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A bicentennial look to the future

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Building Springfield

Construction projects underway all over town

BY MICHELLE OWNBEY

One sure sign of spring is construction projects taking shape all over town, and with the City of Springfield issuing commercial permits worth more than \$26 million dollars in the first quarter of 2018, there are plenty of them in progress. Not surprisingly, most of the high dollar projects tend to be in the Mid-Illinois Medical District, with Memorial Health System, HSHS St. John's Hospital and Springfield Clinic all in the midst of major renovations at multiple locations. However, a number of new businesses are also preparing to open in

Springfield, including retail stores Here Today and HomeGoods, two locations for the daycare franchise Little Minds Learning Center, and ice cream franchise Sweet Charlie's. Local restaurateur Will Hoecker has started a new venture called Papo's Café and brothers Adam, John and Mike Zerkle are preparing to open Anvil & Forge Brewing and Distilling Co. downtown. Many other businesses are expanding or remodeling, with the majority of the construction activity concentrated on the west and south sides of Springfield. Here's an overview of what's been happening since the beginning of the year:



WEST

Here Today, a discount store with an ever-changing inventory of items at closeout prices, is getting ready to open a Springfield location at 1774 West Wabash. Evans Construction is the general contractor for the 17,400 square feet currently under construction in the Chatham Square Shopping Center. The project is valued at \$1,195,000. Here Today, based in St. Louis, offers everything from home décor and accessories to food and beverages.

The former AIG office building, now occupied by **HSHS Medical Group Corporate Services**, is being remodeled. Founders Properties obtained a commercial demolition permit for 3051 Hollis Drive. O'Shea Builders is the contractor and the project is valued at \$25,000. It also obtained a commercial remodel permit for building modifications at the same address; that project is valued at \$863,799.

Three different local dental practices are getting ready to consolidate their offices into the building at 3820 Wabash that has been taking shape next to Dick Van Dyke Appliance World. **Montvale Dental Care** closed its location in November and moved into **Springfield Dental Care**, which currently operates out of a build-

ing at 2965 S. MacArthur. **Westside Dental Group** is currently located at 2633 Chatham Road. All three dentists will be combining their practices into the new 6,000-square-foot building that is currently under construction. Professional Resource Development obtained a permit for the project, valued at \$1 million. The contractor is Buckler, Kentucky-based Jacobs Group, Inc., and subcontractors include Karhliker Plumbing and Allied Plumbing and Heating. While the

new location will be known as Springfield Dental Care, it will be operating under the umbrella of Heartland Dental Care, a company based out of Effingham that provides support services to more than 800 practices throughout the United States.

The Gander Mountain in Springfield closed at the end of last year but will soon be reopen-

the same building. Sweet Charlie's prepares made-to-order ice cream and frozen yogurt on a surface that is below 20 degrees, allowing small ice crystals to quickly form. It will be the first Illinois location for the company founded in 2015 in Philadelphia. RAM Innovations, LLC obtained commercial remodel permits for the interior build outs. Other contractors include Ruby Electric, Mundhenke Plumbing Company, and Ridings Plumbing.

Aldi Food Market has been remodeling all three of its Springfield locations. The company obtained a commercial mechanical permit for 3425 Freedom Dr. for general remodeling and upgrades to the Aldi store. The contractor is Decatur-based King-Lar Company, and the project is valued at \$600,000.

Two new businesses are preparing to open and a third is adding an additional location in a newly constructed strip center on the west side of Springfield. Longtime local business **Primo Designs** is expanding, having recently signed a lease for a second location in the newly built West Iles Business Center, which also includes space for **Little Minds Learning Center** and two additional tenants. An adjacent stand-alone building will be **Papo's Café**. Ben Call, a broker with The Real Estate Group, is the developer for the new center. Call has obtained a commercial remodel permit for the build-outs. The contractor is R. Hopkins Builders and other contractors include Ryan Electrical, Inc. and Allied Plumbing and Heating.

The former Office Max location is being remodeled as **HomeGoods** prepares to open a Springfield location. A chain of discount home furnishing stores, HomeGoods has hundreds of locations nationwide. TJX Companies, Inc. obtained a commercial demolition permit for an interior, non-structural demo at 2951 W. Iles Ave. and a remodel permit for the same address for a project valued at \$800,000. Tower Commercial Construction is the contractor for both projects. Other contractors include Prairie State, Inc. and B & B Electric, Inc.

In January, **Blue Cross Blue Shield** announced they were leasing the remaining 30,000 square feet of space in the building at 3200 Robbins Road that they previously occupied. The two-story office building in the Southwest Plaza office park is nearly 76,000 square feet total. Lasted summer, accounting firm Kerber, Eck



The new home for three local dental practices is emerging at 3820 Wabash next to Dick Van Dyke Appliance World.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

ing as a **Gander Outdoors**. Gander Outdoors is owned by Camping World Holdings, which purchased the Gander Mountain assets as part of bankruptcy proceedings in 2017. National Retail properties obtained a commercial building permit for an interior remodel at 2371 Chuckwagon Dr. DBS Group is the contractor and the project is valued at \$450,000. Subcontractors include B & B Electrical, Inc. and Ace Sign Co.

The recently constructed 9,600-square-foot retail building at 3450 Liberty Drive, directly across from Sky Zone, has its first tenant. Sue Schwartz, owner of **Gypsy Soul**, **Gypsy Tribe** and **Gypsy Dreamer**, has consolidated all three of her locations into one 5,400-square-foot store. A second company, **Sweet Charlie's**, has announced plans to take 1,686 square feet in



Evans Construction manages the development of the new building at 1774 West Wabash for Here Today.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

COVER PHOTO

Mia Woods, executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Illinois Capital Region.

PHOTO/ BY DAVID BLANCHETTE

& Braeckel LLP left its office in the Myers Building downtown and moved into the second floor of the Robbins Road building, which is also the new home of Perten Instruments. BCBS is keeping their current office at 3045 Liberty Drive and moving 200 employees back into the Robbins Road location. AC Building has obtained a commercial remodeling permit for the project, valued at \$400,000. The contractor is Evans Construction Company and AC Building also obtained a commercial electric remodel permit for work to be done by B & B Electrical, Inc.



The future location of Gypsy Soul at 3450 Liberty Drive.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

EAST

AMC Springfield 8, located in the Capital City Shopping Center, has recently completed a multimillion-dollar renovation project that included adding plush recliner seats and new movie screens and sound systems. The theater is also the only one in the Springfield market with a liquor license, allowing it to offer a line of adult beverages in addition to an enhanced menu selection. (*May 2018. Plush recliners, wine and a movie, Springfield Business Journal*) Capital City Trust, c/o Mid-America Asset Mgt., obtained a commercial plumbing remodeling permit to add head over soda dispensers and other work and fixtures at 2946 S. Dirksen Parkway. The contractor is F. J. Murphy & Son, Inc. and the project is valued at \$2,247,973.



The AMC Springfield 8 now has power recliners in every auditorium.

PHOTO/ COURTESY AMC THEATRES

SOUTH

The former law office building that was occupied by Hodge Dwyer & Driver before its merger with HeplerBroom early last year is now being renovated as a day care.

The nearly 7,000-square-foot building is located in the Park South business park just off Stevenson Drive. **Little Minds Learning Center** is a day care franchise that was founded 10 years ago by Stacy and Todd Barnhardt. There are seven operating locations in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Colorado and Nebraska and their website lists another 19 as coming soon, including many in the Chicago suburbs and central Illinois area. Little Minds will also have a location anchoring the newly built West Iles Business Center.

Roland Partners LLC has obtained a commercial remodeling permit for 3150 Roland Ave., Lot 5 Park South. The contractor is Joyner

Construction Services, and the project is valued at \$275,000.

Other recent permits for projects in this area include:

Springfield Clinic has obtained a commercial remodeling permit for 1025 S. Sixth St. The permit covers a mechanical, electrical and plumbing remodel of the GI procedure room at Springfield Clinic's Main Campus East. The contractor is Springfield-based O'Shea Builders, and the project is valued at \$200,000.

Shiva Developments obtained a commercial building permit for a new building at **Shiva Plaza** at 2730 S. Sixth St. Joyner Construction Services is the contractor and the project is valued at \$600,000.

Aldi Food has obtained a commercial remodeling permit for 3736 Octavus Via. The permit covers electrical and mechanical remodeling work. The contractor is Decatur-based King-Lar Company, and the project is valued at \$600,000.

Solon, LLC obtained a commercial building

permit for an interior remodel at 3812 Octavus Via. Joyner Construction Services is the contractor and the project is valued at \$100,000.

Solon, LLC obtained a commercial electric permit for work at 3804 Octavus Via. Speeks Electric is the contractor and the project is valued

at \$50,000.

Springfield Park District obtained a commercial electric remodel permit for work at the structure at **Henson Robinson Zoo**. Prairie State Plumbing and Heating, Inc. is the contractor and the project is valued at \$320,900.

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NORTH

A 5,800-square-foot visual arts center is under construction on the campus of the **Springfield Art Association**, which will house a studio for ceramics, metal and glass blowing. The SAA has raised \$1.2 million in private funds over the past several years and also received \$450,000 in TIF financing from the Enos Park TIF District. The SAA obtained a new commercial building permit for the project valued at \$900,000. The electrical contractor is Lindsay Electric, Inc.

Other recent permits for projects in this area include:

Aldi Foods obtained a commercial building permit for work at the 2731 N. Dirksen Parkway location. The contractor is Mariottini

Construction and the project is valued at \$1,300,000.

Rush Enterprises obtained a commercial building permit for 3441 Gatlin Dr. for an addition and remodeling at **Rush Truck Center**, located off Sangamon Avenue. The contractor is Cambridge Companies, Inc. and the project is valued at \$1 million. Allied Plumbing and Heating is a subcontractor on the project.

Morpho Trust obtained a commercial remodel permit for 3461 Gatlin Dr. Joyner Construction Services is the contractor and the project is valued at \$250,000. Request Electric and Wilkin Plumbing are subcontractors on the project.

The **Springfield Police Department** obtained a new commercial building permit for a K-9 kennel facility at 3501 Color Plant Rd. Cloyd Builders, Inc. is the contractor and the project is valued at \$449,108.



The new studio addition to the Springfield Art Association is underway.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

DOWNTOWN

Economic Growth Corporation, a company based in Rock Island, is moving forward with renovation of the former **First United Methodist Church** at 501 E. Capitol. In September of 2017, Economic Growth Corporation won approval from the city council to increase TIF financing from \$985,000 to nearly \$1.7 million. The project will include 25 apartments, a mix of nine two-bedroom units and 16 one-bedroom units. **The Greater Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce** has committed to being an anchor tenant for the commercial space. In addition to the Chamber's office space, the property includes 1,300 square feet for commercial uses and an additional 1,500 square feet of space once used as a kitchen. (September 14, 2017. *Downtown Church Renovation Moves Ahead, Illinois Times*) The contractor is O'Shea Builders and the project is valued at \$5.8 million.

James and Carol Zerkle obtained a commercial mechanical permit for remodeling work at **Anvil & Forge** at 619 E. Washington. Henson Robinson Company is the contractor and the project is valued at \$10,000.

Brothers Adam, John and Mike Zerkle plan to open Anvil & Forge Brewing and Distilling Co. this summer and have the whiskey distilling portion ready a few months later. They plan to focus distribution in the Springfield area first, providing kegs to bars and restaurants and using a canning line to package their beer for supermarkets and liquor stores. (May 2018. *The business of beer, Springfield Business Journal*)

Other significant projects underway downtown include:

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran obtained a commercial permit for work at 220 S. Second St. The contractor is Request Electric and the project is valued at \$700,000.

Illinois State Police Heritage obtained a commercial building permit for the Illinois State Police Memorial Park site at 615 E. Lawrence. R. D. Lawrence is the contractor and the project is valued at \$2,580,000.

BB Properties obtained a commercial remodel permit for 1800 E. Washington for an update and parking lot project that is valued at \$626,665.



Left to right, brothers Adam, John and Mike Zerkle in the brewing room of the soon-to-open Anvil & Forge Brewing and Distilling Co.

PHOTO/ BY DAVID BLANCHETTE

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MEDICAL NEWS

MEDICAL DISTRICT

Memorial Medical Center

Commercial remodel permit for 701 N. First St. O'Shea Builders is the contractor and the project is valued at \$1.9 million.

Commercial remodeling permit for 701 N. First St., 2E. The permit covers mechanical, electrical and plumbing work. The contractor is Springfield-based O'Shea Builders, and the project is valued at \$4.5 million.

Commercial electric remodel permit for 701 N. First St. Senegy Electric, Inc. is the contractor and the project is valued at \$1.9 million.

Permit for renovation of the morgue, which is located in the lower level lab building at Memorial Medical Center at 701 N First St. The contractor is Springfield-based E.L. Pruitt Company, and the project is valued at \$293,536.

Springfield Clinic

Commercial electric permit for 800 N. First St. B & B Electric is the contractor and the project is valued at \$345,000.

Commercial remodel permit for the Ortho 1st Clinic at 800 N. First St., lower level. O'Shea Builders is the contractor and the project is valued at \$25,000.

Springfield Clinic Partnership obtained a commercial remodel permit for 900 N. First Street. O'Shea Builders is the contractor and the project is valued at \$15,000.



