



Local couple provides insight, comedy on Fox 55.

LAUGHING AND SURVIVING

P. 5



Springfield's YMCA has new heart and "Sowle."

PERSONALITY PROFILE

P. 8



Local law firms make a motion to new offices.

LAW FIRMS RELOCATE

P. 13



Women in hard hats; breaking the glass ceiling.

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

P. 27

FEBRUARY 2013
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Springfield business journal

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BUSINESS. NEWS. PAPER.

Taking pulse of the local economy

Locally owned businesses chime in on economic barometer, projecting and planning

By Betsy Butler,
Senior Correspondent

Editor's Note: This article is the second of a two-part series. Part one included insight from the public sector – economists, academia and local public administrators.

In part two, local business people were invited to provide their opinions on gauging economic barometers.

Determining the health of the economy is not an easy task nor is planning for the future but local business owners forge ahead in such areas as commercial and residential real estate, construction, business and auto sales.

The economy has been struggling mightily since the fall of

2008, but local business people's take on economic barometers signals a stabilizing economy.

Real Estate

"When commercial real estate is moving, everyone benefits," said Michelle Higginbotham, commercial broker and realtor with Coldwell Banker Commercial.

The trickle down effect of the

sale of property is tremendous. "When new owners acquire a property there is remodeling to be done which means work for contractors, electricians, plumbers, furniture companies, phone installation companies and a myriad of other businesses," Higginbotham said.

Predicting the commercial

*Continued on Page 10,
Economic Barometers*

Sparc cuts cost, acronym

Drops affiliation with The Arc

By Job Conger,
Correspondent

The Springfield not-for-profit serving mentally and developmentally challenged individuals has discontinued its institutional membership with their long-time affiliate.

Carlissa Puckett, executive director of Sparc, recently announced the local organization was discontinuing its long affiliation with The Arc of Illinois, the statewide organization, based in Franklin, Illinois.

"It was strictly a financial decision," Puckett said. "As the state has given no cost of living increases for nine of the past 12 fiscal years, the cost of things have increased with inflation, making more difficult the process of deciding what do we cut this year and next year.

"We truly believe in what The Arc does: individual and systems advocacy. Even though we as an organization are no longer a member, we encourage individuals to become members. It's only \$25 a year. I continue to be a member," she said.

Puckett said the cut saves Sparc about \$14,000 a year. Sparc contracts with the State of Illinois to provide services and bills the state every year. Their yearly budget for the current fiscal year that runs from July 1 to June 30 is over \$8 million.

"The lack of cost-of-living

*Continued on Page 9,
Sparc*

City eyes YWCA site for redevelopment

Seeking special designation from State

By Chris Stroisch,
Correspondent

City leaders hope to bring new life into a downtown Springfield eyesore that once housed the local YWCA chapter but are in a holding pattern until the State of Illinois decides whether to give the property a special designation so the city can take it over.

Mike Farmer, director of the city's Office of Planning and Economic Development, said the city would like to see the property, which sits between Fourth and Fifth streets and Capital Avenue and Jackson Street, converted into a "creative mixed use infill redevelopment that might include residential, commercial, office or educational uses."

However, the city cannot acquire the old YWCA building



Vacant YWCA building at the corner of Fifth and Jackson Streets

*Continued on Page 33,
YWCA*

COMING NEXT MONTH ... TWO SPECIAL SECTIONS

Residential Real Estate & Home Builders



REALTOR®

The March issue will feature local news and information about residential real estate: selling and purchasing houses, home construction and renovation. The Lists:

- Residential Real Estate Firms
- Home Builders and Remodelers

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS • PREVIEW 2013 •

Springfield Business Journal has joined with The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce to preview Springfield's only business trade show coming in March. Look for an exclusive preview for this year's show and exhibitors in next month's issue.



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• the rookery

CEO informational lunch

The Sangamon Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) program holding an informational lunch.

The speaker is founding instructor, Craig Lindvahl, executive director of the Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship. Lindvahl will share information on the CEO program and how it prepares youth to become entrepreneurs contributing in to the economic development and sustainability of Sangamon County.

This free lunch provided by Mid-America Advertising will be Wednesday, Feb. 6 at 11:45 a.m. at the Knight of Columbus Hall at 2200 Meadowbrook Rd.

You may R.S.V.P. by Friday, Feb. 1 to Christine Carrels at 217-726-1561 or ccarrels@ibankmarine.com

SHG REALTOR open house

Sacred Heart-Griffin High School will host an Area REALTORS Open House on Thursday, Feb. 7 at SHG's East Campus, 1200 W. Washington St.

Springfield-area realtors are invited to come learn more about the school's students, academics and extra-curricular activities all in a faith-based environment. The Springfield Catholic grade schools will also have information on display.

The program begins at noon. Lunch will be provided by Neuhoft Media Springfield and tours will be available.

SAHBA healthcare seminar

The Springfield Area Home Builders Association is hosting a seminar on the regulations governing health care reform legislation.

The seminar is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 13 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the SAHBA office, 3921 Pintail Drive, Suite B. American Central Insurance Services and Kerber, Eck & Braeckel LLP will keep attendees up to date on reform regulations that could impact employee benefit programs and tax implications.

Registration is at springfieldareahba.com. The event costs \$10 for SAHBA members and \$25 for non-members.

Sliders stay at Robin Roberts

The Springfield Sliders have announced the signing of a lease extension between the team and the Springfield Park District that will allow the Sliders to continue playing at Robin Roberts Stadium through the 2017 season.

"We see a future for the team in Springfield and we are thrilled to make Robin Roberts Stadium our home for the next five years," said Shane Martin, owner.

Sliders Baseball Group, LLC purchased the team in April 2012. The Sliders play in the summer collegiate Prospect League, formed in 2009 and includes teams from Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The 2013 season will begin in late May and runs through early August. The Sliders play a 60-game schedule with 30 home games.

ISBDC workshops

The Illinois Small Business Development Center at Lincoln Land Community College is offering free "Starting Your Business in Illinois" workshops in February. The workshops are designed to provide prospective business owners with information about preparing a business plan, financing a business, legal forms, registering a business name and taxes.

Events in Springfield will be held on Thursday, Feb. 7; 6 to 8 p.m. and Wednesday, Feb. 20; 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Both will be held at the LLCC-Capital City Training Center, 130 W. Mason St.

The Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, 155 W. Morton, will host a workshop on Monday, Feb. 25; 9 to 11 a.m. and the Taylorville Chamber of Commerce, 108 W. Market, will host on a workshop on Wednesday, Feb. 27; 2 to 4 p.m.

Registration is required. For more information about ISBDC workshops or services, call 217-544-7232.

UIS online programs ranked by U.S. News & World Report

UIS is among the top 100 Best Online Bachelor's Programs in the country, while UIS also ranks 16th nationwide in the category of Best Online Graduate Business Programs on U.S. News & World Report's 2013 list of the best online education programs in the country.

"These rankings acknowledge that UIS is a leader in online learning," said UIS Chancellor Susan J. Koch.

U.S. News & World Report looked at best practices and factors, such as graduation rates, assessments, class size, retention rates, and time to degree deadline. They also examined program accreditation, faculty education, student debt at graduation, and technologies and services available to online students.

UIS offers seven undergraduate degrees online in Business Administration, Computer Science, English, History, Liberal Studies, Mathematics, and Philosophy. An online graduate business degree is offered in Management Information Systems (MIS).

"MIS online was the first online graduate program at UIS and the U.S. News ranking recognizes the quality and value of a UIS degree. Our faculty is to be commended for their dedication to student learning and a professional degree program," said Ron McNeil, dean of the UIS College of Business and Management.

View the rankings online at www.usnews.com/education/online-education.

SIU center earns FQHC

The Springfield Center for Family Medicine at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine will be able to treat more patients, especially the uninsured population, thanks to a federal grant that designates it as a Federally Qualified Health Center. The grant, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, totals \$595,833 for the first year.

The center, located at 520 N. Fourth St., will be able to add 2,000-3,000 patients, many uninsured or underinsured, to the 17,000 patients already established.

"We are a community health center here to serve the people of Springfield," said Dr. Janet Albers, chief executive officer of the center.

Certified by the National Committee for Quality Assurance as a Patient Centered Medical Home, the center offers prenatal care and deliveries, child care and immunizations, chronic illness management, preventive and geriatric care. The center's providers care for their patients when hospitalized, in nursing homes and also visit patients in their homes.

The FQHC designation allows for improved reimbursement for Medicaid and Medicare patients, the addition of services and enlists quality measures. The clinic will see patients regardless of their ability to pay.

The center will partner with SIU HealthCare for additional physician and management services. Dr. Michal Dynda, assistant professor and chief medical information officer and Dr. Laura Loesel, associate professor and chief medical officer, will ensure the center continues to meet quality measures.

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LLCC Day!
Monday, Feb. 18 (Presidents Day)
LLCC-Springfield Campus

LLCC Day is a special campus visitation day for prospective students, parents and adult learners to introduce them to LLCC.

Choose a morning (9-noon) or evening (5-8 p.m.) session

9-9:30 a.m. & 5-5:30 p.m.	Check in at Trutter Center
9:30-10 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.	Presentation: Why LLCC?, Getting Started, Success@LLCC and Financial Aid
10-noon & 6-8 p.m.	Exhibits, campus tours, refreshments

Lincoln Land Community College

Please let us know you're coming! Scan the QR code, register at www.llcc.edu or call 786.2577.

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regular meetings •

Monday

- **Springfield Luncheon Optimist Club**, 11:45 a.m., (2nd & 4th weeks) MCL Cafeteria, 2151 Wabash Ave.
- **Sertoma Club of Springfield**, Noon, (1st & 3rd weeks) Hilton Springfield
- **Noontime Toastmasters**, Noon, Laurel United Methodist Church, Walnut & S. Grand Ave. West
- **Rotary Club of Springfield**, 6 p.m., Maldaner's Restaurant (upstairs), 222 S. 6th St.

Tuesday

- **Jacksonville Sunrise Rotary Club**, 7 a.m., Comfort Inn, 200 Comfort Dr., South Jacksonville
- **Capital City Business Builders BNI**, 7:30 a.m., Hickory Glen, 1700 West Washington St.
- **Tuesday BNI**, 11 a.m., Remax Building, 2475 West Monroe St.
- **The Network Group**, 11:45 a.m., The Sangamo Club, 227 E. Adams St.
- **Rotary Club of Springfield-Mid-town**, Noon, Inn at 835, 835 S. 2nd St.
- **Kiwanis Club of Lincoln**, Noon, Al's Main Event, 1230 Fifth St., Lincoln
- **Springfield Noon Lions Club**, Noon, Golden Corral, 1038 Le June Dr.
- **Springfield Parkway Pointe Toastmasters**, 12:05 p.m., AIG Building, 3501 Hollis Dr.
- **Altrusa International of Springfield**, 7 p.m., (1st & 3rd weeks) Laurel United Methodist Church, Walnut St. & S. Grand Ave. West

Wednesday

- **Rotary Club of Springfield - Sunrise**, 7 a.m., Hoogland Center for the Arts
- **Central Illinois Referral Network**, 7:45 a.m., The Real Estate Group, 3701 W. Wabash Ave.
- **Westside BNI**, 11:30 a.m. Mariah's, 3317 Robbins Rd.
- **Prospectors Referral Group**, 11:30 a.m., (1st & 3rd weeks) American Harvest, 3241 W. Iles Ave.
- **Rotary Club of Springfield-Westside**, Noon, Brickhouse Grill & Pub, 3136 Iles Ave.
- **Jacksonville American Business Club**, Noon, Ponderosa Restaurant, Morton Ave., Jacksonville
- **Kiwanis Club of Springfield-Downtown**, Noon, Hilton Springfield, Manhattan Grille Room
- **Capital City Toastmasters**, Noon, IDOT Building, 2300 Dirksen Pkwy. Room 214 A & B
- **Springfield Jaycees**, 7 p.m., Jaycees Activity Center, 2525 S. 12th St.

Thursday

- **Thursday Morning Business Builder BNI**, 7:30 a.m., Coldwell Banker, 3201 Old Jacksonville Rd.
- **Springfield Thursday Lunch BNI Chapter**, 11:30 a.m., Lake Pointe Grill, 1386 Toronto Rd.
- **Rotary Club of Springfield South** - Noon, Centrum Coffee Cafe, 1370 Toronto Rd.
- **Springfield American Business Club**, Noon, Hilton Springfield, 29th Floor
- **Kiwanis Club - Jacksonville**, Noon, Hamilton's Catering, 110 N. East St., Jacksonville
- **Lincoln Douglas Toastmasters**, 6 p.m., Our Saviors Lutheran Church, 2645 Old Jacksonville Rd.
- **Kiwanis Club of Chatham**, 6:15 p.m., Chatham Library, 600 E. Spruce, Chatham

Friday

- **Springfield Breakfast Optimist Club**, 7 a.m., Atonement Lutheran Church, 2800 W. Jefferson St.
- **Frontier International**, Noon, Hilton Springfield, Manhattan Grille Room
- **Jacksonville Noon Rotary Club**, Noon, Hamilton's Downtown, 110 N. East St., Jacksonville

Do you have a regular business meeting to include?
Send your regular meeting to info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

after hours •

The play's the thing

Kari Catton

Profession:
President,
Association Management Partners

Passion:
Playwright

By Raegan Hennemann,
Senior Correspondent

A simple writing assignment during second grade started a journey for Kari Catton that she enjoys more and more every day.

When Catton handed in the story she wrote about the well-known horse Black Beauty, her teacher looked at it and said "Oh, that's all dialogue. You wrote a play."

Not only did hearing the word "play" after working hard on an assignment intrigue her, Catton realized that she had a knack for writing conversations for people.

"We all have something to say and we're going to use our special tool to communicate through," Catton said. "Mine just happens to be plays."

By the sixth grade, Catton, who is now president of Association Management Partners and executive director of Theatre in the Park, had notebooks full of plays and stories. After high school she headed to college to major in theater and it was then that she learned the various components of playwriting. She also studied acting and directing.

"To me, knowing the components of theater helps you be a better playwright," she said.

She also credits classes about the more technical side of theater such as lighting, set design and costume design for enhancing her ability to write plays.

"Because as you're writing the play you can see it in your head, you can hear it in your head - or some writers do, everybody's different - and you're like 'You know what, that won't work.'"

For Catton, writing a play is a process that involves many revisions.

"First you write it and you have a couple friends come over, you cook them dinner, you assign them roles and then you read it and they give you feedback. Then you go back and rewrite the play," she said.

The next step is having peers from the theater community read the play and provide feedback and then back to the computer for more rewrites.

"Then when you're to a point that you're satisfied you might have a staged reading where it's not acted out, the actors just stand up and read it or sing it or whatever and you hear it with an actor's voice for the first time," Catton said.

Again, more revisions and then it's time to submit the piece to play contests and production companies.

So far, Catton has had two plays recognized nationally - "The Track Home" placed ninth in the play category through Writer's Digest in 2007 and "Healin' Home" received an honorable mention in the Jackie White Memorial Play Writing Contest in 2009. Both plays are about the Orphan Train, which transported more than 250,000 children from the East Coast to families in the Midwest from 1854 to 1929.

Receiving recognition is helpful when trying to get a play produced, Catton said.

"That way when you give (a play) to someone to produce, they're going to go 'Oh, it's won an award, so I better read it.' It gives you a little bit more credibility," she said.

Both plays were produced locally through Wildloon Productions in 2002. After the shows ended, Catton decided to send her scripts to a handful of publishers. She was turned down by everyone, but that did not cause her to give up on her goal of having a play published.

In 2011, "Healin' Home" was produced by Theatre in the Park and afterward people encouraged Catton to try again to get it published. Three weeks after sending her script to various publishers, Catton got the news she had wanted to receive for a long time.

A publisher liked her submission and wanted to know if Catton had any other plays to send for consideration. She sent them "The Track Home" and got the same reaction and question. So she submitted "The Sparkle Miser," a fantasy piece that Catton first wrote for her senior project in 1980.

"And she published all three which was astonishing to me, absolutely astonishing," Catton said.

By August 2012 all three plays were published and are in the 2012-2013 catalogues of Big Dog Publishing and its sister company, Norman Maine Publishing.

"To keep me humble, in 2012, I sent (the publisher) a piece to say 'Would you be interested in doing this piece?' and they turned me down because the subject matter was probably a little bit riskier, it wasn't fantasy," she said. "It wasn't quite what they did, so they said 'No.'"

Catton's scripts sell for \$6.95 and the royalty fee is \$75 per performance. Now that Catton is published, she will receive a percentage of the royalties and script sales once



Professional Women's Calendar of Events

You play a key role and we thank you for your contributions to our community.

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

AAUW Diversity Event/Branch Meeting - Thursday, February 7, 2013, 7 PM at the American Lung Association, 3000 Kelly Lane, Springfield.

Program: Sister Cities Association of Springfield, IL, Inc. (SCAS). This event is open to the public.

Association for Women in Communications (AWC)

"Put Your Best Face Forward" - AWC Networking Luncheon. Wednesday, February 13, 2013 at the Sangamo Club, 227 E. Adams Street, Springfield. 11:30 AM Networking, 12:00 - 1:00 PM Lunch begins. \$16 members, \$10 students, \$21, non-members.

It is law enforcement's responsibility to inform the public regarding matters related to public safety concerns and criminal arrests. However, prior to releasing information regarding an FBI operation, there are many decisions that need close review. Our speaker, Brad Ware must regularly consider the content of the message that is distributed to the public. In his role as the Community Outreach Specialist and Media Representative for the FBI - Springfield Division, he maintains public trust by sharing information about the FBI's responsibilities, operations, accomplishments, policies, and values. He'll share lessons communications professionals can learn from.

RSVP to programs@awcspringfield.org by Monday, February 11th. (If you RSVP but are unable to attend and do not notify AWC within 24 hours before the event, you will be billed.)

Illinois Women in Leadership (IWIL)

Illinois Women in Leadership will hold its Monthly Luncheon from 11:30 to 1:00 PM on Thursday, February 21st at the Sangamo Club - 227 East Adams St. Springfield.

Have you ever dreamed about what you want to accomplish? Sarah Mackey our very own 2011-2012 Diamond Award winner and Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Sangamon County will share strategies to not only dream about our future, but make it a reality by working better together with support networks.

Guests and potential new members are welcome to attend. The cost for members is \$18. Non-members and walk-ins are \$23. Reservation forms are available at www.iwil.biz. Reservations with payment must be received by 5 PM Friday, 15th February via the website or by mailing the registration form and payment to: IWIL, P.O. Box 5612 Springfield, IL 62705-5612.

Women Entrepreneurs - Central Illinois (WE-CI)

Women Entrepreneurs of Central Illinois's monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 13th, from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM at Indigo, 3013 Lindbergh Blvd., Springfield.

Program: Effects of the new tax laws on small business. Presenter: Ms. Marjorie Beilstein, C.P.A., of Kerber, Eck & Braeckel, LLP.

\$17 for members, \$20 for guests and \$25 for walk-ins. Please RSVP by noon, Friday, February 8th, 2013. Reservations are non-refundable. Additional information is available by contacting L. Gay Davidson, (217) 725-8500 or at computerhelp92@aol.com or reservations@we-ci.org.

Coming in May



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To have your event added to the Women's Calendar of Events, Please fax your information to (217) 726-8300 or e-mail to info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com



Continued on Page 7, After Hours



COMMUNITY BUSINESS REPORT

sbj



Coming in May...
Nomination forms inside

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February 2013

Laughing and surviving with the Pittmans

Local couple provides insight, comedy on Fox 55

By Gabriel House,
Correspondent

Mike Pittman is a firm believer in the old adage that laughter is the best medicine.

"Comedy played a big role in helping me get through one of the biggest financial challenges in my entire life about four years ago where I was on the edge of bankruptcy," Pittman said. "Had I not had a sense of humor and a relationship with God, there's no telling what I might have done."

Pittman has worn many hats. From being a pitcher in the St. Louis Cardinals baseball organization to publishing the Capital City Courier to being a real estate developer, the occupation that nearly caused his financial ruin a handful of years ago. He has now added television host to his resume.

The "One Mic Stand Comedy Show" is a half-hour television program that began airing on Fox 55 in mid-January. Pittman is the creator and host of the program which features stand-up comedy in front of a live audience. He also procures sponsors and books the talent.

Pittman only allows clean



Sherry Pittman, host of "Survive and Thrive in Marriage."

work ... well, it is.

But Pittman is no stranger to television. His wife, Sherry, is also the host of her own show on Fox. "Survive and Thrive" airs every Wednesday at 7:30 a.m. and is a way for Sherry to take her profession as a life coach – she runs her own business named Life Empowerment Coaching,

sonal philosophy that we all have treasure in us, and someone just has to identify it. So when it comes to talking to a person on my TV show, it's just very natural for me to that."

The show – which is actually the third program Sherry has hosted since 1996 – began in 2011 as "Survive and Thrive in

in the spring of 2012, she realized that she could and should broaden the scope of her program a bit to coincide with her burgeoning business. The show became simply "Survive and Thrive," and Mike started helping pick guests who were typically more community-oriented, Sherry said.

The format, though, remained the same: a cozy, informal chat. It's exactly the kind of atmosphere Sherry strives for.

"This is what I was born to do, it's why I'm here," Sherry said, explaining herself further with an anecdote: "When I was in the first grade I got in trouble on the first day of school. No one had told me they will give you paper and a pencil and there will be a teacher who will tell you what to do."

"No one told me you are not supposed to be fully engaged with everyone in the classroom," she said.

So while Sherry and her guests detail and discuss the minutiae of interpersonal relationships, Mike's comedians may take those same common foibles as a basis for a joke or routine. It's an interesting dichotomy that Fox 55 is more than happy to play host to, said Jeri Waldeck, an account executive for the network.

The Pittmans' shows are almost entirely autonomous affairs. With the help of volun-

Continued on Page 7,
Second Front



Mike Pittman, host of "One Mic Stand Comedy Show"

content on the show – no blue material – delivering the finished project to Fox before its 11:30 p.m. showtime every Saturday.

If that sounds like a lot of

Inc. – and allow a wide range of people to see what it is she does exactly.

"I find people very interesting," Sherry said. "I have a per-

Marriage." Naturally, it focused primarily on relationship building within a marital context.

But as Sherry Pittman began Life Empowerment Coaching

• new businesses

• Ace Cleaning & Restorative Services, #1 Candletree Drive, #7, Springfield, 62704, Jeana VanHouten, (860) 997-6521.

• Agriculture Water Hauling Service, 124 Downing Drive, Chatham, 62629, Jarrod Perce, (217) 553-5269.

• Aerie by American Eagle #2817, 2501 Wabash Ave. Room J01A, Springfield, 62704, AE Outfitters Retail Co., (217) 726-6437.

• Art of You by Amber-Rose, 3036 S. 13th St., Springfield, 62703, Amber Hawkins, (217) 720-2815.

• Belle Dwell Interiors, 2046 S. Glenwood, Springfield, 62704, Melissa Strockbine, (217) 416-4485.

• Bottom Line Bookkeeping & Tax Services, 920 S. Spring St., Suite 1600, Springfield, 62704, Corey Wickersham, Brandon Johnson, (217) 414-3831.

• Buckman Properties, 5510 Turkey Run Road, Sherman, 62684, Rick Messervy, (517) 449-8662.

• Dent Dog, 204 N. Wesley St., Springfield 62702, Wayne Russell Nolan, (217) 414-3368.

• Dunn and Broadway, 347 S. Durkin Drive, Springfield, 62704, Kathleen Dunn, James Broadway, (217) 726-7767.

• Edgewise Consulting, 1101 Williams Blvd., Springfield, 62704, Lisa Clemmons Stott, (217) 331-2926.

• Five Star Home Remodeling & Repair, 2032 E. Adams, Springfield, 62703, Mario D. Curtis, (217) 402-5175.

Continued on Page 38,
New Businesses

• index

The Rookery.....	3
After Hours.....	4,6
Regular Meetings.....	4
Women's Calendar.....	4
New Businesses.....	5,38
Airport En/Deplanements.....	6
Building Permits.....	6
Economic Index.....	6
Business Lunch.....	14
Monthly Drive.....	15
Commercial Development...17-33	
City Codes.....	34
Going Green.....	35
Business Reading.....	36
Giving Back.....	37
Legal Filings.....	38
Law.....	39
Fast Tracks.....	40-41
Community Business.....	42-43
Opinion.....	44
Op-Ed.....	45
Business Card Directory.....	46



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Economic Index

The November Springfield Enterprise Index suggests normal activity with an index of 100. The SEI steadily increases through the year with an index of 111 in November 2013.

The University of Illinois at Springfield announces that the greater Springfield Enterprise Index (SEI) for November is 100, which suggest a normal level of economic activity. A SEI value of 100 indicates that the area economy is on its long-term growth trend. A SEI value less than 100 indicates “below average” activity.

Economic activity is the same as one year ago. The forecast through the year suggests a steady increase in economic activity with an index of 111 for November 2013. The forecast for late fall 2013 last month

was slightly higher—the SEI was 116 for October 2013. This decrease from last month’s forecast could be explained by a slight drop in median housing prices in the November 2012 data compared to October 2012 data.

Economic indexes for other Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) in Illinois are also forecasted. These compare a local area to its own historical level of economic activity for that area. The Springfield pattern of increased activity through November 2013 is consistent with all the other MSAs combined. The Chicago area index shows little change. The Springfield area has higher levels of activity relative to its own economy than the other metropolitan areas in Illinois.



The index is developed by the Regional Economic Applications Laboratory, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois. The Greater Springfield Enterprise Index is a collaboration between The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, the Institute of Government and Public Affairs – University of Illinois and the Center for State Policy and Leadership – University of Illinois Springfield (UIS). For information contact Patty Byrnes, Center for State Policy and Leadership at UIS, 217-206-7783 or pbyrn1@uis.edu.

