After spending 10 months as their Director of Labor Relations, Huebner was recently appointed Executive Vice President of the Central Illinois Builders of AGC, which oversees 46 counties. "They knew that Denny Larson, the previous vice president, had announced his retirement. So, when I was first interviewing, they expressed that that could be a possibility. First, they wanted to see how I performed. And, if I caught onto the issues and was able to do both jobs," Huebner said.

For now, Huebner plans to both run the association and deal with labor issues. He says that construction is slowly picking up in central Illinois. "With Illinois, we went into the recession a little bit later and we stayed in it longer than almost every other state. We stabilized several

years ago and we're starting to come out of it," Huebner said.

Construction is vulnerable to economic fluctuations and a multitude of unanticipated variables such as weather or labor. "People often forget that contracting is a definitely risky game," Huebner said. "You give them a bid; you've got to live by your bid. You can lose a business pretty easily in construction."

Companies change as smaller ones sometimes retire or go out of business. Or, sometimes companies come together for a specific project, find it works well, and merge. This could affect the organization's revenues, but surprisingly it's been steady since dues for membership in CIB are based on the company's size and revenues. "So, it's kind of leveled out," Huebner said.

Illinois is a large state and construction and growth varies, but in Springfield, construction has slowed. "We're such a government town," Huebner said. "The government itself is not building like it used to."

Part of Huebner's job is to keep construction companies informed of changing legislation, new technology and safety issues. "Recently, wage increases per hour, per man have been the issue," Huebner said. "Labor costs are a

major element of any bid."

His predecessor, Larson, was an engineer. Huebner thinks his background as a lawyer helps with reading through and negotiating contracts. Plus, his two decades of working with the state agencies located in Springfield give him a familiarity with state government and its departments. "It's handy to have state departments close by," he said.

Technology has changed the business, making it easier to share information. In the past when workers ran into an issue on site, everything would shut down until the proper departments had been notified and the issue corrected, likely on paper. Now, information and photos can be sent instantly, corrected on a shared platform, and work can continue seamlessly.

Safety issues change as well as circumstances and new information become available. "Last year is an example," Huebner said. "We put in cellphone language in every contract. It's one thing when a company calls or texts an employee with job-related information, but it's another thing when they're just texting back and forth to a friend and they're operating a crane."

Last year, OSHA put into effect some

silica rules. "Silica is a fibrous substance at a molecular level that can cause cancer. There's all kinds of protocols to deal with things that you're doing on the job site that could produce silica. The silica could be in things that are obvious and it could be created by things that are not obvious," Huebner explained.

As an example, if you're drilling a hole in a concrete floor in an enclosed area and there are certain ingredients in the concrete batch, you might have a chance of creating these particulates. Because of this awareness, you'll see more and more construction workers on the job wearing full respirators.

CIB put on a seminar just this past December to educate the industry on what to look for and how to wear the respirators. Huebner expected 30-40 people to attend and they saw 90.

Huebner maintains that the organization which was founded in the mid-20th century is even more relevant today. Unions at that time were just forming. "Now, we have more mature relations with unions," he said.

Helping the unions negotiate contracts, stay current on laws and safety issues, and field questions on pension funds for all the trades are just a few of the services CIB offers. ♦

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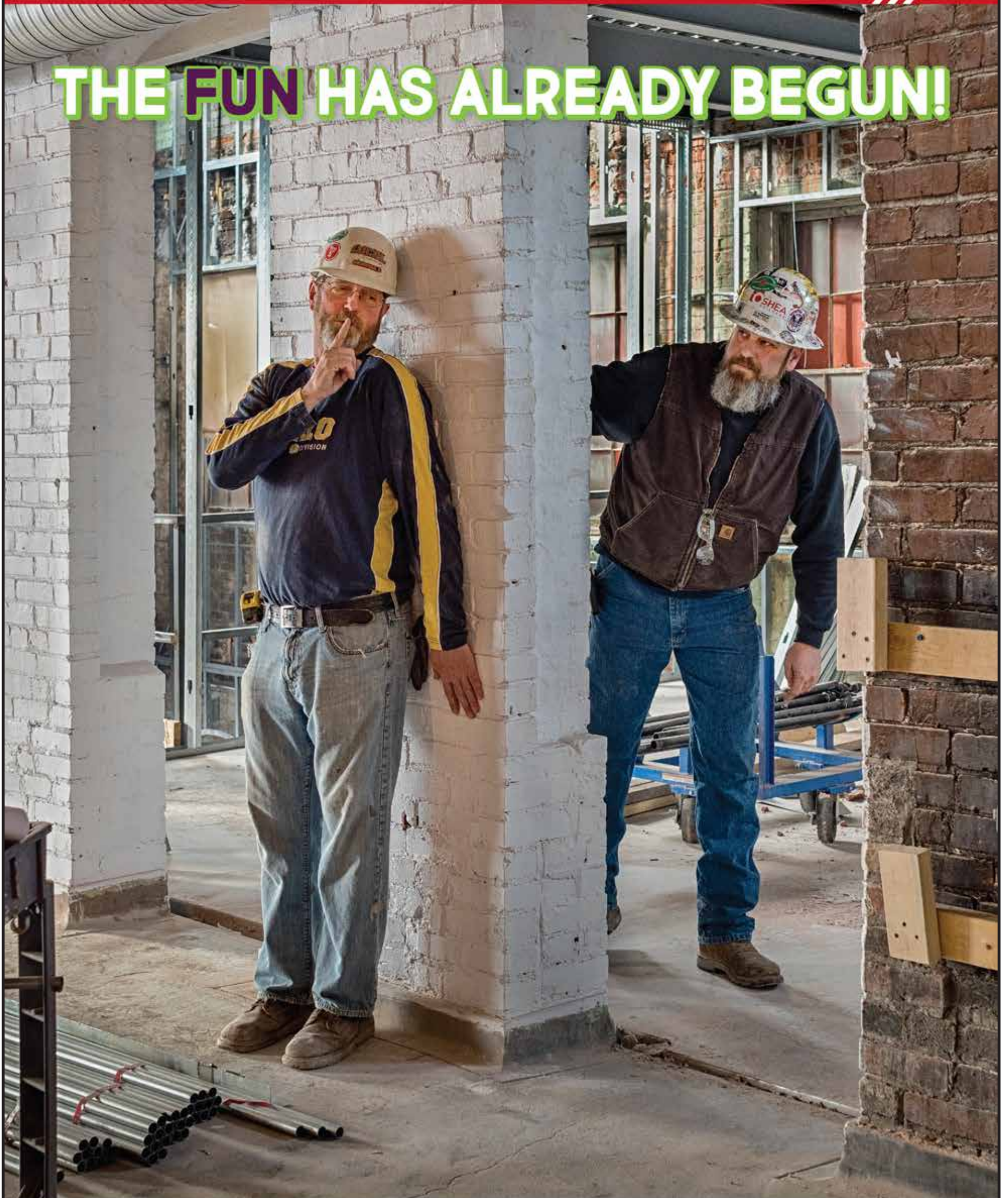


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THE FUN HAS ALREADY BEGUN!



Dave Duffer (left) and Eric Lovely of O'Shea Builders aren't playing around (well, maybe sometimes) when it comes to making sure construction on Springfield's new children's museum stays on track for a summer opening!