The emerging skywalk across Ninth Street for St. John's Hospital.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

St. John's Hospital

Commercial remodeling permit for various mechanical work at 400 N. Ninth St., the contractor is E.L. Pruitt. A commercial electrical permit was also issued for work at the same address, the contractor is Anderson Electric. The total project is valued at \$17.5 million.

Commercial plumbing permits for new fixtures at 400 N. Ninth St., Suite B and Suite C. G. A. Rich and Sons, Inc. is the contractor for both projects. The project at Suite B is valued at \$4,140,000 and the project at Suite C is valued at \$1,004,000.

Nonstructural demo permit for 415 N. Ninth St. O'Shea Builders is the contractor and the project is valued at \$109,713.

Commercial building permit for remodeling work at 415 N. Ninth Street. The contractor is O'Shea Builders and the project is valued at \$1,938,498.

Commercial remodeling permit for 415 N. Ninth St. The permit covers replacement café equipment at Hop N Go, located in the Carol Jo Vecchie Women & Children's Center. The contractors are Springfield-based B&B Electrical, Inc. and Springfield-based Henson Robinson Company and the project is valued at \$80,000.

Commercial plumbing permit for 500 N. Ninth St. E. L. Pruitt Company is the contractor and the project is valued at \$7,429,329.

Commercial building permit for 500 N. Ninth St. The permit is for the St. John's Madison Street parking ramp. The contractor is Springfield-based O'Shea Builders, and the project is valued at \$7,429,329.

Commercial electric permit for the smokestack at 800 E. Carpenter. The contractor is B & B Electrical, Inc. and the project is valued at \$2,479,478. ♦



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A bicentennial look to the future

Springfield leaders and thinkers say where we're going, and where we ought to go

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY DAVID BLANCHETTE

The state's bicentennial observance gives Illinois residents the chance to reflect on how far we've come in the past 200 years, but it also asks what the state will be like in 2218. Things will certainly change, but how will they be different? What would a current resident find familiar 200 years from now, and what would be completely foreign?

Springfield has its share of people who think seriously about the future, and what they envision and hope for in the coming decades paints a picture of opportunities, challenges and, above all, change. Since this is a business publication, we'll start with the economic forecast.

Experiencing the economy

"Baby Boomers show status by buying things. That's not what younger people are doing," said Norm Sims, the former executive director of the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission. "They show status by the experiences they have. The change in the marketplace is coming, and will continue to come, from the demographics of the consumers themselves."

"Merchants are going to have to look at the shopping experience, how you can provide more things than just a place to shop," Sims said. "Around the country we are not seeing new construction of enclosed malls or larger strip centers, we are seeing more lifestyle centers like what's being developed around Scheels, where there are things not only to shop for, but to see and do in the same place."

Sims said that the resurgence of bookstores and independent vinyl record stores is an example of this trend in action. Both types of businesses have become adept at having events, meetings, lectures, film showings and other activities in addition to things they sell.

As prevalent as internet retail sales have become, you still can't receive a personal experience while shopping via computer.

"Big box stores are starting to adapt because they are the ones that are most being beaten by internet sales," Sims said. "A good example is Hy-Vee in Springfield. They provide a wide assortment of things along with groceries. You can do wine tasting there, learn how to cook certain meals, learn more about cuts of meat and so forth."

The experience economy will also impact one of Springfield's key industries, tourism.

"Consumers aren't going to take the static 'come and visit Lincoln sites' any more," Sims said. "We are going to have to show a larger product than Lincoln. We must expand into other areas to show that there are experiences you can have here."

Sims said the younger, experience-seeking shopper of the future will continue to desire things that share value, such as local and hand-made items. Meanwhile, the aging generations of Baby Boomers and beyond may not buy as much "stuff," but they will be in the market for services.

"Look at the growth on the local level of businesses that mow lawns versus what was here 20 years ago," Sims said. "When I was young you'd hire some kid in the neighborhood to mow the lawn. Now we have seen a service industry develop of people who mow lawns. Services are becoming a larger part of that whole retail mix."

A service-driven economy, where many of the "goods" offered are not taxed, means revenues to fund government will drop, Sims said. That reduction, combined with outsourcing of government work, means we can look for a decline in government jobs. On the upside, an aging population means more jobs in the future for the health care industry, he said.

More jobs is what the new Land of Lincoln Economic Development Commission is all about, and those involved hope to chart the community's economic course for the future. But first, the community needs to decide what it wants to be.



Norman Sims

"The issue is trying to figure out what we want to be when we grow up," said Sangamon County Administrator Brian McFadden, an organizer of the Economic Development Commission. "We've kind of had fits and starts with that over time, but we really need to do that as a community. When we decide 'this is really what we want to be,' then we will need the commission to implement that."

The commission is officially formed; they

have established bylaws and officers and had their first organizational meeting in late April. Next up is finding a CEO who can start the visioning exercise which will drive everything else, McFadden said.

"The vision is important, obviously, but so is the process," McFadden said. "That's where we've fallen down in the past, because we haven't had a process to put in place what we want to do."

Putting the "community" into community

We are living longer, but it's where and how we are going to live those longer years in the future that will see change, according to Mike Waldinger, the executive vice president of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Illinois.

"As the Baby Boomer generation ages and has longer life expectancy, we will design for how they want to live in their homes, but also how they want to live in their community," Waldinger said. "These people have a lot of time on their hands that they didn't have before because they were working, so you have to think of the community amenities as much as you do the roof over their heads."

"The home of the future will be more adapted to aging in place and will be designed so people who have limited mobility can use it, but it isn't obvious that it's built for someone in a wheelchair," Waldinger said. "Their outdoor space doesn't necessarily need to be their own space — you might have several individual homes that share a courtyard. There's a lot of talk about shared communal spaces."

The idea of a shared economy is already

catching on, Waldinger said, as evidenced by the rise in companies where entrepreneurs can rent a desk or office from which to conduct their own businesses. The same idea could apply to future living, where residents would have their own private spaces but perhaps share a kitchen, outdoor dining or indoor media room spaces.

Sustainability and green design will be an ex-



Mike Waldinger, the executive vice president of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Illinois, with articles about the climate-driven construction design practice of resilience and examples of communal living design.

pectation in all new construction, Waldinger said, but to that will be added a new design goal – resilience.

“Structures will adapt to whatever the climate is going to throw at them,” Waldinger said. “Climate zones are in flux and in any given season you could have a 50-degree temperature difference in any 24-hour period. Buildings need to adapt to these broader swings in climate.”

More young people will enter the workforce and be able to work remotely, they will carry huge amounts of college debt, and they will want to be close to where the action is, Waldinger said. Because of these factors, people will not want to locate in expensive cities but will instead look for affordable, small to middle-sized cities with cultural amenities such as diverse dining and entertainment options – places like Austin, Nashville, Columbus, Minneapolis and, if we play our cards right, Springfield.

“You have people coming into the workforce with a different idea of what the American Dream is,” Waldinger said. “It’s not the white picket fence and two-car garage. They want to be closer to where the action is so we are seeing a lot of growth in people returning to urban cores.”

Groundwork for the future is laid

Twenty-nine-year-old Springfield resident Steven Simpson-Black is an example of what that future growth may look like. He’s a small-business owner and what he looked for, and found, in Springfield shows what might attract more young residents like himself.

“We have laid a lot of the groundwork for a really good, walkable community. A lot of people don’t notice it because it is not useable to them right now. But as the economy changes I think those things will be more useful,” Simpson-Black said. “We are actually ahead of the game on a lot of things, but because they don’t fit within the current framework of the economy, no one really sees them as beneficial. But 20 or more years from now people will look at that investment and say ‘Wow, we’re glad we did that.’”

Simpson-Black likes the planned high-speed rail line. He thinks Springfield will soon adopt bicycle sharing like some other cities have done and sees a future with more autonomous vehicles that could be shared. He considers the city’s public transportation system a plus and thinks it will receive even more use in the future. All of these transportation

modes bring people closer together, which Simpson-Black thinks will be another feature of future life.

“Right now we are in a kind of situation where if you want to hide and pretend to be on your own you can kind of do that, but I don’t think it will be like that in a few decades,” Simpson-Black said.

based on quality of life factors like liveability, walkability and community.”

The current volatile political and social climate is also a sign that more change is coming in the future. In this case, change will be good.

“There has been a lot of political and social underbrush that had never been burned,” Simp-



Springfield resident Steven Simpson-Black, 29, at the SMTD bus stop at Fifth and Capitol.

“I think the definition of ‘job’ will change,” Simpson-Black said. “As the ‘gig economy’ takes over, people will be able to live more where they want, not based on what jobs are available, and they will make more judgments on where to live

son-Black said. “There are a lot of disagreements that have been ignored for a long time. What we are seeing right now is a lot of that stuff finally coming to the surface. And it has to.”

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Bridging the gap

An increase in the Springfield Hispanic population and more cohesiveness within the black community in the future could help bridge the opportunity and income gap that has traditionally existed between the city's white and minority populations.

"It's important for the black community to have a cohesive economic base," said Springfield entrepreneur Mike Pittman. "It will take a lot of small businesses to perform the economic development we need to turn around the east side of Springfield."

Pittman pointed to the gentrification of traditionally minority areas in larger cities and noted that these areas are attractive because each has a significant drawing point. "Now people are starting to see the importance of being there," which could help create "cool neighborhoods" in the downtown Springfield area, Pittman said.

"You get a lot of the younger black kids now who are going off to colleges and not wanting to come back to Springfield. So we need to start opportunities for them to come back and to do some things to bridge the economic gap that exists here for blacks," Pittman said. "Within the coming decade there's going to have to be some sort of cohesiveness as it relates to the black community, for building any wealth or power structure, because right now we are fragmented as it relates to political, socioeconomic and religious lines."

One division which will be welcomed is the high-speed rail line that runs through Springfield's east side, something Pittman feels is a boost to the entire community but particularly for that part of town.

"You will have more people who might actually work in the Chicago area but live where it's cheaper in Springfield and take the train back and forth to work," Pittman said. "You are going to see the inner core of the city trans-

formed."

Pittman feels high-speed rail will help lure job-producing industries, and Springfield Black Chamber of Commerce CEO and President Dominic Watson agrees. Watson is also optimistic about the jobs that the Land of Lincoln Economic Development Commission could help create.

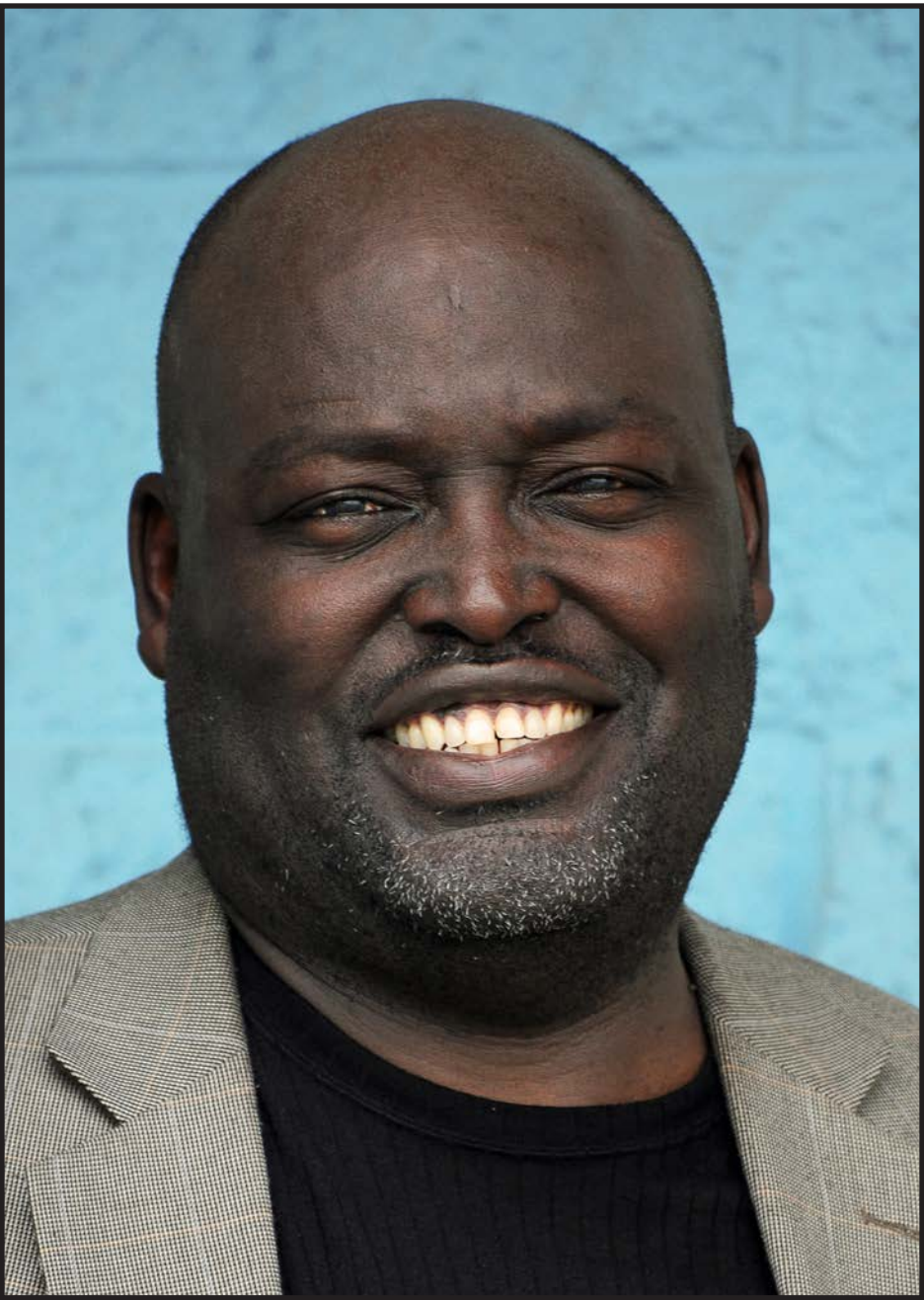
"I think we are on the cusp of something great as long as our current leadership stays focused and is willing to work with everyone," Watson said. "If we can get corporations that are employing individuals from all walks of life and different income levels coming into Springfield, I think we can continue on this path toward success."