Building and Zoning Department - City of Springfield

Building Permit Report

	December		January - December	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
New Single Family Residence				
Permit	2	0	85	103
Valuation	620,000	0	25,083,800	25,820,266
Revenue	643.84	0	26,394.82	28,839.73
Dwelling Units	2	0	85	103
New Two Family Residence				
Permit	2	0	29	21
Valuation	700,000	0	8,367,000	5,866,800
Revenue	828.00	0	12,024.04	8,591.08
Dwelling Units	4	0	58	42
New Multi-Family Residence				
Permit	0	0	0	6
Valuation	0	0	0	5,759,000
Revenue	0	0	0	21,595.40
Dwelling Units	0	0	0	62
New Commercial				
Permit	2	0	23	25
Valuation	9,236,559	0	55,110,763	38,739,959
Revenue	30,853.80	0	185,502.82	134,340.42
Total (New, Remodel, Addition & Misc.)				
Permit	216	150	3,588	2,781
Valuation	14,574,240	10,048,811	162,385,062	253,425,094
Revenue	49,510.43	38,820.66	520,242.78	783,708.91
Dwelling Units	6	0	143	207

Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport – Springfield, Ill.

Total Monthly Enplanements and Deplanements

	December			January - December		
	2012	2011	Change	2012	2011	Change
Airline Passengers Enplaning						
American Eagle	1,576	1,589	-0.82%	19,913	21,625	-7.92%
United Express	2,687	3,067	-12.39%	38,041	34,930	8.91%
Direct Air	0	2,086	0	5,294	16,265	-67.45%
Vision	0	0	0	2,496	0	0
Allegiant Air	1,141	0	0	2,065	0	0
Sun Country - Honor Flight	0	0	0	798	806	-0.99%
Sun Country - Riverside	131	0	0	362	0	0
Charter - Other	0	34	0	244	377	-35.28%
McClelland Aviation	0	4	0	34	51	-33.33%
Sub-Total	5,535	6,780	-18.36%	69,247	74,054	-6.49%
Airline Passengers Deplaning						
American Connection	1,605	1,561	2.82%	20,485	21,760	-5.86%
United Express	2,644	2,989	-11.54%	37,603	34,746	8.22%
Direct Air	0	2,056	0	4,990	16,159	-69.12%
Vision	0	0	0	2,573	0	0
Sun Country / Honor Flight	1,070	0	0	1,895	0	0
Sun Country - Riverside	0	0	0	798	806	-0.99%
McClelland Aviation	131	0	0	362	0	0
Charter	0	34	0	148	501	-70.46%
Sub-Total	5,450	6,644	-17.97%	68,888	74,023	-6.94%
*information provided by the Springfield Airport Authority						
TOTAL	10,985	13,424	-18.17%	138,135	148,077	-6.71%

After Hours, Continued from Page 4

a year.

Not too long ago, Catton received an email from a teacher in Texas who is using "The Track Home" for a high school drama competition. The teacher contacted Catton because she wants to make cuts to the script.

"You always have to go and ask the author if you're going to make cuts to their script, you have to get their permission," Catton said. "I thought that was so hilarious because now someone was asking me. It kind of came full circle."

Besides "The Track Home," "Healin' Home" and "The Sparkle Miser," Catton has written three other full-length plays. They have a first and second act and are 90 to 120 minutes long. She has penned almost two dozen 10-minute plays and gives herself credit for close to 100 unfinished plays.

Those are her least favorite because they don't have a strong enough message. "I'm not passionate enough about what I'm trying to say or I don't understand what I want to say," Catton explained.

Of all the plays she has written, Catton considers "Healin' Home" her favorite. One reason is because of Casey, a main character who has been a part of Catton's imagination (and other writings) since she was in sixth grade. Catton is also proud of the play's message: a family coming together after hardships.

"The kids had lost their mother and the family they come upon has lost their child. And in a time when blended families are forced to come together this family naturally comes together slowly. Their needs awaken, if you will, and the realization that they need both parents or they need kids to love makes them form a new family," she said.

Catton's imagination is always brewing and it is rare when she doesn't have a play in the works, even if she's not sitting in front of a computer typing the dialogue.

At a recent breakfast in St. Louis, Catton listened to a woman talk about her 80-year-old mother who is referred to by neighbors as the "Burn Lady." She burns everything from yard waste to everyday garbage. She doesn't use a waste management company anymore.

"I looked at my daughter and said 'That's a play.'"

Catton's imaginative juices kept flowing as she heard how the 80-year-old was given a speeding ticket for going 78 miles per hour on a country road. The elderly lady wasn't in the stereotypical Cadillac or Lincoln Town Car, she was in a sports car and her hair was blowing all over. The police officer thought she was a teenager.

"We're all laughing hysterically but inside I'm going 'Oh my God, I should write this down because this is good stuff,'" Catton said. "You can get inspiration from anywhere. I could never write about something that I know nothing about. Somehow I have to bring that 80-year-old woman back to how I know her. Use my aunts as an inspiration. That's how your work becomes more true."

As if writing plays isn't challenging enough, for the past four years Catton has been working with Scott Shaw-Smith to turn "The Track Home" into a musical. The first staged reading of "The Track Home: The Musical" will be done at a reception at the Hoogland Center for the Arts on Feb. 2.

For Catton, it's a mixture of emotions when she watches a performance of a play she has written.

"If you're watching it your heart beats a little bit faster, I will say that. You want to sit right down real close so you can watch everything," she said. "You sometimes watch the audience to see if they are enjoying it. One of the best compliments you can have as a playwright is that no one moves in the audience. All of their imagination is up on stage with those actors and they're perfectly still. That is fun to see."

Raegan Hennemann is a senior correspondent for Springfield Business Journal. She can be reached at raegan@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

**Second Front ,
Continued from Page 5**

teers they obtain the advertising, shoot the shows, edit them and then finally deliver them to Fox. Waldeck said it's an ideal situation for the station.

"It's a huge benefit because it offers something different aside from the local news or something that we would produce ourselves," Waldeck said. "The fact that the Pittmans produce them and bring them to us ready to go is wonderful."

Locally produced content, Waldeck said, has typically always been newscasts. Churches began to produce their own shows about a decade ago, Waldeck explained, and that helped to shift the paradigm for more varied programming such as the Pittmans' shows.

"It's fantastic for us," Waldeck said. "We're filling these times with well-produced programs that people actually want to watch."

Sherry and Mike Pittman, meanwhile,

hope people will continue to watch. Despite having little to no experience with television prior to jumping in with both feet, Mike said it's been relatively easy, particularly with help from a few friends. He credited Dean Williams, president of the Central Illinois Film Commission, with helping in every aspect from filming to set design and construction.

As Mike explained, he's used to building things, and the best way to learn is by going out and trying it. Surrounding oneself with talented individuals is a good idea as well.

"Somebody is always saying, 'Somebody needs to do this or some-

body needs to do this,'" Mike said. "Well, you're that somebody. Just do it. Find people who know more than you and learn from them. If you're the smartest person in the room, you aren't going to go too far."

**Jeri Waldeck,
account executive, Fox 55**

Gabriel House is a freelance writer from Auburn. He can be reached at info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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personality profile •

Heart and 'Sowle' of the YMCA

By Eric Woods, Correspondent

Springfield –

What is your favorite part about living in Springfield? Sowle moved to Springfield after college and has come to enjoy the community.

"Springfield has become home," she said. "It is not too big and not too small."

What is the worst part about living in Springfield? The length of the winter is one aspect of Springfield that Sowle could do without. "I love it until mid-February," she said. "By then I am ready for grass and warmth."

The biggest issue Springfield currently faces is... "A problem with communities all over is that people have less money to do things with," said Sowle. "People are worried about the future with retirement, their children's education, and taking care of their parents. It is a real struggle for most families."

Employment –

"When I was 10, I wanted to be... a pro-

fessional gymnastics coach.

First job? Sowle became an instructor at a dance and gymnastics studio when she was 13 years old. "I taught tap, ballet, and gymnastics," she said.

Worst job? Sowle worked at a health club right out of college. "It was a brand new facility, and it was all sell, sell, sell," she said. "It was not a great match for me."

Current job and responsibilities? She has been with the YMCA in Springfield for 25 years. Her first position was as physical director where she was over the physical programs and gymnastics, including Kinder Camp. She was recently named CEO where she is now in charge of the overall operations of both Springfield branches with a \$6 million budget

and 300 employees. The organization is always trying to expand their reach and serve as many people as possible. "We are always looking for new and inventive ways to fund the programs," she said. "It is an ever-present challenge to assess the community's needs and provide the

Angie Sowle

Title: C.E.O., YMCA

Address: 701 S. Fourth St.,
Springfield, Ill., 62703

Telephone: (217) 544-9846

E-mail: asowle@springfieldymca.org

Born: May 5, 1974; Belleville, Ill.

Education: B.S. in parks and recreation
from Truman State University

Family: Husband – Todd; Children –
Austin, Jordan, Sydney, and Sophia

Favorites –

Author: Harlen Coben

Restaurant: Mariah's

Sports team: St. Louis Cardinals and
Chicago Bears

Tidbits –

Enjoys writing children's books and is
working on getting published.

Has always wanted to skydive

Enjoys going to Cancun

programs they want. Plus, what works in January 2013 may not be what is needed in January 2014."

Philosophical –

What do you want to know about the future? Sowle wants to know that people will come upon easier times. "It has been a struggle for people over the past couple years," she said.

How do you envision your life in 10 years?

Sowle sees herself still working in her current position while her children continue to grow up. "My youngest child will be graduating high school," she said.

Something you learned early in life and still use? "People are genuinely good and try to do the best they can," said Sowle. "If you try to make a difference and help, people will act that way and live up to that expectation."

Advice –

Advice for someone seeking a career in your field? "It is a wonderful career and a rewarding field," said Sowle. "You can know and serve thousands of people in the community."

Who was your biggest influence? Sowle's first boss at the YMCA was Andy Anderberg for whom she worked for 15 years. "I was so green out of college," she said. "It was special to have someone coach and nurture me. I learned tons from him about the job and life in general."



Achievements –

As an adult? "I have four wonderful kids who are caring, compassionate, gracious individuals," said Sowle.

Future –

Upcoming job news? Sowle feels there is much to be accomplished over the next three years. "We are still getting used to being a two-branch location," she said. She wants to make both locations viable and productive places.

Any vacation plans? Sowle plans to cross one item off her bucket list when she travels to New York next fall. "I just want to do the tourist stuff and take in the culture and atmosphere," she said.

I want to retire when I'm ... (age)? Sowle figures that she may retire in about 15 years once all of her children are out of college. "Hopefully I will be ready by then," she said.

Eric Woods is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at eric@springfieldbusinessjournal.com



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*Sparc,
Continued from Page One*

increases, combined with longer periods of time between reimbursements of any kind, make cash flow unpredictable," Puckett said. "In the old days we received cost-of-living adjustments about every other year. Up until last week we were owed \$2.9 million.

"When we have to borrow, we have to pay interest on the borrowing, which takes interest away from services. Even a non-for-profit has to watch the dollars," Puckett said.

Tony Paulauski, director of The Arc, expressed disappointment with last year's news of Sparc's disaffiliation.

"We were surprised and very dismayed because Sparc's founder Don Carlson was first executive director of Arc of Illinois in 1950," Carlson said, adding there was always a close relationship between the two organizations.

"I don't want to get into a contest with (Puckett). What they're putting at stake is losing their national brand and identity."

*Tony Paulauski,
director of The Arc*

"We hold out hopes that they will return to the fold," Paulauski said. Currently, The Arc has a membership roster of about 60 Illinois institutions and about about 10,000 individuals. "We have shown (the Springfield not-for-profit) ways they can afford to come back. If they would participate in our state pension program, they would recoup their money back," Paulauski said.

"There are many reasons to belong to The Arc, including our work in Washington, DC," Paulauski said. The national organization also provides cost savings through economies of scale, and its success is seen in the numbers, he said.

"Our membership has been steady," Paulauski said, and he appreciates individual memberships, but adding that The Arc encourages people to join through their organizations since joining through a member institution means that the local institution is paying dues to The Arc and national organization.

"I don't want to get into a contest with (Puckett)," Paulauski said. "What they're putting at stake is losing their national brand and identity."

When informed that the Springfield entity is no longer using the name as an acronym but as a brand spelled not as SPARC in capital letters but as Sparc with lower case letters, Paulauski replied, "We hold the copyright on all those variations and are taking that approach nationally with organizations. If they don't want to affiliate with us, why do they want to use our name? They have received correspondence from us in that regard," he said.

In response to The Arc's statement that Sparc had been offered ways to save recoup the membership dues costs by participating in the umbrella organization's national programs, Puckett said she looked into the options offered, but "they were cost neutral."

"We began as an acronym (SPARC) that stood for Springfield Aid to Retarded Children, later changed to Springfield Association of Retarded Citizens and later to Springfield Arc when they stopped using the word 'retarded'," Puckett said.

The new name is Sparc. "We're not an acronym anymore," Puckett said, adding she was surprised by The Arc's get-tough attitude regarding her the name change.

"I knew that was potentially an issue



Sparc building on Bruns Lane

with them, but I searched the new version of our name on the Internet and found many organizations using it," Puckett said. Sparc is proceeding with bids for

new signage.

The name change and disaffiliation will not affect Sparc services, but other forces are at work. "It's hard to predict future cuts," Puckett said. "It depends on the legislature. I'm not anticipating any cuts, but there may be changes to our grant programs in epilepsy and respite care. There have been for the past three years and may

be next year. Since the Feds do not generate Federal Medicaid reimbursement to the state, the future of those programs is by no means secure."

The move away from The Arc is fostering closer liaison between Sparc and the local United Way since The Arc is not representing Sparc. John Kelker, president, United Way of Central Illinois responded to the news shortly after meeting with Puckett.

"Whether Sparc is a member of The Arc or not, that is a matter of no concern to us," Kelker said. "The Arc will still represent, in the legislature, people we support. That's why we urge individuals – parents, staffs and community members to pay \$25 a year to The Arc and support them. We need their advocacy for individuals."

Job Conger is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at job@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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*Economic Barometers,
Continued from Page One*

real estate market is another story, Higginbotham said. "Commercial real estate is really the 'front line,'" Higginbotham said. "While low interest rates are helpful, they are not driving the market. We know the market is on the move based on the number of calls we receive and scouting inquiries. Commercial real estate differs from residential; there is no particular season that is better than another and no rhyme or reason to change."

Employment impacts the commercial real estate market. "There has to be a workforce for national firms to make a move; they need a strong pool to pull from," Higginbotham said.

"In commercial real estate the saying is that 'retail follows rooftops.' Retail businesses are looking to be where there are a certain number of households in a specific income level," she said. "By the time national firms are contacting us, they are already well aware of what the local market has to offer; they have done their homework. Growth has to be certain for them to make the call; we are starting to see that confidence come back."

Another factor Higginbotham said is important is paying attention to the overall confidence of local business owners.

"Small business owners are the backbone of the economy," Higginbotham said. "They put their plans on hold when there is uncertainty; if they aren't moving, essentially growth is stagnant."

Just as the sale of commercial real estate positively impacts the local economy, so do home sales. Kevin Graham, real estate agent at Century 21, highlights those impacted by the sale of a home.

"During the sale process, the bank or mortgage company, title company, home inspectors, and repair men are involved," Graham said. "Following a sale, there is potential work for interior designers, painters, appliance stores, landscapers, garbage companies and many others."

According to Graham, the greatest factor affecting home sales is supply and demand. "If new homes are not being built but the demand is there, home prices will increase. If supply is greater than demand, sellers will eventually reduce their prices. Pricing of the property is important; no matter what the price point is," Graham said.

Predicting changes in home sales has not been particularly easy. Graham says interest rates are projected to remain steady for the next year meaning the industry is primed for sales to escalate. That being said, Graham points out that while interest rates are the lowest in decades, people remain slow to respond.

"People are hesitant to move up in price and remain very conservative in spending," Graham said. "Prices locally have seen some minor improvement, but we are anticipating only a one to two percent increase per year. In the past we could have expected a three to four percent increase but times have changed."

Graham stressed that employment opportunities are essential to retaining and/or increasing value in the real estate market.

"If jobs are leaving a community, real estate values are certain to decline until new opportunities come back," Graham said. "Springfield and the surrounding communities benefit from our strong medical community, schools, colleges and universities, government offices, technological businesses, agricultural enterprises and regional shopping areas."

In residential real estate, the market is mostly local. "Every market is different – Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois, the national market," he said. "In Illinois, certain areas have experienced

more drastic drops," Graham said. "In the Sangamon County market, we were a more conservative market with less speculation and more constant prices which has resulted in less foreclosures and short sales. In Springfield, homes typically average 104 days on the market with approximately 1,500 to 2,000 homes on the market at any given time."

Construction

Planning and projecting economic change in the construction industry is done by keeping an eye on a number of variables. Halverson Construction, which has two sides of business, commercial and heavy/highway, has a few more factors to consider.

"We are constantly evaluating the number of projects that are available to bid, the number of bidders on each project and prices that are being bid on these projects," said Steve Halverson, president of Halverson Construction said. "Obviously, the fewer projects there are to bid, the more bidders on a project and the more competitive or lower the pricing."

"On the commercial side we gauge what is going on by looking at what is being built around town, and the number of opportunities there are out there to bid. We gauge what is coming up by talking to the architects, engineers and developers to see what they are working on."

"Springfield always has a fair amount of projects going on – the two main hospitals always seem to have work and the state government always seems to have something going on at the Capitol and some of their other facilities around town," Halverson said.

On the heavy/highway side Halverson said what is going on at the national level is a key for highway and infrastructure projects. "We also look at funding of public works projects at the state level," he said.

Keeping appropriate labor for jobs can be difficult, but Halverson says they keep a steady workforce in the office of project managers, estimators and accounting staff. "In addition to that we keep a small crew of superintendents, foreman and key people," he said.

When additional help is needed, local unions come into play. "Once a project is finished we lay off the additional help and get back to our core employees. We have been fortunate that we have been able to keep our core people employed and productive with work that we have bid or negotiated," Halverson said.

Interest rates do not have much of an impact on the heavy/highway side of business. State and federal funding is an indicator for future projects. With regard to the commercial side of business, Halverson said one would think interest rates should have an impact but because money is difficult to borrow they aren't as big a factor.

"Other factors coming into play include new regulations that would slow down or hinder projects such as those coming from the Environmental Protection Agency or the Occupational Safety and Health Administration," Halverson said. "We also stay in tune to what is happening nationally with regard to funding for infrastructure projects, the size and number of those projects as well as the cost of material for the projects."

Business to Business

Commercial business drives much of the success for Zach Hoffman, president at Wiley Office Furniture and Joe Ushman, partner at AmeriCALL Communications Company.

Ushman says bids on projects, interest

Engineers optimistic about economy

By Roberta Codemo, Correspondent

The engineering business in Springfield is an area where the uptick in the economy has firms cautiously optimistic that the industry is recovering.

"We're doing fine," said Mary Bloxdorf of Coombe-Bloxdorf PC. The firm specializes in civil, structural and surveying projects including site and subdivision planning and design, transportation projects including roads and bridges and surveying projects including legal surveys and topographic mapping.

"We work with both private and public sector clients," Bloxdorf said. Current local and statewide projects include bridge design plans for a project in Galesburg in addition to various Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and county projects and several building projects.

"We have also worked on a few projects funded, in part, by federal stimulus funds," Bloxdorf said.



Bloxdorf

Bloxdorf's firm also provides engineering services on infrastructure work. "There is a tremendous need for infrastructure work," Bloxdorf said. "You can look around every day and see crumbling streets, torn up streets to repair, water mains and sewers and buildings in disrepair. Unfortunately, attention to infrastructure is limited by governmental priorities to funding, which is currently on social programs rather than revitalizing our infrastructure."

When it comes to very large projects, she said it's difficult to compete against larger engineering firms. Large firms do subcontract services out to smaller architectural and engineering firms.

"We do subcontract work," Bloxdorf said. "We also subcontract work out from time to time when outside expertise is needed."

Martin Engineering Company specializes in civil engineering and site development work for educational, financial, religious and retail institutions.

"We do a majority of the site development work in town," said Phil Martin, company president. "Subdivisions are our main specialty. It's our primary job base in Sangamon County."

The firm handles both commercial and residential subdivision work. "The commercial work carried us for a while," Martin said. Commercial projects include the Legacy Pointe Town Center, Legacy Sports Complex, Maple Grove sanitary sewer project, Hy-Vee grocery store and the Schnucks stores at Dirksen Parkway and Singer Avenue and Bruns Lane and Washington Street.



Martin

"There's not as much movement in the housing market," Martin continued. Among the firm's residential projects are Savannah Pointe and The Reserve.

"It's a different climate from 2006," Martin said. "We used to do 10 to 15 projects. There's not much work out there. It's been terrible the past four years."

However, he feels like it's getting a little bit better. "The private sector is beginning to move forward. It's beginning to gain a little more momentum," Martin said.

He's optimistic about the long-term. "November is looking up," Martin said. "We have work to get us through the winter." He hopes last month was the kickstarter of things to come.

The firm also handles infrastructure work for sanitary districts, power plants and water and sewer treatment plants and has done some work for IDOT. "We worked on the I-57 road project in District 9," Martin said.

Allen Henderson & Associates, Inc. merged with Arnold Engineering, Inc. in Waukegan, Iowa in 2012. "It's exciting to tap another market," said Christopher Kohlrus, vice-president of Allen Henderson.

The consulting firm specializes in civil and structural engineering services. Areas of expertise include transportation projects including bridges and roadways, buildings and facilities and commercial and residential site development.

Kohlrus said you have to sell yourself. A business will approach them about doing structural design work. His firm chooses a team, comes up with the concept and the design. The team submits a packet to the owners, who interviews each team before making a decision.



Kohlrus

"It comes down to who you want to work with," he said. "Everybody knows everybody," Kohlrus said. "If you do a good job, they'll come back and use you the next time."

Projects the firm worked on include the Springfield Blood Center, the gym addition at Blessed Sacrament and renovations and structural work at White Oaks Mall.

"We also do a lot of bridge and large structure work for IDOT," Kohlrus said. However, there hasn't been a lot of work lately. "Money's tight."

Kohlrus said IDOT puts out a bulletin every three months with a listing of jobs for consulting engineers to put in for. "There used to be 45 to 50 jobs," he said. "Now there's maybe 20."

The firm recently drew up plans for a large bridge project on Chatham Road south of Iles. "The project is going out for bid next year," Kohlrus said. The bridge will be replaced and raised three feet. The plans have been sent to IDOT for approval.

His firm is currently working on a project funded with federal stimulus money through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. "We are currently doing a project in Cass County," Kohlrus said. "Most of the work we do is federally funded."

"We also do a lot of small bridge work for Sangamon and Menard counties," Kohlrus added. The county engineer picks whoever they want for a project and presents a list of names to the county board who makes the selection.

Kohlrus said the local economy is a small microcosm of what is going on in America right now. "It's pretty tough out there," he said. However, his firm hasn't had a lull.

"We have a nice little town here," Kohlrus said. "We're blessed to be healthy and have a job."

Roberta Codemo is a freelance writer from Springfield. She can be reached at info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Continued on Next Page

Continued from Previous Page

rates and local activity all play into the equation for projecting the future. "The movement in the commercial real estate market is as good a gauge as anything," Ushman said. "It's hard to predict what it's going to be like in six months."

"New business and new chains is certainly an indicator of economic upswing."

limited opportunities. Other resources our local papers, the general state of local economy, the Greater Springfield Enterprise Index (SEI), state business, and the Illinois economy. Ultimately, bids shape the future," Hoffman said.

Both Hoffman and Ushman cited freight costs as a big factor in their businesses. "Freight surcharges leap when gas prices spike," Hoffman said. According to

dai, echoed many of the comments made by business owners in different industries – projecting and planning for economic change in the sale of automobiles is not an easy task.

"It's challenging to put the right balance of models, options and colors on the lot," Quimby said. "Most of the time manufacturers send too much so you decline inventory when it is abundant and then later you are searching for inventory when there isn't as much available, typical supply and demand."

"We're looking out about 6 months at a time. It's difficult because there is no crystal ball," Quimby said.

For Quimby, all economic factors play heavy on the industry. "When the economy is bad, used cars are more popular. People are looking to spend less money and for lower monthly payments," he said.

Gas prices have a direct impact on car sales as do employment rates and interest rates. Quimby said gas prices dictate what vehicles sell. "When gas prices are lower, we move pickup trucks; when gas prices skyrocket, economy car sales increase," he said.

Low interest rates have been good to car dealerships. "Interest rates are the lowest since the Vietnam War; there is no better time to buy," Quimby said. "It's essentially free money, no interest."

The weather also wreaks havoc on car sales. "It's tough to sell car when it's 20 degrees below zero. Vehicles always sell better in the spring than in the winter; auto purchases are emotional purchases," Quimby said.

Springfield: A year from now

Local business owners are optimistic. "Because of the medical community and the state government, Springfield always

has a pretty stable economy. Based on what we are seeing, we think that Springfield's economy may be a little better in a year assuming that the people in Washington D.C. don't stop what progress is being made," Halverson said.

Higginbotham believes the local economy to be on the upswing but says it's difficult to predict what the commercial real estate market will look like a year from now. "As the economy improves it feeds on itself – commercial real estate begins to move, construction starts gearing up, employment rates improve, the population grows because of jobs availability; it perpetuates itself," she said.

Hoffman predicts that Springfield will probably not look much different a year from now. "Until the financial problems at the state level are resolved, uncertainty will continue. Springfield doesn't boom or bust so I'm hoping for flat to slight improvement."

"Springfield is a consistent market," Quimby said. "The state and the medical industry keep the market stable. The Champaign and Decatur markets don't have the strong middle class like Springfield does; the strong middle class here keeps Springfield driving."

Ushman agrees that the local economy will be slightly improved a year from now. "Springfield is an optimistic city; you don't have many of the negatives you see in other cities. I think we're going to continue to see things happen here."

NFIB reports confidence up only slightly

Small-business owner confidence did not rebound in December, according to the National Federation of Independent Business Small Business Optimism Index. While owner optimism crept up 0.5 points over November's report, the 88 point reading was still the second lowest since March 2010.

December's report resulted largely from a deterioration of labor market components, and the percentage of owners who still expect business conditions to worsen in the next six months.