COMMERCIAL BUILDERS

Sources: The builders.
Ranked by number of full-time employees.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=) WEBSITE / EMAIL	NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	PARTNERS / PRINCIPALS	AREAS OF SPECIALTY	% SUB- CONTRACTED	RECENT NOTABLE PROJECTS	YEAR EST'D
1	United Contractors Midwest, Inc. 3151 Robbins Road Springfield, IL 62704	217-546-6192 217-546=1904 ucm.biz contact@ucm.biz	170	Robert Bruner, Pres.; Mike Cullinan, Chairman	Asphalt Paving, Concrete Paving, Bridge Building, Earthwork	15	Springfield: construction of an underpass to carry the Norfolk Southern Railway Company over Laurel Street between 8th Street and 11th Street and the construction of an underpass to carry the Norfolk Southern Railway Company over Ash Street between 6th Street and 10th Street. Includes earth excavation, structure construction and roadway improvements. Resurfacing of Woodside Road from west of IL 4 to east of Old Chatham Road. Includes HMA surface paving, earth excavation, structure construction and construction of concrete median.	2001
2	O'Shea Builders 3401 Constitution Drive Springfield, IL 62711	217-522-2826 888-930=2009 osheabuilders.com info@osheabuilders.com	145	Michael E. O'Shea, Pres.; David L. "Bud" O'Shea, CEO	Design-Build, Construction Management, General Contracting	70	LRS Campus Expansion, Memorial Medical Center Expansion, Springfield Clinic First - 900 Building, Springfield Municipal Parking Garage, Altorfer Inc., Fresh Visions Church, HSHS St. John's Women and Children's Center Pediatric Floor Renovation, Champaign School District High School Renovations, Passavant Area Hospital Renovations, Pana Community Hospital Addition.	1902
3	Halverson Construction Co., Inc. 620 N. 19th St. Springfield, IL 62702	217-753-0027 217-753=1904 halversonconstruction.com stevenh@halversonconstruc- tion.com	80	Steven Halverson, Pres.; Larry Antonacci, VP; Kyle Zellers, VP	General Contracting, Bridges, Commercial/ Industrial Construction, Construction Management, Steel Erection, Pre-Cast	30	Illinois: A. Lincoln Presidential Library Parking Garage, Union Station Restoration, MacArthur Blvd Highway Bridges/Interchange/Extension, St. Joseph Home Dementia Wing Addn., Erin's Pavilion, Motomart Convenience Store Gas Station, SMTD - Springfield Mass Transit District, Camp Lincoln, Renovate Jacksonville High School, IHoP, CEFCU, County Market (2nd & Carpenter), PCCC phase 2&3, Hy-Vee, UIS Public Affairs Center.	1978
4	Sangamo Construction 2100 E. Moffat Springfield, IL 62702	217-544-9871 217-544=9873 sangamo.net office@sangamo.net	50	Allan Reyhan, Jr.; Matthew P. Reyhan	Bridge/Highway Construction	20	I-74 10 structures overlay, Spfld: Ridge Ave. HSRR crossing, East Lake Shore structure rehab, US 50 three structures rehab; IL 15 structure rehab.	1990
5	R. D. Lawrence Construction Co., Ltd. 603 N. Amos Ave. Springfield, IL 62702	217-787-1384 217-787=3856 rdlawrence.com info@rdlawrence.com	45	John Goetz	General Contracting, De- sign-Build, Commercial, Industrial, Restorations, Remodels, Additions	60	Illinois Executive Mansion Renovation, MacMurray College Jane Hall renovation, Farmers State Bank & Trust Co. renovation, Adjutant General's Office Building plumbing and circulation renovation, Illinois Realtors Bicentennial Plaza.	1984
6	Jones-Blythe Construction Co. 1030 W. Reynolds St. Springfield, IL 62702	217-787-1640 217-787=1666 jones-blythe.com jblythe@jones-blythe.com	40	John F. Blythe	Design-Build, General Contractor, Construction Management, Industrial Construction	60	St. John's Hospital, Enbridge Pipeline, Pumping and Delivery Stations, Tallgrass Natural Gas Compressor Stations.	1930
7	Evans Construction 1900 E. Washington St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-525-1456 217-525=2886 evansconst.com don@evansconst.com	20	Donald Evans, Pres.	General Contracting, Construction Management, Design/Build, Commercial/Industrial Construction	60	Springfield: Memorial Medical Center, SMTD Site Development, KEB New Office, AT&T Renovations; Taylorville: Memorial Hospital, St Mary's School Addition, Jacksonville: Jacksonville Middle School, Decatur: Dick Van Dyke Remodel, Our Savior School; Quincy: Insurance Office Renovations.	1913
7	Siciliano, Inc. 3601 Winchester Road Springfield, IL 62707	217-585-1200 217-585=1211 sicilianoinc.com buildit@sicilianoinc.com	20	Richard E. Lawrence, Pres.; Kim Lawrence, Sec.	General Contractor, Historical Restoration, Design-Build, Commercial/Industrial Construction, Site Work	15	Historical restoration Booth-Bateman/Kennedy-Ferguson Building downtown Springfield, IL; AMEREN Services – Multiple projects throughout state; State Retirement Systems new security upgrades, Logan County Housing Authority, SIU School of Medicine.	1968

Backlog in state capital projects remains

One year later, infrastructure still feels impact of the budget crisis

BY MEGAN SWETT

While Illinois successfully ended its historic budget impasse last August, the lasting effects can still be felt statewide.

Last February, *Springfield Business Journal* reported on how the budget crisis impacted construction and maintenance in Illinois. At that time a multitude of government-funded entities, like correctional facilities and public universities, were unable to sustain the level of maintenance and upkeep they required because of the budget impasse.

One year later, it still rings true.

The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) has the highest deferred maintenance backlog in the state at \$1.9 billion in FY18, which began July 1, 2017.

According to Gov. Bruce Rauner's proposed capital budget for FY18, the needs of the 25 adult facilities that IDOC operates range from "minor tuckpointing to health and safety concerns." Some specific projects listed in the budget include renovating showers and correcting structural deficiencies.

"Correctional facilities necessarily operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and should be able to maintain minimum standards to ensure the safety of both staff and the inmates housed," Rauner said.

Other state entities feel the lasting burden of the budget impasse as well.

In early January, Rauner visited the Illinois Veterans' Home at Quincy (IVH Quincy) where at

least 61 people contracted Legionnaires' disease and 13 veterans died of it in the past three years. The disease is a type of pneumonia that spreads through water systems.

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin called for the facility to shut down if the problems causing this outbreak couldn't be corrected. Though he later rescinded that statement, he and fellow senator Tammy Duckworth penned a letter to Rauner asking to see his plans for the facility.

"You called for regular reviews of water treatment protocols, investments in the water infrastructure, improvements in the local water source, and upgrades to resident buildings and rooms or even new construction," they said. "However, we – and the Veterans of IVH Quincy and their families who have been waiting patiently for three years now – have yet to see a specific plan of action."

Most of the funds needed to address the problems at Quincy could be federally reimbursed, according to Rauner. Durbin stood by this, saying of the Quincy project, "If the state of Illinois under the governor's leadership will move forward, I'll do everything I can to bring in federal funds to pay for the transition."

However, federal funding won't reimburse every capital project in the state, meaning plenty of projects remain in limbo, like capital projects for schools.

Even with a state budget in place, schools across the state have held back on capital projects in recent months. According to Roger Huebner, executive vice president of Central



The Illinois State Board of Education reports that the state's K-12 schools need about \$7.5 billion for capital projects.

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Illinois Builders of AGC, a main reason for this is the confusion caused by the new school funding equation.

"Most districts are awaiting a solution to better understand the new state funding methods and what they can expect in payments," he said. "So it's still an issue."

A 2016 survey conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education concluded that, statewide, K-12 schools required about \$7.5 billion for capital projects. The majority of these projects include general repairs and remodeling, increasing accessibility measures, and fixing heating and cooling systems.

While most of the higher education focus during the budget impasse concerned grants, wages, and operating costs, universities took a hit to their capital projects, as well.

"As colleges and universities attempt to implement a capital plan for their respective campuses, administrators express concerns they are facing a critical crossroad in strategically

planning the future of their institutions while meeting enrollment and programmatic needs," the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) said. "Many facilities have long exceeded useful life expectancy standards and are experiencing mounting health, life and safety concerns."

Nyle Robinson, deputy director for fiscal affairs and budgeting, recommended that IBHE request \$1.5 billion in capital funding for FY19, which begins July 1 this year, noting that it would only "partially address" the \$5.5 billion in deferred maintenance.

"Given the long drought in capital funding," Robinson said, "a \$1.5 billion request would be a modest investment in maintaining the state's \$26.3 billion public higher education infrastructure." ♦

Megan Swett is an editorial intern for Illinois Times through the public affairs reporting program of University of Illinois Springfield. Contact her at intern@illinoistimes.com.

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David Plake

David Plake has transitioned into the role of President, as announced by Glen P. Garrison, Chairman of Garrison Group, Inc. David has been with Garrison Group for 8 years and is a Certified Property Manager through the Institute of Real Estate Management. David has over 25 years of experience in facilities management and Garrison Group is excited for him to be moving into this leadership role. David resides in Sherman with his wife Regenia, and their three children.



Ashley Mozingo

Ashley Mozingo has joined the Property Management Team as a Property Management Assistant. Ashley is a Texas transplant and new to Springfield. Ashley will be working with our clients to organize and facilitate their full-service management needs. She studied Business Administration at Missouri Southern University.



Tyler Smith

Tyler Smith has been added to the Garrison Group Brokerage Team as the new Marketing Director and Broker. Tyler is a Springfield native, and has recently finished up his M.B.A. through Benedictine University. In the past he has been a part of local organizations, such as, the Springfield Jr. Blues.

Developments at Garrison Group, Inc.









