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Springfield business journal

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DreamMaker Bath and Kitchen's new showroom at 3730 West Wabash Avenue.

PHOTO BY MARANDA POTTER

Franchise a dream come true for DreamMakers

By Mark Thoma

Taking an already successful business and building on the success of others: that was the reason Curt and Deb Trampe hooked up with DreamMaker Bath and Kitchen about eight years ago. The Waco, Texas-based franchise offered a successful business model that the Trampes couldn't pass up when the Sangamon and Menard county territory became available in 2007.

It was a good move. Curt says the company

is coming off two years of increased sales and is celebrating a move to a new showroom on west Wabash in Springfield.

Trampe started his Homeworks, Inc. remodeling business in 1998. Back then the company would do just about anything in construction, literally from the top of the house to the very bottom.

Looking to the future, Curt decided to specialize. "My end goal was to create

a business that can operate without me, having a business model that was more repeatable. So instead of doing windows one day and roofing another, a bathroom one day then finishing a basement, we looked at the scope of our work and created a more repeatable process for us. Ultimately that's going to help us fine-tune our business."

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Meet Allison Paul

New executive director for HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital and Women's Services

By Scott Faingold



Allison Paul always felt the call to serve others.

"My father is a dentist and my mother is a dental assistant," she explains. "They have their own private practice and so I grew up spending a lot of time there, helping out doing different things. That's not directly related to nursing or health care but it's still providing service and direct patient care." She started volunteering at an early age at one of the local hospitals and found that she truly enjoyed helping others. "At a relatively young age, I knew that I wanted

to go into nursing, so that's really where my career started."

Paul grew up in the small town of Oreana outside of Decatur and graduated from Argenta-Oreana High School. From there she went to Illinois Wesleyan University where she earned a bachelor's degree in nursing, finding work at Children's Hospital of Illinois in Peoria. "I was there for almost 12 years," she recalls. "I worked as a nurse and completed my master's of science at St. Francis College of Nursing."

In 2013 she completed her doctorate of

nursing in leadership. "Through nursing, I have some performance improvement background and management background in pediatrics and patient care units." Most recently, Paul served as patient care director over both inpatient and outpatient pediatric care areas. Her new position as executive director of Children's Hospital and Women's Services gives her oversight of operations in these areas along with strategic planning and services.

Paul began her new position on Feb. 16. "Right off the bat I'll be doing a lot of

listening," she says, "starting to develop and establish relationships with different leaders and members of the team." She and her husband currently live in Bloomington with their two children, but will be relocating to the Springfield area soon. "We have not spent a lot of time here in the past," she admits.

"The one thing I really enjoy about moving from the bedside to more of a leadership role," she explains, "is the ability to inspire and motivate and mentor other people as a leader." □

Illini basketball and Illini dollars come to the capital city

By David A. Kelm

At the end of October 2014, the Prairie Capital Convention Center and the University of Illinois Division of Intercollegiate Athletics announced that the Fighting Illini men's basketball team would play five games at the Convention Center in November 2015. This announcement heralded perhaps the second most important event in the city's history, perhaps rivaled only by the unveiling of Springfield as the capital of Illinois in 1837 (a decision, by the way, still venomously whispered about in Vandalia public schools). Just as Springfield's economy sprang to life when legislators, state employees and lobbyists rode into town, when the Fighting Illini men's basketball team rolls into the convention center this coming November, it is hoped that Illini fans will positively add to Springfield's economy.

The Prairie Capital Convention Center general manager Brian Oaks and Shawn Mayernick, PCCC director of business partnerships, began courting the Illini Basketball Team in May 2012. With the planned renovations and upgrades to the Convention Center, Oaks and Mayernick

were looking for acts and events that would be able to take full advantage of the changes at the convention center. Initially, Oaks and Mayernick were hoping for an orange and blue intra-squad scrimmage game to be held at the Springfield facility. However, with Assembly Hall undergoing extensive renovation as it transforms into the State Farm Center, the U of I began looking for a home-away-from-home for the men's basketball team.