"Springfield can move to be a vibrant community. We have seen very high success rates, particularly for historic state capital cities throughout the nation," Watson said. "I think if we focus on driving economic development in Springfield with job creation, the community will flourish."

But the city won't flourish if there remains an economic divide depending on the side of town in which you live, Watson said. Any comprehensive approach to economic development should not limit anyone based on income, race or gender, he added.

"Those who come after us are going to be at the forefront of not looking at race, but embracing race," Watson said.

Springfield entrepreneur Mike Pittman.



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A more well-rounded approach to health care

Eighty percent of a person's health is affected by what happens outside of the hospital or clinic, and the health care system of the future will focus on that.

"Someone's health is affected by their community, environment, family, trauma, food and income," said Dr. Tracey Smith, director of Population Health, Community Health and Community Outreach, and Family Community Medicine for the SIU School of Medicine. "Health care is having to move outside the clinic and the hospital and I think you're going to continue to see that grow, because that's really the only place we're starting to see success with improvements in health."

"When we talk about violence, the crime that is going on in neighborhoods, it's because we've lost a sense of community. And when you lose a sense of community you become isolated and your health decreases," Smith said. "So programs that we put in place will also have to be measured by a return of community. Because when you see a community get healthy, that also means that people individually in that community are healthy."

But measuring a return on community, rather than a return on investment, will mean finding new ways of communicating between those in health care administration and those providing the services.

"Countries that do this really well spend at least two dollars on social services for every dollar that is spent on medical care, because we know the two dollars spent on social services goes so much farther to improve health," Smith said. "The problem is that the language

has not always been spoken correctly in the way that insurance companies or those who speak business gather it up."

Smith said health care professionals will get more creative with marketing in the future, not just to sell their services but to convince patients to do the right thing.

"You are selling patients on what is the best thing to do. We have to learn what clicks with different generations and we have to market our messages correctly," Smith said. "It's not the same old 'you know that you need to exercise 30 minutes a day.' That doesn't work anymore."

Better medication management also needs to come in the future, and it begins with making better use of pharmacists.

"We know that when we have a pharmacist working alongside the physician it makes a huge difference in the number of medications that are prescribed and we are choosing the best meds for those patients," Smith said. "We also have to teach people at a young age that some pain is natural. You're going to have pain in life. We don't always have to have a pill for that."








Tracey Smith at the SIU School of Medicine's Family Community Medicine clinic in downtown Springfield.



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Carpet Weavers
Casa Real Cocina Mexicana
Central Illinois Food Bank
Chase Bank
Children's Museum of IL
Clinton High School
Concordia Village
County Market
Crown Cork & Seal
DaVita Dialysis Center
Decatur Housing Authority
Decatur Memorial Hospital
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HD Smith
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Heritage Manor
Hershey Towers
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Horace Mann

Howlett Building
HSHS
Illes Park Place
Illini Hospital
Ill. Community College System
Ill. Nat. Guard
Ill. State Police
Kidzeum
Liberty Utilities
Lincoln Library
Lincoln Land Community
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Love's Travel Stop
LRS Building
Matheny-Withrow
Elementary School
Memorial ExpressCare
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Children as partners

Your partner in the future may be younger than you expect.

“We need to look at and invest in our children as our partners,” said Mia Woods, executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Illinois Capital Region. “We need to make sure that they have better educational settings, similar opportunities and access, and recognize that their future is our future too.”

“It’s realistic but it’s huge, daunting, tiring and never-ending,” Woods said. “That means it’s everybody’s problem, everybody’s work, but it’s also everybody’s blessing. When children are failing at school we are all failing.”

Job number one is reinforcing each child’s value.

“We tap into the inherent awesomeness that all kids possess through mentorship, pulling that out of them and letting them see what they are worth and what they are capable of and what they can accomplish,” Woods said. “They will be our future leaders one day, making our laws, raising children, and being our workforce. We must make sure they understand that and find value in it so they will work hard at being the best they can be at those things.”

Children learn by example, and Woods said if they see adults investing in their future they will respond in kind.

“When kids see us being involved they understand that community feel and sense, and they want to do that too,” Woods said. “We want to make sure we have future engineers and police officers, but also that we have future people who are invested in their community.” ♦

Mia Woods, executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Illinois Capital Region.







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Professional Women’s Calendar of Events

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Association for Women in Communications (AWC)

AWC will host their summer social on Thursday, June 14 at Boone’s Saloon from 5:30-8 p.m. Kick off the summer and network with your industry colleagues! Invite a friend, guests are welcome.

To make a reservation, visit www.awcspringfield.org.


Illinois Women in Leadership (IWIL)

IWIL will host their annual business meeting and dinner at Island Bay Yacht Club on Thursday, June 21 at 5:30 p.m. There will be a brief annual business meeting to update by-laws and approve organization officers, followed by time to eat and visit at our backyard BBQ-themed event.


Registration is \$30 per person on or before June 15 or \$35 after that and 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 summer social at Island Bay Yacht Club on Wednesday, June 13 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Be part of an evening filled with socializing, games, and a dinner buffet. The cost is \$20 for members or returning guests, first time guests are free. Register at www.weicispringfield.org.




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To have your event added to the Women’s Calendar of Events, please email your information to info@springfielbusinessjournal.com



MANUFACTURERS – MORGAN COUNTY

Sources: “Manufacts” produced by the Quantum Growth Initiative; Jacksonville Regional Economic Development Corporation; the manufacturers Ranked by number of full-time employees.

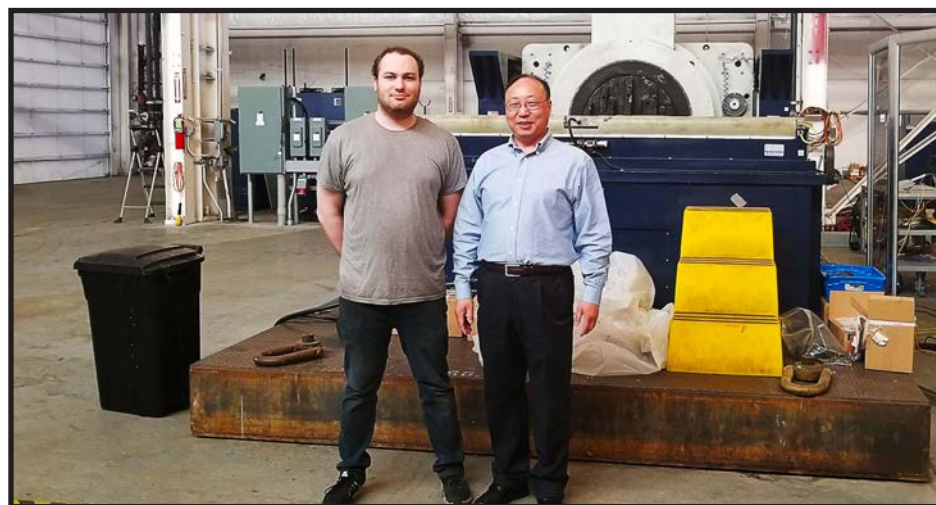
	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=)	WEBSITE	FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	FACILITY SIZE (SQ. FT.)	PRINCIPAL(S)	PRODUCT/SERVICE	YEAR EST'D
1	Reynolds Consumer Products 500 E. Superior Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-243-3311 217-479=1222	reynoldsconsumerproducts.com	800	360,000 (west plant), 508,000 (east plant)	Jeff Phillips, plant manager	Polyethylene bags and films	1962
2	Perma-Bound Hertzberg New Method Inc. 617 E. Vandalia Rd. Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-243-5451 217-243=7505	perma-bound.com	300	320,000	James Orr, CEO Bill Hull, plant manager	Prebound books for schools and libraries	1953
3	Nestlé USA 1111 Carnation Drive Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-9511 217-479=2280	nestleusa.com	181	30 acres	Brent Keener, general manager/plant manager	Non-dairy creamer	1970
4	Bound to Stay Bound Books 1880 W. Morton Ave. Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-5191 217-245=0424	btsb.com	147	110,000	Bob Sibert, president Rob Crain, plant manager	Prebound children’s library books	1920
5	ILMO Products Company 7 Eastgate Drive Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-2183 217-243=7634	ilmoproducts.com	100	40,000 (8 acres)	Linda Standley, CEO Brad Floreth, president	Wholesale/retail distributor of industrial, medical, laboratory EPA protocol & specialty gases and welding equipment sales & service	1913
6	Brahler’s Truckers Supply 21 Harold Cox Drive Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-243-6471 217-245=0565	brahlers.com	92	80,000 (4 buildings)	Richard Brahler, CEO Terry Ranson, plant manager	Retread truck tires and sales, truck and industrial tire sales and service, farm tires	1972
7	CCK Automations, Inc. 500 Capitol Way Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-243-6040 217-245=4105	cckautomations.com	72	100,000	JJ Richardson, CEO	Printed circuit board assemblies, industrial control panels, injection molded parts, engineering services	1999
8	Jacksonville Machine Inc. 2265 W. Morton Ave. Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-243-1119 217-243=3631	jmimachine.com	55	40,000	Jeff Rodems, president	CNC job shop	1919
9	Rutland 7 Crabtree Road Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-7810	rutland.com	30	60,000	Faith Nergenah	Manufacturer of stove and fireplace repair products	1961
9	UGL 550 Capitol Way Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-243-7878	ugl.com	30	43,000	George Crollly	Home maintenance and repair items	1985
10	Eli Bridge Company 800 Case Ave. Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-7145	elibrIDGE.com	23	66,000	Patty Sullivan	Amusement ride manufacturing and metal fabrication	1919
11	Pallet Repair Systems (PRS) 2 Eastgate Drive Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-291-0009	prsgroupinc.com	20	50,000	Jeff Williams	OEM Machinery and job shop services, machining/fabrication	1989
12	Helena Chemical 1995 Old Grace Road Meredosia, IL 62665	217-584-1133	helenachemical.com	16	4 buildings including a 12,000 square ft. liquid fertilizer and chemical building	Jason Smith	Crop protection products, fertilizer and fertilizer application services, specialized nutrients, seed and seed treatments, financial services and precision agricultural services and software	1980
13	BPC, LLC 1933 Old Naples Rd. Meredosia, IL 62665	217-584-1110 217-584=1110	N/A	15	DND	Michael Krause, general manager	Conducts comprehensive analytical testing of resin compounds and conducts trials and DOE to produce specially compounded materials and engineered resins	2012
13	Tarps Manufacturing 1000 State Highway 104 Meredosia, IL 62665	217-584-1900	tarpsmfg.com	15	28,000	Rich Ott	Custom tarps	2003

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Albert Luo, right, is founder and president of DVT, which tests materials by subjecting them to high-frequency vibrations.

PHOTOS/ BY COLIN PATRICK BRADY

Good vibrations

A whole lot of shaking going on at Dynamics Vibration Testing

BY COLIN PATRICK BRADY

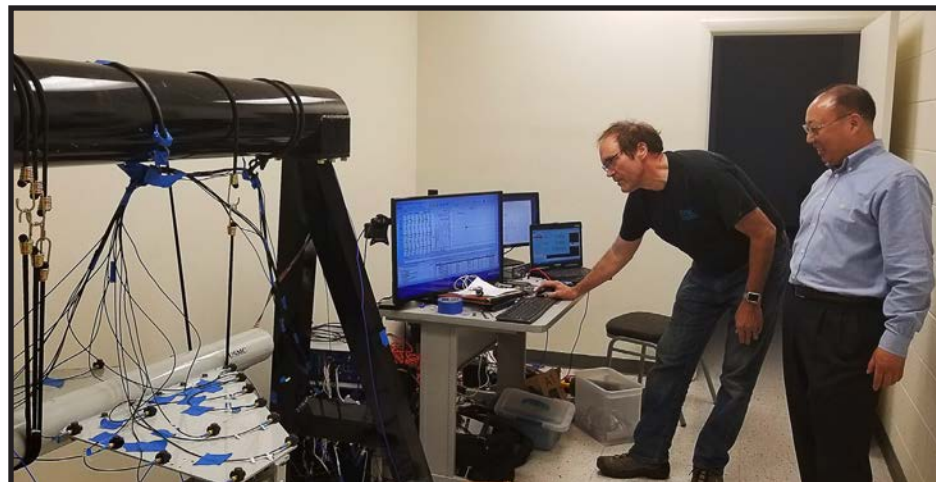
In an industrial park in southwest Springfield, at 3501 Mayflower Drive, "there's a whole lot of shaking going on." So reads the plaque that greets visitors at the gargantuan facility that is Dynamics Vibration Testing, LLC. Albert Luo, Ph.D., is founder and president of DVT, a company that performs an array of tests on materials and equipment by subjecting them to high-frequency vibrations.