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	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX WEBSITE / EMAIL	NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	PARTNERS / PRINCIPALS	UNION AFFILIATED	RECENT NOTABLE PROJECTS	YEAR EST'D
1	Anderson Electric, Inc. 3501 Sixth St. Hwy. W. Suite #1 Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-5471 217-529=0412 anderson-electric.com wesa@anderson-electric.com	200	Employee Owned	Yes	SIU Simmon's Cancer Center, Porta High School - Wind Turbine Project, Illinois Primary Healthcare, Concordia Village various projects, White Oaks Mall rehab, First United Methodist Church, SMTD, St. John's Hospital reroute systems and demo, Spring Creek Water Treatment Plant, CWLP contract 3 pump stations, Passavant Hospital medical office building, Meijer renovation, Ball Elementary addition - Chatham, Memorial Medical Center surgery expansion & patient care tower.	1918
2	B & B Electric, Inc. 3000 Reilly Drive Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-9666 217-528=5481 bnbelectric.net todd@bnbelectric.net	88	Todd M. Brinkman, Tim Brinkman	Yes	Springfield: State Capitol / Supreme Court / PCCC renovations, Kindred Healthcare, Memorial Medical Center, Springfield Clinic First - North, St. John's Sixth St. - Lincolnshire, New Orthopedic Center, LLC - Workforce Center, Prairie Diagnostic Center, New Vision Care, Sacred Heart-Griffin addition, YMCA, Glenwood Elementary School; Lincoln: A. Lincoln Memorial Hospital and Office Building; Jacksonville: Passavant Hospital; Taylorville: Taylorville Memorial Hospital, Medical Office Building, MMC- Learning Center, Altorfer, and Calvary Church.	1962
3	Egizii Electric, Inc. 3009 Singer Ave. Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-4001 217-528=1677 eeiholding.com kpaoni@eeiholding.com	74	Robert W. Egizii	Yes	Dallman Generating Station (CWLP) President Abraham Lincoln Museum, Kennedy Space Center, Boeing Aircraft, Wilkes Barre, Prairie Power Service Contract, Ameren Service Contract, MSM Service Contract, Washington Park Bridge Replacement, Litchfield Airport, Quincy Airport, Veteran's Parkway Rehab, Wabash Avenue Widening, Meredosia Bridge, Mt. Sterling Municipal Airport, Carlinville Shipman Blacktop, Dirksen Parkway Signals, Stanford Avenue Signals, Morton Avenue Signals, State of Illinois Electrical Maintenance, IDOR Security Integrator, Bright New day Investments, UIS Data Center, Senate Hearing Room 212, Logan Correctional Center - Hi Voltage, Lincoln High Speed Rail, CWLP Facility Improvements, CWLP Igniter Construction.	1967
4	Senergy Electric, Inc. 509 North Elm Williamsville, IL 62693	217-566-2826 217-566-2827 www.senergy-electric.com info@senergy-electric.com	33	Matthew J. Giacomini, Brandon M. Keafer	Yes	Community Hospital addition and renovation - Pana, Cultivation Center - Chambersburg, PA., HSHS St. Francis renovation, MMC SIU Center for Family Medicine, The Villas Senior Care addition - Sherman, MMC OR renovations, St. Paul's Lutheran Church Early Learning Center, Obed & Isaac's Microbrewery & Eatery - Peoria, Iles Elementary School renovation & HVAC upgrade.	2014
5	Ryan Electrical Solutions 4151 W. Jefferson Springfield, IL 62702	217-698-4877 217-698=8481 ryanelectricalsolutions.com dennis@ryanelectricalsolutions.com	30	Dennis Ryan	No	Various commercial, residential and audio visual projects. agriculture. backup and portable generator sales, installation and services.	1995
6	Ruby Electric 341 S. Meadowbrook Road Springfield, IL 62711	217-787-4949 217-787=2043 rubyelectric.com johnruby@rubyelectric.com	25	John Ruby	No	Various commercial and residential projects, standby generator systems commercial and residential.	1978
7	Lindsey Electric 3260 Terminal Ave. Springfield, IL 62707	217-544-6789 217-544=9591 lindsey-electric.com lori@lindsey-electric.com	12	Catherine A. Lindsey - pres., J. Michael Lindsey - v.p., Lori A. Lindsey Von Behren - corp. sec.	Yes	Various commercial and residential projects.	1972
8	Jim Watts Electric 2801 E. Sangamon Ave. Springfield, IL 62702	217-652-9950 www.jimwattselectric.com wattselectric1@yahoo.com	11	Jim Watts	No	Various residential and commercial, generators, and installation, security systems.	2011
9	Mansfield Electric Co. 4425 N. Peoria Road Springfield, IL 62702	217-523-0811 217-528=3111 ed@mansfield-electric.com	10	H. Edward Midden, III	Yes	Sangamon County Complex, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, UIS - University Hall, The Bridge Short Stay Nursing Home, Enos Elementary School, Hy-Vee.	1949
9	Prairie State Plumbing & Heating 3900 N. Peoria Road Springfield, IL 62702	217-636-9000 217-636-8927	10	Jerry Judd	Yes	Virginia School District, Springfield Pepsi, LRS, SIU School of Medicine, Brown County Schools, Illinois Veterans' Home, Springfield Metro Sanitary District, IDOT Warehouse buildings.	2005
10	Carmean Electric Inc. 2863 Singer Ave. Springfield, IL 62703	(217) 789-1155 (217) 789=9578 carmeanelectricofspringfield.com carmeanelectric@gmail.com	5	Wayne Shephard	Yes	Various Residential and Commercial projects. 24-hour emergency service, maintenance, new wiring, re-wiring, utility work, solar design and installation, LED lighting.	1970



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MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS

Sources: Mechanical Contractors Association of Central Illinois, the contractors.
Listed by total number of employees – peak season.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=) WEBSITE / EMAIL	NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	PARTNERS / PRINCIPALS	TYPES OF SERVICES	RECENT NOTABLE PROJECTS	YEAR EST'D
1	E. L. Pruitt 3090 Colt Road Springfield, IL 62707	217-789-0966 217-789=2694 elpruitt.com	262	John Pruitt	HVAC, Plumbing, Fire Protection, Architectural Sheet Metal	Memorial Medical Center, St. Johns Hospital, Springfield Clinic, Villas of Sherman, University of Illinois at Springfield, Millikin University, Akorn, ADM, Bridgestone-Firestone, Decatur Memorial, St. Mary's Hospital, Decatur Park District, Crown, Cork & Seal, Passavant Area Hospital, Jacksonville Water Treatment Plant, Illini Community Hospital, Dominos, Fuyao, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Pioneer, Ameren, Municipal Parking Garage, Concordia Village, Kidzeum, Nestle, Pana Hospital, White Oaks Mall, LRS, Liberty Utilities, Mt. Pulaski Schools, Taylorville CUSD #3, St. Francis Convent, Mueller Company, HSHS, Hershey Towers, NorthMac School District, Taylorville High School, DaVita Dialysis, Lincoln Land Community College, Our Savior Lutheran School, Hanson Engineering, Chatham Elementary, SIU Center of Family Medicine, Lutheran High School, Prairie Eye, 911 Decatur Memorial, WICS, Barney's Furniture, Hope Veterinarian Clinic, West Iles Strip Mall.	1971
2	Henson Robinson Company Petersburg Plumbing and Excavating 3550 Great Northern Ave. Springfield, IL 62711	217-544-8451 217-544=0829 henson-robinson.com hrc@henson-robinson. com	230	Brian Vogt	Commercial HVAC, Roofing, Plumbing, Piping, Refrigeration, Architectural Sheet Metal, HVAC/Plumbing Service, Sewer and Water Mains, Excavation, Residential Heating and Cooling Installation and Service	U of I Champaign, ISU, UIS, Winchester, Northpoint, South Central, Springfield Public Schools, Ball/Chatham, North Green, SHG, Normal, Taylorville, Jacksonville, North Mac. Medical: St. John's, Memorial, Blessing, Springfield Clinic, Prairie Eye Clinic. Government: Governor's Mansion, IDOT, IDOC, Illinois State Police, IEMA, Camp Lincoln, CMS, Secretary of State, CWLP, Springfield, Chatham, Taylorville, Jacksonville. Various: Caterpillar, State Farm, White Oaks Mall, NAPA, St. Clara's, Bunn, Panda, Walmart, Villas Senior Care.	1861
3	F. J. Murphy & Son, Inc. 1800 Factory Ave. Springfield, IL 62702	217-528-4081 217-528=4147 fjmurphy.com cfricke@fjmurphy.com	75	Chad Fricke	Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Fire Sprinklers, Refrigeration, Restaurant Equipment, Ice Machines, residential, commercial, institutional, installation and repair	Illinois Supreme Court, Illinois School for the Deaf, Jacksonville Development Center, Regency Nursing Home, Dept. of Agriculture, SEIU Offices, White House/Black Market, H.H. Gregg, White Oaks Mall, The Icing, Hot Topic, U of I Champaign, UIS, Western IL University, Eastern IL University, IL State University, Memorial Hospital, SIU Edwardsville, SIU Carbondale, Caterpillar Peoria, Preckwinkle Home upgrade, hundreds of small repair and remodel projects - residential and commercial.	1947
4	Prairie State Plumbing & Heating 3900 Peoria Road Springfield, IL 62702	217-636-9000 217-636-8927 www.prairiestateinc.com jjudd@prairiestateinc.com	40	Jerry Judd	Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electical, Mechanical, Sitework, Ventilation	Rochester Intermediate School, Rochester Atheltic Complex, Mason District Hospital, Blessed Sacrament School, AT&T, Christian Homes, Springfield Metro Sanitary District, Palmyra Northwestern School, Springfield Pepsi, Brandt Consolidated, Prairie Capital Convention Center remodel.	2005