State-specific data isn't available, but Kim Clarke Maisch, state director of NFIB/Illinois, said what's happening here mirrors what's happening nationally.

"Congress played chicken right up to the end of the year, so small-business owners didn't know whether they'd have to pay higher taxes or whether we'd all plunge over the fiscal cliff," she said.

"The eleventh hour 'deal' has brought marginal certainty about tax rates and extenders and will provide some relief to owners, but doesn't guarantee a more positive forecast for the economy," said NFIB chief economist Bill Dunkelberg. "The January survey results will be more enlightening."

The Index is at a recession level reading as pessimism prevails; December's reading is certainly not typical during a recovery. Seventy percent of owners surveyed characterized the current period as a bad time to expand; one in four cite political uncertainty as the top reason. Taxes (23 percent) and regulations (21 percent) rank as the top two business problems, with "poor sales" as a close third (19 percent).

We stay in tune with what is happening in the central Illinois area," Ushman said.

Hoffman echoed that local activity is a big indicator. "Knowing what the business will look like in six months is not easy but you can get a pretty good idea about what is going on by talking to people," Hoffman said.

"Essentially if construction and the trades are busy, there are opportunities out there. If not, there are going to be

Ushman, freight costs are one of the most direct impacts to their business.

Hoffman said commodity prices also impact Wiley Office Furniture. "Both commodity prices and material input costs have a big impact; but freight cost in general is probably the biggest thing we keep an eye on," Hoffman said.

Auto Sales

Mike Quimby, partner at Green Hyun-

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Dealing with disaster takes compassion

By Eric Woods, Correspondent

Springfield –

What is your favorite part about Springfield? After spending four years in San Francisco, Brown is happy to be back in an area where people are friendly. “Nobody ever says ‘Hi’ out there,” he said. “It is nice that people are friendly here and talk to you.” Building relationships and a connection with people throughout Springfield is much easier than in the bigger cities, according to Brown.

What is the worst part about Springfield? While there are bigger cities such as St. Louis and Chicago nearby, Brown feels that Springfield does not get as much of the big city fine arts. “The Hoogland and the Prairie Capital Convention Center do a good job, though,” he said.

The biggest issue Springfield currently faces is... Brown feels that the pension issues are very important right now. “The state budget is big, and having the state-house here makes it a little closer to home sometimes,” he said.

Tim Brown

Title: Owner, Vital Restoration
Address: 3900 Wood Duck Dr.,
 Springfield, Ill. 62711
Telephone: (217) 679-0254
E-mail: tbrown@vitalrestoration911.com

Born: Aug. 26, 1980; Springfield, Ill.
Education: A.S. in applied sciences from
 Lincoln Land Community College
Family: Wife – Tracy; Children – Renee-
 mae

Favorites –

Hobby: Working with his hands
Movie: “Office Space”
Restaurant: Chili’s

Tidbits –

Owned a small paint company while
 going to college
 Wants to travel to the east coast
 Belongs to Springfield and Chatham
 Chambers of Commerce

Employment –

“When I was 10, I wanted to be...” a lawyer first, then the President of the United States.

First job? When he was 13 years old, Brown had a job detasseling corn. “It was not that horrible,” he said.

Worst job?

While living in San Francisco, Brown received work with a painting company but was the only employee who spoke English. “It was interesting and fun work, but it was rough trying to get through the language barrier,” he said.

Current job and responsibilities?

Vital Restoration has been in business for 18 months and specializes in disaster restoration. Their main function is to clean houses affected by fire and wa-

ter damage. They also work with carpet and air duct cleaning. “You do not have to have a disaster to use us,” said Brown. Other services include mold remediation as well as biohazard and crime scene cleanup. Brown has been in this line of work for 13 years, and there are currently two employees on staff. The company is

certified through the Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration.

Philosophical –

What do you want to know about the future? Brown simply wants to know if it is going to rain and when.

How do you envision your life in 10 years?

Brown hopes to see growth in his company to where he has eight to 12 employees. He also wants to build the franchise nationwide. “I hope to be a household name in the community,” he said.

Something you learned early in life and still use? “Do what you love, and the money will come,” said Brown. “Life is just too short to be in a job you hate.”

Advice –

Advice for someone seeking a career in your field? Working with the customer is crucial in this line of work. “It is the worst day in some of their lives,” said Brown. “The best advice is to have compassion.”

Who was your biggest influence? “My grandfather taught me how to work with my hands,” said Brown. “My father taught me to be a good person and love life.”

Achievements –

As a kid? In the fourth grade, Brown won the math bee. “I am a numbers guy,” he said.

As an adult? Starting Vital Restoration



has been a dream for a long time.

Future -

Upcoming job news? Brown is preparing for the rainy season, as spring time is the busiest time of year with the potential for flooded basements.

Any vacation plans? With the company still in its early stages, Brown does not see himself getting away for a little while. “It will take some time before I feel comfortable stepping away from the business for a period of time,” he said.

I want to retire when I’m ... (age)? “I love what I do,” said Brown. “I will probably work until I can no longer get up. I do not know what I would do if I stayed home all the time.”

Eric Woods is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at eric@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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Law firms make a motion to new offices

New west side offices

By Chris Stroisch,
Correspondent

After looking at several options downtown and on the west side, attorneys at a Springfield law firm recently decided to pack up their case files and move west after having a downtown presence for 42 years.

"We did consider other downtown locations," said Gary Borah, an attorney with Heyl, Royster, Voelker and Allen. "There was nothing downtown that satisfied our needs as well as this property on the west side."

The law firm, which opened its Springfield office in 1970, had occupied space at 1 North Old State Capitol Building since 1975. However, the lease on the space expired at the end of 2012.

"Most of the available space downtown was in older buildings that would require extensive renovation to meet our needs, and we wanted to avoid that, if possible," said Debra Adams, the executive director of the law firm.

In late 2012, 27 attorneys and staff members moved into the old Morgan Stanley building on Wabash Avenue.

"It was an almost perfect size for us, allowing for adequate room for growth without paying for a significant amount of space we do not presently need," Borah said. "The first time we saw the building, we all knew it was a good fit for us. We felt this building could provide one of the better law office suites in Springfield."

Minimal remodeling of the building was required, according to Adams. The reception area was upgraded and a few offices were reconfigured.

"We are confident our clients will be impressed with our new location," Adams said. "It is pleasing to the eye, professional in appearance, easy to access and provides exceptional meeting space."

While Borah said they all miss certain aspects of being downtown, their west side location is more convenient for clients.

"With our parking lot just out the front door, parking is much more convenient for our clients and guests," Borah said.

Sorling Northrup celebrates one-year mark in downtown location

While attorneys for Heyl, Royster, Voelker and Allen could not find a downtown property to suit their needs, another Springfield law firm recently celebrated its one-year mark in a different downtown location.

"Client reaction has been very positive," said John Kauerauf, an attorney with Sorling Northrup Attorneys, of the firm's decision to move from the Illinois Building to PNC Bank's downtown office building in late 2011. "They like the conference space we have created and the ease of accessibility."

The group moved to the second floor of the PNC building after being in the Illinois Building since the firm's inception in 1944.

"In February 2008, our firm organized a working group of attorneys in our office to examine our 17,639 square feet of space spread over two floors in the Illinois Building and potential alternatives thereto," Kauerauf said. "That group determined that the Illinois Building could not be effectively remodeled to address the identified problems of an insufficient number of private offices, inadequate client conference space and client accessi-



New offices for Heyl, Royster, Voelker and Allen on W. Wabash (former Morgan Stanley building)

bility issues."

The group wanted to remain downtown, however, to be near the courts, State Capitol and clients located downtown, said Kauerauf.

In November 2011, 30 attorneys and 23 staff members moved into the 22,000 sq. ft. space at PNC.

"(It) offered us the opportunity to design a new space on a single floor that would solve our need

for additional office and upgraded client conference spaces," Kauerauf said. "With both surface and underground parking immediately adjacent to the facility, it also allowed us to address our concerns about client accessibility."

In addition to the downtown Springfield office, Sorling also has offices in downtown Peoria and in Chicago.

Chris Stroisch is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com.



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UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT



business lunch •

Susie Q's: Solidly reasonable

By Tom Collins

Located in the Enos Park neighborhood, Susie Q's is easy to miss – especially while driving with a guest intent on demonstrating the torque his truck engine can deliver. Thankfully, sharp eyes prevailed and we arrived safely, parking literally feet from the door. My guests and I arrived around 11:30 a.m. on a bitterly cold day to find Susie Q's empty. Of course, it was a state holiday – which probably explained the relatively slow business that day. We were pleasantly greeted, and particularly ap-

preciated that our server actually turned up the heat for us. As the lunch hour progressed other diners started trickling in – primarily families and perhaps those out with friends on the holiday. Much like the exterior has little by way of signage, the interior of Susie Q's is also quite non-descript. There were the obligatory beer signs, but little else in terms of decoration. If I had to use one word, Spartan would come to mind. I did see a stack of magazines and papers, which I thought was a nice touch for those dining alone. Kudos to the owners for the effort. The front room has a number of four-top tables finished off by a generously sized back bar. Although we didn't explore, there appeared to be some back rooms but we couldn't tell if they were being used or not. We had our choice of tables, and selected one conveniently located on top of the floor vent. Hats off to my guest who quickly claimed the spot closest to the vent. Our drink orders were quickly taken, menus were promptly delivered and the daily specials were efficiently relayed. The day we visited the specials included a grilled cheese sandwich and cup of soup (\$5.95) and the BBQ pork sandwich and cup of soup (\$6.50). Soups that day were the chicken vegetable and cream of mushroom (\$2.95 cup, \$3.95 bowl). There was also a grilled chicken Caesar salad for \$6.50. The menu itself, as one might expect, was comprised of mainly burgers, sandwiches and salads. There were a variety of appetizers, the majority of which involved a trip through the fryer. Notable options included the Chopped Salad (\$6.25, \$7.25 with chicken – dried cranberries, candied walnuts and goat cheese – the latter of which was a pleasant surprise to find on the menu); the Stuffed Tomato (\$6.95 – with choice of chicken or tuna salad, served with cottage cheese and fruit), and the Battered Cod Sandwich (\$6.95, with slaw or fries \$7.95). Sandwiches and burgers are served with chips and fries are available for an extra \$1.00. Bacon and a variety of cheeses also cost an additional \$1.00. We opted to start out with the Pepperoncini Bites (\$4.95). These were hot peppers stuffed with cheese, sausage and perhaps a bit of red sauce. They came out piping hot and were served with ranch dressing. They were good, and not just because it was a cold day. The Italian sausage played well against the bite of the pepper and there were none left by the time our entrees arrived. For main courses we opted for the grilled cheese sandwich and cup of chili

Susie Q's
Overall Rating: ★★★

Atmosphere: ★★★
Service: ★★★
Food: ★★★
Price: ★★★★★
Suitability for Business Lunch: ★★★

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Credit Cards: Yes
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*Menu listings and prices subject to change



WHAT THE STARS MEAN:
(None) Poor to satisfactory
★ Average
★★ Good
★★★ Very Good
★★★★ Excellent
★★★★★ Extraordinary

with chips and fries are available for an extra \$1.00. Bacon and a variety of cheeses also cost an additional \$1.00. We opted to start out with the Pepperoncini Bites (\$4.95). These were hot peppers stuffed with cheese, sausage and perhaps a bit of red sauce. They came out piping hot and were served with ranch dressing. They were good, and not just because it was a cold day. The Italian sausage played well against the bite of the pepper and there were none left by the time our entrees arrived. For main courses we opted for the grilled cheese sandwich and cup of chili

(\$5.95), the 1/3 pound cheeseburger with fries (\$6.95); and the Pork Tenderloin Salad (\$6.95). Each item was served within an acceptable time frame – something that's important for those on a short lunch hour. The cheeseburger was served on a nicely toasted and better than average bun. The very generous serving of fries appeared to be homemade and certainly tasted that way. The burger was reported to be nicely representative of the higher end of diner burgers with a nice crust. The grilled cheese was served with nicely browned Texas Toast and a creamy inside, and was likewise accompanied by a generous helping of chips. My guest was pleased with both his sandwich and the chili – but opted to skip the onion and cheese (extra \$1.00). The salad, on the other hand, was a bit underwhelming. It was comprised of a bed of iceberg lettuce, some grated cheese, a few croutons and some under-ripened tomatoes topped with a three and a half strips of thin pork that could have used a bit more browning. Service was friendly but suffered a couple of glitches. Our drink glasses required requests to be refilled and it took some effort to grab the attention of our server (three attempts) to get a mid-meal request attended to. Nonetheless, we all thought that the service was more than acceptable, especially since our server appeared to be the only one working other than kitchen staff. Susie Q's delivered about what we expected – solid food at a reasonable price. There's nothing wrong with that.

Tom Collins is a freelance writer from Springfield

monthly drive

2013 Ford Escape: Fun and funky

By Jane Driver

Ford Motor Company's 2013 Escape has captured the attention of my sons and the contestants on the CBS reality show, "The Amazing Race." Giving the car away to two contestants doesn't hurt one's enthusiasm. I liked it too, and all I did was test drive it.

Paul Walsh, who has been selling cars for about 18 months, gladly went for a spin with me as he fits Ford's demographic for this SUV. Yes, the Escape is considered an SUV, even though it looks more like a cross over, and handles more like one too. My Tuxedo Black metallic Escape SEL and EcoBoost with Charcoal Black leather interior lists for \$34,070.

The first item I noticed was the squared front doors, which increased the size of the entry, but also added a different look to the vehicle. This "different" continued with the pinch-cornered side view mirrors, the 21st century/retro lighting for the controls (including Ice Blue dials), the modularized dash and center console, and the use of silver plastic trim to outline certain areas. It made me feel like I was in a sort of pod, but in a good way. It just made the car more fun to be in, frankly.

You sit quite far back from the windshield, which I have not encountered recently so there is substantial surface area in front of the steering wheel. But the view out the front was good, even though we weren't as quite high up as in a more traditional SUV. I could see straight out the back, rather than slightly up, but my

on the road, rather than the center console. My complaint, in general, is that I forget which button does what and find myself setting the cruise when I wanted to change the radio station since I'm not supposed to look, but drive. Oh well.

2013 Ford Escape

Driven at:

Landmark Ford
2401 Prairie Crossing
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(217) 862-5200
landmark-ford.com



Sticker price as driven: \$34,070

MPG: 23 city; 33 highway

Notables:

Interesting, distinctive look
Huge sunroof; Excellent gas mileage
Easy to maneuver; Not-spiffy acceleration
Uncomfortable gear shifter
Lots of buttons to remember

Ford does have My Ford Touch for voice controls and Walsh demonstrated how to use it to change the fan speed. Perhaps we will soon be able to just speak to the car as I talk to Siri on my iPhone, rather than having to do one word commands in a particular order.

The gear shifter was large and awkward to press the button to shift and I kept putting it into Sport mode, which is just one movement down from drive. Acceleration was smooth, if not a quarter horse, with its 1.6 L engine. But, with 23 miles per gallon in the city and 33 on the highway, it may be

work giving up some acceleration. I heard rather than felt the innumerable bumps on Springfield's streets.

While the Escape was very easy to turn, the turning radius wasn't quite as small as I expected. The brakes were very good and the vehicle handles much more like a car than an SUV when swerving. It hugged the road well.

Ford gave the Escape a huge sunroof, the front part of which opens, providing light and air and yet another "differentness" to it. Back seat passengers may find the seat bottoms a little short, but at least they recline a few degrees, giving the impression of more room than is there.

Back storage looked a little small, but perhaps the most impressive feature is the kick open tailgate. Such a little thing to have taken so long to realize. But, one has to learn how to use it – no moving your foot back and forth, which would throw you off balance. Just kick your foot under the rear bumper and set your foot down. The hatch opens slowly and quite high. The height of the hatch opening is adjustable, Walsh said.

While Ford is marketing the Escape to a wide age range, I can see its appeal to the 20-somethings to early 40-year-olds. It's different in a very funky, modern/high tech way that makes it stand out from the crowd. The



2013 Ford Escape

vehicle did come with a backup camera.

My seat was a little squishy, but the lumbar support was very good and the heated seats were quick and a little too heated, even though the temperature was cold and the wind was high the day of my test drive.

When I complained about the number of buttons on the steering wheel, Walsh reminded me that they are intended to maintain the driver's attention

rounded front end with upward slanting headlights and black grill give it some aggression, but the raked front windshield and rounded back end soften it up. This is a car you remember once you see it, unlike so many today.

Jane Driver is a freelance writer from Springfield. She can be reached at jane@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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• commercial development 2013: construction and real estate

Commercial builders dig in

Economic aftershocks shake construction industry

By Roberta Codemo,
Correspondent

Times are tough for the commercial construction industry in Springfield. Local contractors have experienced a downturn in business since the economic collapse in 2008. Projections for the industry in 2013 do not see construction volume rising to pre-2007 levels.

According to the 2013 Dodge Construction Outlook report released by McGraw-Hill Construction, total construction starts for 2013 will rise six percent to \$483.7 billion, slightly higher than the five percent increase to \$458 billion estimated for 2012. Commercial construction will increase 12 percent, a slightly faster pace than the five percent gain estimated for 2012. Next year commercial construction will be more than 40 percent below numbers.

Founded in 1902, Harold O'Shea Builders, 3401 Constitution Dr., is a fourth-generation family-owned business. The company employs 70 tradesmen. "Hiring will increase as work picks up in March and April," said company President Mike O'Shea.

He started working at the family business while in high school. "I grew up in the industry," said O'Shea.

"Before the economy melted down, the price (or steel) changed everyday. The lack of demand has kept prices low. We need job retention and creation in central Illinois. People need to be employed."

*Mike O'Shea, president,
Harold O'Shea Builders*

Nationwide, O'Shea sees a brighter economic outlook for the construction industry since 2007. He does not think the next one to two years will be as good as the robust years of 2004-2007.

"Many contractors suffered trying times," said O'Shea. "Several firms are no longer in business. O'Shea has been fortunate. We've had prosperous years."

The company is doing better than industry norms. O'Shea said the industry is in a slow, but promising recovery. Overall the dollar value of work the past several years has been below 2004-2007 levels.

"We've worked hard at building our organization," said O'Shea. A key com-

ponent of the company's strategic plan is relationship building. He attributes the company's success to the relationships it built with its customers before the economy went south.

"There are more opportunities in Springfield," said O'Shea. "The vast majority of our work is in the private sec-

"Both locally and nationally something needs to change. There are serious issues in front of us that no one wants to address ... We need to put people to work. It's a very tough time for all industries."

*Rick Lawrence,
president, Siciliano, Inc.*

tor."

O'Shea sees local businesses initiating new projects. The K-12 education market continues to grow and so does health care. "It's helped stabilize Springfield," he said.

Current construction projects include a new medical office building on the Passavant Area Hospital campus and the \$60.5 million four-story medical office building on Memorial Medical Center's campus. The company has also started construction on the new 32,000 square-foot Matheny-Withrow Elementary School.

The price of construction materials impacts cost. The price of steel and petroleum has the largest impact on the industry. O'Shea said the price of steel is very volatile. "Before the economy melted down, the price changed everyday. The lack of demand has kept prices low," he said.

"We need job retention and creation in central Illinois," said O'Shea. "People need to be employed." That will encourage spending and growth in the construction industry.

"2013-2014 is looking pretty bright," said O'Shea. "The next two years will be a ramp up for us."

Frank Siciliano founded Siciliano, Inc., 3601 Winchester Road, in 1968. Rick Lawrence, president, purchased the company in 1997. The company's customer base is split between the private sector and federal and state projects.

The general construction company offers a wide-range of services including site development, concrete work, steel erection, drywall, painting and masonry. It subcontracts out electrical, plumbing and mechanical work.

"The commercial market is depressed," said Lawrence. "This is the worst I've seen." His company has had to downsize from 160 employees to 20.

The company did half the volume of work in 2012 than it did in 2011. "2012 was a tough year," said Lawrence. "2013 doesn't look a whole lot better."

"It's a challenge to survive," he continued. "Our customers have had to consolidate their budgets. The volume of work has decreased. I don't see them gearing back up this year or next."

The cost of materials also impacts construction costs. "The cost fluctuates with the market," said Lawrence. The costs

have to be passed on.

There have not been any big projects the past several years. "The money isn't there," said Lawrence. His company has been involved with restoration of the Dana-Thomas House, construction of the New Salem Visitor Center, the Crowne Plaza Hotel and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

"Both locally and nationally something needs to change," said Lawrence. "There are serious issues in front of us that no one wants to address."

*Continued on Page 21,
Commercial Builders*



Jim Kuhar
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jim@jimkuhar.com


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Central Illinois Builders

PROFILES:

Josh Craggs – P. 20

Keith Ackerman – P. 26

LISTS:

Commercial Builders – P. 18

Mechanical Contractors – P. 22

Electrical Contractors – P. 24

Labor Unions – P. 28

Commercial Real Estate Network – P. 32

Major Commercial Builders

(Listed by Number of Full-Time Employees)

	Company Name Address City, State, ZIP Code	Telephone (-) Fax (=) Web Site (www.) E-Mail	Full-Time Employees	Partners/Principals	Areas of Specialty	% sub- contracted	Recent Notable Projects	Year Established
1	United Contractors Midwest, Inc. 3151 Robbins Road Springfield IL 62704	217-546-6192 217-546=1904 ucm.biz contact@ucm.biz	165	James P. Bruner, Pres Mike Cullinan, Chairman	Asphalt Paving, Concrete Paving, Bridge Building, Earthwork	15	Illinois: Route 67 West of Jacksonville - concrete paving, bridge, earthwork; Route 29 Edinburg - asphalt paving, earthwork.	2001
2	Harold O'Shea Builders 3401 Constitution Drive Springfield IL 62711	217-522-2826 217-522=6586 osheabuilders.com mikeoshea@osheabuilders.com	115	Michael E. O'Shea, Pres David L. "Bud" O'Shea, CEO	Design-Build, Construction Mgt., Gen Contracting, Pre-Con. Services	70	Illinois: Kerasotes YMCA/Sportscore, Pepsi Bottling Company, Brandt Consolidated building addition, Memorial Medical Center, Lincolnshire Health Center, Passavant Area Hospital Medical Office Building, Abraham Lincoln Memorial Hospital, Tay- lorville Memorial Hospital, Springfield Clinic 1st North, Prairie Eye Surgery Center, Cathedral of Immaculate Conception, Farm & Home, Walgreens, Hope Institute Residential Home, Orthopedic Center of IL, Allied Waste, Altorfer Caterpillar, HD Smith, Kirlin Egan Butler Funeral Home, Nestle, Matheny-Withrow School	1902
3	Halverson Construction Co., Inc. 620 N. 19th St. Springfield IL 62702	217-753-0027 217-753=1904 halversonconstruction.com stevenh@halversonconstruction.com	80	Vern E. Halverson, COB Steven Halverson, Pres Mary D. Halverson, VP	Gen. Contracting, Bridges, Commercial/Industrial Construction, Const Mgt, Steel Erection, Pre-Cast	30	Illinois: A. Lincoln Presidential Library Parking Garage, Union Station Restoration, MacArthur Blvd Highway Bridges/Interchange/Extension, St. Joseph Home Dementia Wing Addn., Erin's Pavilion, Motomart Conve- nience Store Gas Station, SMTD - Springfield Mass Transit District, Camp Lincoln, Renovate Jacksonville High School, IHoP, CEFCU, County Market (2nd & Carpenter), PCCC phase 2&3.	1978
4	Jones-Blythe Construction Company 1030 W. Reynolds St. Springfield IL 62702	217-787-1640 217-787=1666 jones-blythe.com jblythe@jones-blythe.com	60	John F. Blythe	Design-Build, Gen Contractor, Construction Management, Industrial Construction	60	Spfld, Ill.: St. John's Hospital, Memorial Hospital, Hoogland Center for the Arts, 183rd Air Guard Composite Support Facility, Menard Electric Head- quarters - design/build, Grant Middle School, Trans-Canada Pipeline.	1930
5	Sangamo Construction 2100 E. Moffat Springfield IL 62702	217-544-9871 217-544=9873 office@sangamo.net	50	Allan Reyhan, Jr. Matthew P. Reyhan	Bridge/ Highway Construction	20	Illinois: IL 16 - Embarras River structure rehab, IL 15 - Fairfiled IL structure rehab, I-57/70 pedestrian bridge, I-57/70 Fayette Avenue structure, IL 78 - Panther Creek structure rehab.	1990
6	R. D. Lawrence Construction Co. Ltd. 603 N. Amos Ave. Springfield IL 62702	217-787-1384 217-787=3856 rdlawrence.com info@rdlawrence.com	45	John Goetz	General, Contracting, Design- Build	60	Illinois: St. Johns Hospital Patient Tower and Main Surgery structural steel package, site demo and mass exc.; Dominion Power Plant D.S.I. Project; J.P. Morgan Chase HVAC upgrades	1984
7	Evans Construction 1900 E. Washington St. Springfield IL 62703	217-525-1456 217-525=2886 evansconst.com don@evansconst.com	40	Donald Evans, Pres	General Contracting, Construction Management, Design / Build, Commercial / Industrial Construction	40	Spfld., Ill.: Memorial Medical Center Renovations, SHG East / West Cam- pus renovations, Illinois Community College Foundation build out, Jack- sonville Ill.: LLCC - Science Lab and classroom renovations, Illinois School for the Deaf roof & restroom renovations.	1913
8	Newman-Alton Inc. 719 Estill Drive Springfield IL 62707	217-753-1986 217-753=1988 salton@newman-alton.com	21	Patrick Newman Steve Alton	General Contractors, Non-Union Construction Management, Design-Build	40	Spfld, Ill.: Illini Country Club, Panther Creek Country Club, Gold Center, Shell Jiffy Stop, Green Acres Hotel, Springfield College, Obed & Isaacs; Decatur, Ill.: BKD; Hillsboro, Ill.: McDonough-Whitlow; Lincoln, Ill.: Lin- coln-Chrysler.	1992
9	Siciliano Inc. 3601 Winchester Road Springfield IL 62707	217-585-1200 217-585=1211 sicilianoinc.com buildit@sicilianoinc.com	15	Richard E. Lawrence, Pres Aubrie Megginson, CFO Kim Lawrence, Sec	General Contractor, Restora- tion, Design-Build, Commer- cial/Industrial Construction, Site Work and Site Utilities	18	Spfld, Ill.: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Abraham Lincoln Presi- dential Museum, Crowne Plaza hotel, Dana Thomas House restoration; Jacksonville: Jacksonville Water Treatment Plant.	1968

Sources: The builders.