The University of Illinois sought bids to host five games in November 2015. In the end, Springfield was joined by Peoria, Bloomington-Normal, Rosemont and Hoffman Estates. Oaks and Mayernick knew that the renovated convention center with new concession stands, bathrooms and perfect site lines would assist in winning the contract. To win over the Illini, though, Oaks and Mayernick threw down the loyalty card. "We know there is a huge Illini following in Springfield," Mayernick said. "The team wanted it to feel like their home court and not like they were playing in Redbird Arena or on the Bradley campus." With the Springfield fan base and the ease

with which Illini fans from across the state can get to the Capital City, U of I went with the Prairie Capital Convention Center.

Come November 2015, downtown Springfield is sure to have an orange and blue sheen. The final pre-season game on Nov. 8 will be followed by regular season games on Nov. 13, 15, 21 and 23. The convention center will become a "mini State Farm Center" with the Illini trucking in the court and scoreboards. There will be a section for season ticket holders, courtside seating and the loud and proud "Orange Crush" student section. However, tickets are not on sale yet. Mayernick said the most frequent question he gets these days is about Illini tickets. "We have a meeting in the next few weeks with the university to get an idea of when tickets will be available," Mayernick said.

The convention center has developed a new seating configuration to pack as many fans in as possible. A sold-out game will see 7,600 fans watching their favorite college basketball team. "We estimate 40,000 people will invade Springfield for these five games," Mayernick said. "Additionally,

the schedule is split so that there is a game on a Friday and then Sunday and on a Saturday and then Monday." Team Illini will overnight in Springfield and practice on the off day.

The schedule, though, also plays into the economic development benefits these games could bring to Springfield. The





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PCCC is already working with the city's Convention and Visitors Bureau to market Illini basketball weekend packages. The convention center estimates that it has a \$72 million impact on Springfield's economy annually based on 350,000 event attendees. With a potential 40,000 attendees for five games, Springfield could see an impact

of approximately \$8 million from Illini basketball. "Hotel rooms, restaurants, bar tabs, and downtown shopping can all be part of this experience," Mayernick said. "The CVB is already doing some advertising up north to attract Illini fans to Springfield for these great weekends." The Prairie Capital Convention Center

and the University of Illinois are hoping to make the effort as seamless as possible for Illini fans while also positively impacting the Springfield economy. The convention center is also offering sponsorships for local businesses to get involved and invest in the Illini opportunity. "We want Springfield to buy into this effort, show their Illini support and

reap the benefits as a community," Mayernick said. For promotional opportunities or further information, Mayernick can be contacted at 217-788-8800. □

Dave Kelm is a Springfield-area attorney who can be reached at DavidAKelm@gmail.com.







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BUSINESS PROFILE



Jon Sigle has a plan for your foot and ankle problems.

PHOTO BY ERIC WOODS

Rise of the one-stop foot shop

By Eric Woods

For nearly four years, Dr. John Sigle has been running his foot and ankle practice on Springfield's west side. Later this year he will be going one step further by adding a new specialized medical store dedicated exclusively to foot and ankle care. According to Sigle, this store will be the first of its kind in central Illinois. "As the Baby Boomers are getting older, there are more people with foot and ankle problems," he said. "We are going to offer the highest quality medical products for foot and ankle that are not readily available at other retail stores," he said.

The thought of opening a retail store catering solely to foot and ankle issues has been in the back of Sigle's mind ever since beginning his practice. About a year ago, he really began taking the idea seriously, as research around the country shows that others have opened similar stores with success. After recognizing a growing demand for foot and ankle products and the reality that product choices for foot and ankle care are very limited, Sigle put his idea in motion. "We started to incorporate it by carrying some products here," he said. "Patients were extremely satisfied that they did not have to go three different places. I used to have to say 'go to this store or that store.' Now they can just stay here."

The store will be ancillary to the clinic and will function as a retail store in the same building. Sigle said most of the products will have the American Podiatric Medical Association Seal of Acceptance. "The post-op care can be right here. It is totally convenient for the patients. The best way to please them was to open a store," he said. "My patients will get suggestions on what to be wearing." Sigle has a close association with top orthopedic and podiatric foot and ankle surgeons as well as consultants in practice management and business innovation who have been coaching him and his staff since the conception of the idea.

Although the concept came to Sigle pretty easily, making it a reality has been challenging. It started with a need for appropriate space and continued from there. "We had to conceptualize and figure out what did we want to sell," he said. "There were three different architectural plans to accommodate the store. Plus we had to contract with the suppliers to have the products. That is challenging in itself."