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4	Airmasters - Commercial Mechanical Contractor 1330 North Grand Ave. West Springfield, IL 62702	217-522-9793 217-522=7293 theairmasters.com rmathews@theairmasters.com	40	Robert Mathews	Commercial Mechanical Contractor, HVAC/R, Sheet Metal	St. Johns Hospital - Life Safety Upgrades; St. Mary's Hospital - IT Upgrades; White Oaks Mall - Auntie Anne's; White Oaks Mall - Kay Jeweler Remodel; Fiducial - Remodel Laurel United Methodist - Chiller Park Place - Boiler; First Congregational Church - VRRV; System Prairie Power - IT Upgrades; Christian Village - Replacements; Casey's General Stores - Service, Replacements and New Construction.	1993
5	Allied Plumbing & Heating, Inc. 1315 Wabash Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-698-5500 217-698=5505 alliedpnh.com mark.miller@alliedpnh.com	30	Mark Miller	Residential and Light Commercial Service, Replacement and Construction, Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Ventilation, Sewer and Drain	HVAC and Plumbing in both Residential New Construction, Replacement, Service and Light Commercial New Construction, Replacement and Service.	1977
5	Mike Williams Plumbing and Heating 3225 E. Clearlake Springfield, IL 62712	217-753-4545 217-753=4548 mikewilliams.net csr1@mikewilliams.net	30	Lewis Williams	HVAC, Heating, Air Conditioning and Plumbing	Residential Service & Repair & Pre-Season Maintenance Tune-up.	1976
6	Aire Servv HRI Plumbing 560 North St. Springfield, IL 62704	217-523-8594 217-243=7002 aireserv.com/cil aireserv@as-hri.com	20	Chris Williams, Jennifer Williams	Residential, commercial, and industrial service for HVAC equipment and ductwork. Indoor Air Quality, including duct cleaning. Commercial kitchen and refrigeration, including ice machines, coolers, and freezers. Chillers, boilers, and Geothermal. Plumbing for residential and light commercial.	Cargill, Jacksonville High School - Building automation; IL Coalition Against Domestic Violence - rooftop units; IL Dept. of Human Services, Casey's General Stores, Multiple local banks and restaurants. Multiple residential projects.	1985
7	Central Illinois York, Inc. 1210 E. Laurel Springfield, IL 62703	217-522-3371 217-522=1341 york321@aol.com	6	Bruce Ruyle	Commercial, Residential, Heating, AC, Ventilation, Sheet Metal	Midwest Technical Institute, Andrews Engineering, Kerasotes Theaters - Parkway Pointe; Midwest Technical Institute Peoria; Eagles Club, Riverton; Holiday Inn, Baton Rouge, Maryville Manor; City of Salem, Ill.; Staab Funeral Home.	1940
8	Eades Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc. 525 Fraase Road New Berlin, IL 62670	217-529-5767 217-725=5391 eadesheatingandair@gmail.com	5	Ron & Melanie Eades	Commercial and residential service and repair, residential installation for all heating and air conditioning systems, water heater repair and replacement	Service all of Springfield and surrounding area for over 33 years, service and replace units for multiple AT&T locations all over Illinois, specialize in servicing property management rental properties.	1983



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Senergy Electric has made the health care sector a major focus. The company's work on the SIU Family Medicine Clinic at Fifth and Carpenter has led to other contracts with Memorial Health System.

Fast-growing Senergy Electric has big plans

With small-town roots, specializing in health care and security systems

BY ZACHARY ROTH

Many businesses, whether they are local or national, had humble beginnings. For Matt Giacomini, Brandon Keafer and Senergy Electric, it was no different.

"We waited three months for the phone to ring," said Giacomini, Senergy's president. "The first year was pretty slow. We didn't do a whole lot. At this point, we have \$6-7 million (in annual revenue) and 33 employees."

Senergy began as two different companies started by two drastically different people. Giacomini's specialties are in electrical contracting and alternative energy, while Keafer's are in communications, marketing and business development.

The two men merged their expertise, Giacomini in electrical engineering and Keafer in technology, to form a new company based in Williamsville in 2016. Within a year, the company had bloomed and has plans to continue growing its footprint throughout central Illinois.

"I started this company primarily out of frustration with other options in the marketplace," Giacomini said. "I saw an opportunity to start something that I didn't think existed."

Giacomini considers himself to be quite rigid in his beliefs and tactics in his chosen profession. And Senergy has become one

of central Illinois' fastest growing electrical contractors.

One of Senergy's main focuses is in the health care sector, where it has worked with distinguished companies like Memorial Health System which built a new SIU family medicine clinic in Springfield, with the help of Senergy's contractors. In addition to the clinic, Senergy also assisted in the renovation of operating rooms at Memorial Medical Center and a new addition to Sherman Villas, which is operated by Springfield Clinic.

"There's a whole other element to being precise, being careful in health care," Giacomini said. "There's so many things that affect your customer and your customer's customers (patients). They're very sensitive and very particular about who does their work."

Much of the company's speedy growth can be attributed to Giacomini's partner, Keafer, who started Cardinal Technology Solutions in 2013. He eventually merged his company with Senergy in 2016, becoming the company's vice president, specializing in marketing and business development. Keafer's expertise in technology has helped with the formation of Senergy Technologies, which assists in the installation of security apparatuses, IP networks and sound systems for various companies and institutions.

Senergy has also been involved with

updating security systems for local schools, such as the Chatham School District and Springfield Public Schools. Keafer's personal concern for schools and children largely comes from his side job as a part-time police officer.

"I've been involved a lot with schools, both as a police officer training in a school, as a teacher training school districts on a lot of things and now over here at Senergy on the security side of the technology that goes into schools," Keafer said. "Schools are near and dear to my heart."

Despite the quick and steady growth of Senergy within the last two years, it remains a small operation, albeit one that has a growing portfolio. However, the offices in Williamsville are small enough that one must squint to view them from Interstate 55. Nevertheless, Senergy has ambitious plans, including a futuristic project in conjunction with the Williamsville Police Department. There are plans for a series of wireless cameras spread out across the village to monitor daily activities.

"It's a security system that will also handle access control," Giacomini said. "In their squad cars, police can hit a button, control doors... we're going to give them a la carte as to what they're looking for."

What they are looking for includes facial recognition software, from which data will

be sent back to Senergy's lab for use by the village.

"The analytics on what we're deploying could be used for facial recognition, license plate recognition," Giacomini said.

Fancy technology aside, it's the implementation of a solid company culture that has helped Senergy grow from a small company of three employees to one that can secure such projects as one at Memorial Medical Center and another with the Williamsville Police Department.

"I think it's an exciting environment," Keafer said. "We do a lot of good work, and everyone who works here shares in it, and we just want to continue with that trajectory with more people."

Giacomini noted that the culture separates Senergy from other contractors in the field.

"I would describe us as a family, and it's something that's very important," Giacomini said. "I think what makes us different is the communication we have, the closeness we have as a group and the reliance we have on each other as team members." ♦

Zach Roth is a freelance journalist based in Springfield. He graduated in 2016 from Bradley University with a degree in journalism.



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Sources: As listed on the Capital Association of Realtors website: http://seebuildings.com/fs_crenmembers.php
Members listed alphabetically.