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personality profile •

Building for the future

By Eric Woods, Correspondent

Springfield –

What is your favorite part about Springfield? Craggs feels the city is very diversified. “The city is spread out which allows for more growth,” he said. “There are a lot of options here with retail outlets and restaurants.”

What is the worst part about living in Springfield? Craggs feels that Springfield could use a better infrastructure. “Every town is hurting for that, but it is getting there,” he said. “We have a power plant and some other things already in place.”

The biggest issue Springfield currently faces is...? The downtown rail issue could still be a problem, according to Craggs. “It would be better to route it around town,” he said.

Employment –

“When I was 10, I wanted to be...” in construction.

First job? Craggs worked in maintenance on his grandfather’s farm as a kid.

“He was a coal miner and had a good work ethic,” he said.

Worst job? Craggs once worked in a factory building box heaters but found assembly lines to be very repetitive.

Current job and responsibilities?

Halverson Construction has two primary divisions: heavy/highway construction and commercial construction. As a commercial project manager, Craggs guides clients from various industries through the entire commercial construction process starting with bidding. He also handles estimates, budgets, and full project management. Thorough evaluations are included in the process to help identify any risks involved. Craggs has worked with Halverson Construction since last August but has been in the industry since 1999. “I began in residential construction while in high school,” he said. “I have always liked building things.”

Philosophical –

Josh Craggs

Title: Commercial Project Manager, Halverson Construction Company
Address: 620 N. 19th Street, Springfield, Ill., 62702
Telephone: (217) 753-0027
E-mail: jrcraggs@halversonconstruction.com

Born: June 4, 1979; Springfield, Ill.
Education: B.S. in Construction Management from Illinois State University
Family: Wife – Raimee; Children – Gavin, Griffin, and Grayson

Favorites –
Hobby: Outdoor activities
Restaurant: Longhorn Steakhouse
Sports team: Chicago Bears

Tidbits –
Began working on his grandfather’s farm at age 10
Loves taking his family to Florida
Wants to travel outside the United States



How do you envision your life in 10 years? As he has just begun with Halverson, Craggs envisions himself still working with the company. He will also be getting ready to send his children off to college.

Something you learned early in life and still use? Craggs learned about having a strong work ethic from his grandfather. “Treat people with respect,” he said. “Respecting older people seems to be going by the wayside with some young people.”

Advice –

Advice for someone seeking a career in your field? “Work hands-on in the field,” said Craggs. “You could also work at a design firm to see the other side of things.” These could both help people get some experience with project management. Personality skills will help as well as those in construction are always dealing with a number of personalities, from owners to other management types.

Best advice you have ever been given? “Stay in school,” said Craggs. “My grandfather told me to use my mind and not my back.”

Achievements -

As a kid? “I was able to buy anything because I worked and made my own way,” said Craggs.

As an adult? Getting to his current level, having a good work history, and being college educated are very important to Craggs. He is also very proud of his family.

Future -

Upcoming job news? Craggs is currently working on jobs at Enos School as well as Simon Properties. There are several small design build jobs at which they are looking with a couple having already been priced.

Any vacation plans? Craggs plans to take the family to Disney World in Florida this summer.

I want to retire when I’m ... (age)? Craggs does eventually plan to retire but it will depend on how his situation has shaped up as he nears retirement age. “It is not so much financial anymore but more on the health insurance side,” he said.

Eric Woods is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at eric@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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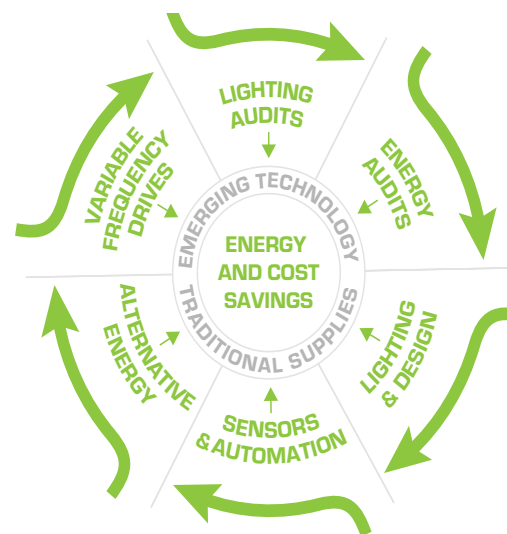
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• commercial development 2013

Commercial Builders,
Continued from Page 17

The state was having problems as early as 2003-2004. "It affected us a little then but not to the degree it does now," said Lawrence. The financial problems with the state have halted work. "Everything is grinding to a halt."

Lawrence said new banking regulations have impacted funding for private sector work. "It's more difficult to finance new projects."

There is no magic pill. "There are so many other things that are more important than this industry that need fixed," said Lawrence. "We need to put people to work. It's a very tough time for all industries."

mercial work. "We build office buildings, restaurants, build to suit to fit a business's needs and lease to own," said Buraski.

"The economy is shaky," continued Buraski. As things move forward, the company would like to partner with businesses to fill a need.

"We've been affected by the recession like everyone across the board," said Buraski. Business started slowing down in 2007-2008. "There have been times we've been slower than we normally are at times of the year we're typically not."

Buraski has seen an increase in the cost of construction materials the past few years. "As time goes on, buildings get more expensive," he said. "You can buy something for less than the cost to build it."

Fewer building permits; more processing time

The economic downturn in 2008 impacted the Springfield area commercial construction industry. According to figures released by the City of Springfield Building and Zoning Department, the number of new commercial building permits fell from 40 in 2008 to 23 in 2012.

Conversely, the total number of building permits (which includes new, remodels, additions and miscellaneous) increased from 3,228 in 2008 to 3,558 in 2012. The total number of permits increased from 7,199 in 2008 to 8,512 in 2012.

On average, it takes between two to four weeks to approve a commercial building permit application. "It takes a little longer than it did in 2008," said department manager John Sadowski.

New commercial valuation affects the time the department spends on the building inspection process. In 2012, the number of new commercial building permits had a total commercial valuation of more than \$55 million.

It can take three weeks to approve a commercial building permit for a small building like a strip mall with three to four tenants compared to four weeks for a multi-million dollar project like Springfield First North. For a large-scale project, there are hundreds of pages of drawings to review.

Permit applications make up a small part of his department workload. "We're doing more work now that we didn't have to do 15 years ago," said Sadowski. "It takes time away from processing commercial permits."

Among the new responsibilities his department handles are registering vacant buildings under the city's new abandoned properties ordinance and reviewing plans to ensure buildings meet new energy code requirements. His office also processes Freedom of Information Act requests.

"We're doing more with the same number of employees," said Sadowski. He manages 16 people, and approximately 10 of those handle commercial building permits. His staff is cross-trained so they can fill in for people who are absent.

"I'm not saying the process can't get faster," said Sadowski. His department is working on streamlining the permitting process.

Contractors must submit two sets of drawings for review by zoning, plan review, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, fire safety and the city engineer. His department recommends that contractors now submit three or more sets of drawings to speed up the review process.

Once the drawings have been examined and commented on by each reviewer, they are returned to the designers, who have to respond to the comments before the permit process moves forward. This can further delay the permit approval process.

Sadowski feels his department has a good relationship with area contractors. "There's always going to be disagreements," he said. "It's part of doing business."

Roberta Codemo is a freelance from Springfield.
She can be reached at info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Lawrence respects his competitors. "We have some of the best talent around. It's a tough market for everybody. We're all scraping by to get what we can," he said.

Buraski Builders, 3757 S. Sixth St., has a reputation for designing and constructing homes. Founded in 1981 by Frank and Barbara Buraski, the family-owned business specializes in residential and commercial design and construction.

Jason Buraski is co-owner along with his sister, Heather Sobieski. The company employs approximately 32 people.

"We pride ourselves on service and the quality of our product," said Buraski. He has been involved with the family business for 11 years.

"We've done commercial construction for some time for existing clients," said Buraski. "It's never been our focus."

The company is making an effort to get its name out there. "We want to expand the business," said Buraski.

The company focuses on light com-

Buraski said there are some projects in the works. "Things are moving in a positive direction."

The company recently completed a restaurant remodel. "It was a great project for us," said Buraski. "We're looking forward to doing more in the future."

Buraski said companies like R.D. Lawrence Construction Co. and Harold O'Shea Builders are in a different league. "We're much smaller," he said. He acknowledges there is some overlap between things his company does and vice versa.

Buraski said the company keeps to itself. "We worry about ourselves," he said. "We do our own thing."

"People need to spend money," added Buraski. "That's what it comes down to."

Roberta Codemo is a freelance writer from Springfield.
She can be reached at info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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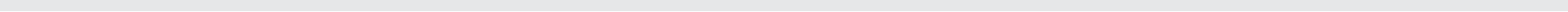
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Major Mechanical Contractors

(Listed By Total Number of Employees - Peak Season)

	Company Name Address City, State, ZIP Code	Telephone (-) Fax (=) Web Site (www.) E-Mail	Number of Employees (Peak Season)	Owner / President	Services	Recent Notable Projects	Year Established
1	E. L. Pruitt 3090 Colt Road Springfield IL 62707	217-789-0966 217-789=2694 elpruitt.com	297	John Pruitt	HVAC, Plumbing, Fire Protection, Architectural Sheet Metal	Memorial Medical Center, St. John's Hospital, Passavant Hospital, Millikin University, LLCC, St. Mary's Hospital, Crown Cork & Seal, Springfield School District-Variou Locations, Abe Lincoln Capital Airport, Springfield Clinic-Sleep Lab, Hope Springs Apartments, Target Remodel-Springfield & Bloomington, Pathway Services, Walgreens-Bloomington, County Market-Springfield, Pepsi Distribution Center, Camp Lincoln, Gard Elementary-Beardstown School District, Meridian CUSD #15, IL Air National Guard, Sangamon County Animal Control, JP Morgan Chase Bank.	1971
2	Henson Robinson Company 3550 Great Northern Ave. Springfield IL 62711	217-544-8451 217-544=0829 henson-robinson.com hrc@henson-robinson.com	250	Steve Etheridge, Secretary/Treasurer; Dan Hoselton, Pres.	HVAC, Roofing, Plumbing, Piping, Refrigeration, Architectural Sheet Metal, HVAC/Plumbing Service, Residential & Commercial	Memorial Medical Center, St. John's Hospital, YMCA, St. Mary's Hospital, Caterpillar, Super Value, Southeast High School, Heritage Manor, ADM, IHoP, LLCC, Decatur Airport, SHG, Walmart.	1861
3	F. J. Murphy & Son, Inc. 1800 Factory Ave. Springfield IL 62702	217-528-4081 217-528=4147 fjmurphy.com jpasko@fjmurphy.com	75	John Pasko	Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Fire Sprinklers, Refrigeration, Restaurant Equipment, Ice Machines, residential, commercial, institutional, installation and repair	Illinois School for the Deaf, Jacksonville Development Center, Regency Nursing Home, Dept. of Agriculture, SEIU Offices, White House/Black Market, H.H. Gregg, White Oaks Mall, The Icing, Hot Topic, U of I Champaign, UIS, Western IL University, Eastern IL University, IL State University, Memorial Hospital, SIU Edwardsville, SIU Carbondale, Caterpillar Peopria, Preckwinkle Home upgrade, hundreds of small repair and remodel projects - residential and commercial.	1947
4	Prairie State Plumbing & Heating / Harney Electric 1499 W. State Route 29, Athens IL 62613	217-636-9000 217-636=8927 jerryjudd@sbcglobal.net	44	Jerry Judd	Plumbing, heating, electrical	Rochester Intermediate School, Rochester Athletic Complex, Mason District Hospital, Blessed Sacrament School, AT&T, Christian Homes, Springfield Metro Sanitary District, Palmyra Northwestern School, Springfield Pepsi, Brandt Consolidated, Prairie Capital Convention Center remodel.	2005
5	Allied Plumbing & Heating, Inc. 1315 Wabash Ave. Springfield IL 62704	217-698-5500 217-698=5505 alliedplb-n-htg.com mark@alliedplb-n-htg.com	35	Mark Miller	Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Ventilation, Service, Lawn Irrigation, Residential / Light Commercial, Replacement	Williamsville Christian Church, Quaker Steak & Lube, IHoP, Villas at Pine Creek, Road Ranger.	1977
	Mike Williams Plumbing and Heating 2403 South Grand Ave. East Springfield IL 62703	217-753-4545 217-753=4548 mikewilliams.net	35	Lewis Williams	HVAC, Heating, Air Conditioning and Plumbing	Primarily residential projects.	1976
	Punzak Air Conditioning & Sales Co. 4745 Industrial Drive Springfield IL 62703	217-529-6731 217-529=6767 punzakhvac.com info@punzakhvac.com	35	Stuart O. Cappellin	Residential / Commercial, Heating - Cooling Service, New Construction, Sheet Metal Work, Equipment Replacement	O'Shea Builders - New Facility, Wings Restaurant, Fit Club South, Bickford House, Timberlake Retirement Center, St. John's Hospital, Boy Scout Office, Hospital Sisters, Midwest Ins, WICS remodel, IDOT, Solomon Colors, Laurel United Methodist Church, Diversified Services.	1946
8	Doyle Plumbing & Heating Company 225 N. West St. Jacksonville IL 62650	217-243-1013 217-243=9400	30	Tom Doyle	Commercial and Industrial Plumbing, HVAC, Mechanical Piping, Specialty Boiler Work	Lincoln Land Community College, Secretary of State, Capital Development Board, Springfield Area Business District.	1921
9	Johnson Controls, Inc. 4231 Westgate Drive Springfield IL 62711	217-793-8858 217-793=8759 johnsoncontrols.com	25	Corporate Owned	Commercial HVAC, Fire Security, Light Residential	University of Illinois - Champaign Post Genomic Institute, SIU School of Medicine Labs.	1885
10	Airmasters - Commercial Mechanical Contractor , 1330 North Grand Ave. West Springfield IL 62702	217-522-9793 217-522=7293 theairmasters.com rmathews@airmasters-services.com	17	Robert Mathews	Commercial Mechanical Contractor, HVAC/R	DDC Building Automation Controls upgrade at Park Place, Entire Refrigeration Installation at CVA-Taylorville, Sheet Metal Fabrication for St. John's Hospital.	1993
	Central Illinois York, Inc. 1210 E. Laurel Springfield IL 62703	217-522-3371 217-522=1341 centralilyork.com york321@aol.com	17	Frank Cole	Commercial, Industrial, Residential, Heating, AC, Ventilation, Sheet Metal	Midwest Technical Institute, Andrews Engineering, Kerasotes Theaters - Parkway Pointe; Midwest Technical Institute Peoria; Eagles Club, Riverton; Holiday Inn, Baton Rouge, Maryville Manor; City of Salem, Ill.; Staab Funeral Home; Kohls Department Stores.	1940
12	Aire Serv / HRI 560 North St. Springfield IL 62704	217-523-8594 217-243=7002 aireserv.com/cil aireserv@as-hri.com	13	Chris Williams Jennifer Williams	Sales, Service, Installation & Commercial	Cargill, Jacksonville High School, Casey's General Stors, various Residential Projects.	1985
	Tom's Heating, Air Conditioning & Plumbing, Inc., 2809 N. Dirksen Parkway Springfield IL 62702	217-525-8667 217-525=5926 tomsheatingandair.com tomshgt@sbcglobal.net	13	Tom Garmers	Installation, sales & service - HVAC & Plumbing	Petersburg Veterinary clinic - plumbing, new residential construction, residential HVAC change outs and plumbing remodels, service / retail sales / geothermal systems, Family Dollar (S. Grand), Habitat for Humanity homes.	1982
14	Brennan Heating & Air Conditioning 619 E. Morton St. Jacksonville IL 62650	217-245-7181 217-245=0352 brennansheetmetal.com tinman95@mchsi.com	11	Chris Cisne	Residential and Commercial HVAC Installations, replacement and service, Industrial Fabrication	Nestle, Reynolds Consumer Products.	1942
15	Bangert, Inc. Plumbing 450 North St., Suite A Springfield IL 62704	217-787-6560 217-544=5690 banginc@sbcglobal.net	4	Ryan Bangert	Plumbing Service and Remodel for Residential and Commercial Projects	Commercial and Residential service and remodel.	1993

Sources: Mechanical Contractors Association of Central Illinois, The Building and Zoning Department - City of Springfield, The contractors.



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Major Electrical Contractors

(Listed by Total Number of Full-Time Employees)

	Company Name Address City, State, ZIP Code	Telephone (-) Fax (=) Web Site (www.) E-Mail	Number of Full-Time Employees	Owner(s)	Recent Notable Projects	Union Affiliation	Year Established
1	Anderson Electric, Inc. 3501 Sixth St. Hwy. W., Suite # 1 Springfield IL 62703	(217) 529-5471 (217) 529=0412 anderson-electric.com wesa@anderson-electric.com	240	Employee Owned	SIU Simmon's Cancer Center, Memorial Medical Center - Interim Surgery Project, St. John's Hospital - Lobby Renovation, Porta High School - Wind Turbine Project, Dr. Paris - 3kW Solar Project, Illinois Primary Healthcare, Sixth Street Wal-Mart, Concordia Village Skilled Nursing, Independent Living, and Assisted Living, White Oaks Mall rehab, UIS Apartments rehab, JC Penney rehab, First United Methodist Church (4 locations in central Illinois), SMTD, Spring Creek Water Treatment Plant.	Yes	1918
2	B & B Electric, Inc. 3000 Reilly Drive Springfield IL 62703	(217) 528-9666 (217) 528=5481 bnbelectric.net todd@bnbelectric.net	83	Todd M. Brinkman	Splfd., IL: Kindred Healthcare, Memorial Medical Center, Springfield Clinic First - North, St. John's Sixth St. - Lincolnshire, New Orthopedic Center, Lincoln Land - Workforce Center, West Side Christian Church, Prairie Diagnostic Center, Springfield Priority Care, Capital Community Health Care, New Vision Care, Capital - HVAC project, Sacred Heart-Griffin addition, YMCA, Glenwood Elemntary School; Lincoln, IL: Abraham Lincoln Memorial Hospital and Office Building; Jacksonville, IL: Passavant Hospital; Taylorville, IL: Taylorville Memorial Hospital and Medical Office Building.	Yes	1962
3	Egizii Electric 700 N. MacArthur Blvd. Springfield IL 62702	(217) 528-4001 (217) 528=1677 eeiholding.com paul@eeiholding.com	81	Robert W. Egizii	Dallman Generating Station (CWLP), President Abraham Lincoln Museum, Industrial Nuclear Power, Kennedy Space Center, Boeing Aircraft, Wilkes Barre, PA, Mitsubishi Motors Manufacturing, various lock and dam projects, Mars Pet Care, Memorial Stadium (U of I), Ft. Lauderdale Airport, Martin Marietta..	Yes	1948
4	Haenig Electric Company 2951 Stanton Ave. Springfield IL 62703	(217) 529-0454 (217) 529=4094 haenig.com deb@haenig.com	30	Debbie Marsaglia Mike Marsaglia	Rochester Athletic Complex, Sangamon County Public health, Fit Club South, B. J. Grand Salon, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, CVS (Springfield/Jacksonville), Walgreens, Regions Bank, Pittsburg Pipe, IHOP, Illinois State Police Credit Union, Riverton CUSD #7, Girard Elementary School, Brandt Consolidated, Blackburn College, Capital Airport, Farm & Home, solar and Generac/Guardian Authorized Dealer and installer of permanent generators for home and business.	Yes	1904
5	Ryan Electrical Solutions 1305 W. Enos Ave. Springfield IL 62702	(217) 698-4877 (217) 698=8481 ryanelectricalsolutions.com dennis@ryanelectricalsolutions.com	25	Dennis Ryan	Various Commercial, Residential and Audio Visual Projects.	No	1995
6	Ruby Electric 341 S. Meadowbrook Road Springfield IL 62711	(217) 787-4949 (217) 787=2043 rubyelectric.com johnruby@rubyelectric.com	20	John Ruby	Various Commercial and Residential Projects, Standby Generator Systems Commercial and Residential.	No	1978
7	Lindsey Electric 3260 Terminal Ave. Springfield IL 62707	(217) 544-6789 (217) 544=9591 lindsey-electric.com lori@lindsey-electric.com	10	Catherine A. Lindsey - President J. Michael Lindsey - V.P. Lori A. Lindsey Von Behren - Corp. Sec.	Various Commercial & Residential Projects.	Yes	1972
	Mansfield Electric Co. 4425 N. Peoria Road Springfield IL 62702	(217) 523-0811 (217) 528=3111 ed@mansfield-electric.com	10	H. Edward Midden, III	Sangamon County Complex, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, UIS - University Hall.	Yes	1949
9	Carmean Electric Inc. 2863 Singer Ave. Springfield IL 62703	(217) 789-1155 (217) 789=9578 carneanelectric@gmail.com	6	Wayne Shephard	Various Residential and Commercial Projects.	Yes	1970

Sources: The electrical contractors.



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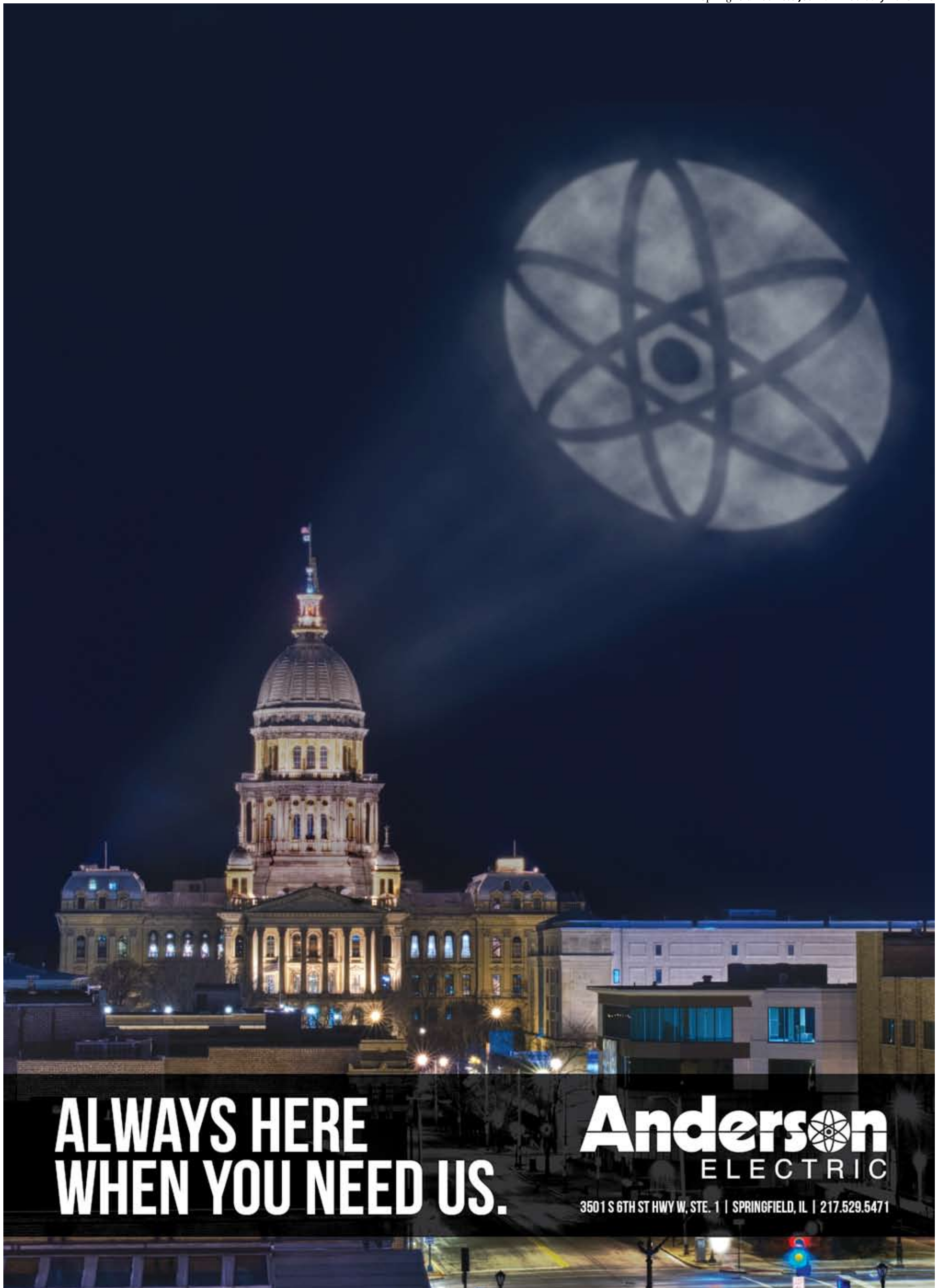
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Adam Craddock
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217-243-1414

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C. Michael Marsaglia
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217-529-0454 • www.haenigelectric.com

Harney Electric
Jerry L. Judd
1499 W. State Route 29 • Athens, IL 62613
217-636-9000

Ingram Electrical Services, Inc.
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personality profile •

Equipping his territory

By Eric Woods, Correspondent

Springfield –

What is your favorite part about living in Springfield? “The town is not too big and not too small,” said Ackerman.

What is the worst part about living in Springfield? Ackerman is not a big fan of the winter months in Springfield. “It is too cold,” he said. “I like to golf.”

The biggest issue Springfield currently faces is...? Growth within the city is an issue Ackerman has seen over the years. “We need businesses to grow in order to expand,” he said. “We have to get businesses here to allow that growth. That is what the Chamber of Commerce is all about right now.”

Employment –

“When I was 10, I wanted to be... a pilot.