Sigle is currently working with advisers and vendors to finalize the product line. As it stands, there will be these product groups: lotions; gels, silicone, felt and foam pads; wart removal products; fungal nail and skin care; braces and splints; after-surgery items; shoes, sandals, slippers, and clogs; shoe inserts, insoles and orthotics; socks and compression stockings; and equipment and supplies. The products will exclusively be provided to accommodate all foot and ankle conditions. "We will carry products no one else will be carrying in Springfield. We will offer a select brand of therapeutic shoes for men, women and children. Our brands will combine therapeutic features and style," he said. "We feel pretty certain that they will be handsome for men and beautiful for women. Many styles will also be available for athletics, dress, slip-ons and other casual use."

Along with the physical store, Sigle said that there will also be a comprehensive online presence in the hope of attracting business from all around. The web planning is already underway, and the goal is to have the site operational by the time the actual store opens. "If it is successful, we will have an online site for people to shop at home and have products mailed to their home," he said. "Therefore people who do not live close by will have access to the products via the online store."

According to Sigle, the store will have a full-time staff which will consist of his current medical assistants and receptionists. As demand grows, additional staff members will be hired. "At the beginning it will be the current staff until it gets off the ground," he said. "The staff will be extremely knowledgeable of the products based on their actual foot condition. They will be excellent resources for educating the patients and clients. The products will be doctor recommended and approved."

Architectural planning is complete, and construction will begin soon. The hope is that the store will be operational in late spring or early summer. Sigle promises to have an open house soon after the store launches. "We will invite the mayor and other physicians in town as well as others who want to check out the new store," he said. "The patients will really like it." □

Eric Woods can be reached at ericw93@aol.com.

Getting things just right

Just Right Eating brings proper nutrition to doorsteps

By Gabe House

"It's one thing to have people train, but you can't out-exercise a bad diet."

Stephanie Johnson, owner of Just Right Eating, has worked in the fitness industry for nearly three decades. She is a member of the American Council of Sports Medicine and is certified in lifestyle and weight management as well as sports nutrition. Johnson knows the value of proper nutrition, and that's why nearly four years ago she created Just Right Eating.

"I used to teach classes at my house, (and) we would plan meals for a week at a time," Johnson said. "I was encouraged to move on from that. I started actually making individuals' food and it got to be where I realized this could be a bigger thing."

Now, Johnson said, she and her staff of eight plan, prepare and deliver between 6,000 and 6,500 meals a week in Springfield and surrounding areas, including Petersburg, Sherman and Auburn. Breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks can all be included in the various meal plans. An online store also features nearly 70 items that can be ordered at any time, Johnson said.

"It is \$140 a week for seven days, breakfast, lunch, dinner and a snack, then we added a five-day plan, and we have dinners



PHOTO COURTESY OF JUSTRIGHTEATING.COM

only," Johnson said. "There are several different options for people to choose from."

After several iterations through the years, Johnson finally settled on Just Right Eating's current menu system, a six-week rotational menu that makes planning and execution easier, while also helping clients not to become burnt out on any one item.

"Some people would like the same things every day, but we just can't do that,"

Johnson laughed.

Clients choose a meal plan depending upon their goals, and Johnson is more than willing to help them cater the meals to their specific needs if they reach out for assistance. From athletes to people seeking weight loss to those who simply desire freshly prepared meals in a convenient manner, Just Right Eating strives to meet any wishes.

Johnson said she uses several distributors to get the freshest vegetables and leanest cuts of meat for her meals, all of which are prepared – and also packaged – on-site in a 3,000-square-foot kitchen.

"We do it all, and we do it all at once," Johnson said. "It has to be very structured, so we don't mess any orders up or anything like that. The website is very important to keep everything organized, so we don't lose anybody or their plans."

"This is our business, and it can get crazy if we don't have that structure."

Johnson said Just Right Eating has experienced growth every year since the business' inception, which she is pleased with, but she is also looking for future opportunities. Chief among those is a food truck that would be particularly useful for Just Right Eating to make appearances at local sports events.

There are also plans for future expansion.

"I'm making plans right now," Johnson said. "And we're really close to servicing the St. Louis area." □

Gabe House works in the lending department at United Community Bank. He can be reached at ghouse@ucbbank.com.

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MANUFACTURING



Freshman legislators tour Decatur's Caterpillar facility in February.