AGENT	BUSINESS NAME	ADDRESS	EMAIL	PHONE	MOBILE	FAX
Dennis Albanese	Albanese Realty Corp.	319 E. Madison, Suite 3A, Springfield, IL, 62701	dennisalbanese@il-hotels.com	217-522-7900	217-899-3400	309-210=7253
David Barber	Illini Properties	22 Virginia Lane, Springfield, IL 62712	davidbarber2@gmail.com	217-529-1236	217-652-1064	217-529=8358
John Clark	Real Estate Group	3701 W. Wabash, Springfield, IL 62711	johnbclarkrealtor@yahoo.com	217-787-7000		217-787=7779
Bernard Curvey	Curvey Real Estate, Inc.	611 Springfield Rd, P. O. Box 677, Taylorville, IL 62568	curvey@ctitech.com	217-824-4996		217-287=2111
Tom Frost	Real Estate Group	3701 W. Wabash, Springfield, IL 62711	thomas_frost@sbcglobal.net	217-787-7000	217-652-8972	217-787=7779
Glen Garrison	Garrison Group, Inc.	739 S. 5th Street, Springfield, IL 62703	glen@garrisongroupinc.com	217-241-0202	217-816-2664	217-241=4202
Kevin Graham	Century 21 Real Estate Assoc	2030 Timberbrook, Springfield, IL 62702	KGraham367@aol.com	217-789-7200	217-638-5100	217-789=2600
Sandra Hamilton	Re/Max Professionals	2475 W. Monroe, Springfield, IL 62704	sandyhamilton@gmail.com	217-787-7215	217-778-1010	217-787=8957
Jeffrey Hamrick	Myers Rice Auction & Realty	115 Chatham Road, Springfield, IL 62704	Hamrick1@comcast.net	217-787-3200	217-741-1961	
Richard Hohmann	Hohmann Agency	1850 W. Morton, Jacksonville, IL 62650	Rich@HohmannAgency.com	217-245-6166		217-245=6167
Kirk Jefferis	Cityscape Real Estate, Inc.	2160 S. Sixth St., Springfield, IL 62703	capitalideas@sbcglobal.net	217-522-8800	217-971-2258	217-522=8808
Douglas Kent	Charles E. Robbins Real Estate	2144 S. MacArthur, Springfield, IL 62704	dkent99@msn.com	217-525-2112	217-725-5161	217-525=2275
James Kuhar	Wanless-Spengler, Ltd.	2731 S. MacArthur Blvd., Suite 100, Springfield, IL 62704	jim@jimkuhar.com		217-415-5555	
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	UNION NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE/ FAX (=) / WEBSITE / EMAIL	2017 LOCAL MEMBERSHIP	CONTACT(S)	NUMBER OF IL COUNTIES REPRESENTED	YEAR EST'D
1	International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local Union 916	3361 Teamster Way Springfield, IL 62707	217-522-7932 217-522=9492 teamsters916.org lisa@teamsters916.org	4,631	Tony Barr, President	10	1943
2	Local 477 LIUNA Laborers	1615 N. Dirksen Pkwy. Springfield, IL 62702	217-522-0014 217-522=0090 local477.com	1,500	Brad Schaive, Business Manager; Kirk Kellus, Secretary Treasurer	7	1903
3	International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 965	3520 E. Cook St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-9659 217-528=9060 iuoe965.org operators@comcast.net	1,400	Dennis R. Minick, Business Manager	15	1931
3	United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Local No. 270	211 W. Lawrence Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-528-7571 217-528=9364	1,400	Carl Bimm, President	19	1887
4	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local No. 193	3150 Wide Track Dr. Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-3479 217-544=0193 ibew193.com ibew193@comcast.net	940	Neil Hervey, Business Manager	9	1901
5	Plumbers & Steamfitters, Local 137	2880 E. Cook St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-2724 217-744=6855 ualocal137.org	892	John Haines, Business Manager	18	1895
6	Plasterers and Cement Masons, Local 18	40 Adloff Lane, Suite 6A Springfield, IL 62703	217-585-4221 217-585=4222 lpcmia18.org localunion18@att.net	750	Steve Clement, Business Manager; Mark Winkler, Business Agent and Pres. of Central IL Building and Construction Trades Council	22	1864
7	Sheet Metal Workers, Local 218	2855 Via Verde Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-0161 217-529=6005	700	Ed Robison, Business Manager	21	1969
8	Iron Workers, Local 46	2888 E. Cook St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-4041 217-528=9046 ironworkers46.org iwaustin@sbcglobal.net	315	Shane Austin, Business Manager	20	1908
9	Millwrights, Local 1051	602 Keokuk St. Lincoln, IL 62656	217-735-1051 217-732=1051 millwrightlocal1051.com local1051@carpentersunion.org	296	Jeff Bort, Business Representative; Nate Hodgson, Business Representative	41	1987
10	International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, District Council 58, Local 90	3223 Lake Plaza Dr. Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-6976 217-529=6658 dc58iupat.org mbristow@dc58.org	273	Nicholas Mettlemeier, Business Representative	9	1899
11	United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers, Local 112	301 East Spruce St. Springfield, IL 62704	217-210-2044 217-210=2041 rooferslocal112.com office@rooferslocal112.com	86	Ray Wake, Business Manager	14	1930



Communities are strengthened when union apprentice and training programs help to build a skilled workforce.

Earn as you learn

Trade unions are building jobs through apprenticeship programs

BY CINDA ACKERMAN KLINKNA

Luckist Turner was 30 years old, struggling to make ends meet with three part-time jobs, when he discovered an apprenticeship program through the Local 18, Plasterers and Cement Masons Union. "This changed my life, and I wish I had known of the opportunity when I was in high school," he said.

Several different trade unions comprise the Central Illinois Building and Trades Union, led by their elected president, Mark Winkler, a plasterer and cement mason for 22 years. He says, "An entire generation of students has been told that the only path to success is with a college education. That is the right path for some, but not all. So many don't even know of the possibilities through the unions for training and well-paying jobs."

When people listen to a presentation about the various apprenticeship programs, audible gasps are heard in the audience. Students with a high school diploma or a GED can

get accepted into an apprenticeship, learn a trade while getting paid (more than minimum wage), exit with no debt and a job that earns a handsome salary plus benefits. Dennis Minick, business manager of Local 965 Operating Engineers, knows the importance of helping communities. "We are helping to build a skilled workforce."

"This is earn as you learn," says Winkler. "It is hard, honest work, not just collecting a check."

In his area of cement masons, the apprentice spends three years with a journeyman, with the goal of completing 1,200 hours of work per year. For a first-year apprentice, the salary ranges from \$17-\$25 an hour plus benefits: health insurance, pension, annuity and training.

"There is absolutely no tuition charged.

And, my local gives each apprentice a \$250 starter kit of tools," Winkler said.

Each trade union within the umbrella organization offers its own apprenticeship

program, each with some variation of requirements, training and pay. Some accept applications each month; some when work is needed (specific requirements and application dates are listed on each trade union's website). Most programs, though, require an applicant to be 18 years old, have a high school diploma or GED, and complete a set number of hours within the program working at a site with an experienced journeyman. Some require coursework and tests. The unions take the work seriously and want to ensure that the people who complete the apprenticeships are going to be good workers and skilled in what they do.

Kirk Kellus of Local 477 LIUNA (Laborers International Union of North America) explains that their apprenticeship program requires four one-week classes a year to earn state certification in various areas, such as asbestos. Apprentices visit their four facilities in the state to get trainings and work with a contractor on site, with monthly evaluations. "We want to ensure that the people who complete the apprenticeship are properly trained and well-qualified."

The Operating Engineers program requires more on-site hours than some of the others, plus certain safety trainings. Minick says, "When people are running a hoist, a crane or other heavy equipment, proficiency and safety are key."

Andy Fuchs with the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 137 initiated a Building Trades Career Day. Last November, the second annual day drew over 1,000 people from the area. Over 20 schools participated, and with hands-on demonstrations, participants learned what a job in the trades would entail.

Lincoln Land Community College offers a separate training program for work in the trades, developed in 2007 by Julie Rourke, Director of Workforce Development at LLCC. The various trade unions are actively involved

by speaking to students. Some retired tradesmen teach classes.

"The unions wanted to expand who came in the door and ensure success while also increasing the participation of minorities and women," Rourke says, and the college saw a need to also provide training.

The LLCC program has its own set of requirements: 450 hours divided into courses in math and budgeting, followed by basic shop training and then specific trainings such as welding. Students participate in actual hands-on projects.

Working with the trade unions, the LLCC program provides a booklet of the requirements, application guidelines and contacts for each of the apprenticeship programs offered by the unions.

Winkler explains that jobs are available not just in the Springfield area, but also throughout the union's jurisdiction in Peoria, Decatur, Rock Island and Macomb. There are jobs with the city, Secretary of State, schools, areas that "people often don't realize hire trades workers," says Winkler.

Luckist Turner is one example; he works for the Secretary of State doing concrete work at the various facilities. "Fourteen years ago I went from part-time jobs making \$7.50 an hour to my first year in the apprenticeship program making \$28 an hour. Today, I have a full-time job and the union makes a difference. Plus, things just keep changing in machinery, products and methods so it keeps you going and learning."

Building skilled workers for needed jobs in our communities is at the heart of the trade unions' apprenticeship programs. ♦

Cinda Ackerman Klickna taught high school English and is immediate past president of the Illinois Education Association, which believes vocational careers are important for students to explore.

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Constitution Drive strip center sold

BY MICHELLE OWNBEY

After nearly five years of vacancy, the strip center on Constitution Drive, just south of Target, should be seeing quite a bit of activity soon. In 2013, the two largest occupants moved out when Carpet Weavers relocated to Prairie Crossing and Friar Tuck expanded to a new building on West Wabash. Since then, the 28,400-square-foot strip center has been vacant. For more than two years it was listed for sale at \$1.9 million with no takers.

The listing agent, Bill Marriott of The Real Estate Group, said, “We had a little interest, but more from possible tenants than someone looking to buy. There were a couple of

prospective buyers but their concepts never seemed to pan out. In the end, it was sold at auction.” He noted that the whole area at the south end of Parkway Pointe seems to have struggled in recent years.

The buyer of the retail center, Ram Talluri, is already quite familiar with the area and working to turn things around. He is the local franchisee for Sky Zone, a trampoline park that was constructed at 3454 Liberty Drive behind Target, in 2016. More recently, he built a 9,600-square-foot retail center directly across from Sky Zone and he is in the process of building storage units across the street, adjacent to his recently purchased strip center. His auction purchase was also a bargain; he paid just \$700,000 for

the vacant property.