First job? Ackerman worked weekends and summers as a busboy when he was about 16 years old.

Worst job? Ackerman has not had a large number of jobs, and he has enjoyed

them all.

Current job and responsibilities? Martin Equipment has been in business since 1926, and their Springfield location has been around since 1973. The company has nine locations in Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. It is an authorized John Deere industrial equipment dealership and works with contractors, government bodies, utilities, gas, and oil companies. Ackerman has been with the company for almost 28 years and manages his territory which consists of the area counties around Springfield. “I take care of the customer and make sure they are happy,” he said.

Philosophical –

What do you want to know about the future? “Why are we all here?” said Ackerman. He hopes to see an end

to cancer at some point in the future. “I want to see a total cure.”

How do you envision your life in 10 years? Ackerman wants to still be healthy and working but possibly slowing down somewhat. “I am not sure about retirement,”

he said. “Work keeps you going.”

Something you learned early in life and still use? Ackerman’s parents taught him the value of honesty growing up, which he has learned is pretty special in his line of work as well.

Advice –

Advice for someone seeking a career in your field? Ackerman believes that a good work ethic will go a long way. “Listen to people and their needs,” he said. “Help customers resolve issues, work hard and give 110 percent.”

Best advice you have ever been given? “Never look back,” said Ackerman.

Who was your biggest influence? Ackerman learned a lot from his parents growing up on a farm. He would work on the farm whenever they needed help. “We had livestock and farmed grain, corn, and soybeans,” he said.

Achievements –

As a kid? Learning to ride a bicycle was a proud moment for Ackerman.

As an adult? “I am happy to be raising and influencing my son,” said Ackerman.

Future –

Upcoming job news? “John Deere is always on the cutting edge,” said Ackerman. “They are always engineering products to make them better and last longer.”



Keith Ackerman

Title: Territory Manager, Martin Equipment of Illinois, Inc.
Address: 2384 J. David Jones Parkway, Springfield, Ill. 62707
Telephone: (217) 528-4347
E-mail: kackerman@meoi.com

Born: July 23, 1959; Springfield, Ill.
Education: Attended Lincoln Land Community College and numerous John Deere certifications
Family: Wife – Janet; Son – Ridge

Favorites –

Hobby: Golfing
Movie: “The Hangover”
Sports team: Fighting Illini basketball

Tidbits –

Grew up on a farm
Wants to vacation in Hawaii some day
Enjoyed history class in school

Any vacation plans? While it is also business related, Ackerman is heading to Arizona in March. “We love going to the Chandler and Mesa areas,” he said. Ackerman is hoping to catch some Spring Training baseball games while he is out there.

I want to retire when I’m ... (age)? “It would be nice to pick a time, but I really enjoy working,” said Ackerman. “Weekends are always fun when it is nice out, but I feel comfortable at work.”

Eric Woods is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at eric@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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Women in hard hats; breaking the glass ceiling

By Roberta Codemo,
Correspondent

The face of the construction industry is changing as more women choose to enter this traditionally male-dominated profession.

In 2011, there were 9,039,000 people employed in the construction industry. Of this, 828,000 were women according to the National Association of Women in Construction, up from 807,000 in 2010. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women comprise nine percent of the construction industry.

Rachel Broughton, president of Perry



Deb Marsaglia, president of Haenig Electric Company, Inc.

Broughton Trucking and Excavating, Inc., 1227 West Enos Ave., sees more women entering the industry. She comes from a farming background and manages the family farm.

She and her husband, Perry, founded the company in 1972. "We wanted to go into business for ourselves," said Broughton. "We started with one truck and one end loader and one lowboy."

Broughton initially saw her role as supporting her husband's dream. "I decided I needed to be more involved. This was my future also," she said.

"Women were few and far between when I first started," continued Broughton. "You didn't see women on the job site. The first time I took a bid to a letting in the early 1970s I was the only woman in the room. The men thought I was a secretary and had the wrong room."

Women from her generation entered the construction industry through family connections. Today, she sees women choosing to enter the industry on their own.

Salary is the main attraction. "Women can make a good living," said Broughton. Her company employs several women as laborers and truck drivers. The number ebbs and flows depending on the size of the project.

The company recently completed the new entrance at the Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport, but work has slowed since the recession.

Michael Zahn, business manager for International Union of Operating Engineers Local 965, said there are approximately 125 to 150 women in the construction branches out of a total union membership of 15,500. The union actively recruits women for its apprenticeship program.

Broughton said women have to work as hard as men. "Women have to prove that they can do the job," she said. "You have to want to do the job and be willing to do a good job."

Broughton said women are more accepted. She advises women to equip themselves with the skills needed to do the job. "There are a lot of opportunities."

Women still face challenges. "It takes time to change the perception of who can do the job," said Broughton.

Deb Marsaglia, president of Haenig Electric Company, Inc., 2951 Stanton Ave., was not a "doll girl" growing up. "I liked to play with building blocks," she said.

She and her husband, Mike, a union electrician, purchased the business in 1980. "The owners wanted to sell so we decided to buy it," she said.

Marsaglia loves looking at a piece of ground and seeing a building come up out of it. "I love all the aspects that go into it," Marsaglia said. "I love how things work. You start with a blank piece of ground and over a year's time you have a functioning building."

Current projects include Dick Van Dyke, Carpet Weaver's and Camp Lincoln. Past projects include Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport, Social Security, Pathway in Jacksonville, IHOP and Fit Club South.

"There are very few women electricians," said Marsaglia. "It's not a woman's field. The interest isn't there." The company employs two women electricians.

Marsaglia would often go to meetings and be the only woman there. "It's a male-dominated field," she said.

Paul Moore with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 193 said there are eight women in the construction side out of a total union membership of 400. "We're constantly trying to bring women into the union," he said. "We have a very good apprenticeship program."



Michael Zahn, business manager for International Union of Operating Engineers Local 965

Marsaglia said there are a lot of talented women who would be a great success in this industry. "I don't know if the drive is there. You have to be dedicated."

The United States Department of Labor sets guidelines federal contractors must follow to recruit and advance women and minorities in the workplace. Marsaglia sees the hiring guidelines as a detriment. "I wouldn't want to think I was hired to meet a quota," she said.

"It should be a fair playing field for everyone," continued Marsaglia. "The best person for the job is one who can do it 100 percent to their ability."

She recommends women study hard and apply themselves. "You can't let anyone hold you down," said Marsaglia. "You

just have to get into the field."

Mary Wilson, president and CEO of Michel Concrete Construction, Inc., 3101 Great Northern Road, always knew she wanted to own her own business. "I grew up in an environment where there were no limits on what a woman could do," Wilson said.

In 2008, Wilson and her husband, Jeff, purchased the assets of her father's company. She purchased her husband's ownership stock in 2009, giving her sole control of the company.

The company recently completed work on the new Brandt addition, County Market and Robert's Automotive. They're in the process of finishing work on a 6,000 sow hog unit and grain bins in Atterbury.

Wilson recognizes the contributions that women have played in this industry. "Women have had to fight hard to get here," she said. In the past, there was the chance a company would be blackballed if it was run by a woman.

Brad Schaive, business manager for Laborers Local 477, said the union has more women than any local in the city. There are 56 women in the construction side out of a total union membership of 244. "We work diligently to promote a diverse workforce," Schaive said.

"Concrete is physically demanding," said Wilson. However, as technological

advances are made in the industry, there are more opportunities for women and men to work smarter, not harder.

"As more women become involved, the opportunities will become better known, leading to more participation by women," said Wilson.

Wilson said women are faring very well in a male-dominated industry. "The industry is moving past its own stereotypes," she said. "It's easier for women to be accepted in the workforce."

"Field relationships can be confusing," Wilson said. "The rules of chivalry toward women are different on the work-site. It took awhile for guys in the field to stop taking things out of my hands – like tools – and helping me carry something heavy."

Wilson sees more leadership opportunities for women in the construction field. "Because we stand out in a crowd, our accomplishments and values get noticed," said Wilson. "Women in the field are unique and provide a unique perspective."

"I've experienced very little bias against women in construction, if any," noted Wilson.

Roberta Codemo is a freelance writer from Springfield. She can be reached at info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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Major Building and Construction Trade Unions

(Listed by Number of Local Members)

	Union Name Address City, State, ZIP Code	Telephone (-) Fax (=) Web Site (www.) E-Mail	2012 Local Membership	Contact	# of IL Counties Represented	Year Established
1	Teamsters Local 916 3361 Teamster Way Springfield IL 62707	217-522-7932 217-522=9492 teamsters916.org sues@teamsters916.org	4,412	Tony Barr, President	10	1943
2	Local 477 LIUNA Laborers 1615 N. Dirksen Parkway Springfield IL 62702	217-522-0014 217-522=0090 local477.com	1,600	Brad Schaive, Business Manager, Kirk Kellus, Secretary Treasurer	7	1903
3	International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 965 3520 E. Cook St. Springfield IL 62703	217-528-9659 217-528=9060 iuoe965.org operators@comcast.net	1,550	Michael D. Zahn, Business Manager	15	1931
4	Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, Local No. 8 of Illinois 3301 Boardwalk Drive Champaign IL 61822	217-747-0289 217-747=0290 bac8il.org mlanders@egix.net	1,200	Dan McCall, President, Mark Landers, Field Rep. - Springfield	65	1865
5	United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Local No. 16 211 W. Lawrence Ave. Springfield IL 62704	217-528-7571 217-528=9364	1,000	Jeff Burnett, Business Manager	3	1887
6	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local No. 193 3150 Wide Track Drive Springfield IL 62703	217-544-3479 217-544=0193 ibew193.com ibew193@comcast.net	940	Glenn Baugh, Business Manager	9	1901
7	Plasterers and Cement Masons, Local 18 40 Adloff Lane, Suite 6A Springfield IL 62703	217-585-4221 217-585=4222 lpcmia18.org sclementlocal18@yahoo.com OR mwinklerlocal18@yahoo.com	800	Steve Clement, Business Manager, Mark Winkler, Business Agent	32	1864
8	Sheet Metal Workers, Local 218 2855 Via Verde Springfield IL 62703	217-529-0161 217-529=6005	750	Paul Hayes, Business Manager	21	1969
9	Boilermakers, Local 363 2358 Mascoutah Ave. Belleville IL 62220	618-234-8843 618-234=7301	650	William M. Mulconnery, Business Manager	57	1903
10	Plumbers & Steamfitters, Local 137 2880 E. Cook St. Springfield IL 62703	217-544-2724 217-744=6855 ualocal137.org	600	John Haines, Business Manager	11	1895
11	Insulators and Allied Workers, Local No. 1 3325 Hollenberg Drive Bridgeton MO 63044	314-291-7399 314-291=6993 insulators.org	349	John J. Stiffler, Business Manager, Jerry Donovan, Bus. Agent/Financial Secretary, John Farrell, Business Agent	36	1895
12	Iron Workers, Local 46 2888 E. Cook St. Springfield IL 62703	217-528-4041 217-528=9046 iwaustin@sbcglobal.net	347	Shane Austin, Business Manager	21	1908
13	Millwrights, Local 1051 602 Keokuk St. Lincoln IL 62656	217-735-1051 217-732=1051 millwrightlocal1051.com mw@local1051.com	310	Jeff Bort, Business Representative, Nate Hodgson, Business Representative	41	1987
14	International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, District Council 58, Local 90 3100 S. 11th St. Springfield IL 62703	217-529-6976 217-529=6658 dc58iupat.net alauher@dc58iupat.net	287	Allan Lauher, Business Representative	9	1899
15	Glaziers, Architectural Metal and Glassworkers, District Council 58, Local 1168 234 W. Cerro Gordo St. Decatur IL 62522	618-781-9546 217-422=5793 bfeller@dc58iupat.net	125	Bryan Feller, Business Representative	25	1937
16	Elevator Constructors, Local 55 400 NE Jefferson Peoria IL 61603	309-671-5085 309-671=5095 iuec55@ameritech.net	120	Rod Gilles, Business Representative	45	1919
17	United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers, Local 112 PO Box 13426 Springfield IL 62791	217-529-2229 217-529=2298 rooferslocal112.com office@rooferslocal112.com	74	Ray Wake, Business Manager	9	1930

Sources: Central Illinois Building and Construction Trades Council; The Unions.

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CMT's Knoles retires

Warren Knoles, P.E., senior vice president for Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, Inc., retired after 35 years from the engineering consulting firm at the end of 2012. Knoles most recently held the position of chief technical officer, and had also served as chief operating officer and the director of the firm's transportation and land development units.

His task to maximize quality was recognized in 2010 when CMT became the first engineering consultant to receive an Award for Excellence from the Baldrige-based Lincoln Foundation of Illinois.

"Warren's accomplishments and the legacy that he will leave both CMT and our profession are a testament to his work ethic, professionalism, integrity and commitment to quality and innovation," said Dan Meckes, CMT president.

Knoles, a Pana, Ill. native, graduated from Bradley University in 1970 with a degree in Civil Engineering. In 2012, he was elected to the Hall of Fame of the school's Department of Civil Engineering and Construction.

Anderson Electric hires one, promotes four

Anderson Electric announced the addition of Sara Reynolds as secretary at the company's Springfield office.

Reynolds earned an associate's degree in applied science for office technology from John Wood Community College. She previously worked as a corporate secretary and EEO officer at Clevenger Contractors for 8 years. In her new position, Reynolds will handle payroll and billing.

Matt Giacomini was promoted to senior project manager at the company's

Springfield office. Giacomini started with Anderson Electric in 2007 in the warehouse while attending college. Upon receiving his bachelor's degree in construction management from Southern Illinois University, he returned to Anderson Electric as an estimator. In 2010, he was promoted to project manager. As senior project manager, he oversees the company's contract, negotiated and design-build projects in Springfield.

Anderson Electric also announced the promotion of Rodney Frey to director of the company's new Pre-Construction Services Division.

Frey started at Anderson Electric in 1999 as an apprentice. He started as a journeyman wireman before becoming a foreman. In his new position, Frey develops cost estimates and schedules, prepares detailed material lists and coordinates the functions of the project management, purchasing and field staff. He is an instructor for the Local 193 Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee, where he is also certified to teach First Aid and CPR, and qualified to teach rigging and hand signaling.

In addition, Rick Newbold was promoted to superintendent. Newbold is a certified journeyman wireman with 17 years of commercial, industrial and residential experience. As the superintendent, Newbold oversees the day-to-day field operations of the Springfield Branch, ensuring worker safety, customer satisfaction and adequate project support.

Finally, Anderson Electric announced the appointment of Jake Bullard to procurement and logistics manager. In this position, Bullard is responsible for purchasing, warehousing, and coordinating delivery of materials, tools, and equip-

ment to the worksites.

Bullard started as an intern at Anderson Electric in 2011, and graduated from Southern Illinois University in May 2012. He earned an associate's degree in electrical distribution from Lincoln Land Community College, and a bachelor's degree in construction management from Southern Illinois University.

Doolin joins O'Shea

Harold O'Shea Builders announced the addition of Greg Doolin to the company's team of construction professionals. In his new position as Director of Pre-Construction Services, Doolin will draw on his 25 years of design and construction experience as he works with clients, architects and consultants to understand project expectations and lead project teams during the design phase.

Doolin

Prior to joining O'Shea, Doolin was vice president of a Peoria-area general contractor, where he developed and oversaw major design-build projects. Doolin also served as a Senior Engineering Project Team Leader for Caterpillar, which involved leading design and construction teams in Illinois and China.

Doolin earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign from their architectural program. A licensed architect, Doolin is experienced in green building design and construction integration, and is a LEED Accredited Professional.

Tebrugge hired, Fletcher celebrates anniversary at KSID

Erin Tebrugge has joined KSID Interiors, Inc. as an interior designer. Tebrugge recently received her bachelor's degree in Interior and Environmental Design. She is an alumna of Sacred Heart-Griffin High School.

Tebrugge



Fletcher


Mallory Fletcher, Senior Designer at KSID Interiors, Inc., is celebrating her one-year anniversary with the firm. Fletcher earned her B.F.A. in Interior Design in 2008 from Maryville University in St. Louis and is a native of Springfield.

Hoecker joins Americall

Courtney Hoecker has recently joined Americall Communication Company as a sales representative. She will assist in sales for all phases of planning, design, installation and maintenance for data and voice systems.




Hoecker

She is a graduate of Northern Illinois University with a degree in Business Administration. She has two children that have been her focus for the past few years.



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In March 1997, Henson Robinson Company became an employee owned business. It is now headed by employee leaders who see Henson Robinson Company continuing well into the 21st century.




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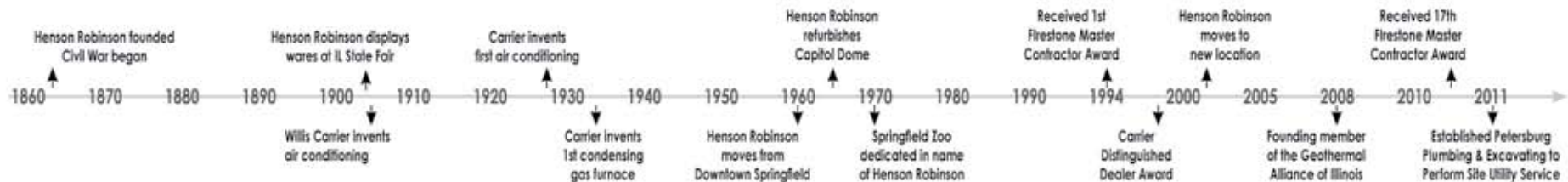
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Management transitions at FWAI

FWAI Architects Inc. is announcing transitions in management. Paul Wheeler has been named President, with Carl Fischer becoming Chairman of the Board.

Kay Fischer has retired after 35 years as Office Manager.

Jim Alberts, Interior Designer for the firm since 2002, is also now Secretary-Treasurer and a Principal.

FWAI has been in business in Springfield since 1976, specializing in commercial architecture, interior design and historic restoration. Recent projects include the addition to Blessed Sacrament School, a new building for the Central Illinois Community Blood Center, and medical clinic projects for Memorial Health System of Illinois and Springfield Clinic.



Wheeler



Fischer



Alberts

CIB elects officers

Central Illinois Builders of AGC elected its officers for 2013 at the association's 58th annual meeting.

The 2013 officers are: President – Douglas J. McCoy, McCoy Construction Co., Pontiac, Ill.; Senior Vice President – Donald H. Evans, Evans Construction Company, Springfield, Ill.; Vice President – Dana J. Olson, RJS Constructors, Inc., Peoria, Ill.; Secretary/Treasurer – Bernard J. Koch, River City Construction, LLC, East Peoria, Ill.; Specialty Contractor Delegate – Martin K. Smith, Tile Specialists, Inc., Champaign, Ill.



McCoy



Evans



Olson

Past President – Robert C. Aldridge, Felmley-Dickerson Co., Bloomington, Ill.

Directors elected or re-elected to serve on the Board are: Jim Lopez, Broeren-Russo Construction Co., Champaign, Ill.; Mitch Schinzler, Christy-Foltz, Inc., Decatur, Ill.; Al Slagel, Vissering Construction Co., Streator, Ill.; Jody Alderman, Henson Robinson Company, Springfield, Ill.

Central Illinois



Koch



Smith

Builders of AGC is a building contractors' trade association representing 114 general contractors, subcontractors and associated firms from a 46-county area of central Illinois. The association is a chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC).

Dennis Larson is Executive Vice President and Scott Larkin is Director of Labor Relations.

CWLP moves, hosts workshop

City Water, Light and Power's Energy Services Office, home of CWLP's Energy Experts and water efficiency program staff, has moved. Formerly located at Monroe and Sixth Streets, the Energy Services Office is now located at 1008 E. Miller Street, between North Ninth and Eleventh Streets, at CWLP's Electric Dispatch and Engineering facility.

The move will save on utility rental fees, provide more resources between ESO staff and electric engineering operations staff, and will offer convenient parking for customers. The phone number, 789-2070, is the same but employee extensions have changed. The office can also still be reached at nrgxprts@cwlp.com.

The ESO also hosted a home efficiency workshop on Jan. 30. The program, called "Smart Solutions," which focused on home winterization tips and information on how customers can reduce energy and water usage.

CWLP's energy experts were on hand to provide information on efficiency and analyze problems for customers.

The CWLP Energy Services Office also offers the Smart Solutions workshops on-demand to interested churches, neighborhood associations, and other community and civic groups, who have a minimum of 15 attendees.

Altorfer announces Rupp retirement, adds Will and Iowa facility

Altorfer Inc. welcomes Tom Will as store manager of the Hannibal, Missouri location. Will replaces Dick Rupp who retired after 45 years.

Will is a native of Payson, Illinois, and a graduate of Spoon River College in Canton, Illinois. He joins Altorfer with 25 years of experience in the construction equipment industry.

Altorfer also announced that property has been secured for a new full service ag facility in West Branch, Iowa, with construction beginning this spring.

The West Branch location will be a full service farm equipment dealership. When complete, the current ag parts store in Cedar Rapids will move to this location.

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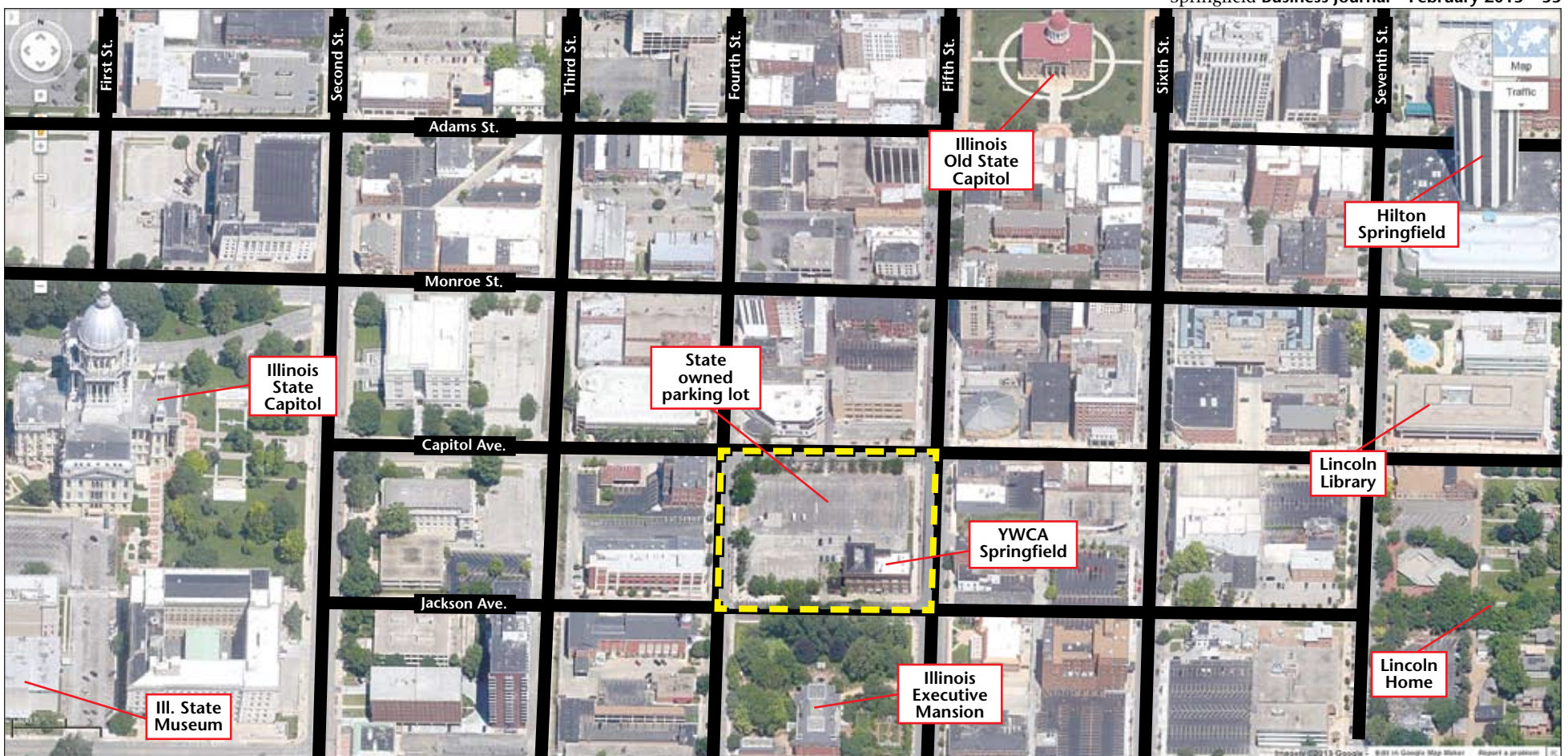
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Sources: As listed on the Capital Area Association of Realtors’ website: http://seebuildings.com/fs_crenmembers.php



Map of downtown Springfield in relation to the vacant YWCA building and parking property which the City of Springfield is determining how to redevelop

YWCA, Continued from Page One

and the adjacent parking lot and move forward on redevelopment plans until the state designates the property as "surplus property."

The 30,050 sq. ft. building at 421 E. Jackson St. has been vacant since the YWCA sold it in 2007 to Governor's View, LLC, a Washington, D.C.-based investment group. It is now listed on the market for \$250,000 by local commercial realtor Curtis Tillett, according to Tillett's website.

The adjacent parking lot is owned by the state, Farmer said.

The city council passed a resolution in May 2012 asking the state to allow Central Management Services (CMS) to declare the entire block as "surplus" and transfer it to the city for redevelopment, according to Ward 5 Alderman Sam Cahnman, whose ward includes the downtown property.

"It is my understanding that this block was in the custody of the Secretary of State (SOS), but that it has already been transferred from the SOS to CMS, and that the state is in the process of doing what the resolution requests," Cahnman said.

However, there is no timetable for when the city can acquire the property or when redevelopment could begin, ac-

ording to Farmer.

A 2007 study by a group of architecture students from the University of Illinois' AIA 150 program recommended the block be used for a "mixed use, mixed income residential and retail development" that includes apartments and townhouses in the renovated YWCA building, according to Cahnman.

The plan also called for a 15-story residential tower to be built in the center of the block.