It is a bit of a heavy load to describe exactly what services DVT provides for its clients. They are mostly conceptual and include quality control aspects and the modification of materials based upon the stress and strain they encounter over a range of vibrational frequencies and temperatures. Luo explains in brief a core element that DVT provides: "We provide an array of dynamics,

are all about quality control and testing," says Huang. "No production takes place here. Our clients send us the materials fully produced and ready to be analyzed."

When asked why he chose Springfield to set up shop in 2015, Luo does not hesitate. "Springfield has been a very supportive community to DVT. The mayor has toured the facility twice." He adds, "We provide a unique service in all the United States. Plus, we are centrally located from several major manufacturing cities, like Chicago, St. Louis, Indianapolis and the Quad Cities." All those cities host industries that have provided material for testing by DVT.

Perhaps the most intriguing place at DVT is the isolation room, which evokes a spy thriller. It is a large (at least 30 feet high) white outcropping that leads out to a retractable bay door. A semi or similar truck could back up into this bay



Tim Copeland, left, and Luo. DVT tests equipment for automotive, aerospace, electronics and defense industries.

vibration and fatigue testing. This allows us to serve several areas of industry, including automotive, aerospace, electronics, computer systems and the defense industry."

DVT is all about superlatives. Some of the largest and costliest machines of their kind exist within its 79,000 square feet of floor space and nowhere else in the world. The crown jewel of the myriad shaking and vibrating machines at DVT is what the employees term "the mighty 35-ton shaker." It is complete with an overhead gantry equipped with a 35-ton loading crane to move the giant shaker around, or to place heavy specimens upon it to be shaken. "I designed the base upon which the 35-ton shaker sits," says Luo. "NASA spent something like \$500,000 on the same base, and we did it for \$10,000." Luo is a full-time professor of mechanical engineering at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. "My students supply solutions for some of the larger problems we face at DVT."

Luo's teaching obligations keep him at SIU-E much of the time, so the operation of DVT falls to Sherry Huang, manager and chief engineer. "We

and deposit a piece of material that is totally unseen by all but authorized personnel. There are DVT cameras pointing outwards and similar cameras pointing within this white isolation room to ensure that no prying eyes spy the secrets held within. Luo explains, "This isolation room was developed for high security systems – missile testing, for example."

Luo expounds on the virtue of information fluidity. "High-tech research not only attracts more revenue to the area, but it informs our existing technology, and allows other agencies to provide applied sciences for future generations." Further, Luo says, "After 100 to 200 years people will have a greater appreciation and understanding of the advancements we have innovated here. Those innovations will be woven into the fabric of people's daily lives and experiences through their technology." ♦

Dynamics Vibration Testing, LLC, has an intuitive and informative website that can be found at <http://www.dvttesting.com>.

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MANUFACTURERS – SANGAMON COUNTY

Sources: "Large Employers and Manufacturers" produced by the Quantum Growth Partnership; the manufacturers DND - Did Not Disclose. Ranked by number of full-time employees.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=)	WEBSITE	FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	FACILITY SIZE (SQ. FT.)	PRINCIPAL(S)	PRODUCT/SERVICE	YEAR EST'D
1	Bunn-O-Matic Corporation 1400 Stevenson Dr. Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-6601 217-542=2827	bunn.com	500	DND	Arthur Bunn, president & CEO	Manufacturer of a complete line of commercial dispensed beverage equipment, paper filters and home coffee brewers	1957
2	Arch Coal Viper Mine 5945 Lester Road Williamsville, IL 62693	217-566-3000 217-566=3051	N/A	276	DND	Garrett Barton, general manager	Coal producer	1982
3	Standard Aero 1200 N. Airport Dr. Springfield, IL 62707	800-731-7371 217-541=3365	standardaero.com	219	250,000+	James Campbell, vice pres./general manager	Aircraft service, modification	1911
4	Brandt Consolidated, Inc. 2935 S. Koke Mill Road Springfield, IL 62711	217-547-5800 217-547=5801	brandt.co	209	25,000	Rick Brandt, CEO	Fertilizers, crop protection, micronutrients, spray adjuvants, seed	1953
5	Nudo Products, Inc. 1500 Taylor Ave. Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-5636 217-528=8722	nudo.com	181	400,000	Darryl Rosser, president & CEO	Manufacturer of wall and ceiling panels with a variety of substrates	1954
6	Simplex, Inc. PO Box 7388 Springfield, IL 62791	217-483-1600 217-483=1616	simplexdirect.com	150	125,000	Thomas Debrey, president	Load banks, day tanks, fuel supply systems	1952
7	DICKEY-john Corporation 5200 Dickey John Road Auburn, IL 62615	217-438-3371 217-438=6012	dickey-john.com	135	225,000	Jeff Schertz, vice pres. of operations	Electronic design and manufacture of systems controls for agriculture and public works	1966
8	Solomon Colors, Inc. 4050 Color Plant Road Springfield, IL 62702	217-522-3112 217-522=3145	solomoncolors.com	100	250,000	Richard Solomon, pres./CEO; Charles Kreutzer, vice pres./CFO	Manufacturing of iron oxide pigments, color for concrete, mortar and concrete products	1927
9	Henry Technologies 701 S. Main St. Chatham, IL 62629	217-483-2406 217-483=2462	henrytech.com	90	DND	John Murry, operations director	Components for HVAC/industrial & commercial refrigeration	1914
10	Mel-O-Cream Donuts Intl., Inc. 5456 International Parkway Springfield, IL 62711	217-483-7272 217-483=7744	mel-o-cream.com	80	70,000	David Waltrip, president; Dan Alewelt, director of operations	Frozen dough products and frozen pre-fried donuts	1932

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Sources: The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce. * - State of Illinois number includes all state government agencies, including education institutions within Sangamon County. Ranked by number of employees.

	EMPLOYER NAME	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	PRINCIPAL	PRODUCT/SERVICE	YEAR EST'D	WEBSITE
1	State of Illinois	17,800	Bruce Rauner, Governor	Government	1818	illinois.gov
2	Memorial Health System	5,181	Edgar J. Curtis, President and CEO	Health Care	1897	memorialmedical.com
3	Hospital Sisters Health System	4,123	Mary Starmann-Harrison (HSHS) Charles Lucore (St. John's) Presidents and CEOs	Health Care	1875	st-johns.org
4	Springfield Clinic	2,350	Ray Williams, CEO	Health Care	1939	springfieldclinic.com
5	Springfield Public Schools #186	2,144	Jennifer Gill, Superintendent	Education	1854	sps186.org
6	University of Illinois-Springfield	1,551	Susan J. Koch, Ed.D., Vice President and Chancellor	Higher Education	1969	uis.edu
7	SIU School of Medicine	1,526	Jerry Kruse, M.D., MSPH Dean/Provost	Higher Education/Health Care	1970	siumed.edu
8	City of Springfield	1,393	James O. Langfelder, Mayor	Government	1832	springfield.il.us
9	Horace Mann	1,127	Marita Zuraitis, President & CEO	Insurance	1945	horacemann.com
10	Lincoln Land Community College	950	Charlotte J. Warren, PhD., President	Higher Education	1967	llcc.edu

Long Bridge is 20 years old and growing

A golf course, restaurant, beer bar, wedding venue

BY KAREN ACKERMAN WITTER

"Exceptional golf and so much more," is how Michelle Buerkett describes Long Bridge Golf Course. Buerkett is the owner and general manager of this family-owned business, which celebrated its 20th anniversary on May 15. Long Bridge is located just north of Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport off of Route 29. Although it's only a 15-20-minute drive from just about anywhere in Springfield, it has the feel of being in the country. Long Bridge offers a nine-hole golf course open to the public, golf leagues, a full-service restaurant, live music on Friday nights, outdoor patio, wide selection of craft beers and the first self-pouring craft beer bar in Springfield. It is also a popular venue for weddings and other celebrations.

Long Bridge gets its name from the "long bridge" that is part of the golf course. Golfers enjoy the natural setting and scenery. The nine-hole course is located along the Sangamon River and features rolling terrain, ponds, trees and vistas unimpaired by houses, streets or other developments. The family owns an additional 85 acres of timber, which surrounds the golf course. Although Long Bridge is known as a golf course, Buerkett welcomes golfers and non-golfers alike and says there is something for everyone. She and her team are committed to providing a relaxing, friendly and welcoming environment for all.

In May, Long Bridge opened the first self-pouring craft beer venue in Springfield, with a variety of craft beers. Customers check in at the bar and provide a debit or credit card to purchase a wristband. Then they simply tap the band on the screen by the beer they want to pour. Customers make their own selections and can pour individual samples, make their own flights or pour a full glass. The system accommodates a selection of 10 types of craft beers, and customers are charged by the ounce. Local beers from Rolling Meadows, Hand of Fate and Engrained, as well as beers from other central Illinois communities and beyond, are some of the current selections. Buerkett saw this system at the National Bar Show in Las Vegas several years ago and was determined to bring this to Springfield.

Michelle's father, Merle Buerkett, founded and built the golf course 20 years ago. He had a local business, Buerkett Wrecking. An avid golfer, he designed and built the golf course on a former landfill of demolition debris from his business operations. His daughter, Michelle, spent two years in nursing school, but helped

her father with the golf course from the very beginning. She took over the day-to-day operations after her father was diagnosed with cancer. It has been a labor of love for her over the past 20 years, continuing and growing what her father started.

In the beginning, Long Bridge was a golf course with a snack bar. It was completely remodeled and expanded in 2011. An outdoor patio was added, and the restaurant was expanded. Long Bridge began presenting live bands on Friday evenings and hosting weddings on Saturdays. Long Bridge has become a popular setting for weddings and other celebrations and has hosted 122 weddings. There is a large tent near the outdoor patio, which is ideal for weddings, class reunions, birthday parties and other celebrations.

Long Bridge is a family operation. Michelle took over what her father began. Her daughter, Stephanie Alford, manages the kitchen and is a graduate of the Lincoln Land Culinary Institute. Her son, Mason Alford, works on the overall course maintenance and bartends on weekends.

Her husband, Mike Kovarik, an anesthesiologist with HSHS Medical Group, is her business partner. Michelle gives him credit for the beautiful landscaping. Both Stephanie and Mason helped out when they were young, worked during the summers, added hours



Michelle Buerkett, left, owner and general manager of Long Bridge Golf Course, with her team that includes her husband, Mike Kovarik, her daughter, Stephanie Alford, and her son, Mason Alford.

PHOTOS/ COURTESY LONG BRIDGE



Long Bridge now has a wide range of craft beers on self-pouring taps.

and are now fast becoming part of the family business.

Buerkett says she is proud of where they came from and even more proud of where they are going. She has been a part of Long Bridge since the beginning and responsible for fulfilling and expanding her father's dream. She credits her wonderful staff and is happy that her business provides local jobs with a positive work environment. She is grateful for superintendent Arden Lear, assistant manager Dan Ladyman and all of the hard-working wait staff and cooks. "We could not be a success without all of them behind us," said Buerkett.

Another expansion is on the drawing board and will be completed later this summer. Buerkett was filled with emotion on the 20th anniversary of Long Bridge, reflecting on what her father's small business has become.

She knows that her father would be proud of what's been accomplished and the plans for the future.

Long Bridge is open daily during the summer and for lunch during the winter. For more information on hours, menus, live bands, wedding rentals and other details, go to www.longbridgegc.com. ♦

Karen Ackerman Witter is a freelance writer who enjoys writing about interesting people, places, organizations and businesses. As a longtime resident of Springfield, she is interested in promoting local businesses, especially in this year of the Illinois Bicentennial and its theme: BORN, BUILT & GROWN, honoring the tremendous people, places and things that make Illinois enduringly strong, kind and beautiful.

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Keep on truckin'

Springfield's food trucks are learning to navigate city regulations

BY SCOTT FAINGOLD

"Last summer, the Illinois Future Farmers of America asked us and AZTCA to come set our food trucks up on the south side of the convention center for an event there," said Randy Twyford, owner and operator of the Twyford BBQ food truck. "There were spots already pre-approved by the city on the south side of the convention center and we were set up there but then the mayor sent his people over. A nearby restaurant said we were affecting their business and we had to move to the other side of the convention center."

Twyford's experience seems typical of the challenges being faced by food truck operators in Springfield. While the popularity of the trucks can be observed in the well-attended local "food truck meet-ups" such as the MacArthur Boulevard Association's Bites on the Boulevard and Downtown Springfield's Street Food Festival, a perception among the food truck community of hostility toward the trucks from brick-and-mortar restaurants, along with unreasonable paperwork demands from the city, are keeping a potential economic engine from reaching full steam.

"On the food truck, we try to make ourselves friendly and hospitable. We truly do appreciate the business because if it weren't for our customers we wouldn't be in existence. Springfield is so supportive of us," said Twyford, whose truck was voted "Best Barbecue" by readers of the *Illinois Times* in 2017. "It just amazes me every day. We get a lot of repeat customers and a lot of new customers."