Lawmakers tour Decatur manufacturing facilities

By Colin Patrick Brady

Five freshman Illinois legislators toured two manufacturing facilities both housed in Decatur on Feb. 10. The Illinois Manufacturer's Association (IMA) played host to these incoming lawmakers who visited Caterpillar and Archer Daniels Midland's intermodal facility (served by the Norfolk Southern, Canadian National and CSX railroad companies) on a chilly winter's afternoon. IMA clearly hoped that exposure to these local manufacturing firms would impress upon these newly minted lawmakers the importance of keeping two large businesses like ADM and Caterpillar running, along the way becoming familiarized with some of the unique features the companies have to offer.

A core mandate of the IMA is to make certain Illinois' manufacturing sector receives active promotion, advocating for more than 4,000 businesses with roots throughout the state. It is incumbent upon the organization to advocate and advertise opportunities afforded by agencies such as ADM – especially to an audience of newly minted Illinois lawmakers who have voting and funding power. The IMA-sponsored tour of these Decatur

manufacturing juggernauts afforded the freshman lawmakers an opportunity to witness these facilities firsthand and ponder the economic output places like these contribute to the state, nation and ultimately the world market.

A greater part of the tour took place on the ADM grounds, specifically on the plot which houses their intermodal ramp – an important bit of infrastructure that helps keeps this firm a player on the world stage. Mark Denzler, vice president and COO of the IMA, fielded questions as he led the lawmakers and press along the intermodal ramp.

Denzler spoke to the merits and benefits of having an intermodal ramp present in Decatur, allowing cargo to be shipped from coast to coast with virtually no stops along the route. According to Denzler, "We are able to ship and receive cargo to the East and West Coast or up into Canada from this location [in Decatur] with no stops – that is, direct transit to the buyer or seller's desired location." Furthermore, Denzler cited the intermodal ramp as an investment subsidized by the state of Illinois that has thus far served as an example of a

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successful piece of infrastructure. ADM's intermodal ramp allows Decatur to remain competitive with other manufacturing and logistical entities nationwide – utilizing interstate and railroad lines, for example. Denzler further championed the ADM intermodal by emphasizing the fact that logistical and shipping congestion may often occur in metropolitan regions such as Chicago. Businesses throughout Illinois and surrounding areas can utilize the intermodal ramp and its logistical services with greater facility while also bringing funds downstate to central Illinois.

Reginald “Reggie” Phillips, R-Charleston, state representative of the 110th district, was impressed by his tour of the Caterpillar and ADM logistical facility. Optimistic after having viewed the impressive infrastructure opening Illinois to a world market, Phillips remarked, “Is it going to be a great year in Illinois – yes!”

Carol Ammons, D-Champaign, admitted that she had not been aware such a facility as the ADM intermodal ramp existed. Ammons called the facility a “game changer” in that it allows Illinois industries to move goods and products in and out of the state. The research park at the University of Illinois, part of Ammon's district, will benefit, allowing products manufactured and developed there to find their way to market via such logistical ports.

Mark Schweitzer, managing director for the ADM intermodal cited a pragmatic aspect to the tour given the freshman lawmakers, observing that as these new lawmakers gain firsthand knowledge of

how government actually works, they will also understand that their local communities and companies will benefit through utilization of facilities like the intermodal. Denzler also reiterates the practicality of hosting a tour of the ADM facility “for them to see firsthand the importance of it [the intermodal] when they go to Springfield and cast votes they’ve been to a manufacturer and know the impact that they have.”

“We are able to ship and receive cargo to the East and West Coast or up into Canada from this location [in Decatur] with no stops”

A take home-message was one of mutual benefit between government and business interests, inevitably affecting the well-being of the citizenry. Schweitzer concluded by stating that, “if you don't have the businesses, you don't have the jobs, right? We have to always think about the laws and how they affect the communities and how they affect the businesses.”

Future bills, no doubt drafted and voted upon by some of these very freshman lawmakers, may well result from information gleaned during this tour. It is the hope of the IMA that even a one-day tour will have a lasting impact on the memory of these new lawmakers and may one day effect a change in the economy at large. During this tour, they collectively learned how thousands of workers and numerous manufacturing businesses benefit central Illinois through stimulating region's economy and ensure jobs for those residing within the area. □

Colin Patrick Brady is a freelance writer residing in Decatur. He can be reached at colinpatrickbrady@hotmail.com.