Cahnman likes the plan but said the block could also be used for a downtown campus of the University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) or a law school for UIS.

"Could you imagine how great the close proximity to the Capitol and the Illinois Supreme Court would be for students of government or of the law?" he said.

How the property is redeveloped, though, may come down to money and how much developers are willing to invest in the site.

"The practical problem is, can we find a developer who believes they can make money from such a development?" Cahnman said. "While ideally I like the design of AIA 150, I am open to any kind of plan for that block that incorporates elements of that plan or office space that a private developer would propose."

Local business leaders want something

to be done with the property before it becomes an even bigger eyesore in the area.

"An empty building can deteriorate rapidly and could have a negative impact on nearby properties," said Sarah Phalen, president and chief executive officer at Illinois National Bank, which is located within steps of the old YWCA building. "We'd like to see the block developed in a way that takes into account the residential, business and government sectors of the adjacent area. Its close proximity to the Governor's Mansion and Capitol Avenue should also be taken into consideration."

Ray Hancock, president of the Illinois Community College System Foundation, said if the building is left to deteriorate, it will definitely have a negative impact on the entire Capitol area of Springfield.

"City, cultural and historical groups need to join hands and continue the excellent renovations along Capital Avenue all the way to the Capitol itself," Hancock said.

Specifically, he would like to see the old YWCA building saved and converted into a community center.

"That location and facility is a significant building in downtown Springfield from a historical aspect – Dana Thomas House – and a commercial aspect – the Capitol," Hancock said. "Although I don't know the condition of the build-

ing, I would like to see it restored, if possible, and used as a location for tourism, community redevelopment, Chamber of Commerce, historical commission(s) and other downtown rejuvenation purposes."

He said the city could help with renovation efforts and then make space available "to the many groups currently helping Springfield remain a historical and cultural center for central and southern Illinois."

Cahnman said, however, the building is listed as a local landmark of historical or architectural significance on the City's Historic Sites Commission.

"To tear it down, it is my understanding the Historic Sites Commission would have to give their OK," Cahnman said. "I would prefer to see the building saved. However, I don't know if this is economically viable."

Regardless, the alderman would like to see something done with the property as soon as possible.

"The site of an ugly gravel parking lot two blocks from the Capitol and across from the Governor's Mansion does not make our city look good," Cahnman said.

Chris Stroisch is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com



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safety •

Seek the middle path with OSHA

In the late 1970s, I worked as a laborer during construction of the Clinton Nuclear Power Plant where I first encountered the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the facts, rumors, locker room gossip about rules and regulations of this regulatory agency as being confusing and redundant. I have no way of verifying this but the talk around the job site was OSHA had performed an inspection and as a result, required all heavy machinery to have back up beepers to alert workers on the ground.

A following inspection later in the year, with a different OSHA inspector, resulted in all workers being required to wear ear protection in areas of high noise levels. The result was a person was killed when a bulldozer with a properly working back up beeper, ran over the worker wearing proper ear protection. Again, I have no way of verifying this, but business owners both small and large are anxious and complain about OSHA and the mountains of regulations many believe can bury a company, whether they are compliant with the rules or not.

OSHA was established to oversee the Occupational Safety and Health Act signed into law by President Richard Nixon in 1970. The agency began work in 1971. Similar to the origins of labor unions which focused on making workers environments better, the purpose of OSHA was to oversee, promote, as well as



City Codes

Dale Simpson

inspect workplaces for employee health and safety issues. In 1972, OSHA formed a training branch to assist employers with recognizing workplace hazards, and create safer working environments. Some workplaces are not covered by OSHA rules and regulations, either because of other regulatory agencies, or are just exempt due to Department of Labor requirements.

As with any regulatory government agency, many loud and resounding debates have centered on the rules and enforcement activities of OSHA. Arguments on both sides of the issue have valid points to consider, but misunderstanding of the rules also creates additional concerns. Many business and bottom line people believe the regulations, and especially the fines associated with a routine inspection or investigations resulting from an incident are excessive, unnecessary, and even malicious. The argument exists since OSHA is a self-funded agency, fines imposed are based on a quota system to generate revenues for the agency, which is just another instance of a regulatory agency gone wild.

The opposite side of the argument believes that unscrupulous employers will subject their workers to hazardous conditions to get the job done no matter what, and OSHA is the watchdog to protect employees from injury and death. This side believes without this oversight, human life will be reduced to a dollar and cents aspect. A worker will be fired and replaced

with someone who is willing to take the risk for the sake of the paycheck.

Both sides have valid points where a common middle ground should be established for the agency and business to work together. Rules and regulations are important to protect workers lives and health, but these regulations should be enforced sensibly, and redundant rules which create a no-win situation for the employer, should be changed.

If an infraction is found during an inspection that can be remedied while the inspector is on sight, then the violation should be noted as a concern and resolved without consequences being imposed.

OSHA procedures are to violate the employer, not the worker, when a violation is noted. There are business owners who claim, and rightly so, they were cited and fined wrongly. An instance would be roofers who are required to wear fall protection. If a worker is not hooked up, even for a moment, it can be a violation for the employer. There may be times when the letter of the law is not followed every moment, but sometimes these moments are a part of the job. One argument of business are the inspectors have no knowledge of the job being performed and do not understand what is a violation and what is not.

OSHA offers training for employers to

“As with any regulatory government agency, many loud and resounding debates have centered on the rules and enforcement activities of OSHA. Arguments on both sides of the issue have valid points to consider ...

understand not only regulations, but why these regulations are required and how to make the workplace safer, and avoid violations. With the huge cost associated with employee injuries, lost time, and worker compensation payouts, the safest workplace an employer can provide can reduce overall cost of the project. In 1996 OSHA established the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act to

assist small business with understanding and implementing the requirements. There is a feedback section that allows small business to have input in the development of rules and regulations. This program also has a section that gives small business a process

which can recover attorney fees incurred when a federal agency is found to have imposed excessive costs and fines.

There are several ways to take advantage of this assistance; some have a cost, some of it is free. The OSHA website is www.osha.gov where there is a truckload of information on how to contact the agency for assistance, information on developing a workplace safety program, and obtaining information of the regulations as they apply to your small business. There are 10 regional offices in the United States with Illinois in Region V located at 230 S. Dearborn St. Room 3244, Chicago Ill., 60604. The phone number is 312-353-2220.

While the federal OSHA plans cover all private sector employees in Illinois, there is also a state OSHA plan which covers only Illinois public sector employees which is administered through the Illinois Department of Labor, or IDOL. The website is www.state.il.us/agency/idol. Offices are located at 900 S. First St. Springfield Ill. 62702. Their phone number is 217-782-6206.

Dale Simpson is the former Fire Marshal for the City of Springfield. He can be reached at dale@springfieldbusinessjournal.com.

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• environment

Military energy-saving technology

Going Green

Chad Kruse

The United States Department of Defense (DOD) may not be the first group that comes to mind while thinking of advances in energy efficiency. However, the group that helped bring jet travel and certain antibiotics to the civilian population is making strides in the area of energy efficiency with a multi-faceted payoff.



Back in 2011, United States Secretary of the Army, John McHugh, announced that the Army will strive toward "getting 25 percent of the Army's power from renewable sources by 2025," according to a DOD press release. This is only a small bite from the apple, since the DOD uses about 80 percent of the federal government's energy, and the Army consuming approximately 21 percent of that total.

Not only will energy savings benefit the DOD in terms of resource use and the environment through more efficient use of resources, troop security will increase due to a reduced need to transport fuel to military installations around the world.

McHugh said, "less reliance on renewable fuels at combat outposts and forward operating bases, as well as fewer convoys, not only saves energy, but also reduces enemy exposure for soldiers who support those energy requirements." According to the Civil Society Institute, "in 2007, there was one casualty per every 24 fuel convoys in Afghanistan and one casualty for every 39 fuel convoys in Iraq."

The DOD task force working on energy efficiency is focused not only on the military, but also the private sector and the American taxpayer. With that focus, the task force has sought partnerships, "with the private sector on a variety of large-scale renewable energy and alternative energy programs within the continental United States."

Meeting the 2025 goal is estimated to cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$7.1 billion in private investment according to McHugh and Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary of the Army for installations.

The money expended on this development of technology has fallen under significant scrutiny (insert your favorite Solyndra joke here). But as with other green spending, the rationale of "a little spending now goes a long way into the future" has seemingly prevailed. In this instance, the cost savings in the long run is not only money spent on resources—fuel is/was one of the largest expenses of the Iraq and Afghan deployments, according to the National Journal—but also the cost of lives transporting resources in war.

One example of the technology developed under this initiative is the Re-Generator multi-fuel capable generator, "that can generate up to 1,200W of integrated Solar, 2,400W of external solar and 1,200W of wind along with managing fossil fuel generators," along with storing energy as well. This is according to the Civil Society Institute, which also states that "the integrated solar panels are adapted to harsh climatic conditions and have been field-tested."

The Oshkosh Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) A3 is another impressive result of the DOD investment in renewable energy. The Oshkosh HEMTT A3 looks like a typical large military vehicle, but it has a diesel-electric drive system and "it delivers 100kW of clean,

exportable military grade AC power, enough to run a field hospital or airstrip ... the HEMTT A3 eliminates the need for additional trucks or trailers to transport external equipment," according to the Oshkosh Defense website.

Finally, a technology that captures moisture from the air and concentrates the moisture "by a high-temperature desiccant wheel" that collects the moisture and purifies it to produce potable water is perhaps the most profound outgrowth of the initiative.

The Civil Society Institute named Arroyo 500 by FLIR Systems, as one embodiment of this technology, but searching for it on the Internet turned up very little information. If this technology, which seems to be in the concept phase given the information available, were to become a reality the ramifications for arid regions of the world could be dramatic.

When I started looking into the information for this column, I was surprised at both the breadth of the projects and the relatively scant information available on the Internet. So, while not well covered, this ongoing DOD initiative may prove to be a very important green development into the foreseeable future. For information on the Civil Society Institute, see <http://www.civilsocietyinstitute.org>. For more information on the Oshkosh HEMTT A3, see <http://oshkoshdefense.com/products/12/hemtt-a3-diesel-electric>.

Tenth annual composting symposium scheduled

The Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC) Green Center, Illinois Stewardship Alliance, University of Illinois Extension, City of Springfield's Division of Waste and Recycling, and the Illinois Department of Agriculture have come together to schedule the 10th annual Central Illinois Composting Symposium 12-5 p.m. on Feb. 20 at LLCC's Trutter Center.

The symposium is a forum for sharing composting information, stimulating the composting market; and bringing composters, educators, and businesses together so that everyone can benefit from learning about compost as an excellent organic soil amendment. This year's theme is "Composting for a Sustainable Community" and will feature radio host and award-winning columnist Mike Nowak as the keynote speaker.

When I attended the symposium in 2009, it served as a springboard for all sorts of connections which helped to build my environmental network since then – the symposium brings environmental-minded people in the central Illinois agriculture industry together.

For example, the new interim Executive Director of the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, Wes King, may be present representing ISA. Consistent with past symposiums, the Feb. 20 event will also include national composting experts and a build-your-own-bin workshop for an additional fee at the close of the session.

For registration and additional information about the symposium, see www.llcc.edu/greencenter.

Chad Kruse is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at chad@springfieldbusinessjournal.com.


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business reading •

Invest in your strengths, not your weaknesses

We all like to root for the underdog. In the movie “Rudy,” for example, the main character spends every bit of his energy trying to make it to Notre Dame so he can play football there. But the thing was, Rudy was not athletically inclined so he had to work and work and work – and yes, he did get to play eventually but it was only one game. (Rudy! Rudy! Rudy!)

“Rudy” was a great underdog story. But if you really think about it, he went through all of that just to play one game? Can you imagine if he invested all that time and energy into one of his strengths instead of a weakness?

Too bad Rudy didn’t first read a book like “Strengthfinders 2.0,” the updated version of the 2001 “Now, Discover Your Strengths” book by Tom Rath. Rath is the Global Practice Leader for Gallup and is responsible for work around employee engagement. The book explores the concept of strength-based development for people and provides a very interesting online tool for determining a person’s natural strengths. Rath used more than 40 years of Gallup research, which includes more than 10 million in-depth interviews with people across generational lines, geography and business types.

Rath makes a compelling argument that a strengths-based approach to human development just makes sense. He worked with the late Dr. Donald Clifton,



Book Review

Tom Fitch

whom Rath describes as the father of strengths-based psychology, on examining why society seemed so obsessed with people’s weaknesses and shortcomings instead of people’s strengths – all at a time when their research showed significant portions of our society were becoming less engaged at work.

From a business leader’s perspective declining work engagement can be devastating to an organization. Disengaged workers don’t like their jobs, they treat coworkers and customers poorly, they have poor attitudes, and they achieve less, all while creating unnecessary stress on a company. A primary survey question Gallup uses to measure engagement is: “At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.” In other words, they asked people if they use their strengths on a daily basis.

The survey results were telling; people who responded to this question “strongly agree” or “agree” were six times more likely to be actively engaged in their job. On the contrary, Rath cited a more recent poll of 1,000 people who responded “strongly disagree” or “disagree” and not one single person was actively engaged in their job. He argues that aligning an employee in a position that uses his or her natural strengths is a strong leading indicator to a satisfied and engaged employee.

The idea of putting employees in positions that use their strengths isn’t ground-

breaking news. But ask yourself this question: How do you determine someone’s strengths? For that matter, how do you know your own strengths? Personality profiles such as Meyers-Briggs and the DISC (Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, Compliance) profile are commonplace nowadays in progressive organizations, but how many businesses take a similar approach to determining people’s strengths?

According to Rath, the failure of leaders and of people themselves to know and understand their strengths has led to a tremendous misalignment of people that has resulted in unrealized potential for higher employee engagement and all the benefits that come with it. Not only are engaged employees good for the company and its bottom line but, according to Gallup’s research, they are three times more likely to report having an excellent quality of life.

The best part of this book is that Gallup has made their research accessible to anyone who wants to take advantage of it. If you purchase the book you will find a sealed envelope on the back cover. Inside the envelope is a unique code that allows you access to their website where you can take the assessment and learn about your own natural strengths. Gallup has discov-

ered a “strengths language” that includes 34 very distinct themes. The 30-minute survey culminates in an instantly available detailed report that shows your

“Great companies got the wrong people off the bus, put the right people on the bus, and then figured out where to drive the bus. What Collins didn’t talk about though was how do you figure out the right seat on the bus? That’s where Tom Rath’s book “Strengthfinder 2.0” can be particularly useful.

top five strength themes. Each identified theme includes detailed insights into that strength along with a list of ideas on how to further develop that strength. I took the assessment and found the results to be spot-on.

Jim Collins’ landmark book “Good to Great” sought to understand why similar

“good” companies in similar markets at the same time took drastically different paths. Some companies went on to be “great” while their counterparts failed. One of the enduring lessons from “Good to Great” is the “First Who – Then What” concept where he used the bus analogy. Great companies got the wrong people off the bus, put the right people on the bus, and then figured out where to drive the bus. What Collins didn’t talk about though was how do you figure out the right seat on the bus? That’s where Tom Rath’s book “Strengthfinder 2.0” can be particularly useful.

Tom Fitch is an avid book reader and business professional from Springfield



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Security Bank pledges to CBAI for scholarships

Security Bank has pledged \$2,500 to become a Bronze Donor of the Community Bankers Association of Illinois (CBAI) Foundation for Community Banking. In support of the foundation's many scholarships, the bank is helping to secure financial assistance to deserving high school students and others.

In 1996, the CBAI Foundation for Community Banking was established by the Community Bankers Association of Illinois to support the community-banking philosophy and the continuation of education for young people.

The Salvation Army of Sangamon County is beginning the 'School for Cooks' program to teach homeless veterans how to work in any kitchen in America. "This class is offering more than just finding a job, this class will help start careers and get more people off the street," said Major Paul Logan, Corps Officer.

The school will prepare each student with the knowledge they need to take the Illinois Department of Public Health Food Service Sanitation Exam as well as how to work in a commercial kitchen. These topics include food-borne diseases, laws, rules and regulations, food storage, preparation and equipment, personal hygiene, cleaning and sanitizing procedures.

"Almost every graduate from our past 10 classes has found a job, moved off the streets and doing very well," added Logan. The program is funded through a grant from the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA). "Without the tremendous support we received from Lincoln Land Community College and the IDVA, this program would not be as suc-

Giving Back

Jean Jones

cessful," stated Logan.

The American Red Cross Illinois Capital Area Chapter is currently seeking hero nominations from the public for the annual Red Cross Heroes Breakfast fundraiser on April 19 at the Crowne Plaza. Presented by the **Bank of Springfield**, the event honors a group of everyday local heroes for performing an extraordinary act or giving a lifetime of service to the community.

The community can fill out and submit an online hero nomination form by visiting il-redcross.org. Nominations are due by Feb. 22. Nominees must either live or work in Sangamon, Christian, Logan, Menard, Macoupin, Montgomery or Shelby County. Local heroic acts must have taken place within the last 18 months to be eligible, unless the nomination is for a lifetime of service. An individual or group of individuals may be nominated and can be entered into multiple hero categories.

The **Orthopedic Center of Illinois** Foundation (OCIF) announced details on their 2013 scholarship, the OCIF Scholarship. The OCIF Scholarship will recognize a graduating senior pursuing a career in the healthcare field. The student must be a graduating high school student, be a resident of Sangamon County, and attend an accredited college or university in the coming fall as a full-time student majoring in a health-related field. The \$1,000 scholarship is renewable, up to four years, provided that the student is

in good standing. For more information on this scholarship or to download an application, please visit the OCIF website at ocif.net. The deadline to apply is March 15, 2013.

Simmons Cancer Institute at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine has joined the American Cancer Society's colorectal cancer screening initiative.

Through the colorectal cancer screening initiative, patients who meet screening guidelines will be able to schedule colonoscopies through the partnering hospitals and their satellite facilities. The Society will provide grant money to hospitals providing colonoscopies to the uninsured and underinsured whose insurance does not cover this service. Any abnormalities found, such as polyps or colorectal cancer will be treated appropriately by the partnering hospitals with no charge to uninsured patients.

Memorial Medical Center and St. John's Hospital are supporting the program.

Lincoln Land Community College is offering a variety of non-credit personal enrichment classes in the Springfield area this spring. These classes are open to adults looking for skill-building opportunities.

The non-credit classes and workshops are offered in a variety of topics including arts and crafts, computers, cooking/foodie fun, dance, health/personal improvement, finance, gardening, language studies, non-profit and business development, ornamental welding, pets, photography, upholstery basics and more. For a full class listing and more information,

visit llcc.edu/commed or call 217-786-2432.

The Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln is now accepting scholarship applications for the 2013 award cycle. There are 20 different scholarship funds that will be accepting new online applications for more than \$60,000 in available awards. Since 2005, the Community Foundation has distributed more than \$310,000 in scholarships.

Full details and criteria for each award are posted on the Community Foundation's website at CFL.org by clicking on "2013 Scholarship Applications." Students with questions or limited computer access should contact the Community Foundation.

The deadline for applications is March 1. Students should review the specific requirements, criteria and due dates for each scholarship application. The recipients will be notified by May 1. All scholarships are for post-secondary education.

Isringhausen Imports recently donated \$16,500 to the Central Illinois Foodbank. The donation was a result of the month-long campaign to support the Central Illinois Foodbank in December and was combined with over 100 pounds of food to be donated to the organization.

Jean Jones is a freelance writer from Springfield.

If your organization has an item that you would like Jean to include, email information and details to her at info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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legal filings •

The following information was obtained from the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk, and has not otherwise been verified by Springfield Business Journal.

This list of recent filings does not represent all matters filed with the Seventh Judicial Circuit Court for Sangamon County for the given time period, but instead represents those filings Springfield Business Journal, independently of the Sangamon County Circuit Clerk, believes will be of interest to its business readers.

Lawsuits

- 12/20/12 - Carter Bros. Lumber Company, Inc., Plaintiff, Vs. Jacob Burris, Jeremiah Jackson, Defendants, Contract.
- 12/21/12 - Enviroform of America, Plaintiff, Vs. The Heights LLC, Luke Vespa, Matthew Vespa, Lindsay Vespa, Defendants, Contract.
- 01/03/13 - MJ Kellner Company Inc., Plaintiff, Vs. Brandywine 2 LLC, Wild Berry LLC, Morrissey Unit One LLC, Defendants, Contract.
- 01/16/13 - Shirley Klingbeil, John Klingbeil, Plaintiffs, Vs. Bob Robinson, Remax Professionals, Mary J. Welch, Kristi D. Kesler, Kimberly Ellioitt, Defendants, Contract.

Chancery

- 12/17/12 - PNC Bank National Association, Plaintiff, Vs. Kimberly L. Williams, Defendant, Foreclosure.
- 12/18/12 - The People of the State of Illinois, Plaintiff, Vs. Enlightened LLC, Defendant, Injunction.
- 12/19/12 - Everbank, Plaintiff, Vs. Joseph R. Oliveros, Leslie Aguila Oliveros, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/19/12 - Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Plaintiff, Vs. Timothy W. Feurer, Irma A. Feurer, Park View Estates Homeowners Association, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/19/12 - US Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Jerome C. Bernardes, Old Tipton Estates Homeowners, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/20/12 - Hoffee Motors Sales Inc., Plaintiff, Vs. Quinn Group Inc., Illini Bank, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/20/12 - Marine Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Connie Meyer, Bank & Trust Company, Unknown Tenants, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/20/12 - Mid-West Truckers,

- Plaintiff, Vs. First Hospital Laboratories, Defendant, Injunction.
- 12/20/12 - Security Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Bradley W, Dart, Tina M. Dart, Gem City Account Services, Barr & Barr, Pro Com Services of Illinois, Gem City Services, Inc., SIU Physicians & Surgeons, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/21/12 - Marine Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Jacob Burris, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendant, Foreclosure.
- 12/24/12 - Deutsche Bank National Trust, Plaintiff, Vs. Margaret C. Landholt, First of America Bank, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/24/12 - JP Morgan Chase Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Rebecca S. Collins, Ivory Renair, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/24/12 - PNC Bank National Association, Plaintiff, Vs. Ronald S. Clark, Michelle M. Clark, Heartland Credit Union, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/26/12 - Bank of America, Plaintiff, Vs. Jennifer L. Martin, Thornhill Homeowners Association, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/26/12 - United Community Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. William H. Nissen, United Community Bank, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/26/13 - US Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Pamela A. Skelton, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/27/12 - Corky Terry, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/27/12 - Fransisco Ocampo, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/27/12 - Neil Ackerman, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/27/12 - PNC Bank National Association, Plaintiff, Vs. Brenda V. Garner, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/27/12 - Ricky Thomas, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/28/12 - Isaiah Green, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois

- Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/28/12 - JP Morgan Chase Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Niki Doyle, Christopher Doyle, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 12/28/12 - Pablo Morales, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/28/12 - Saul Donado, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/31/12 - Earl Edwards, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/31/12 - Phillip Daniel, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 12/31/12 - Stephen G. Goodwin, Plaintiff, Vs. People of the State of Illinois, Illinois Department of Corrections, Defendants, Injunction.
- 01/02/13 - Citizens Equity First Credit Union, Plaintiff, Vs. MTI Properties, LLC, Michael T. Ivy, Illinois National Bank, MS Investment Group, Inc., KGH Investments, Sangamon County as Trustee, Equity Trust Co. Cust. fbo L. Justice IRA, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/02/13 - United Community Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Randall G. Pedigo, Tammarra L. Pedigo, United States of America, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/03/13 - Bank of America, Plaintiff, Vs. Lyna Frazier, Note Tracker Corporation, Department of Building and Zoning, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/03/13 - Fannie Mae, Plaintiff, Vs. Paul R. Novak, Devyn L. Novak, Unknown Occupants, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/03/13 - Illini Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Donald R. Timm, Illini Bank, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/03/13 - People of the State of Illinois, Lisa Madigan, Plaintiffs, Vs. Allied Energy LLC, Dean Gibson, Defendants, Injunction.
- 01/03/13 - Illinois National Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Notanasaf LLC, Robert C. Kaufmann, Jeffry R. Canterbury, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/03/13 - PNC Bank National As-

- sociation, Plaintiff, Vs. Cynthia Rossman, Defendant, Foreclosure.
- 01/04/13 - Bank of Springfield, Plaintiff, Vs. Michael J. Smith, Tracy S. Smith, Capital One Bank, National Association and Twin, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/08/13 - Bank of America, Plaintiff, Vs. Steven Brennan, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/08/13 - Town & Country Banc Mortgage, Plaintiff, Vs. Norma Snodgrass, Beth R. Shartzter, Penny Taylor, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/08/13 - PNC Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Autumn Rain, Illinois Assistive Technology Program, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/08/13 - Sangamo Chapter Credit Union, Plaintiff, Vs. Joseph M. Vespa, Jamondra J. Vespa, Illini Bank, Household Finance Corporation, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/10/13 - Flagstar Bank, Plaintiff, Vs. Karla A. Roberts, Christopher A. Roberts, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/10/13 - Freedom Mortgage Corporation, Plaintiff, Vs. Kierra Boston, Cornelius Kirk, Jimmy Hale, Lucille Hale, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/10/13 - Household Finance Corporation III, Plaintiff, Vs. James Marcy, Bonnie Henry, State of Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, Unknown Tenants, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/11/13 - Town & Country Bank of Springfield, Plaintiff, Vs. Chosen Generation Gospel Ministry, Donald Hunt, Jennifer Hunt, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/14/13 - CitiMortgage, Plaintiff, Vs. Susan K. Short, Steven J. Short, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/15/13 - Bank of America, Plaintiff, Vs. Clifton O. Jones, L'Sonya Crawford Jones, William S. Mundstock, Glen Aire Homeowners Association, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/15/13 - Nationastar Mortgage LLC, Plaintiff, Vs. Brenda K. Bohlen, Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants, Defendants, Foreclosure.
- 01/16/13 - Bank Springfield, Plaintiff, Vs. Michael J. Smith, Tracy D. Smith, Capital One Bank, Defendants, Foreclosure.

new businesses •

**New Businesses,
Continued from Page 5**

- Forever Fit, 1840 Noble, Springfield, 62704, Mary T. Venturini, (217) 891-9711.
- GTS Motorsports, 629 S. Madison, Berlin, 62670, Tommy Sheppard, Sr., Tommy Sheppard, Jr., (217) 414-4070.
- H.A.R. Design, 3609 S. Douglas, Springfield, 62704, Heidi Rudolph, (217) 670-0007.
- Hakim Sign Installation & Construction Co., 1124 S. 11th St., Springfield, 62703, Luqman Hakim, (217) 416-2359.
- Heartland Heating & Cooling, Inc., 409 S. Allen, Spaulding, 62561, Matt Evans, (217) 341-4125.
- Helping Families, 2129 S. Fifth St., Springfield, 62703, Cassandra A. Cook, (217) 725-7232.
- INB Wealth Solutions, 3161 W. White

- Oaks Dr., Suite 104, Springfield, 62704, Illinois National Bank, (217) 747-5500.
- J.F.K. Construction, 2729 Delaware, Springfield, 62702, Jeff F. Klees, (217) 381-9980.
- J & J Properties, 5815 N. Haymeadow, Apt. C, Peoria, 61615, Teron Jackson, Christopher Jones, (217) 381-8558.
- Kepner Consulting, 1125 Williams Blvd., Springfield, 62704, Susan Kepner, (217) 416-1366.
- La Calia, 115 N. Sixth St., Springfield, 62701, Leah Schrenk, (217) 753-1652.
- Le La Nails, 2501 W. Wabash, Suite C1, Springfield, 62704, Tam Le, (217) 787-2626.
- Man Cave Supply, 1305 Stevenson Drive, Springfield, 62703, Gary Bennett, (217) 341-7087.
- Nail Time & Spa, 2464 W. Wabash, Springfield, 62704, Ny T. Truong, (217) 546-9789.