While Talluri purchased the building for a fraction of the listing price, he says that he is planning to invest additional money to bring it up to speed. “I want to bring a new look to the center,” Talluri said, explaining that everything from a new color scheme to a new roof and façade are in the works. “We should be starting the work in four or five weeks,” he said. “We’re going to change the building’s look and feel.”

He is hopeful that the center won’t remain vacant for long. “I’m negotiating with one tenant who would take half of the space,” he said. “They are an existing business here in Springfield that is looking to expand.” He also believes he has two tenants to split the

remaining 14,000 square feet and indicated he was working with an ice cream store and an international grocery store, which he said would both be new businesses to the Springfield market.

His newly built retail center across from Sky Zone is also close to being occupied. “We are negotiating with two tenants who each want to take half of the building,” Talluri said. “It’s too soon to say their names, but they would both be retail businesses that would help drive traffic to Sky Zone.”

The fourth business venture in the area that Talluri is pursuing is storage units. The first phase is already complete, and he says he anticipates starting the second phase before the end of the month. In all, there will be 965 units when the project is complete. “We haven’t started marketing the storage units yet, but I think it will be a very good location,” said Talluri.

While Talluri has become a local developer, he also serves as the CEO and managing director of Lead IT Corporation, an international IT staffing company that employs 600 people worldwide. His Springfield office is located in a suite at 1999 Wabash Ave. With a small office and only a handful of local employees, many people may not realize that Talluri is overseeing companies with around \$100 million in annual revenue. He and his many business ventures were profiled in the *SBJ* when he was preparing to open his first Sky Zone location (*A franchise with its ups and downs, February 2016*).

Local Realtor Bill Marriott is among those who hope Talluri’s plans in the Parkway Pointe area come to fruition. “There’s a lot of activity going on back there now with Sky Zone, and hopefully he’s going to single-handedly spur some development that will take off.” ♦



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MEDICAL NEWS

Taylorville Memorial Hospital announces construction project

Pending approval from the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board, Taylorville Memorial Hospital will begin construction in June on a two-story, approximately 97,000-square-

foot building that will replace most of the current hospital.

The new structure will be built on the current hospital campus at 201 E. Pleasant St. and

will be fully complete by early 2021.

"The hospital is of vital importance to the community," said Jim Adcock, chairman of the nonprofit hospital's board of directors. "Taylorville Memorial Hospital, formerly St. Vincent Memorial Hospital, has served this community well for more than 100 years. This investment will provide improved, modern facilities for patient care and a better environment for our staff and doctors to work. I look forward to seeing it become a reality."

The construction will include 25 private patient rooms. Three of the rooms will be larger to provide additional family space and will be fitted with overhead ceiling-mounted power lift equipment to help move patients from their beds to the bathrooms. They'll have larger bathrooms and showers to assist patients who might need help to shower.

The inpatient unit will have a family lounge area, a multipurpose activity room and a kitchen and dining area for patients and families as well as a chapel and meditation space.

The new facility will also have space for outpatient services, laboratory, educational conference rooms and administrative offices. The main hospital kitchen will be in the new facility, with space for a cafeteria and dining area.

A rehab services area will offer physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy

and cardiac/pulmonary rehab services.

A specialty clinic will include space for out-of-town physician specialists to see patients, a congestive heart failure clinic and a room with equipment for telehealth visits.

"We believe in providing innovative and patient-centered health care, and this modernization project demonstrates our continued commitment to provide the people we serve with a state-of-the-art hospital for decades to come," said Kim Bourne, president and CEO of Taylorville Memorial Hospital.

The construction will be completed in two phases. The first phase is expected to be ready in early 2020 and will see the opening of the patient rooms, outpatient services, therapy services, laboratory, pharmacy, specialty clinic and central utility plant. The second phase is targeted for an early 2021 opening and will include food and nutrition services, administrative offices and conference rooms. The five-story building, originally built more than six decades ago in 1954, will be torn down during the second phase.

The two-phase approach will ensure "continuity of all patient services during construction and will have minimal impact on the newer portions of the hospital built in 2011," Bourne said. O'Shea Builders in Springfield is the general contractor. Architects from BSA Life Structures in St. Louis are the designers. ♦

OSF HealthCare and Caterpillar partner to develop downtown Peoria block

In a move that is hoped will rehabilitate a century-old, iconic Peoria building and help reinvigorate downtown development, Caterpillar Inc. and OSF HealthCare are partnering to develop the property at 124 SW Adams Street (commonly known as the former Chase building) into OSF HealthCare's new Ministry headquarters. In addition to the Chase building, Caterpillar is donating the Peoria Professional Building, the adjacent parking lot and \$3 million to OSF HealthCare for further development of amenities on the block.

"We are pleased to partner with Caterpillar on this project. From our perspective, OSF will be able to bring many of the administrative Mission Partners for OSF together in one building, improving the synergy and collaboration for our Ministry," said Bob Sehring, OSF HealthCare CEO. "In addition, this will help OSF attract and retain talent in Peoria and support the expansion of our Ministry in the

communities we have been called to serve."

To complete the development, the Caterpillar and OSF partnership will request the former Chase building be listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building within a historic district. This designation will make the building eligible for Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits to assist OSF with restoration costs of its headquarters.

"Peoria is home for thousands of our employees and revitalizing this historic, downtown property will benefit them and the entire community," said Caterpillar CEO Jim Umpleby. "We will work closely with OSF to complete this important project."

Planning activities are already underway and, if the historic designation is received, construction is expected to begin in late summer of 2018 and take at least two years to complete. ♦



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Assessing Sangamon County's health needs

Memorial Medical Center, HSHS St. John's Hospital and the Sangamon County Department of Public Health are once again collaborating on a project to assess the health needs of the residents of Sangamon County.

As part of the assessment process, the two Springfield nonprofit hospitals and the county health department will ask all county residents to help identify pressing community health needs through an online community survey.

The online survey will be open until Feb. 12. Residents can take the survey at go.uis.edu/chna.

The survey research department at the University of Illinois at Springfield will conduct the online survey.

Nonprofit hospitals must complete a community health needs assessment every three years, a requirement of the Affordable Care Act of 2010. Hospitals provide their reports to the Internal Revenue Service.

Following the survey, the university will provide the hospitals and the county health department with an outcomes report. The hospitals and county health department will

determine which health priorities they should address over the next three years and how to implement those priorities. Those priorities will be announced in late 2018.

In 2015, the two hospitals and the county health department completed their first collaborative assessment, drawing from feedback provided by 781 residents who responded to the survey. That led to the Springfield hospitals jointly supporting a project to increase access to care in the Enos Park Neighborhood, a low-income neighborhood between the two

hospitals.

In addition to their collaborative initiative in Enos Park, each hospital developed separate community health priorities. Memorial Medical Center focused on mental health and obesity. HSHS St. John's Hospital focused on pediatric mental health, pediatric obesity and pediatric asthma.

Sangamon County Department of Public Health adopted child abuse, access to care and asthma as priorities. ♦

HSHS Medical group opens new facility in Chatham

HSHS Medical Group recently celebrated with an open house and blessing for a new facility at 125 E. Plummer Blvd. in Chatham. Opening Jan. 15, the new facility is home to HSHS Medical Group Family Health, currently located at 345 North Main Street, and HSHS St. John's TherapyCare, currently at 1134 Commercial Court. A pediatric clinic will open in February.

Speakers included Patrick McCarthy, village administrator, Chatham; Melinda Clark, CEO, HSHS Medical Group; Charles Lucore, MD, president and CEO, HSHS St. John's Hospital; and Kristin Doster, executive vice president, Prairie Heart Institute. A blessing was offered by Father John Nolan from St. Joseph the Worker in Chatham. Amy Byers, president of the Chatham Chamber of Commerce, led a ribbon cutting.

"HSHS Medical Group Family Health doctors have been caring for patients in the Chatham community for more than 30 years. We are pleased to continue our commitment to Chatham by expanding hours, services and our location footprint. This new location is 17,000

square feet – large enough to accommodate primary and pediatric care, state of the art lab and imaging services, and a partnership with HSHS St. John's TherapyCare," said Melinda Clark, CEO of HSHS Medical Group. "We are proud to be the fastest growing medical group in Sangamon County and increasing access to high quality, patient-first care in communities like Chatham."

"We are looking forward to having an

expanded space for our TherapyCare services in Chatham, alongside our HSHS physician

HSHS Medical Group Family Health and HSHS St. John's TherapyCare colleagues celebrated their new location with a ribbon cutting Jan. 9.

PHOTO/ COURTESY HSHS MEDICAL GROUP

partners," said Dr. Charles L. Lucore, MD, MBA, president and CEO of HSHS St. John's Hospital.

"This new location provides spacious facilities where comprehensive, state of the art therapy services can be provided. Additional staff will also allow us to see more patients."