"We like to team up with local farmers based on the availability of produce," said Kendra Cooper of Cooper's StrEATside. "Our menu changes weekly, monthly, seasonally, based on what the farmers have. We like to use fresh products, our French fries are hand-cut daily, we use fresh meats as well. Everything is homemade." Cooper's husband, Justin, is the chef, and she says he likes to take ownership and pride in the food he serves and keeps up with the latest food trends. In addition to setting up regularly at the Old Capitol Farmers Market, the StrEATside truck keeps busy providing lunch service for large office buildings and other private businesses. Cooper says she hasn't run into any hassles with the city but does find some of the paperwork required to set up a food truck to be excessive. "I understand having policies for setting up on the street. However, when we are in private parking lots, I don't think the paperwork should be as redundant as it is." As an example, she said that in

order to participate in 'Food Truck Fridays' at St. John's Hospital for a second year, all paperwork had to be redone. "I don't understand why we have to go through the full process of getting the property management's consent and everything else again. They don't have time to take out of their schedule to sit down and fill out paperwork and neither do we."

Cooper, whose truck's motto is "Fresh Cuisine You Can't Pass Up," says she finds the public image of food trucks to be improving. "I

so we kind of partner up with them," he said.

The newest truck on the block in Springfield is Robert's Seafood. "We launched the truck about three weeks ago," said Brian Aiello. "Everything we do is fresh made – we want to replicate what we do in the store, with the same quality of food." He says that so far, customers seem to love their seafood and shrimp tacos. The fish used in their tacos depends on the season. "We've got wild cod or wild mahi throughout the season and we have other seasonal sauces or

mentioned an experience he had where the fact that a McDonald's was within 300 feet kept him from setting up. "I don't think I'm going to hurt McDonald's business," he said. "Honestly, I would have liked to do lunches but it's just too much hassle."

Gilly's BBQ is a trailer, rather than a truck. "I don't drive," said owner-operator Gil Taft, whose mobile kitchen – which specializes in ribs, rib tips, pork, brisket, chicken and other barbecue-style favorites – stays put in the parking lot between JoAnn Fabrics and GFS on Wabash Ave. "I pay rent there so I stay there. I do one event a year, for the sheet metal workers on Labor Day and that's about it. I meet all the requirements from the city. My dad and family have been in the restaurant business all their life, so I understand where they're coming from. I sit on my little spot and try to mind my own business and take care of business."

"We obviously would like to see a fair balance and we appreciate the concern that there is about fair competition between mobile food vendors and brick-and-mortar restaurants," said Val Yazell, economic development director for the city of Springfield. "We know brick-and-mortar restaurants want to ensure that food trucks are subject to the same operating regulations, while the food truck operators would like regulators to think more about what regulations are appropriate for their industry. We understand that there is that kind of balancing act." She said that while the city applauds the fact that small-business owners have thought outside the box and realize that food trucks represent a unique opportunity, they also understand the frustration of restaurants that might find a competitor parking in front of or very near to their business.

"We just want to ensure that everyone feels that they have a fair advantage for their business."

For his part, Twyford contends that permit problems and other issues with the city have affected his business in a negative way. "You hear people say food trucks don't have any overhead. Oh really? We've got trucks and we pay real estate tax and it would probably scare people how much sales tax we have to pay to the city of Springfield." He mentioned that he has worked with the city council and has found support from Ward 6 alderman Kristin DiCenso but has concluded that this kind of support only goes so far. "It's just one of those deals – if somebody complains about it, that's it. If they come in and blindsides you, there's nothing to be done. In Peoria and St. Louis things are very food truck friendly, but here, just an hour down the road, you've got the opposite." ♦

Scott Faingold can be reached at sfaingold@illinoistimes.com.



Wayne Kidd, owner of Jamaican Me Hungry, stands ready to serve you.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

know there used to be a perception that food trucks are nasty, they're dirty, but I think we've overcome that stereotype. I think people are supporting food trucks now in the Springfield area." As for competition from other food trucks, her attitude can be summed up as the more the merrier. "I think it would be nice to have one location in Springfield where all the trucks could go, like a food truck park. St. Louis does it, a lot of larger cities do that – they could even have it out at the fairgrounds, like a weekly or monthly thing."

Hector Lopez of Los Rancheros has had his truck operational for a year. Specializing in tacos and burritos, the truck is a mobile addition to his stand on South Grand Avenue. "Our habanero burrito is very popular on South Grand and we tend to carry that to the stops or events that we go to." As far as the permitting, Lopez has so far been able to avoid complications. "We found a couple of businesses that want us to be next door to them, like Hair of the Dog Bar/ber shop,

toppings, like pico de gallo or mango fruit salsa, and we change those up as well." Outside of seafood, Aiello enthusiastically touts his truck's bison burger. "It's a little bit leaner but it's a very flavorful burger that we do on the grill. It comes with a pretzel bun and aioli sauce. People who haven't had bison are very skeptical but they are very pleasantly surprised."

As for dealing with the city, Aiello says the only learning curve on their part so far involves the timing of some of the processes. "If someone comes along and says they want us to do something this Saturday, we don't have time to submit paperwork to the city, because that takes up to two weeks," he said. "I'd love to help those guys get a better process."

Jason Richardson of Skippers Island Oasis doesn't set up for lunches, primarily choosing to focus on special events. "My food is higher-end, so to do lunches I'd have to change the menu. It's also not really worth the additional permits just to be able to park at a certain spot." He



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	NAME / ADDRESS	CATERER/ FOOD TRUCK	PHONE / WEBSITE/ EMAIL	OWNER(S)	MIN/MAX SERVED	PRICE RANGE PER PERSON	MENU SPECIALITIES	TYPES OF EVENTS CATERED	YEAR EST'D
1	5Flavors Catering 3086 Normandy Rd. Springfield, IL 62703		217-787-4654 5Flavors.com Info@5Flavors.com	Chip Kennedy	30-2,000	\$25-\$100	Playful spins on old classics to cutting edge contemporary cuisine and custom menus created just for you.	Intimate gatherings to fundraising galas and everything in between including weddings and corporate events.	2009
2	Arena Food Service, Inc. 3101 Greenhead Dr., Suite B Springfield, IL 62711		217-698-2944 arenafoodservice.com info@arenafoodservice.com	Shaun Moore and Sherri Madonia	25-5,000	varies	Fully customized event services featuring modern renditions with a strong culinary foundation.	Galas, fundraisers, corporate and private events, weddings, class reunions.	1985
3	Artisan & Company Springfield, IL 62704		217-717-5530 artisanandcompanylocal@gmail.com	Shannon Matheis	Any size group	varies	Upscale customized.	Private dinner parties, executive and corporate dinners, charity fundraisers, political functions, and in-home cooking demonstrations.	2017
4	Chadito's Mexican American Grill Taco Truck		217-529-8226 www.facebook.com/Chaditos	Chad Reese	Any size group	\$10	Mexican American food, taco bar and nacho bar.	All	2012
5	Conn's Catering 835 S. 2nd St. Springfield, IL 62704		217-523-4466 connshospitalitygroup.com sales@inn835.com	Karen and Court Conn	25-5,000	varies	Full variety of catering options available, including hand-carved meat stations, plated or buffet meals, breakfast bars, and more.	Corporate, weddings, fundraisers, farm retreats.	1947
6	Cooper's StrEATside Bistro Food Truck		217-415-3852 www.cooperstreatside.com info@cooperstreatside.com	Justin and Kendra Cooper	20 and up	\$8 and up	Fresh local ingredients when available. We focus on customized menus and event design.	Community, business, luncheons, reunions, weddings, dinner, cocktail.	2014
7	County Market Catering 3001 Veterans Parkway Springfield, IL 62704		217-717-0360 countymarketcatering@nieman-nfoods.com	Niemann Foods	15-300	\$8-\$17.99	Taco bar, pulled pork, fried chicken.	Weddings, business lunches, school events.	DND
8	Cured Catering 2005 Barberry Dr. Springfield, IL 62704		217-494-2425 curedcaters.com curedcaters@gmail.com	Brian Reilly	25-1,000	varies	Full scale catering with an eye towards presentation. Gourmet hors d'oeuvres, soups, salads, entrees.	Specializing in weddings and custom events.	2017
9	Fields of Sweets PO Box 361 Rochester, IL 62563		217-441-4639 fieldsofsweets.com orders@fieldsofsweets.com	Eleana & Ross Fielding	25-250	\$8-\$35	Petit fours, cakes, cheesecake, cookies and brownies.	Food truck events, weddings,festivals, holiday events, and other events.	2014
10	Hamilton's Catering 101 Main St. Franklin, IL 62638		217-675-2720 hamiltonscatering.com info@hamiltonscatering.com	George Hamilton	50-5,000	\$8 and up	Prime rib, pork loin with bourbon/peach glaze, parmesan crusted chicken, fried chicken.	Weddings, holiday parties, business parties, family events, etc., and complete off-premise bar service.	1913
11	Hy-Vee 2115 S. MacArthur Blvd. Springfield, IL 62704		217-746-1001 1640cateringmgr@hy-vee.com Hy-vee.com	Hy-Vee	Any size group	All events individually quoted	Variety of catering options available. Customized menus available.	All	2014
12	Irie Jerk Chicken Truck		217-820-3722 www.facebook.com/jamaican-mehungry876 jamaicanmehungry876@gmail.com	Wayne Kidd	Any size group	\$2-\$12	Traditional Irie jerk chicken, Jamaican curry chicken, Caribbean style fish, Irie jerk pork, traditional Jamaican sides and sodas.	All	2017
13	McCormick's Catering 1510 N. 15th St. Springfield, IL 62702		217-726-3418 www.mccormicksrestaurant.net jdmfoods@comcast.net	Jared and Sarah McCormick	10-2,500	\$15	Specializing in house crafted award-winning meats and bbq, fresh baked breads, wide variety of hot and cold sides, salads and soups and desserts.	Business luncheons, house parties, hog roasts, full wedding services including bar and consulting.	1994
14	Nelson's Catering 3005 Great Northern Rd. Springfield, IL 62711		787-9443 Nelsonscatering.com Info@nelsonscatering.com	Josh Lindvall, Jeff Lindvall	10-10,000	\$8-\$75	Menus tailored to your event. Upscale appetizers, grilled items, BBQ, seafood prime rib.	Small board meetings, fundraising, galas, private parties, weddings, large corporate events, bar service.	1995
15	Poe's Catering 295 East Andrew Rd. Springfield IL 62707		217-487-7601 poescatering.com poecater@msn.com	Lance and Angela Poe	20-10,000	\$9.50 and up	Prime rib, fried chicken, ribs, smoked meats.	All	1998

	NAME / ADDRESS	CATERER/ FOOD TRUCK	PHONE / WEBSITE/ EMAIL	OWNER(S)	MIN/MAX SERVED	PRICE RANGE PER PERSON	MENU SPECIALITIES	TYPES OF EVENTS CATERED	YEAR EST'D
16	POUR Bars 3086 Normandy Rd. Springfield, IL 62703		217-679-2709 www.facebook.com/PourBars info@5flavors.com	Chip Kennedy	30-2,000	varies	Bar service for your formal wedding, backyard party, or anything in between. Poured wine with your dinner, specialty drinks, and professional bartenders.	All	2013
17	Robert's Seafood 1615 W. Jefferson St. Springfield, IL 62702		217-546-3089 www.robertsseafoodmarket.com zbeatty@robertsseafoodmarket.com	Dean "Robbie" Robert, Jr., Pamala Robert, Andrea (Robert) McLaughlin	All events individually quoted	\$4-\$13	Variety of fresh prepared seafood, bison burgers, new england crab roll, seasonal soups, salads and more.	Public events, festivals, private parties, lunches, shrimp boils, weddings, small or large events.	1916
18	Secret Recipes Catering 1615 Normandy Rd. Springfield, IL 62703		217-585-1100 SecretRecipesCateringCo.com Info@SecretRecipesCatering.com	Chip Kennedy	30-2,000	\$15-\$30	American home style cuisine. Chicken romano and our cheesy potatoes are fan favorites.	All	2003
19	Turasky's Catering 1020 West Jefferson Springfield, IL 62702		217-626-2803 turaskyscatering.com tony.turasky@live.com	Tony Turasky	50-5,000	\$8 and up	On-site grilling, stuffed pork chops, roast beef top round with au jus gravy, marinated grilled chicken breasts, pulled pork, Italian beef, ribeyes and ribeye sandwiches.	Wedding receptions, golf outings, company picnics, company parties, corporate events, banquets, fundraisers, etc.	1978
20	Twyford BBQ & Catering 2562 Twyford Rd. Jacksonville, IL 62650		217-370-2274 217-370-6353 twyfordbbq.com randy@twyfordbbq.com	Randy & Marla Twyford	25-500	\$10-\$50	BBQ ribs, brisket, pork, whole hog roasts, pork loin, chicken.	Food truck locations, festival vending, drop off, buffets for corporate events and employee appreciation, weddings and other social events.	2008
21	Wafflelicious Cafe		217-638-3063 www.facebook.com/Waffleliciouscafe/ zbistro@comcast.net	Abbas Zolghadr	50-200	\$6-\$10	Belgian waffles & wings, waffle dogs, nutella and fruit waffle.	All	2011
22	Yum Yum Hibachi on Wheels		630-776-4854 www.facebook.com/baindekok	Faustino Dekock, S. Hartawan	Up to 50	\$8	Chicken, chicken noodle, hibachi shrimp, salmon, steak and vegetables.	All	2017