- Photography by Nordeman, 18156 Atterberry St., Petersburg, 62675, Ceceilia A. Haasis-Nordeman, (217) 801-1794.
- Prior Communications, 31366 Black Diamond Trail, Farmersville, 62533, Brandon L. Prior, (217) 691-1484.
- RAF Entertainment Enterprises, 2308 Queensway, Springfield, 62703, Dave W. Wanamaker, (217) 585-9235.
- Route 66 Pack & Ship, 1417 E. Sangamon Ave., Springfield, 62702, Truett Miller, (217) 544-3229.
- Rumors, 104 W. Illinois, New Berlin, 62670, Stephanie Jones, (217) 502-4189.
- Scott Carwile Landscapes, 7 Circle Drive, Rochester, 62563, Michael Carwile, (217) 801-7604.
- Skyreel Travels, 2324 S. Willemore Ave., Springfield, 62704, Bukola (Becky) Emuze, (217) 241-1412.
- Synsears Lawncare, 2643 Poplar, Springfield, 62703, Anthony R. Ross,

- (217) 503-8603.
- The Artists' Edge Tattoos, 2100 N. Grand Ave. E., Springfield, 62702, Craig M. Jones, (217) 525-0091.
- The Piggy Bank, 1933 W. Monroe, Springfield, 62704, Ianeli Inc., (217) 341-7656.
- Timeless Home & Gardens, 3042 Lakeshire Drive, Springfield, 62707, Nancy L. Alexander, (217) 741-8480.
- Trinity Child Care, 2631 Bluebird Court, Apt. 1, Springfield, 62703, Jacqueline Wheeler, (217) 761-5900.
- Two Brothers Painting, 3027 S. 13th St., Springfield, 62703, Gary L. Graham, Jr., Isaiah J. Jack, (217) 638-0807.
- Wish List Event Production, 1908 Stanhope, Springfield, 62702, Rachel Hemstock, (217) 971-3846.

Taxing changes in 'Relief' Act

Based on the titles of the tax laws, we should have so much relief by now that there should be no taxes at all. We know that will never happen.

So, here are some of the highlights of the American Taxpayer "Relief" Act of 2012 (the "2012 Act") that the president signed on Jan. 3, 2013.

Payroll Taxes: The change that will affect the greatest number of taxpayers is the expiration of the payroll tax holiday. In 2011 and 2012 the social security portion of the payroll tax paid by employees was reduced from 6.2 to 4.2 percent. The 6.2 percent rate has been reinstated, which most people should have noticed in their first paycheck of 2013. The social security wage base for 2013 is \$113,700.

New rates and brackets for the 2013 Income Tax Rates are listed in the inset:



Law

Sarah Delano Pavlik

1.3 million in 2001, according to the Tax Policy Center." (Time, <http://business.time.com/2013/01/03/at-long-last-a-permanent-patch-for-a-dreaded-tax/>.)

Estate and Gift Taxes: There was actual relief in the area of estate and gift taxes. The 2012 Act retains most of the 2010 law that was set to expire on Jan. 1, 2013. The estate and gift tax exemption for each person was set at \$5 million in 2011 and increases each year based on inflation. The 2012 amount was \$5,120,000 per person and the amount for 2013 is \$5,250,000. The estate and gift tax rate, however, was increased from 35 to 40 percent. The annual gift tax exclusion amount continues to increase with inflation, and the amount for 2013 is \$14,000.

The 2012 Act also make portability "permanent." In general, portability al-

Income Tax Rates: new rates and brackets for 2013:

Rate	Single Filers	Married Joint Filers
10%	\$0 to \$8,925	\$0 to \$17,850
15%	\$8,925 to \$36,250	\$17,850 to \$72,500
25%	\$36,250 to \$87,850	\$72,500 to \$146,400
28%	\$87,850 to \$183,250	\$146,400 to \$223,050
33%	\$183,250 to \$398,350	\$223,050 to \$398,350
35%	\$398,350 to \$400,000	\$398,350 to \$450,000
39.6%	\$400,000 and up	\$450,000 and up

Capital Gains and Dividend Tax Rates: Capital gains and qualified dividend tax rates remain the same except for taxpayers in the new 39.6 percent income tax bracket. Their rate on capital gains and qualified dividends increases to 20 percent.

Phaseouts: Before 2006, itemized deductions could be reduced by up to three percent based on your income. The phaseouts themselves were phased out, so in 2012 there were no phaseouts. Now the phaseouts are back for single taxpayers with adjusted gross income ("AGI") of more than \$250,000 and married taxpayers filing jointly with AGI of more than \$300,000. The phaseout for itemized deductions reduces total itemized deductions by three percent of excess income over the AGI threshold. The personal exemptions phaseout reduces personal exemptions by two percent of the total exemptions for each \$2,500 of excess income over the AGI threshold. Each of these phaseouts can increase an individual's marginal tax rate by about one percent.

Alternative Minimum Tax: The original minimum tax law was passed in 1969 and was intended to apply to 155 U.S. taxpayers who were perceived to not be paying enough income tax. The current alternative minimum tax ("AMT") law was passed in 1982, but did not include adjustments for inflation. This caused the AMT tax to affect millions of taxpayers. Over the years Congress passed numerous one year "patches" to the AMT to prevent its unintended application to middle class taxpayers. The 2012 Act finally included a "permanent" fix for the AMT. (I use quotation marks because nothing prevents future changes to the tax laws.) The exemptions have been increased to \$50,600 for individuals and \$78,750 for married couples. These amounts will be adjusted for inflation in future years. "According to one GOP estimate, 28 million families would have had to pay an average of \$3,400 in extra taxes this year without the AMT fix. About 4 million taxpayers owed the AMT in 2011, up from about

1.3 million in 2001, according to the Tax Policy Center." (Time, <http://business.time.com/2013/01/03/at-long-last-a-permanent-patch-for-a-dreaded-tax/>.)

lowers for a surviving spouse to use the estate tax exemption of a deceased spouse. For example, if husband dies in 2013 with a \$3 million estate and leaves everything to his wife, then husband will not use any of his estate tax exemption amount. Before portability, husband's estate tax exemption would have been lost. Under portability, wife will have her own estate tax exemption and husband's unused exemption of \$5,250,000. However, wife could lose husband's exemption if she remarries.

The Illinois estate tax exemption amount increased to \$4 million on Jan. 1, 2013. It is not scheduled to increase.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: In addition to the 2012 Act, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") imposes several new taxes starting on Jan. 1, 2013.

Medicare Tax: An additional Medicare tax of .9 percent is added to wages above \$250,000 for married couples and \$200,000 for individuals. This is on top of the 1.45 percent Medicare tax each individual already pays on wages and the 1.45 percent Medicare tax the employer pays.

Investment Income Tax: An additional 3.8 percent tax is added to investment income on married taxpayers with AGI of \$250,000 and single taxpayers with AGI of \$200,000. Investment income includes items such as interest and dividends.

Medical Device Manufacturing Tax: A 2.3 percent tax will be applied to the gross sales of medical device makers. This includes all medical devices, with the exclusion of glasses and contact lenses.

Other changes include a new threshold of 10 percent of AGI (up from 7.5 percent) for deducting medical expenses and an annual cap of \$2,500 for flexible spending accounts.

There are many more extensions and changes in the tax laws for 2013. Consult your tax professional to minimize your tax burden.

Sarah Delano Pavlik is an attorney from Springfield

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fast tracks •

Dunphy named president of Association

Clyde Dunphy, DVM, a Pleasant Plains resident and veterinarian at Capitol Illini in Springfield and Chatham, was elected president of the Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association at its annual meeting. Dunphy has served on the ISVMA executive board for four years.

Dunphy

"Having worked in both small and large animal practices, Dr. Dunphy brings an all-encompassing point of view to the leadership position coupled with a passion for growing the profession," said Peter Weber, ISVMA executive director.

Dr. Dunphy joined Capitol Illini in 1995. He was born and raised on a farm in White Hall, Ill. After graduating from veterinary school, Dr. Dunphy spent four years at a mixed animal practice in Buffalo, N.Y. He moved back to Illinois in 1978 and opened his own farm and companion animal practice in Carlinville, Ill. where he practiced for 17 years.

McVary joins SIU

Kevin T. McVary, M.D., has joined the faculty at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine as a professor and chair of the Division of Urology in the Department of Surgery.

McVary was a professor Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago from 1989-2012, recently a professor of urology. He was also attending staff urologist at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, attending surgeon at VA Lakeside Medical Center in Chicago, and chief of urology at both the VA Lakeside and VA Crown Point Ambulatory Care Center in Chicago. McVary founded and directed the Center for Sexual Health, the Prostate Diseases Minimally Invasive Program and the Andrology Fellowship Program at NMH.

McVary completed a urology research fellowship at Northwestern University Medical School in 1988 and residencies in general surgery and urology at NMH. He received his M.D. degree from NUMS in 1983.

McVary is board certified by the American Board of Urology and the National Board of Medical Examiners.

His primary clinical areas are prostate diseases, including prostate cancer and BPH, as well as the evaluation and treatment of sexual function. He currently serves as the associate editor for the Journal of Urology.

McVary is the son of the late Patrick B. McVary, M.D., an early faculty member at SIU School of Medicine who helped start its urology division.

LLCC professor a top 10 new Latino author

The editors of "Latino Boom: An Anthology of U.S. Latino Literature" have listed John Paul Jaramillo, associate professor of English at Lincoln Land Community College, as one of the 2013 top 10 new Latino authors in the U.S. to watch and read.



Jaramillo

Jaramillo's new book, "The House of Order," is available at the LLCC Bookstore, located in the lower level of Menard Hall.

Jaramillo joined the LLCC faculty in 2005. He holds a master of fine arts degree from Oregon State University and a bachelor of arts from the University of Southern Colorado.

Marine Bank adds two, promotes four

Marine Bank has announced the addition of Vicki Belsher and Tim Hortberg.

Belsher, new vice president in the commercial lending department, has nearly 40 years of experience in commercial credit administration, liquidation, and litigation in local, state and regional markets. During her career, she has worked for the U.S. Small Business Administration, as well as commercial banking organizations.

Hortberg has joined Marine Bank as assistant vice president of Marketing and has more than 20 years of experience in marketing, brand development and graphic design. He earned his associate's degree in Commercial Graphics and Design from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

Four Marine Bank team members have recently earned promotions.

Steve Hartman has been promoted to senior vice president, Commercial Lending. Hartman has more than 20 years of banking and finance experience including seven years with Marine Bank. He currently provides Marine Bank customers in Champaign County with a variety of commercial lending services, specializing in real estate construction solutions.

Tina Tinsley has been promoted to vice president, Mortgage Operations. Tinsley has been part of the Marine Bank Mortgage Lending Team for 13 years. She supervises the processing and delivery of all conventional and FHA/VA mortgage

loans originated in the Central Illinois market, including Springfield and Champaign.

Tammy Hart has been promoted to assistant vice president, Mortgage Services. Hart has 12 years of experience with the Marine Bank Mortgage Lending Team and is responsible for preparation of closing documents for all conventional and FHA/VA mortgage loans originated in the Central Illinois market.

David Ploskonka has been promoted to Loan Documentation officer. Ploskonka has nearly eight years of loan operations experience at Marine Bank and is responsible for the monitoring of loan collateral documents, oversight of floor plan accounts, and loan servicing customer service.

"We appreciate the contributions of these four valuable employees," said CEO Chris Zettek, "and we are pleased to reward their achievements with these well-deserved promotions."

McGladrey hires two

McGladrey LLP added Teresa Tucker and Katelyn Evans to its Springfield office. Tucker, a senior tax associate, graduated with a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Illinois Springfield and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Eastern Illinois University.



Tucker



Evans

She is a registered certified public accountant, certified management accountant, chartered property/casualty underwriter, a Life Management Institute fellow and Financial Services Institute fellow.

Evans, an assurance associate, graduated with a master's degree in accounting and a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She is a member of the Illinois CPA Society.

BOS appointments

Bank of Springfield has announced new appointments.

Brian Brewer has moved to the Financial Services department along with Rob Reidelberger. Brian will serve clients in the Springfield while Rob will service clients in the Metro-East area.

Ryan Murphy has joined the Commercial Lending department.

Jon Sturgeon has been promoted to Loan Officer and Branch Manager of the

Chatham branch and Travis Heckenkamp has been promoted to Assistant Loan Officer and has moved to the retail lending and personal banker position at the Chatham branch.

Shannon Jones has joined the Business Services staff serving commercial clients.

BOS was founded in 1965 in Springfield and now serves six communities with branch locations in Springfield, Chatham, Jacksonville, Quincy, Shiloh and Swansea.

Ratterman promoted at American Central

Nick Ratterman of American Central Insurance Services has been promoted to producer. Ratterman has been with American Central Insurance Services since 2008 in the customer service department. He will be focusing on commercial property & casualty insurance and bonds, and group life and health insurance.

Passavant Employee of the Month

Passavant Area Hospital's January 2013 Employee of the Month is Sarah Lawson, Ambulatory Surgery. Lawson previously won the award in 2005.



Lawson

Sarah's responsibilities in Ambulatory Surgery include pre- and post-op care, starting IVs for the GI Lab, taking vital signs, and making post-op phone calls.

Sarah and her husband, Brad, live in Jacksonville. They are the parents of three children. Sarah keeps busy being involved in her grandchildren's activities.

The Employee of the Month at Passavant receives a cash award, an Employee of the Month lapel pin, wall plaque, engraved writing instrument, coffee mug, meal certificates for use in the hospital cafeteria, and a day off with pay.

Habitat for Humanity elects new officers, board members

Habitat for Humanity of Sangamon County announced the election of new officers and board members for 2013.

Elected officers for 2013 include Jeffery Perkins, Perkins Valuation and Consulting, president; Ed Hohenstein, retired, vice-president; Andy Roselle, Illinois National Bank, treasurer; Cheryl McKnelly,

Continued on Next Page



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Horace Mann Companies, secretary; and Wes Barr, Sangamon County Sheriff's Office, past president.

Newly elected board members include Phil Chiles, The Real Estate Group; Pete Reeves, Regeneration Strategies International, Inc.; Jim "Fish" Richbark, Cathedral School; and James Schackmann, Springfield Park District.

Returning board members include Jennifer Benanti, Town & Country Bank; Brenda Kochman, Hanson Professional Services; Lisa McNeal, Allstate Insurance Company; Joe Neubauer, Lowes; Steve Rambach, Springfield School District #186; Alex Reavy, R.W. Troxell & Company; Timothy Rowles, The Springfield Project; Dick Smith, retired; Jason Vincent, Delano Law Offices; and Karen Woods, Blue Cross Blue Shield.

Three from UIS named to Hall of Fame

The Bill Miller Public Affairs Reporting Hall of Fame honored three graduates from the University of Illinois Springfield's Public Affairs Reporting program who have distinguished themselves in the field of journalism. Nina Burleigh, Jim Prather, and Jim Webb were inducted into the Hall of Fame at the Inn at 835 in Springfield on Monday, Jan. 28.

Nina Burleigh is a journalist and the author of five books. She also writes the weekly Bombshell column at the New York Observer. Her last book, "The Fatal Gift of Beauty," was a New York Times bestseller. She has written for numerous publications including Businessweek, The New Yorker, the New York Times and New York magazine, is a contributing editor at Elle and has appeared on "Good Morning America," "Nightline," "The Today Show," "48 Hours," MSNBC, CNN and on NPR and many radio programs. Nina received her bachelor's degree in English from MacMurray College, a master's in English from the University of Chicago and her master's degree in Public Affairs Reporting from UIS (then Sangamon State University) in 1984.

Jim Prather began his career as a government reporter for WICS-TV in Springfield. He has had a long career in broadcast journalism in Arkansas, Texas, California, Maryland, Wisconsin and Nevada. He now oversees radio and television station clusters in Boise and Tucson, and a Journal Broadcast Group duopoly in Palm Springs. A graduate of Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, Prather holds a bachelor's of science degree in radio-television and political science, and a master's degree in Public Affairs Reporting from the University of Illinois Springfield.

Jim Webb is the editor for a Chicago Tribune investigative team focused on state and local government. Previously he was the paper's Illinois political editor from mid-2005 to mid-2010. In his current role, Webb works with a team of reporters focused on the relationships between powerful public officials and private interests. Prior to joining the Tribune, Webb spent 18 years as a reporter, desk supervisor and news editor for The Associated Press. After receiving a B.A. in journalism from Bradley University, Webb interned with the AP at the Illinois statehouse as part of the master's program in Public Affairs Reporting at the University of Illinois Springfield. Upon graduation in 1987, he worked a series of jobs with the AP in St. Louis, Louisville, Frankfurt, Ky., and Philadelphia before moving to the Chicago bureau in 1989.

The Public Affairs Reporting Hall of Fame was named in honor of Bill Miller, an award-winning journalist who served as the program's director for 19 years.

Heyl Royster receives ranking, attorneys named Leading Lawyers

Heyl Royster received a Tier 1 Best Law Firm ranking from U.S. News & World Report and Best Lawyers. The rankings come from evaluations of more than 10,000 firms in 118 practice areas in 170 metropolitan areas.

Also, Brad Elward in the firm's Peoria office, Lisa LaConte in the firm's Peoria and Edwardsville offices and Mike Schag in the firm's Edwardsville and Chicago offices were selected by Leading Lawyers Network as Leading Lawyers in Illinois.

Elward was selected in the area of Civil Appellate Law. His appellate practice includes a concentration in workers' compensation appeals.



Elward

He is the current Vice President of the Appellate Lawyers Association. He serves as the Vice Chair of the Peoria County Bar Association's CLE Committee. In addition, he is the Associate Editor of the Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel's IDC Quarterly. He has also authored amicus curiae briefs before the Illinois Supreme Court on behalf of the IDC. He is a magna cum laude graduate of the Southern Illinois University School of Law.

LaConte was selected in the areas of Toxic Torts Defense Law, Products Liability Defense Law, and Health Law.



LaConte

She is co-chair of Heyl Royster's Toxic Torts & Asbestos Practice. In addition, she serves as the firm's hiring partner and co-chair of its Diversity Committee. She is a member of a number of professional organizations including Lawyers for Civil Justice, the Council on Litigation Management, the Defense Research Institute, and the Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel. She is a graduate of the Washington University School of Law and also holds an LL.M. degree in Health Law from Saint Louis University.

Schag was selected in the areas of Toxic Torts Defense Law, Products Liability Defense Law, and Military Law. He has handled cases entail-



Schag

ing products liability, mass tort, commercial contract, government contract and insurance law, and he is experienced in jury trials, appellate practice, administrative/regulatory litigation, and alternative dispute resolution. In addition to his practice with Heyl Royster, Schag is an Air Force Reserve JAG lawyer now serving in an operational assignment supporting the legal advisory function at the 618th Tanker Airlift Control Center at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. In 2012, he was the recipient of his fifth Meritorious Service Medal (MSM), the non-combat equivalent to the Bronze Star. He is a cum laude graduate of Oklahoma City University School of Law.

LaConte, Elward and Schag join 31 other Heyl Royster attorneys who have been named to the Leading Lawyers list.

Weed Man honored

Springfield's Weed Man franchise has received the 2012 Award of Excellence. Josh Fromme and Chad and Todd Reinhart, the owners of Central Illinois Turf and four Weed Man franchises in Springfield, Bloomington, Peoria, and Murfreesboro, Tenn., were recently honored as the recipients of the 2012 Award of Excellence for Weed Man, North America's leading lawn care franchise company.

The Award of Excellence is the top achievement award within Weed Man. It symbolizes excellence in the franchise and is achieved with planning and execution.

"It is an honor to receive this award and be members of such a successful franchise system," Todd Reinhart said. "We make it our responsibility to always be available to help others. It is important to us that not only are we successful, but that the entire franchise system is."

Weed Man USA, a franchised lawn care provider, is a network of locally owned and operated lawn care businesses providing environmentally responsible fertilization, weed control and integrated pest management services.

McGladrey wins award

McGladrey LLP was recently selected as a winner of Progressive Media Group's Bob Scott's Insights' 2012 VAR Stars Award. One hundred resellers are honored each year for their accomplishments in the field of middle market financial software.

Members of the VAR Stars were selected based on factors such as growth, industry leadership and innovation. Chosen firms represent a wide range of sizes and many

different software publishers of accounting software.

This is the fourth consecutive year McGladrey has won this award.

Sikich merges with Achieve, adds supply chain consulting

Sikich LLP, announced its merger with Achieve Consulting, a supply chain consulting firm based in Warrenville, Ill. This merger marks the start of Sikich's newest service line, supply chain consulting.

Sikich's clients will now have access to resources to improve their organizations' operations, management and overall bottom lines. The supply chain consulting practice will offer clients, particularly those in the manufacturing and distribution industry, the opportunity to gain a competitive, market-responsive supply chain through improvements in strategies, processes and enabling systems.

Achieve Consulting brings with it more than 80 years of combined experience on the industry and consulting sides. Owners Dave Forberg and Gregg Hague will join Sikich as partners, both of whom specialize in services such as distribution network design, facility design, maintenance process and system design. Forberg holds an MBA from Northwestern University and a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from the University of Illinois. Hague holds an MBA from the Illinois Institute of Technology and a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from Purdue University. Additionally, Jeff Coghlan and Scott Uher will join Sikich as managers.

The professionals from Achieve are now located at Sikich's corporate headquarters in Naperville.

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Simmons Cancer taking applications for interns

Simmons Cancer Institute (SCI) at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine is offering four summer internships. Four positions will be awarded to qualified undergraduate college students who plan a career in medicine or research with a focus on cancer.

Interns will have the opportunity to learn basic laboratory skills while working under the supervision of SCI faculty members. Three internships will be located at the School of Medicine campus in Springfield. One position will be offered at the SIU campus in Carbondale.

Dr. K. Thomas Robbins, professor of otolaryngology at SIU School of Medicine and director of Simmons Cancer Institute, described the summer program as “an opportunity for a young person to work in a lab by the side of researchers who are performing cancer research.”

Qualified applicants are undergraduates who have completed his or her freshman year of college by June 2013 and will not graduate from college prior to June 2013.

Applicants should submit a current college transcript, a resume and two letters of reference from instructors along with a personal statement letter describing current studies, activities and future goals. The paid internships are awarded on a competitive basis.

Applications may be submitted by using PDF-formatted documents emailed to tcasson@siumed.edu. They may also be mailed to Morris Cooper, Ph.D., SIU School of Medicine, P.O. Box 19626, Springfield, IL 62794-9626.

SIU med students working with local physicians

Family physicians in seven Illinois communities are hosting students from Southern Illinois University School of Medicine through Feb. 8. The students are participating in the School's Family Medicine Preceptorship Program.

The experience provides an opportunity for students to use their medical knowledge in an office setting under the supervision of an experienced physician. The students choose from more than 160 family practice physicians in Illinois for their preceptorship experience. They will graduate from medical school in May 2014 and then pursue training in a specific area of medicine before beginning practice. Since 1981, 2,200 students have participated in the program, which is offered by the School's Department of Family and Community Medicine.

Rachel Day is the guest of Dr. Christopher Nelson at Carle Clinic at Mahomet; Allison Mayfield is the guest of Dr. Tom Miller at SIU Quincy Family Medicine; Alex Michael is the guest of Dr. Patrick Zimmerman of Family Medicine Associates in Collinsville; Raunak Patel is the guest of Dr. Tim Miller at the Forsyth Professional Center; Daniel Sadowski is the guest of Dr. Mary Chinn at Washington Street Clinic in Mendota; Kathryn Sanserino is the guest of Dr. Michael Brewer at Wabash Medical Center in Springfield; Drew Schmucker is the guest of Dr. Bradley Houston in Olney; Susan Yanik and Josiah Zubairu are the guests of SIU Center for Family Medicine in Springfield.

Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport gets financial clean opinion, completes improvements

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport received an unqualified, or “clean opinion” of its financial report from the CPA firm of Eck, Schafer & Punke.

According to the audit, the airport's net assets grew to \$62.1 million in 2012, up from \$57.3 million in fiscal 2011. Net income rose to \$4.8 million in accordance with accounting rules and regulations, compared to a net income of \$2.6 million in 2011. The reason for the large increase in net income was a \$2.3 million increase in federal and state grants.

The exclusion of depreciation of \$4.3 million and grant revenues of \$8 million would still result in an unofficial positive net income value of \$1 million. The Authority's property tax revenue has increased at an average rate of 2.1 percent a year over the last 10 years.