HSHS Medical Group Family Health is expanding hours for more accessibility early and late day. Same day appointments and Saturday morning hours will continue to be offered as part of the HSHS Medical Group promise of patient-first care. The clinic will also offer state of the art lab and imaging services on-site. All staff, including providers James Crabtree, MD; John Rollet, MD; Kenneth Schmidt, MD; Sarah Blank, PA-C; and Angela McCormick, FNP-C will relocate to the new facility. Pediatricians Erin Blackburn, MD, and Gopinathan Nambiar, MD, will begin a pediatric clinic rotation in February.

HSHS St. John's TherapyCare will offer physical therapy services, including integrative medical services. All staff, including two physical therapists, will transfer to the new facility and their hours will remain 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday. ♦



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Finley's is drawing crowds to the strip mall at Ginger Creek and Koke Mill, near Le Peep.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

Finley's Tap House

Relax with good food, craft beers, casual atmosphere

BY THOMAS C. PAVLIK JR.

I've been hearing good things about Finley's Tap House. So when two friends called to suggest lunch there, everything fell into place for a *Business Journal* review. We're glad it did.

Finley's holds itself out as providing "delicious, affordable food with a menu that satisfies every taste." It's a restaurant, a bar and a "relaxed and

fact that it's located in a strip mall, but there's only so much you can do in that regard.

We arrived just around noon to find Finley's was already pretty crowded – including a delightful group on a bus trip from Concordia Village. We were seated in the more traditional dining area, and in retrospect felt like we were a bit cut off from the action. Next time we'll ask for one of the high-tops in the bar area. The rest of

sauté (\$14.99) and wheat beer glazed salmon (\$15.99). Salads and pastas come with Finley's



In addition to the traditional dining room, the bar area includes high-tops for dining.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

casual gathering place." In the main, they've satisfied their mission.

My guests and I arrived on a bitterly cold day. We all lamented that we weren't able to take advantage of Finley's expansive outside deck due to the weather, but it looks like a nice place to spend some time on a less inclement day – especially when the exterior windows can be opened out to the deck.

The interior is painted in hues of yellow and orange, with wood and brick highlights. Off to the left there are two traditional seating areas, while to the right there's a long bar and seating at plenty of high-tops. Finley's did its best to deal with the

our fellow diners came mainly from the business crowd, with a handful of the west side social crew.

With three beer drinkers together for lunch, we had to inspect the craft beer menu. Although we didn't imbibe, we were impressed with the 20-some beers on tap as well as the selection of cans and bottles. The owners put some thought into their selections.

Finley's menu is more comprehensive than I had expected and goes well beyond burgers, sandwiches and salads. There are three flatbread pizzas (\$10.99 to \$13.99), three pasta selections (\$10.99 to \$15.99), some vegetarian selections (\$13.99 to \$14.99), and entrees like Thai chicken

croutons and ranch), the hot chicken sandwich (buttermilk fried chicken, beer-infused hot sauce, bread and butter pickles with sweet honey BBQ - \$10.99) and the blackened salmon sandwich (sweet pickle mayo, avocado, topped with crispy onions - \$13.99).

Although I skipped the ranch and went with oil and vinegar, I'm a fan of the hot chicken salad. The hot chicken itself was well cooked, with a perfectly crusty exterior and enough heat to tickle the taste buds. I liked how some of the sauce from the chicken managed to coat the lettuce, which would have been even better had I opted for the ranch dressing. Sadly, however, Finley's neglected to bring me the beer bread.

My guest who ordered the hot chicken sandwich was equally pleased, even if he thought the heat level was a bit too high. That didn't stop him from tucking right in. I managed to snag a few of his French fries, and shared his opinion that they were on the soggy side.

The blackened salmon sandwich had a generously sized slab of fish served on some nicely toasted bread. My other guest was impressed that the fish wasn't dry. He opted for the homemade chips. I also managed to snag a few of those, and found them to be far superior to the fries – but perhaps this was an anomaly the day we visited. In any event, this was his first time to Finley's and he announced that he'd be happy to try the dish again or to delve further into the menu.

Service was efficient and attentive enough to not bother us while we dealt with the business portion of our lunch. If you're on the clock and don't bother with a starter, you can get in and out of Finley's in a very reasonable time. We also appreciated that our food was served simultaneously – a rarity with so many of Finley's competitors.

With its tasty food, generous portions and good atmosphere, Finley's is one to add to your lunch or dinner rotation. ♦

Thomas Pavlik is an attorney at Delano Law Offices, LLC. Contact him at tpavlik@delanolaw.com.



There are about 20 beers on tap, plus a nice selection of craft beers in cans and bottles.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

beer bread, while sandwiches and burgers come with a choice of homemade kettle chips, hand cut fries, potato salad or coleslaw. There's no separate lunch menu.

Price points seemed on the high end compared to Finley's peers, but portions were generously sized. Still, add in a few starters and some drinks and the bill can creep up on you here.

We decided to start with an order of the cheese curds (with Siracha aioli - \$8.99). I wanted to hold out for the tater tot bowl (beer cheese, bacon, scallions, diced tomato and sour cream - \$9.99) because, well, tater tots. But majority rules and my companions announced that the curds were as good as they'd had anyplace else. I wouldn't have gone that far, but they were pretty good, if slightly pricey. I'm not sure if the aioli was just ranch blasted with some Siracha or not, but its brightness paired well with the richness of the flash-fried nuggets of cheesy goodness.

For our main selections, we went with the hot chicken salad (romaine and iceberg lettuce, hot chicken, tomato, cucumber, white cheddar,

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Professional Women's Calendar of Events

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Association for Women in Communications (AWC)

AWC will host a lunch on Wednesday, Feb. 14 at the Sangamo Club from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. The guest speaker will be Stacey Skrysak, speaking on "Moving from Criticized to Conquerer." Skrysak will share how she dealt with public criticism as a television news anchor/personality. Join us to hear her very personal story of overcoming, pushing forward and finding the inner confidence to start new chapters in the various areas of her life.

Members and guests are welcome. To make reservations, visit www.awcspringfield.org.

Illinois Women in Leadership (IWIL)

IWIL will host a lunch on Thursday, Feb. 15 at the Sangamo Club from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. The guest speaker will be Alan Lowe, executive director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Registration is \$18 per person before February 9; \$23 after that or at the door. Visit www.iwil.biz for more information or to register.

Women Entrepreneurs of Central Illinois (WE-CI)

WE-CI will hold a new member social on Tuesday, February 13 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Engrained Brewing Company. The cost is \$20 for members. For more information or to register, visit wecispringfield.org. Connect with fellow business owners in your community through monthly networking and education events.



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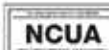
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A primer on the new federal tax law

BY SARAH DELANO PAVLIK

On Dec. 22, 2017, President Donald Trump signed "An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018." The bill had been entitled the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act" but, in yet another example of political dysfunction, the Senate cut the title from the bill. I will refer to the new law as the "Act."

A lot of the media coverage of the legislation has centered on the tax changes that affect us as individuals. The individual income tax brackets have been increased and the rates have mostly been lowered, with the new top rate being 37 percent versus 39.6 percent. Other significant changes are elimination of personal exemptions, a \$10,000 cap on itemized deductions of state and local taxes (including income, sales and property taxes), large increases in the standard deduction, a

doubling of the child tax credit, a lower cap on the home mortgage interest deduction and elimination of deductions for casualty losses and moving expenses.

A change that will have a tremendous impact on divorce negotiations is the treatment of alimony. Alimony paid pursuant to a court order entered after Dec. 31, 2018, will no longer be deductible by the person paying the alimony and will no longer be income to the person receiving the alimony. For couples where one spouse was the sole or predominant breadwinner, this provision will likely greatly increase the total tax obligation of the divorced couple.

As dramatic as some of the changes in individual tax provisions are, the changes in business taxes are even more so. The provision that has received the most coverage is the reduction of the corporate tax rate from 35 percent (one of the highest in the world) to 21 percent. However, the provision that will likely

have the largest impact on small to medium-sized businesses is the 20 percent deduction for pass-through income.

The income of businesses that are taxed as sole proprietorships, partnerships and S corporations "passes through" to the individual owners. The owners then pay taxes on the income at their individual rates. Most small businesses are taxed in this way.

The Act creates a deduction for individuals of 20 percent of qualified business income from pass-through entities. For example, if a taxpayer owns a convenience store that is taxed as a partnership and her share of the income is \$50,000, she can now deduct 20 percent of that income, or \$10,000. The deduction does not apply to service businesses in the areas of health, financial and brokerage services, athletics, accounting, law, performing arts, consulting or "any business where the principal asset is the reputation or skill of one or more of its employees," except for engineering

and architecture. (Apparently the engineers and architects have the best lobbyists.) This deduction is not an itemized deduction, so it is still available to taxpayers who take the standard deduction. Of course, the deduction is not as simple as a straight 20 percent deduction. There are several limitations, and business owners will need to consult with a tax professional to determine exactly how the deduction will apply to them.