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	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX (=) / WEBSITE	NUMBER OF ROOMS	NUMBER OF MEETING ROOMS	ROOM RATE SINGLE/DOUBLE	GENERAL MANAGER	AMENITIES
1	Wyndham Springfield City Centre 700 E. Adams Street Springfield, IL 62701	217-789-1530 217-789=0709 wyndham.com/hotels/49084	369	20	\$109 - \$209	Emily Mitchell	Locally owned full-service hotel featuring 369 guest rooms, including 36 suites, 50,000 sq. ft of meeting space, complimentary Wi-Fi in guest rooms and meeting space, complimentary shuttle to ariport and train station, award winning Nick & Nino's Penthouse Steakhouse on the 30th floor, The Grille at City Centre, Pinnacle Club Lounge, with a panoramic view of the city, Starbucks, heated indoor swimming pool, fitness center, located across the street from the Bank of Springfield Convention Center, within walking distance of Lincoln historical sites, pets welcome.
2	President Abraham Lincoln Springfield - A DoubleTree by Hilton 701 E. Adams Street Springfield, IL 62701	217-544-8800 217-544=9607 dtspringfieldil.com	310	17	\$109 - \$209	Robert Sabin	Featuring 310 overnight guest rooms, 13,000 sq. ft. meeting space; complimentary Wi-Fi access in all guest rooms, complimentary shuttle to Amtrak and Abraham Lincoln Capital airport, connected to Bank of Springfield Convention Center, heated indoor swimming pool and 24-hour fitness center.
3	Crowne Plaza Hotel 3000 S. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-7777 217-529=6666 cpspringfield.com	288	32	\$109 - \$229	Alan Filer	All rooms and suites with refrigerators and free Wi-Fi, 32-versatile meeting rooms, 70,000 sq. ft of flexible renovated meeting space, Long 9 Restaurant, Long 9 Bar & Grill with video gaming, proudly bew Starbucks coffe shop, 14th floor indoor pool, sundeck, and Lifecycle fitness center, 24-hour business center, complimentary shuttle to Amtrak & airport, 850 complimentary parking spaces, great for outdoor events and motorcoach travel.
4	Holiday Inn Express 3050 S. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-7771 217-529=1777 hiexpress.com	140	2	\$89 - \$165, (2 suites)	Shane Blanford	Mcrowaves and refrigerators in all rooms, daily complimentary hot breakfast, free Wi-Fi and fully equipped business center, on-site fitness center, guest laundry facilities, access to all facilities at the Crowne Plaza-including indoor pool, complimentary shuttle to and from Amtrak & airport, free street -level and bus parking, free local and domestic long distance calls.
5	State House Inn 101 E. Adams Street Springfield, IL 62701	217-528-5100 217-528=4358 redroof.com	125	6	\$89 - \$139	Scott McKay	Complimentary full hot breakfast buffet, business center, fitness center, lounge, complimentary on-site parking, complimentary in-room wi-fi, 3 blocks from Amtrak, 6,500 sq. ft. of meeting space.
6	Wingate Inn 3185 S. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62711	217-529-1100 217-529=1105 hamptoninn.com	124	3	\$99 - \$149	John McNutt	Complimentary hot deluxe breakfast, free wireless internet, indoor pool and fitness center, easy interstate access, great location.
7	Drury Inn & Suites 3180 S. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-3900 877-732=0594 druryhotels.com	117	1	\$99 - \$159	Josh Chadbourne	Free hot quickstart breakfast, manager's reception, hot foods, indoor pool/jacuzzi, exercise room, guest laundry room, micro/fridge combos, in-room coffee, wired & wireless internet, business center, free long distance.
7	Hilton Garden Inn Springfield 3100 S. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-7171 217-529=7172 springfieldil.gardeninn.com	117	7	\$95 - \$199, (13 suites)	Chris Fultz	Indoor pool, whirlpool, exercise room, free wired / wireless high-speed internet, restaurant and lounge open daily, free local calls, free business center with wireless printing from the rooms, Keurig®, refrigerator and microwave in every room, complimentary parking, Fit Club passes.
8	Route 66 Hotel and Conference Center 625 E. Saint Joseph Street Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-6626 217-529=4666 rt66hotel.com	114	4	\$72 - \$150, (8 suites)	Jodi Tammisto	Outdoor swimming pool, wireless internet service, in-room coffee maker, iron & hair dryer, on-site guest laundry, two-room suites available, free parking, bar on site, jacuzzi suites available, fridge and microwave in every room, video gaming and restaurant and bar on site.

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9	Candlewood Suites 2501 Sunrise Drive Springfield, IL 62703	217-522-5100 217-522=5101 candlewoodsuites.com	110	1	\$99.99 - \$129.99	Janie Deheve	Complimentary wireless high-speed Internet and full kitchens in spacious guest rooms for longer visits. Free laundry facilities, unlimited access to a state-of-the-art business center, an exercise room and the Candlewood Cupboard convenience store for meals and snacks, Green Certified hotel.
10	Residence Inn Springfield South 2915 Stanford Avenue Springfield, IL 62703	217-527-1100 217-527=1101 residenceinnspringfieldil.com	108	1	\$149.99 - \$199.99	Darin Dame	Studios, 1-2 bedroom suites (w/full kitchens, separate living space, work areas, sleeping areas), evening reception/social hour Mon.-Wed., 24 hr. fitness center, indoor pool, whirlpool, laundry facility, coffee in lobby, coffee/tea in-room, complimentary buffet breakfast, phone calls: toll-free, safe deposit boxes at front desk, pets allowed - contact hotel for details.
11	Northfield Inn, Suites & Conference Center 3280 Northfield Drive Springfield, IL 62702	217-523-7900 217-523=7273 northfieldinn.com	105	8	\$89 - \$149	Marianne Zarndt	Free high-speed internet in Guestrooms and Conference Center. 13,000 sq. ft. of meeting space, fitness center & business center. Free extended Continental Breakfast. In-room coffee makers, refrigerators, and microwaves. Jacuzzi Suites, Standard, and Accessible Rooms available. Free parking and indoor pool.
11	Motel 6 6011 S. Sixth Street Road Springfield, IL 62712	217-529-1633 217-585=1271 motel6.com	105	0	\$39.99 - \$59.99	Jonathan Graham	Kids 17 and under stay free (with parents), pets stay free, outdoor pool, free morning coffee, free local and long distance calls, Wi-Fi, guest laundry, truck parking, expanded cable with two HBO channels and three ESPN channels.
12	Ramada Springfield North 3281 Northfield Drive Springfield, IL 62702	217-523-4000 217-523=4080 springfieldramada.com	97	2	\$89 - \$149	Marianne Zarndt	Complimentary deluxe continental breakfast, free Wi-Fi, all non-smoking hotel, newly updated guest rooms, indoor pool, fitness center, refrigerator/microwave in all rooms, business center, jacuzzi rooms, 32" flat screen TVs, guest laundry facilities.
13	Comfort Suites 2620 S. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62703	217-753-4000 217-753=4166 comfordsuites.com	92	1	\$100 - \$149	Justin Hamilton	All rooms equipped with refrigerator, microwave, pull-out sofa bed, remote TV w/DVD upon request, free high-speed wireless internet access, separate work/leisure areas.
14	Hampton Inn & Suites 2300 Chuckwagon Drive Springfield, IL 62711	217-793-7670 217-793=6522 hamptoninn.com	83	2	\$102-\$182	Darrin Thurman	Complimentary hot breakfast, indoor pool, 24-hr. fitness center, free high-speed internet, wireless internet, business center, 2-room suites, microwaves and refrigerators, Evening Sundowner Tues, Wed, Thurs in the reception area.
15	Staybridge Suites 4231 Schooner Drive Springfield, IL 62711	217-793-6700 217-793=6694 staybridge.com	82	1	\$100 - \$200, (all suite hotel)	John Voyles	Complimentary hot & cold breakfast, free wireless & hard wired internet, free local calls, direct phone line w/ voice mail, indoor pool, 24-hr. fitness center, convenience store, business ctr., complimentary evening social (M-Th 5:30-7:30) w/ soda, beer, wine & food), pets welcome, complimentary laundry facility, firepit, basketball court, grills.
16	Comfort Inn & Suites 3675 S. Sixth Street Springfield, IL 62703	217-529-8898 217-529=4354 comfortinn.com	80	1	\$89 - \$134	Sarah Dietrich	Cable/Satellite TV, free local calls, hair dryer, in-room coffee maker, in-room microwave and mini fridge, Wi-Fi, indoor pool, continental breakfast, indoor hot tub, fitness center.
17	Howard Johnson Inn & Suites 1701 J. David Jones Parkway Springfield, IL 62702	217-541-8762 217-541=8774 hojo.com	79	3	\$69 - \$89	Shailesh Parekh	Complimentary continental breakfast, free local calls, outdoor pool, 24 suites, truck parking, free wireless.
18	Courtyard By Marriott 3462 Freedom Drive Springfield, IL 62704	217-793-5300 217-793=5300 www.marriott.com/spicy	78	1	\$109.99 - \$179.99	Nathan Biermann	All non-smoking hotel, heated indoor pool, spa, exercise room, lounge, in-room coffee, iron, free high-speed wireless internet, restaurant - The Bistro, Starbuck's coffee, HD-TV in all rooms.
18	Country Inn & Suites 3092 Stevenson Drive Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-5151 217-544=5353 countryinns.com/springfieldil	78	1	\$119 - \$199	Joe Council	Complimentary hot breakfast, 18 suites, refrigerator/microwave in every room, heated indoor pool, free Wi-Fi, business center, free weekday newspaper, fitness center, Inn Case Market™, Read It & Return Lending Library™.



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1	Illinois Women in Leadership (IWIL) Sangamo Club 227 E. Adams St. Springfield, IL 62701	217-414-6220 iwil.biz membership@iwil.biz	11:30 am to 1 pm every third Thursday in the month except September, December, March, June, July- dates and times TBD	215	Jennifer Sublett	Regular member: \$80	2004
2	Women Entrepreneurs of Central Illinois (WE-CI) Meeting Location Varies	217-299-1366 wecispringfield.org maureenwms32@yahoo.com	2nd Wednesday of the month	48	Maureen Williams	\$96 annually	DND
3	The Association for Women in Communications Sangamo Club 227 E. Adams St. Springfield, IL 62701	awcspringfield.org president@awcspringfield.org	2nd Wednesday of the month	40	Melissa Hahn	\$25 plus national dues, various membership categories	1977
4	McBrien Lincoln Douglas Toastmasters Club Our Savior's Lutheran Church 2645 Old Jacksonville Road Springfield, IL 62704	217-546-8624 mcbrianlincolndouglas.toastmasters.org randaln1@yahoo.com	Thursdays, 6 pm	28	Nate Randall	\$51/6 months	1936
5	Prospectors Referral Group Meeting Location Varies	217-546-7310 tammykayehearn@aol.com	Wednesdays, 11:30 am, (1st & 3rd weeks)	20	Tammy Kaye Hearn	Lunch cost only	1999
5	Noontime Toastmasters Laurel United Methodist Church 631 South Grand Ave. West Springfield, IL 62704	217-414-7378 noontime.toastmastersclubs.org stormwolff@gmail.com	Mondays, Noon	20	Storm Wolff	\$53/6 months	1998
6	The Network Group The Sangamo Club 227 E. Adams St. Springfield, IL 62701	217-652-3686 217-496-3684 edclark@icloud.com	2nd Tuesday of the month, 11:45 am	19	Ed Clark	Lunch \$15/mo.	2000
7	League of Our Own Toastmasters Club Springfield Urban League Inc 100 N. 11th St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-789-0830 Ext. 1126 1179206.toastmastersclubs.org lhemingway@springfieldul.org	Fridays, 11:30 am (2nd & 4th weeks)	16	Larry Hemingway, Sr.	\$10.50/mo.	2008
8	Central Illinois Networking Group Gem PR & Media 2121 W. White Oaks Dr. Springfield, IL 62704	dominic@henson-robinson.com	Every other Thursday 8 to 9 am	15	Dominic Carnduff	\$50 annual	2010
8	Capital City Toastmasters IDOT Building (Hanley Building) 2300 Dirksen Parkway, Room 214 Springfield, IL 62764	217-698-8767 1313356.toastmastersclubs.org kathybrennan77@yahoo.com	Wednesdays, Noon	15	Kathy Brennan	\$55/6 months \$100/12 months	2009
8	BNI of Central Illinois 3603 W. Bennington Ct. Peoria, IL 61615	309-453-2463 BNI-IL.com jeff@bni-il.com	BNI Business Insiders – Wed 7:45 am Jay Davis Country Financial BNI Business Builders – Thurs 7:30 am Schnuck's on Iles BNI Thurs Lunch – Thurs 11:30 am Brickhouse Grill & Pub	15-25 per chapter	Jeff Ensinger	\$445/year. First year fee for books & training of \$150	2011 2000 2000



Devi Harper, owner of Building Blocks, left, with a class of joyous students.