The airport also completed more than

\$12.6 million in improvements to roadways, runways, taxiways, ramps and facilities during the 2012 calendar year. Of the \$12.6 million in costs, over 84 percent was funded with federal and state monies.

Capital improvement projects completed in 2012 include the new entrance road, airfield improvements to runways, taxiways and ramps, acquisition of aircraft rescue and firefighting equipment and numerous energy conservation improvements.

“These infrastructure and equipment improvements were necessary to keep our community's airport safe, modern and competitive,” said Airport Authority Board Chair Frank Vala. “We plan for projects that create multiple benefits. For example, the new lighting and HVAC upgrades installed throughout airport facilities and parking lots will cut utility costs and reduce electricity usage by at least 50 percent.”

The US Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration provide for the planning and programming of airport improvement projects in concert with the Airport Improvement Program. Funds to support these projects are provided from the Aviation Trust Fund, a depository for federal aviation excise tax receipts maintaining the concept that users of the aviation system are paying for maintenance and improvement projects to support the system.

Allegiant Releases Summer Schedule to Fort Myers/Punta Gorda from Springfield

Allegiant released their summer schedule of non-stop service from Springfield's Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport (SPI) to the Fort Myers, Florida area (PGD) through Aug. 12, 2013. Flights can now be booked online at www.allegiant.com.

The inaugural schedule, which began service in Springfield on Nov. 6, provides central Illinois travelers with non-stop service to Florida's Gulf coast through the summer season. Airport officials continue to cite strong loads and future bookings as the reasons for Allegiant's extension of flights to the Fort Myers area. Specific flight dates and fares can be found at allegiant.com or by contacting the Springfield airport's Passenger Service Center at 217-788-9200.

Local, statewide home sales up in 2012

Home sales were up as were home prices in 2012, according to a year-end report by the Capital Area Association of REALTORS®.

Home sales in the Capital Area during the month of December 2012 amounted to 260 units, a decrease of 2.3 percent from the 266 home sales recorded in December of 2011. Year-to-date home sales through December of 2012 revealed 3,522 unit sales, up 9.4 percent from the 3,219 units sold during the same period in 2011.

The median home sale price during December 2012 was \$110,000, up 7.8 percent over the \$102,000 December 2011 price. The median home sale price year-to-date through December of 2012 was \$114,000, a 3.6 percent increase over the \$110,000 median price during the same period in 2011.

The inventory of homes listed for sale at the end of December 2012 was 1,342, a 1.7 percent decrease from the 1,365 listings during December of 2011 and was at its lowest point in over five years. Current inventory levels stand at 1,455 homes

and reflect a 4.9 month supply at the average monthly sales pace for the past twelve months.

The number of sales pending at the end of December 2012 was 220, as compared to 224 sales pending at the same time in 2011. The average cumulative days on market in December of 2012 was 87 days, as compared to 118 days during the same month in 2011. Year-to-date through December, homes spent an average of 104 days on the market as compared to 105 in 2011.

During 2012 there were 129 new residential construction sales, reflecting a 7.5 percent increase over the 120 sales in 2011. New construction sales in 2012 made up 3.7 percent of all home sales in the Capital Area. The median price of a new construction sale reported through the MIS in 2012 was \$238,500, reflecting a 0.4 percent increase over the \$237,500 median price in 2011, and the highest median price on record for new construction sales.

Statewide, home sales increased 15.2 percent over previous-year levels in December and median prices increased 5.6 percent, according to the Illinois Association of REALTORS®.

Statewide home sales in December 2012 totaled 10,265 homes sold, up from 8,908 in December 2011. Year-end 2012 home sales totaled 128,436, up 22.9 percent from 104,480 in 2011. The statewide median price in December was \$132,000, up 5.6 percent from December 2011 when the median price was \$125,000.

Museum closes

Abraham Lincoln's National Museum of Surveying announced its closing. Due to financial reasons from the beginning, the museum has struggled to meet its obligations and plan for the future. When the museum was scheduled to open in 2007, surveyors, surveying companies and manufacturers were making record profits. As the recession hit, companies downsized and manufacturers went into agriculture and other fields driven by GPS.

Early struggles were well documented however they finally opened in September 2010. Until October of 2012, they were able to meet their operating costs but not the mortgage. A capital campaign only brought in about half the money needed. In addition, many surveyors didn't have time or money to make the needed commitment to the museum.

Most likely starting in February, the building will enter some stage of foreclosure.

The museum told a story about Lincoln and how his time as a surveyor from 1833 to 1837 helped him gain a foothold in the political world as he laid out many towns and properties in Central Illinois. It also told the national tale of how surveying, a STEM profession, developed America. STEM is the new educational focus of teaching students about Science, Technology, Education and Mathematics. These are just a couple of examples of what the museum will no longer be able to offer.

Old State Capitol to host Chicago Bar Association chorus and orchestra

The sounds of Lincoln-era music will fill the Old State Capitol as the Chicago Bar Association Chorus and Symphony Orchestra present “Lincoln and His America: A Musical Celebration.”

The concert takes place at 7 p.m. on

Continued on Next Page

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Saturday, Feb. 16. It will include American folk songs and spirituals and will feature musical works and narrative readings about Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War era.

The chorus and orchestra are comprised mainly of attorneys, judges and members of Chicago's legal community. Rebecca Patterson conducts the chorus, while Michael Poulos leads the orchestra.

Now in its seventh season, the chorus has collaborated with the orchestra on classical masterpieces.

Sponsors of the concert include FIRM Inc. and Zack Stamp Ltd. A suggested donation for concert-goers is \$10 per person and \$15 per family.

In addition to the evening concert, professional actor and chorus member Kevin Bry will present a lecture-performance, "A Confluence of Muses: Abraham Lincoln's Life as Shakespearean Drama," at 2:30 pm at the Old State Capitol. Admission is free and the public is invited to attend.

Treasury helps Illinois banks increase lending

The U.S. Department of the Treasury released a report showing that Illinois institutions receiving capital through the Small Business Lending Fund increase their small business lending, in total by over \$210.1 million over their baselines.

This Use of Funds report represents the sixth consecutive quarter in which SBLF participants have increased lending to small businesses. Across the country, SBLF participants have increased lending by \$7.4 billion overall and \$740 million over the prior quarter. Community banks

participating in SBLF have increased business lending in greater amounts than a group of similar banks of size, geography, and loan type.

The SBLF, established as part of the Small Business Jobs Act that President Obama signed into law in 2010, encourages community banks to increase their lending to small businesses, helping those companies expand their operations and create new jobs. Treasury invested more than \$4 billion in 275 community banks and 51 community development loan funds, or CDLFs across the U.S. through the SBLF.

SBLF encourages lending to small businesses by providing capital to community banks and CDLFs with less than \$10 billion in assets. The dividend or interest rate a community bank pays on SBLF funding is reduced as the bank increases its lending to small businesses – providing a incentive for new lending to small businesses. As of September 2012, the average rate paid by community banks on SBLF capital was two percent. Individual community banks can reduce the rate they pay to one percent if they increase qualified small business lending by 10 percent over their baseline.

ICBA supports community bank exemptions, restructuring of too-big-to-fail firms

The Independent Community Bankers of America said it is encouraging that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's final rules establishing new mortgage-servicing rules recognize the practices of community bank servicers. By exempting those that service 5,000 or fewer mortgage loans, the bureau recognizes that

community bank servicers did not engage in the abuses that have roiled the housing market. ICBA advocated a servicing threshold of at least 10,000 mortgages.

The CFPB exempted small servicers from certain rules requiring servicers to create and maintain new servicing policies and procedures, to issue monthly statements that would include more information, to avoid charging for "force-placed" insurance, and to follow loss-mitigation procedures for mortgage loans secured by a borrower's principal residence, among other guidelines. These exceptions and adjustments will help reduce burdens for small institutions.

Community banks will have to comply with interest-rate adjustment notices for adjustable-rate mortgages. Servicers will be required to deliver the notices between 210 and 240 days prior to the first payment due after the first rate adjustment. They also must provide a notice between 60 and 120 days before payment at a new level is due when a rate adjustment causes the payment to change.

ICBA also supports a call to restructure too-big-to-fail financial institutions to reduce risks to the financial system. These financial firms should be restructured into multiple business entities and only their resulting commercial banking operations would benefit from the safety net of federal deposit insurance and access to the Federal Reserve's discount window.

"ICBA has long advocated restructuring too-big-to-fail financial institutions because of the risks they pose to our nation's community banks, financial system and economy as a whole," ICBA President and CEO Camden R. Fine said.

The nation's 12 largest megabanks, which hold 69 percent of U.S. banking

industry assets, are not allowed to fail because of their size and complexity. The result is limited market discipline and greater risk, while these institutions enjoy the benefits of the federal safety net. This plan would separate too-big-to-fail firms' commercial and shadow banking affiliates and restrict access to the federal safety net to commercial banking operations.

The Government Accountability Office agreed to study potential market distortions caused by too-big-to-fail financial institutions. The study by Sens. David Vitter (R-La.) and Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), would focus on financial institutions with more than \$500 billion in consolidated assets.

In their bill, introduced in December and passed by the Senate by unanimous consent late last year, Sens. Vitter and Brown asked the GAO to study the economic benefits that too-big-to-fail financial firms receive due to actual or perceived taxpayer support. The GAO will investigate whether banks with more than \$500 billion in assets are able to raise funds more cheaply than smaller competitors and have distorted credit ratings because it is widely believed that megabanks have a government guarantee against failure.

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OPINION

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Mr. Mackey,

This letter responds to correspondence submitted by Linda Koch, President and CEO of the Illinois Bankers Association (IBA), which appeared in your January 2013 issue. In her letter, Ms. Koch raises an old and tired argument. She states bankers “respect those credit unions that have stayed within their original mandate” and “their special treatment” – exemption from income tax as not-for-profit financial cooperatives – is deserved. However, the letter suggests if a credit union happens to grow, then it is no longer deserving of its tax exempt status.

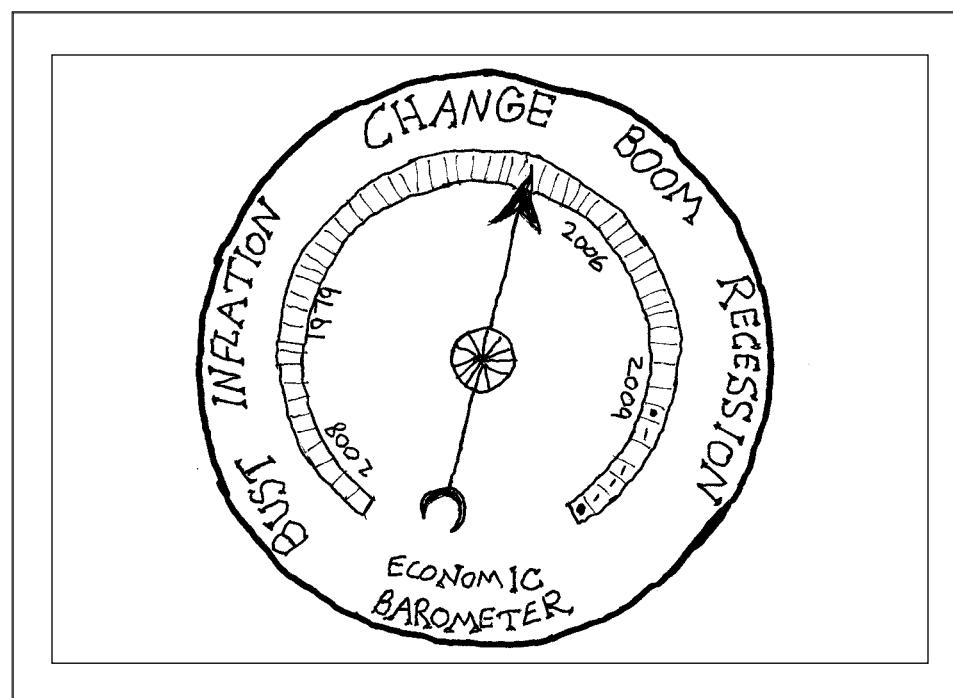
The problem with that argument is the growth limitation the bankers so desperately seek to impose on credit unions is nowhere found in the law that created credit unions or the law that continues to regulate them to this date. Credit unions were first exempted from federal income taxes in 1917 to fulfill a special mission as valuable and affordable cooperative alternatives to for-profit banks. Since then, credit unions have more than fulfilled their mission, as evidenced by Congressional codification of the credit union tax exemption in 1951 and 1998.

Credit unions derive their tax exempt status from their structure as cooperatives. A cooperative is a business entity formed by individuals who have a common goal or interest. Cooperatives are owned and controlled by the people who use their services. The primary purpose of a cooperative is to meet their members’ needs through affordable goods and services of high quality. Cooperatives can be formed to support producers such as farmers, purchasers such as independent business owners and consumers such as electric coops and credit unions.

Cooperatives may look like other businesses in how they operate and, like other businesses, cooperatives can range in size from small offices to large companies. However, regardless of their size, they are distinctively different from other businesses in their structure. In a cooperative, such as a credit union, the members are the owners. There are no stockholders. A credit union’s board of directors consists of unpaid volunteers, elected by and from the membership. Speaking of volunteering, the credit union “People Helping People” philosophy motivates credit unions to get involved in countless community charitable activities and worthwhile causes. Each credit union member has the opportunity to vote in electing board members and members also run for election to the board. In contrast, a bank’s board consists of individuals who are paid. Customers of the bank have no voting rights, cannot be elected to the board and have no say in how the bank is operated. Only the investors or stockholders have voting privileges.

It is the structure of the credit union, not its size, that is the reason it receives its tax exempt status from the government. The sporting goods giant, REI, and a leading dairy producer, Land O Lakes, may be very large, but they still retain their tax exempt status, because they retain their cooperative structure.

Credit unions are not for profit organizations. After expenses are paid and reserve requirements are met, net revenue is returned to the members in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates and lower costs and fees for services. Banks are for profit institutions, which means their primary purpose is to generate a profit. Earnings are not distributed to customers, but to investors/stockholders



who may or may not be depositors.

We need not debate whether banks are better than credit unions, or vice versa. It is sufficient to address the IBA letter, by stating banks and credit unions are structured differently. It is because of that structural difference, not how big or small they are, that Congress granted credit unions their exemption from federal income taxes (just as Congress has done with other producer, purchasing, shared service and consumer cooperatives).

Even though credit unions are exempt from income tax because of their cooperative structure, they still are subject to and pay property taxes, payroll taxes, sales taxes, and a host of governmental regulatory supervision fees. And speaking of regulatory oversight, contrary to Ms. Koch’s assertion that credit unions receive “special regulatory treatment,” credit unions are subject to far more restrictions than banks in how they may invest their capital and structure loans to their members. Further, the “alphabet soup” of regulations now administered by the new federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Reg. B, Reg. E, Reg. Z, etc.), apply with equal force to credit unions.

The notion that credit unions like CEFUCU are getting too big simply isn’t borne out statistically. Banking institutions hold nearly 15 times more assets than credit unions. In fact, each of the four largest banking entities is larger than the entire credit union industry. In Illinois, banks hold more than 92 percent of all deposits. Yet, while banks decry the credit union tax exemption, almost one out of three banks elect Subchapter S status under the Internal Revenue Code to avoid federal income taxation. In Illinois, that’s \$38 million in diverted tax dollars. These for-profit Sub-S banks also pay dividends and fees – not to customers, but to directors/investors/stockholders who may or may not be depositors – to the tune of over \$1 billion in Illinois alone. This is far in excess of the estimated income tax credit unions would pay, if credit unions were not structured to operate as democratically controlled cooperatives. Given these facts, it is disingenuous for the banks to complain about the tax status of credit unions.

Nationally, consumers benefit to the tune of \$10 billion annually because credit unions are tax-exempt. In Illinois, by recent estimates, credit unions annually provide more than \$198 million in direct financial benefits to almost three million members. In fact, CEFUCU alone

distributed \$9 million at the end of 2012, its largest distribution of capital ever to its members. That distribution flowed directly from the cooperative framework in which the credit union is structured to operate.

If bankers really believed that credit unions had unfair competitive advantages, they would restructure their institutions to credit union charters and provide this same direct benefit to their customers. None of them do this, however, because doing so would expose them to democratic ownership and control and force them to adhere to a more restrictive regulatory regime, including higher capital standards (and fewer options to generate it).

Credit unions do agree with one observation made by the IBA letter – that “it is time for a change.” To a notable extent, the financial crisis and housing bust of 2008 were fueled by the improper mortgage lending and servicing practices of very large banks, the same banks that recently entered into a \$25 billion settlement with the nation’s attorneys general for their fraudulent “robo-signing” mortgage foreclosure activities. Credit unions were not guilty of those practices. However, along with other smaller financial institutions, businesses and consumers, credit unions are now paying the price in the form of higher costs to address the onslaught of compliance initiatives flowing from the extraordinarily challenging regulatory environment that resulted from the crisis.

For over 20 years, consumers have given credit unions the highest satisfaction rating of any financial service organization and the best marks for the lowest fees. Who says so? The Gallup Organization, after conducting its annual survey for “The American Banker.”

Daniel D. Plauda
President/Chief Executive Officer
Illinois Credit Union League

Light, camera, action

Journalism – it is said – is the first rough draft of history. Looking at the box office, it appears that journalism has become a movie script treatment.



Joe Natale

WORKING BLUE Motion pictures like “Argo” and “Zero Dark Thirty” are based on events that were widely reported as they unfolded. Even the epic bio-pic “Lincoln” has its roots in newspaper reports of the time. Films about a hostage crisis, a manhunt and amending the Constitution certainly make for gripping cinema, but you have to wonder what events of today could be fodder for films of tomorrow? Here is a preview of coming attractions:

- “Eye on the Y” is a movie about the haggling involved in the sale of the YWCA site. After much intrigue, the property is sold and developed into a retail center. The film ends with Mayor Mike Houston cutting the ribbon at a Pottery Barn.

- “Lincoln and Herndon” portrays the travails of two law partners hanging their shingle at the corner of Sixth and Adams. Sally Fields reprises her role as Mary Lincoln, surprisingly portraying the future First Lady as a blond.

- Springfield is a “Boom Town” in this film about an improving economy. A series of the interwoven stories follow characters as they buy new homes, cars and find jobs. The film ends with Mayor Mike Houston cutting the ribbon at a Five Fat Guys Burgers and Fries.

- “Les Mistrial” is a courtroom drama about a trademark infringement case over the use of the word “Sparc”. A jury of 12 angry men deliberate for days until finally admitting to the judge they were unable to reach a verdict because they thought the word “Sparc” was spelled with a “k”.

- The film “A Union of Their Own” is loosely based on the character Rosy the Riveter, a building contractor who leads her all female construction crew in the construction of a major box store. The film ends with Mayor Mike Houston cutting the ribbon at a west side IKEA. In 3D.

- In the film “Thirty Bullet Magazine,” the executive vice president of a Second Amendment lobbying group claims that individuals have the right to protect themselves with semi-automatic weaponry. Then he shoots his eye out.

Cut. Print. That’s a wrap.

Joe Natale is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be e-mailed at: joe@springfieldbusinessjournal.com or follow Joe on Twitter at twitter.com/workingblue

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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HOW TO CONTACT THE PRESIDENT

Office of the President and Vice President: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C., 20500; main telephone number: (202) 456-1414; comment line: (202) 456-1111; e-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

Address:

P.O. Box 9798
 Springfield, IL 62791

1118 W. Laurel
 Springfield, IL 62704

Telephone: (217) 726-6600
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Facebook:

www.facebook.com/sbjmonthly

Twitter:

www.twitter.com/sbjmonthly

Website:

www.springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Email:

info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Publisher and Editor

Brant W. Mackey
 brant@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Copy Editor

Courtney Westlake

Senior Correspondents

Betsy Butler
 Raegan Hennemann
 Joe Natale

Correspondents

Roberta Codemo
 Tom Collins
 Jane Driver
 Tom Fitch
 Gabriel House
 Jean Jones
 Chad Kruse
 Teresa Paul
 Sarah Delano Pavlik
 Chris Stroisch
 Eric Woods

Business Manager

John Schilsky
 john@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Office Administration

Shawn M. Berry
 shawn@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Office Staff and Support

Mitchell Ladd

Springfield Publishers Inc.
Board of Directors
 Brant Mackey, John Schilsky

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Commercial space always relevant

Recently, I was engaged in a discussion about what the future of commercial real estate might look like in Central Illinois. A concern was expressed



Sam Perks

OPINION

robots.

So, what is the future of humanity as it relates to commercial space? Are we destined to be a society of consumers waiting for packages to be delivered to our home offices? Technological advances are certainly going to make life less complicated, but they will never replace people.

Human beings are physical by nature. We take up space, and we need different kinds of space to live out the activities of our daily lives. In the course of my discussion on commercial space, I was asked if stores would be a thing of the past since online shopping has become so popular. The answer is no.

People shop at stores for many reasons in addition to the acquisition of products. Shopping is an experience that people share. Several people might go shopping together to find clothes for an event they are all attending. I know a family that goes to the grocery store together every Sunday afternoon. They enjoy cooking and they all want to be part of the process. Online shopping is convenient when obtaining certain things, but it does not replicate the experience that is very often a critical component to shopping.

Office space was another issue that our conversation touched on. Some companies are allowing their employees to work from home offices. While modern conveniences have made working from home possible, I do not think that we are seeing an indicator of what the future will look like.

I can't imagine that I am the only one

who likes to keep some separation between my work life and my personal life. I am always happy to show a building after normal business hours, or to take a call from a family member while I am at my office. However, I have created a sort of psychological barrier between the parts of my life I bring to work, and the components I leave at home. I think this is a healthy practice, and commercial space helps us realize that needed separation.

In addition to compartmentalizing the different sections of our lives, having a "place of business" makes a statement. Maintaining an aesthetically attractive place that is exclusively used for work is good for employee morale and focus. It is obvious that team work can't happen if everyone is at home. It also sends a message to customers and clients that your company is successful and that you are a viable choice for them to do business with.

Even companies that specialize in online sales need space. I recently worked with a company that does ninety percent of their business in the form of online sales. Believe it or not, they were looking to expand into a larger building. While I was getting to know the company, I even learned that they plan to hire six new employees when they finally make their move.

So, if commercial properties are here to stay, what does the future of commercial real estate look like? I don't have a crystal ball, but I do have an intelligent, fact-based prediction. Property is going to continue doing what it has always done since people lived in caves. It is going to change, it is going to adapt, and it is going to meet the needs of the people who use it.

Being a younger business person, I am often labeled as unrealistically optimistic. In this case, though, take a moment to examine the possibility that I may be right even if I am a little "green." Don't spend too much time thinking about

which property type will be the next to become obsolete. I don't believe there is one. Don't spend too much time worrying about what kind of occupation is the next to be eliminated. The elimination of entire trades and occupations is much less common than anxiety-inducing news stories on the topic. And finally, don't look at an empty building and say

“Don't spend too much time thinking about which property type will be the next to become obsolete. I don't believe there is one.”

to yourself "boy somebody ought to do something with that thing ... it has so much potential" as I very often hear.

People who engage in the above mentioned unpro-

ductive activities are certain to be left behind if my predictions of the future are correct. The future of commercial property (and the future in general) belongs to people who can be creative. Instead of fearing the damage that technological advances will do to the world that exists today, try to understand the positive impact that they can have on the world that will be here soon. People who are able to learn and adapt will find themselves in a position to come up with creative, readapted reuses for space.

We have all heard before that the great thing about real estate is that "they aren't making any more of it." Space exists, we exist, and we need space. As the population continues to increase, it is reasonable to assume that space will become a more scarce resource than it currently is. So quit worrying about robots taking over the world and do the one thing that only humans are good at. That is, using creativity, ingenuity, and thoughtful examination to make old things work in new ways for new purposes. If you can do that, regardless of what happens in the future, you and your commercial space will always be relevant.

Sam Perks is a committee member with the Commercial Real Estate Network and a commercial real estate broker with NAI True in Springfield.

ROSES and THORNS

A Rose – To Illinois Times for the opening of their new offices on Sixth Street.

A Rose – To Don Bassford of Donnie B's Comedy Club who continues to give locally owned businesses their props when opening a show.

A Thorn – To 'Old Man Winter' who is seemingly passing us by again this year. Most people still don't realize that Springfield and the lake needs the precipitation, so go ahead and please snow.

A Rose – To the commercial developers, architects, engineers and builders who are able to stay busy and in turn boost our local economy. An added Rose for women who are finding success in the construction industry.

A Rose – To Brenna Westlake for celebrating her first birthday.

BOOK OF LISTS

In each issue of the Business Journal, we publish at least one or more lists of local businesses by major business categories. In the month prior to publication, we announce which lists will be published the following month. If your business is included in our monthly and annual lists, take a moment each month to check our upcoming list(s). If you have changes, additions, deletions, etc., e-mail us at: info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com. NEXT MONTH: Residential Real Estate Agencies; Home Builders and Remodelers

LOOKING BACK

5 years ago in the Business Journal (February 2008) ...

- Noonan True Value moved its rental operations to the old Jungle O' Fun building on S. Koke Mill Road

- Ray Lytle rejoined the airwaves broadcasting on WCVS 96.7 FM.

- Springfield Business Journal covered the opening of a new downtown restaurant, Caitie Girl and its owner Caitie Barker.

- The Business Journal spoke with Don Walton of The Walton Group about the 'Green' features of Southwind Park.

- Local engineer Walter Hanson released his biography written by Janice Petterchak.

- Newly elected alderperson, Debbie Cimarrossa (now Thompson) penned an op-ed column on MacArthur Boulevard Business Association in her ward.

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President and CEO



Leslie J. Fyans Jr., M.A., Ph.D.
Clinical Psychologist

3001 Spring Mill Drive
Springfield, IL 62704
793-8900



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F. 217.323.5505

2908 Greenbriar Drive, Suite B
Springfield, IL 62704
P. 217.726.7091
F. 217.726.7944
jmyers@myersandmyerscpa.com

Wykoff Law Office, LLC

Mark Kevin Wykoff, Sr.
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