The limit on Section 179 deductions is increased from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. Section 179 is the provision that allows a business to write off certain assets 100 percent in the year the asset is acquired rather than depreciating the asset over time.

The corporate alternative minimum income tax (AMT) is repealed. The individual AMT is not repealed, but the exemption amount is increased.

Like-kind exchanges are now limited to real property. Simplified, in a like-kind exchange, if a taxpayer sells an investment asset and invests the proceeds in a new investment asset, gain can be deferred until the new asset is sold. Like-kind exchanges in our area often involve farmland. If a farmer sells farmland but invests the proceeds in other farmland, he can defer the gain on the sale. Like-kind exchanges had also been available for certain types of personal property, but the Act eliminates that option.

Businesses can no longer deduct any entertainment costs. Fifty percent of entertainment costs were previously deductible. The 50 percent deduction for meals remains intact. The Act also provides that no deduction is available, "With respect to membership in any club organized for business, pleasure, recreation or other social purposes." Dues at country clubs have not been deductible for years, however, the prohibition on business club dues is new.

The treatment of net operating losses (NOLs) has changed. Previously, a net operating loss could be carried back. For example, if your business made money in 2016 but lost money in 2017, you could amend your 2016 return deducting your 2017 losses and potentially receive a tax refund. NOLs can no longer be carried back. They can still be carried forward, but there is now an 80 percent limitation. For example, if your business loses \$100,000 in 2018 and makes \$100,000 in 2019, you can only deduct \$80,000 of your 2018 NOL on your 2019 return.

The Act makes many more changes to individual and business taxation. You should consult a CPA or other tax adviser to determine how you can structure your finances to maximize opportunities and minimize negative consequences under the Act. You should consult them sooner rather than later, as the Act went into effect on Jan. 1. ♦

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



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L-R: Joe Crain, Karen Cox, Sally Tavender, Miles Copeland. Karen Cox and Sally Tavender receive a check for Mini O'Beirne Crisis Nursery from the 3-Degree Weather Guarantee with WICS's Joe Crain and Mylas Copeland, general manager at Green Toyota.

PHOTO/ COURTESY GREEN TOYOTA

Green and WICS team for '3-Degree Weather Guarantee' Local nonprofits benefit during tough times

BY JANET SEITZ

Some area nonprofits weathering financial challenges are seeing green.

That is, thanks to the "Three-Degree Weather Guarantee" partnership between NewsChannel 20/Fox Illinois and Green Family Stores.

"Each weeknight the meteorologist will predict the following day's high temperature," explained Green Family Stores director of marketing Rachael Buraski. If it's correctly predicted within three degrees, the month's featured charity earns \$100 each time. "We choose a different organization each month, and WICS/FOX Illinois will also do a news story on that organization. I love that we can use this platform to not only donate money to a worthy cause but also raise awareness. A lot of our organizations aren't as well-known and can truly benefit from the recognition," she said.

WICS and FOX Illinois donate on-air time during the evening news, and Green Family Stores writes a check each month. "I think it's important to point out that the entire investment for this program from Green Family Stores goes directly to the charity," said Buraski.

Buraski credited the local weather team for aiding the charities. "We have a pretty great local weather team, and their accuracy keeps the total pretty high each month. With about 20-22 weekdays in a month, they typically earn around \$1,800 for each organization. However, we enjoy making a friendly jab by telling them they should have been closer, so often we will round it up to \$2,000."

Buraski recalled a meeting with Todd Green, president of the Green Family Stores new and used car dealerships, and then new WICS/FOX general manager Rick Lipps, who joined the station in August 2014 from Charleston, South Carolina. "Todd has been quietly supporting many charities over the years and always encourages others to do the same," said Buraski. "He challenged Rick to find a way to give back, too. It was right then that Rick came up with an idea to team up for something bigger than just writing a check. What if we could combine the power of broadcast with WICS and the financial support of Green Family Stores? The Three-Degree Weather Guarantee began the following month."

The weather guarantee was a variation of a previous program, Lipps explained. "There was no community involvement and the reward came if the station was wrong. I wanted to

celebrate accuracy and wanted to give out cash when we were correct within three degrees. I had a client in Charleston looking for ideas for community involvement and the current weather guarantee is what we came up with."

The Springfield area program has benefitted about 40 organizations since implementation in October 2014. The first to benefit was The Matthew Project, a local charity that provides clothing, food, tutoring, mentoring and life skills classes to District 186 homeless children. Ann Libri, the organization's founder, praised Green for the support. "They are extravagant givers. They have been a blessing to the Project." Green has provided coats, sponsorships and other support.

Another beneficiary of the weather prediction program is Prairie Coalition Against Sexual Assault. The organization's executive director, Shelley Vaughn, praised Mike Quimby and his staff at Green Hyundai for support to PCASA over the last 10 years. In addition to promoting PCASA's annual Walk A Mile In Her Shoes event, Vaughn said Quimby requested her organization be a recipient of the weather challenge. "It was a trying time during the state budget impasse, and the funds that were donated by Green Family Stores and WICS/FOX in 2016 and 2017 helped keep our doors open. We value our partnership with Mike and Green Hyundai. He has never turned us away in our time of need. And for that, we are forever grateful."

NewsChannel 20 and FOX Illinois are committed to helping the community, said Lipps. In addition to the partnership with Green, they work with many other organizations. Those include the annual Joy of Sharing event, Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, high school football broadcasts and more. "These are just a few of the causes we believe in and to which we contribute our time and talents," he said.

"We have always been able to rely on them for our community involvement," added Buraski, who appreciated recent support for the annual coat drive which benefited more than 1,500 local children. "Most of our charities have been nominated by our own staff members. If an employee is passionate about a cause, we want to feed into that as much as we can. We've also had organizations reach out to WICS. They pass those along to us as well. We really enjoy helping local organizations that truly make a difference right here in our community."

Nonprofits can visit the Green Giving link on GreenFamilyStores.com to submit requests for sponsorships and

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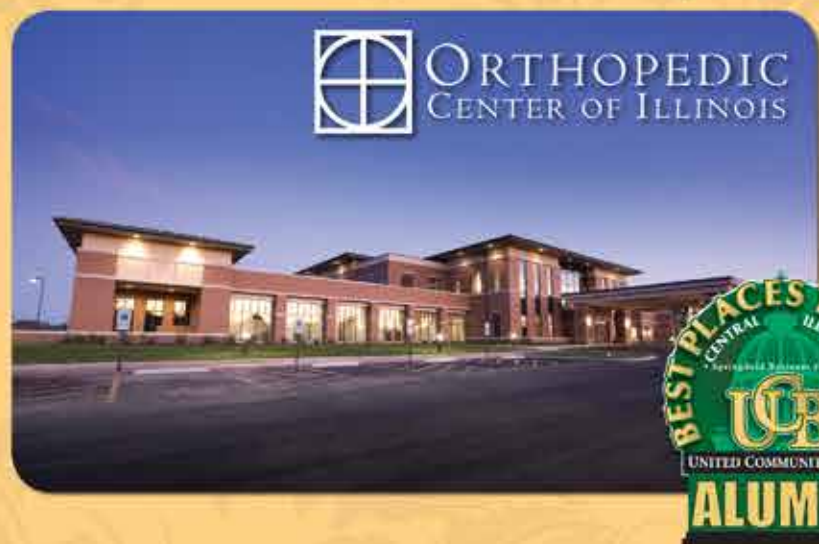
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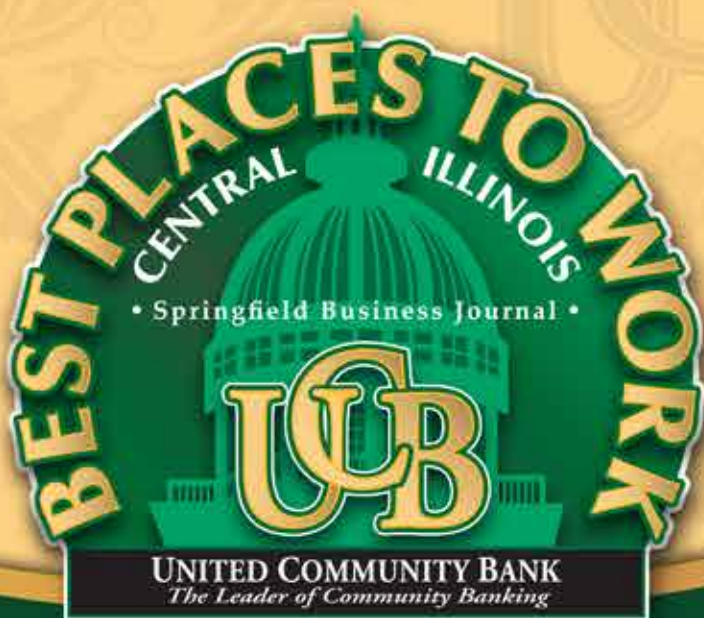
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