PHOTO/ BY STACIE LEWIS

Child care options in Springfield grow

Though the market is contracting, more companies are coming

BY CATHERINE O'CONNOR

One of Springfield's most well-known child care businesses, Building Blocks Preschool, Center, Inc., has closed its second location at 770 Apple Orchard Road in the Park South complex, merging all of its operations into its facility at 805 Chatham Road in Springfield.

Owner Devi Harper, who has been affiliated with Building Blocks since 1998, purchased the business in 2007. According to Harper, the combined facility, which has had a couple of renovations and additions over the years, has 27 classrooms and now serves 365 children. The reason for the closure of the east Springfield site was based on a decline in enrollment, which had dropped to 60 percent capacity. Of the 165 children who were being served there, 130 have been transitioned to the west site.

Based on Harper's experience in the child care business for nearly two decades, declining population and job prospects in the city have had an impact. "I have seen the trend overall for Springfield is downward for young families." More recently, over the past five years, she has seen an increase in her customer base of young families migrating from the Chicago metro area, while the younger generation of native Springfield families staying here to utilize child care centers like hers, seems to be dwindling.

Building Blocks provides a structured curriculum that includes pre-math and pre-reading, with free movement throughout the day. This has been their successful formula for the past 13 years. According to Harper, special community programming includes involving kids in supporting the Children's Miracle

Network, so that they can learn empathy and support for sick children. The children also have opportunities to interact with seniors at the Fair Hills Residence, across the street from Building Blocks, "which is great for both sides of the equation," Harper has found.

Parents report that they choose Building Blocks because of its central location and extended hours — from 6 a.m. until 11:45 p.m. — which is essential for those working in the health care and service industry. In addition to scheduling flexibility and community-oriented approach, the families that Building Blocks serve appreciate that the facility is not a franchise but is independently-owned by Harper, who takes a "hands on" approach. "They like that I am here every day. That's my job. I'm in the community and know all the employees and many of the children, by name," Harper said.

Little Minds Learning Center has announced plans to open two Springfield locations at 3250 West Iles and 3150 Roland Avenue. Little Minds is a day care franchise that was founded 10 years ago by Stacy and Todd Barnhardt, who were seeking quality child care options for their own children. The Little Minds Learning Center website states that they serve children between the ages of six weeks to six years old, with "part child care, part child development, and part preschool."

According to Ben Call, developer of the West Iles Business Center, Little Minds was planned as the anchor tenant for the development. Call told *Springfield Business Journal* in December 2017 that Little Minds was, "currently involved in the DCFS licensing process with the understanding that takes about six weeks. They should be the first one in the cen-

ter to open, probably at the end of January."

While representatives of Little Minds declined comment for this article, their website says they are not actively accepting or soliciting enrollments, but are currently seeking highly motivated directors and teachers to join the LMLC Team. Those who are interested are referred to the website employment page for a complete list of openings.

Enrichment classes to be offered at Little Minds include yoga, sign language and Spanish for children over age 2. There are discount rates for full-time EMS, fire response and law enforcement personnel, and members of United States armed forces.

Their second location, Little Minds East, was once a law office building at 3150 Roland Avenue, formerly occupied by Hodge Dwyer & Driver. The nearly 7,000-square-foot building, located in the Park South business park, just off Stevenson Drive, was on the market for a little over a year before being sold in August 2017. No date has been given for the centers to begin providing child care services.

According to their website, Little Minds Learning Centers operate in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Colorado and Nebraska, with several new locations planned for the Chicago suburbs and central Illinois area.

A third company, Goddard Systems, Inc., franchisor for the Goddard School, has also announced plans to open a facility in Springfield. A private preschool with nearly 500 locations in 37 different states, Goddard School serves children ages six weeks through six years old. Barbara Burrows, the local franchisee, has operated the Goddard School in Edwardsville for the past nine years.

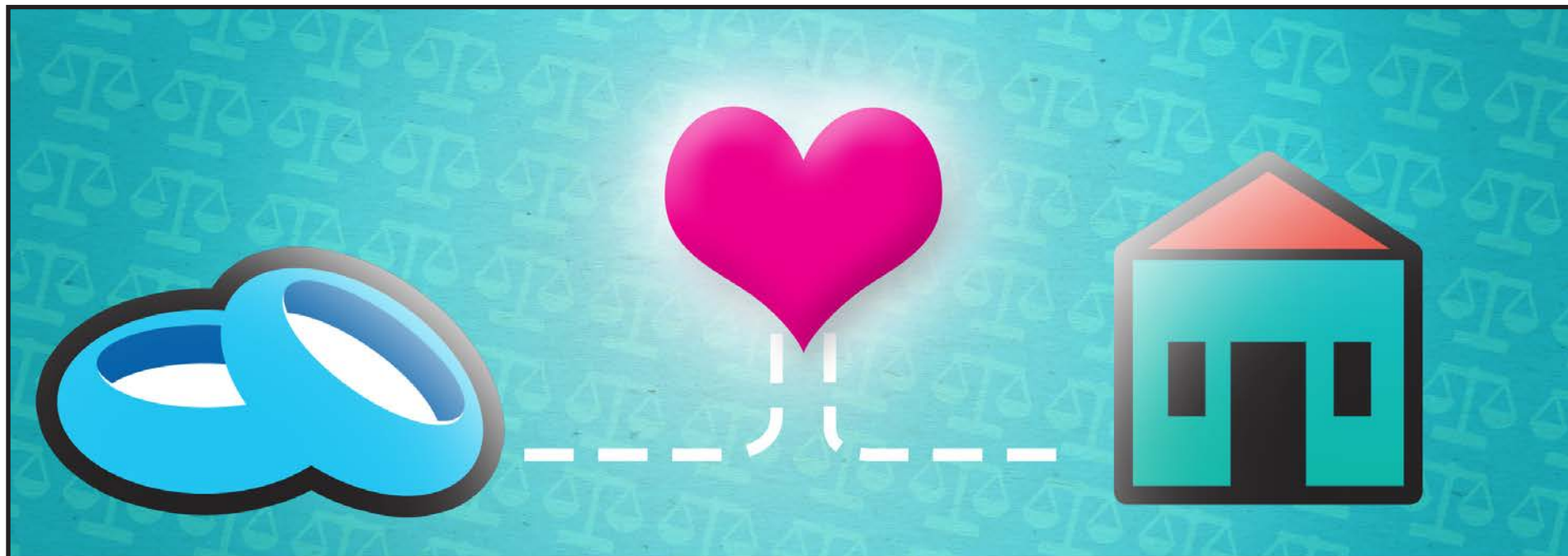
In an interview with *Springfield Business*

Journal in February 2018, Burrows said, "That school is running really well, and I'm ready for a second one. I looked in Columbia, Missouri; Liberty, Missouri; and Ankeny, Iowa in addition to Springfield when I was considering a new location. The main reason I ended up in Springfield was to take advantage of shared services between the two locations."

She explained that she will be able to use many of the same vendors, and even some of the employees might ultimately work out of both locations. Burrows said she is also using the same architecture firm that designed her first location, Henderson Associates Architects out of Edwardsville, based on their familiarity with the Goddard School specifications and safety requirements. However, she is using local firm Joyner Construction as the general contractor, and Bank of Springfield is providing financing for the project.

Initially, Burrows was looking at existing buildings on the market and originally considered the Knights of Columbus Hall on Meadowbrook Road. "At the end of the day, the renovation number (on that building) was extremely high. I could have done a ground up, brand new school for the price of the renovations," she said.

Ultimately, she purchased a piece of land at 3411 Hedley Road, which she felt was close enough to have the same demographics she was seeking. The plan now is to construct a new 9,000 square foot building. In February, Burrows told *SBJ* the goal was to have the center open in late October or early November. Burrows said the facility would employ 30-35 people and about 145 would be enrolled in the preschool. ♦



Joint tenancy is a potential disaster

Consider this simple option, an entirety different matter

BY SARAH DELANO PAVLIK

For most personal transactions, people do not consult their lawyers. Instead, they rely on advice and information from other professionals such as real estate brokers, financial planners, bankers, etc. When I ask most clients how they hold title to their property, they don't know. It is something they should know, as title has many legal consequences.

Regarding the purchase of a home by a husband and wife, there is a simple option that is used infrequently that can provide significant benefits. That option is owning the residence as "tenants by the entirety." Most deeds that I see from title companies have a husband and wife taking title as "joint tenants with rights of survivorship" ("joint tenants"). This form of ownership results in the husband and wife owning the property equally (unless otherwise specified) and further provides that the home will automatically pass to the surviving spouse upon the death of the first spouse.

Assuming that joint tenancy is a proper choice for the couple, it is almost never the best option. In my opinion, a husband and wife should almost never hold title to their residence as joint tenants. Why? Because owning the home as tenants by the entirety is almost exactly the same as joint tenancy, but with one significant advantage. Under Illinois law, if a home is held as tenants by the entirety, a creditor cannot force the sale of the home to pay a debt of just one spouse.

For example, assume that a husband and wife own their home as tenants by the entirety and that the husband has a gambling problem or is in a car accident or is a doctor who is sued for malpractice, and that a creditor obtains a judgment against the husband. That creditor cannot force the home to be sold to pay the husband's debt. A creditor can only force the home to be sold to pay a debt if both husband and wife are liable on the debt. For example, if husband and wife jointly borrow money, then the home can be used to satisfy that debt. The one major exception for creditors is, as always, the Internal Revenue Service. The IRS can seize a home held as tenants by the entirety for the tax debt of only one spouse.

Not all states have tenancy by the entireties, and there are differences between the laws of various states. In Illinois, in order to validly hold title as tenants by the entireties, (1) two people must be married (or in a civil union), (2) the deed must identify them as married and that they are taking title as tenants by the entireties, (3) the property must be their homestead residence (not a second home or rental property), and (4) both parties must live in the residence. If one or both spouses moves out of the residence, the spouses divorce or one spouse dies, the home is no longer held as tenants by the entirety even though the deed still says that it is.

If a husband and wife currently own their homestead residence as joint tenants, they can reconvey it to themselves as tenants by

the entirety and obtain the creditor protection benefits. However, they will not obtain the benefits "if the property was transferred into tenancy by the entirety with the sole intent to avoid the payment of debts existing at the time of the transfer beyond the transferor's ability to pay those debts as they become due." That means you cannot wait until one party already has a debt he or she cannot pay to make the transfer.

One further difference between joint tenancy and tenancy by the entireties is that in joint tenancy, one spouse can transfer his or her interest in the property. With tenancy by the entireties, any interest in the home cannot be sold, given away, etc., without the signature of both spouses.

Now I would like to address joint tenancy in general. This is the default designation for real property, bank accounts, brokerage accounts, etc., and often it may be the appropriate choice. However, no two people (whether husband and wife, parent and child, or anyone else) should take title to property as joint tenants with rights of survivorship without completely understanding what that means.

Any property held as joint tenants with rights of survivorship has two significant legal consequences. The first is that both parties have full rights and access to the entire property. For a bank account, this means that either party can legally withdraw the entire account. It also means that the creditors of either party can use the property to satisfy a debt. For a husband and wife, this may be the

desired result. For a parent and child, it may not.

The second significant consequence is that at the death of the first party, the property automatically passes by law to the surviving party, separate and apart from any will or trust agreement. Again, for husband and wife, this may be acceptable, but it may not. For example, if husband and wife have trusts under their will for tax purposes, the joint tenancy property cannot be used to fund those trusts. Or, if husband and wife do not leave their property to the same people under their wills, joint tenancy may not be the right choice. For example, assume husband and wife each have children from a previous marriage. The wife's will says that her property goes to her children. Any assets she owns as joint tenants with her husband will pass to him and not her children as specified in her will. Or, assume her will provides that all of her property goes into a trust. The husband receives the income for his lifetime, but what is left when he dies passes to the wife's children. Again, property held as joint tenants with the husband will not pass under the will but will instead go outright to the husband. He may or may not then leave that property to wife's children at his death.

Bottom line: Don't automatically title your property as joint tenants. Explore your options and talk to your lawyer or accountant if you have questions.

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

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Sliders launch new season

BY ZACH ROTH

For the last 90 years, Robin Roberts Stadium in Springfield has played host to organized baseball. Whether it was the old Springfield Redbirds or the yearly City Series, the venerable facility has entertained Springfield's hardball fascination.

Todd Miller's goal is to make people care about professional baseball in Springfield once again. Now in his third season as owner/general manager of the Prospect League's Springfield Sliders, he has ambitious plans for the club. New food, a refurbished field . . . it all goes back to Miller's priority of quality on and off the field. However, it hasn't been easy.

"We just had to start promoting the Sliders," Miller said, referring to the team's existence prior to his purchase of the team. "The previous ownership didn't spend money advertising, didn't spend money doing anything of that nature, so it was a word of mouth/whoever came, so people on the north end who liked baseball knew about it."

When Miller arrived, attendance was low, and people weren't convinced that the Sliders were a good investment for their dollars. Miller is working to change that.

"They'd get their 400-500 people per game. On big nights when they had fireworks, they'd break 1,000 and sometimes 1,500. Well, we wanted to average over 1,500. Really, we want to average over 2,000. If you look at our market size, all you're asking for is 2 percent of the market. If you get 2,000 people per game, you're going to be pretty successful."

The Sliders have had plenty of success on the field in Miller's short tenure. In his first year, the team had the best record in the Prospect League and made it to the postseason.

And expectations are high for 2018. Miller said this is the best team, on paper, that he has had in his three years in Springfield. He hopes to add to the 12 players that have been drafted to major league clubs over the last two years while playing for the Sliders.

However, the thing that Miller is most proud of in his early years in Springfield is revamping the Sliders' product into a full-fledged entertainment enterprise.

"We've had people come from all over the world (to see the Sliders), because of what we do for our marketing of live entertainment," Miller said. "We're one of the best summer collegiate teams in the nation in live entertainment, and since I've taken over, we've transformed into a live entertainment facility."

To promote the team's 10th year of existence, The Beach Boys held a May 25 show at Robin Roberts Stadium. Miller said that no live touring act, much less one with the worldwide fame and prestige that the Beach Boys have, would have come to Springfield under the old ownership consortium. Miller, for his part, is changing that narrative.

"We've never had a national touring act at the stadium, we've never even had a concert here. But a real national touring act? So we have the Beach Boys coming here," Miller said.

For Miller, there are three things that are just as important as entertaining the fans: winning, making money so the team can continue to bring in more fans, and helping his staff move forward in their careers.

"Really, I just want to break even," Miller said. "I want my players to get to the next level. I want my interns to get to the next level. I want all my staff, my coaches, everybody to get to the next level. If we can get everyone



to where they're supposed to be, for another organization somewhere else, even if it's not sports-related, even if one of my interns works for the Wyndham or the paper, we want to make sure we train them up to where they're supposed to be, so that way they can go out in the real world."

Miller said he will not be doing a gun giveaway this year, but there will be plenty more giveaways of slightly less controversial things.

"We gave away 50-inch big-screen TVs, we've given away bikes, we've given away all kinds of stuff, but the gun is most certainly the biggest one in Springfield by far," Miller said.

On opening night, anyone who enters the ballpark to watch the game will be allowed to pay whatever they want. The proceeds will be donated to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Miller was inspired by his 16-year-old brother,

who died recently of a rare form of cancer.

"A donation to Make-A-Wish will be the entry fee for the game," Miller said.

Miller has settled into his role as owner/GM. Two years ago, the only thing the Sliders could do to get the attention of the people of Springfield was to give away a firearm. Now, Miller is comfortable in a role that seems to suit him well.

"Maybe I'm cocky, but I feel if somebody is going to be able to do it, it's going to be me," Miller said. "I've got the drive, the passion, and I'm much younger than others who have been in this position." ♦

Zach Roth is a freelance writer based in Springfield.



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Anything Goes Hauling, 5858 N. Lake Road. 529-1601. Claude K. Jacobs.
BMR Custom Flooring, 2907 Fox Bridge. 691-4104. Benjamin Reese.
M P F Inflatable Rentals, 1952 E. Capitol. 741-2832. Michael Crafton.
Prairie State Armory, 6237 Byron Street, Pleasant Plains. 725-1682. Michael L. Metzroth.
Affordable Pet Grooming, LLC, 450 W. North Street, Suite B. 528-4504. Stacey McNear and Megan Williams.
Pure Energy, LLC, 1605 E. Cummins Avenue. 816-9551. Michael Clark, Jr.
Full House Improvements, 963 Kamm Road. 741-1389. Ray Burris.
JAMB Technology, 815 S. State Street. 638-7796. David M. Cloyd.
Amor Nails and Spa, 960 Clocktower Drive, Suite F3. 801-9913. Kristin M. Hernandez-Renfro.
Little Lincoln's Toy Shop, 3450 Liberty Drive. 684-1081. Ryan Leake.
Crazy Lemonade and Treats, 2312 S. 9th Street. 361-33670. Miyoshi Childrous.
Fairway Lawn Care dba Border Creations, 2145 Catalina Lane. 553-4320. Pete Summers.
Fusion Fitness Studio, 2434 Denver Drive. 741-2558. Monica A. Maggio.
Twenty 712, 504 Colbrook Drive. 691-9674. Christina R. Geary.
Critter Sitter, 2012 S. Whittier. 836-5695. Jacquie Floyd.
24/7 Pet Care, 2206 Westchester Boulevard, Unit 7. 615-3199. Elizabeth L. Hoag.
Rogers Mop and Glow, 400 W. Mulberry, Chatham. 415-9822. Bertram M. Rogers.
Double D Construction, P. O. Bo 2504. 971-4695. Darell D. Marshall.
Integrity Home Inspectors, 5601 Oak Crest Road. 816-1674. Craig W. Walker, Sr.
Schnake Sound, Inc. dba Schnake Sound and Light, 4916 West State Route 97. 553-2278. Carl W. Schnake.
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Faculty and students graciously accept the contribution from the estate of Charles and Irene Kreher.

PHOTOS/ COURTESY LINCOLN LAND

Agriculture education is greening up

Major gift from Macon County farm family benefits Lincoln Land

BY JANET SEITZ

A recent \$18 million gift provides substantial seed money for an endowment fund to yield an estimated \$500,000 annually to grow Lincoln Land's agriculture program. The donation, from the estate of Macon County farmers Charles and Irene Kreher, will increase the program's offerings, including scholarships and other improvements.

According to LLCC's agriculture coordinator Bill Harmon, those improvements may include expanding dual-credit opportunities for high school students and adding new technology, such as drones, GPS systems, and a simulator for learning about large agriculture equipment, such as a combine. Some of the Krehers' Blue Mound farm — where they raised corn, soybeans and Angus cows — will be used for experiments by Lincoln Land students while a tenant farmer will continue to operate part of the land. A newly created ag specialist position was added to recruit students into the ag program.

After Charles Kreher died in 2009, his widow, Irene, worked with an adviser to put the family's assets into a charitable trust. According to Karen Sanders, LLCC Foundation executive director, Irene visited the LLCC campus in November 2012, and LLCC President Charlotte Warren, Bill Harmon and Sanders took her on a tour of the LLCC Workforce Careers Center and discussed the ag program. "She was a very private person," said Sanders. "We respected that and her desire for confidentiality. We continued to cultivate the relationship with Mrs. Kreher throughout the years and were truly honored to be a recipient of the Krehers' generosity."

Irene died in February 2017. She established a financial legacy in honor of her husband at LLCC because of the reputation of the college's ag program, which serves students in the 15-county LLCC district, as well as students in the Lewis and Clark and Heartland Community College districts. "She also believed strongly in the mission of LLCC, to improve lives of district residents through education," said Harmon.

"Mrs. Kreher appreciated the fact that we have a robust transfer program," added Harmon. About 60-70 percent of ag students go on to a four-year university to earn a bachelor's degree. The remaining 30-40 percent earn applied science degrees and certificates, which prepare students to enter the workforce. "Her husband loved Angus cattle, so our award-winning livestock judging team was also of great interest to her. One connection she had to LLCC is a nephew of the tenant farmer on the Kreher farm who is a graduate of the LLCC

precision agronomy program and is now farming."

Both nationally and in central Illinois, growing the ag workforce is important, given the predicted need for new workers in agriculture, natural resources and environmental science. Harmon said they are working with community ag partners and businesses for training to meet area employment needs. The ag program's goal is to increase enrollment to over 300 students by 2021. "We are marketing the program more robustly, both to the traditional market of high school students and to adults looking to change careers, reenter the workforce or acquire new skills."

Harmon added that their program will produce more and better qualified candidates for applied associate degrees who will enter the workforce. It will also increase the number of students who transfer to four-year universities to earn degrees in agriculture, helping qualify them for well-paying and fulfilling careers which "will positively impact the economy of our local communities."

A recent collaboration with Brandt Consolidated, a local leading agriculture retailer and manufacturer of agricultural specialty products, will result in conducting trials at the main campus and at the Kreher farm. Brandt and LLCC will work together on the main campus' 45-acre "Land Lab," focusing on corn and soybean production best practices. In addition, Brandt will collaborate on research efforts at the Kreher Farm in Blue



Charles and Irene Kreher

Mound. Both locations will be working to gain production agriculture knowledge, prepare students to further their education or develop students to enter the workforce.

Harmon said they have had other businesses inquire about offering internships to students due to publicity surrounding the gift. They are working with local and area businesses to lease farm equipment for students to use on the college land labs and expanding partnerships with agricultural organizations.

LLCC has invested in an ag program since the college opened in 1968, and it was one of the original degree programs offered. Since then, LLCC has added applied science degrees and certificates, such as precision agronomy. The Ag Club began in 1984, and it has grown into the largest student club on campus, said Harmon.

"This amazing, transformative gift is an investment in education," said Sanders, "which improves lives and helps grow our communities. The gift is also an investment in promoting the value of agriculture to the general public," added Sanders. ♦

Contact Janet Seitz at janetseitz1@gmail.com.

The new downtown Italian

Mixing self-serve lunch and evening sit-down dining

BY TOM PAVLIK

While we continue what seems to be the interminable wait to learn what fate holds for the YWCA block, at least some things are happening downtown. And so it is with Springfield's newest downtown restaurant – La Piazza Cucina Italiana.

La Piazza is located in the former Z Bistro/Udder Hut space on South Sixth Street, just south of the Old State Capitol Plaza. It's a bit of a hybrid in that it's a mix of self-serve buffet and counter service dining at lunch, while for dinner it's traditional sit-down dining with a larger menu.

What intrigued us most, however, was rumor of a traditional brick oven imported from Naples, Italy, designed to turn out authentic Neapolitan-style pizza.

In terms of décor, the space limited La Piazza's ability to tap into the feel of a traditional Italian Cucina. It would have been nice if the wood pizza oven were visible to diners, but that would have required some substantial remodeling. Still, the walls are adorned with pictures of Italian landmarks and scenery, and the colors are muted hues of green and ochre accentuated by faux brick. It doesn't instantly transport one to Italy, but it was nicely done. My guest astutely pointed out that, given the buffet nature, La

Piazza appropriately placed a hand sanitizer by the front door. Better safe than sorry.

My guest and I decided to try La Piazza for lunch. As we stood before the counter, it was clear we weren't the only

first-timers – we all seemed a little confused about the process. Thankfully, the friendly staff quickly set us straight. In short, one orders and pays at the counter and gets a drink from the soda fountain. (Note to the owners: Please get an unsweetened iced tea option. This isn't the

South.) Then, diners adjourn to the next room to a buffet where pizza, bread and pasta are available, depending on what was ordered.

La Piazza's lunch menu is pretty compact and simple. Basically, you get to pick any two items for \$10. The menu is comprised of soups (minestrone and the soup of the day – potato the day we visited), two salads, a half-pasta option, a half-sandwich option, and a slice of that day's pizza special. The pasta options are spaghetti with red sauce and linguini alfredo (each served with bread, protein available for extra \$1.75-\$2). Salad options are the Di Casa salad (romaine, tomatoes, red onion, cucumber, carrots and avocado with a lemon herb vinaigrette) or the Mediterranean salad (arugula, grape tomatoes, red onions, cucumbers, peppers, olives and goat cheese with an Italian vinaigrette). For sandwiches, there's a pesto chicken and an Italian sub-style sandwich. Pizza the day we visited was cheese or meat.

The salad was appropriately portioned and contained fresh ingredients. Blissfully, La Piazza was quite generous with the goat cheese, which paired well with the acidity of the olives. Also, because the salads are on a tray for self-selection, I was able to choose from any number of different dressings.

The spaghetti portion was probably too generous with the noodles, but a little sparse when it came to sauce. A quick request on my side rectified the situation. The sauce was bright and had a bit of spice. Thankfully, it wasn't too sweet. Pasta comes with a large hunk of fresh country bread, with an oil and herb dipping sauce if desired. The meatballs were moist



La Piazza's lasagna will keep you coming back for more Italian flavor.



Fichi and prosciutto pizza invites the zesty sweet palate of Italy to your table and taste buds.

La Piazza has a more traditional and comprehensive menu,

but those offerings are only available for the dinner crowd.

We decided to cover as much of the menu as we could. I opted for the Mediterranean salad and spaghetti. My guest went with the pesto chicken sandwich and the meat pizza.

and definitely added to the dish.

The pasta itself – not surprisingly as it had been sitting in a warming tray for some time – was overcooked but not mushy. More on the buffet issue later.

My friend reported the pesto sandwich was excellent, again with a good dollop of goat cheese. The pizza, like the pasta, suffered somewhat from sitting under a heating lamp – sort of limp and without that special “bite” that Neapolitan pizza normally delivers. Though he reported that the pizza was just fine, it probably would have been excellent had it been served straight from the wood-fired oven.

Therein lies the tradeoff. What we really

liked about La Piazza was that you can make it a fast lunch. What you have to give up is the made-to-order aspect. La Piazza fills a needed niche in Springfield's downtown dining scene – something more substantial than a cold sandwich, but that's fast and convenient. We will be back when the occasion calls. ♦

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Leo and Patrizia Guerrier of La Piazza.

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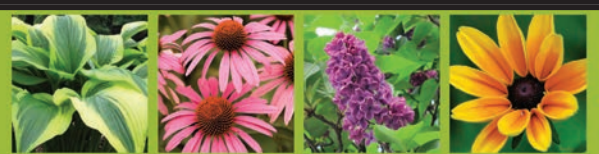
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