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New digs for a venerable firm

By Ginny Lee



Brent Dickey of Harold O'Shea Builders poses with Paul Schafer, Jim Hogge and Brad Punke in Eck, Schafer & Punke's new offices at 227 S. Seventh St. O'Shea Builders transformed the empty space to handsome offices in less than three months.

PHOTOS BY GINNY LEE

The public accounting firm Eck, Schafer & Punke held a ribbon-cutting Friday, Jan. 23, at its new offices at 227 S. Seventh St. in the Dobbs Building. The company relocated its downtown office from smaller quarters at 600 E. Adams St.

On Jan. 1, 2014 Eck, Schafer & Punke merged with Mario Perrino's firm, Perrino & Associates, who had offices downtown at 214 S. Sixth St., so larger offices were necessary for a growing company.

Al Eck, Paul Schafer and Brad Punke started their company in 1994. Twenty years later they had outgrown the 7,500-square-foot office on E. Adams Street.

Early in 2014, Court and Karen Conn bought the historic red-brick Dobbs Building at Seventh and E. Monroe streets and rehabbed the first floor. They bought Widow at Windsor Antiques from Marilyn and Tom Kushak and moved The Widow to

the first floor of the Dobbs Building.

"When the Conns acquired the Dobbs Building," Schafer said, "they had no plans for the second floor. I said, 'Boy, that might be good for an office for us.'" The Conns made the space into a condo, and Eck, Schafer & Punke bought it.

"It was fortuitous that it worked out with the Conns' building," Schafer said. "Everything they do, they do right."

O'Shea Builders were hired to gut and remodel the 12,000-square-foot space into offices. E.L. Pruitt installed the plumbing and HVAC, and B & B Electric completed the wiring. Work began on Sept. 15, 2014, and by Dec. 15, Eck, Schafer & Punke had a temporary occupancy permit. "We wanted to get in and get settled before tax season began," Schafer explained.

The entire project cost \$1.5 million, and Eck, Schafer & Punke received \$425,000 in

TIF money from the city of Springfield. "We have a commitment to being downtown," Schafer said. "With the TIF money it was economically possible to rehab the building. We wouldn't be here without TIF assistance."

Eck, Schafer & Punke and Perrino & Associates operated in their respective offices downtown before moving into the Dobbs Building in December. Both companies are pleased to finally be working in the same office space.

"Our merger with Eck, Schafer & Punke was a great fit for our clients and staff," Perrino said. "They handle clients the way we do." Eck, Schafer & Punke added their expertise in auditing to Perrino's business, he said.

"There's not a more respected tax preparer between Chicago and St. Louis than Mario Perrino's firm," Schafer said. "We have more depth now after the merger."

Perrino, who worked for the Internal Revenue Service in Cincinnati before moving to Springfield, has more than 24 years experience in accounting, auditing, tax preparation, estate planning and business consulting. Perrino & Associates also has offices in Naples, Florida.

With the merger, the firm now employs 34 people. "We had both practiced downtown for many years," Schafer said. "It's nice to be together in one place."

"We're thankful to the city for the TIF grant, and we are thankful to O'Shea Builders for getting us in here in such a short time," Schafer said. "We look forward to the next 20 years of service." □

Ginny Lee is a regular contributor to the Springfield Business Journal as a writer and photographer.

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Employees and friends of the accounting firm Eck, Schafer & Punke held a ribbon-cutting at their new digs at 227 S. Sixth Street on Jan. 23.

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Cheryl S. Neal, JD
VP & Senior Wealth Planner
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Cheryl Neal is the newest member of our Wealth Management Team in our Springfield Office. Cheryl joined PNC in January 2015 as a Senior Wealth Planner. Prior to joining PNC, Cheryl was a partner with Mohan, Alewelt, Prillaman & Adami law firm for over 25 years. While at the firm, Cheryl concentrated her practice in estate planning, probate and trust administration and litigation, and business and tax matters. She has extensive experience in the preparation of wills, trusts, gift and estate tax returns, and the formation and maintenance of closely held corporations, limited liability companies and partnerships.

Cheryl earned her Juris Doctor at the University of Illinois College of Law and was admitted to practice law in the State of Illinois in 1984. In 2010, she was named a Leading Lawyer in the area of Trust, Will & Estate Planning and earned the distinction of AV Preeminent by Martindale-Hubbell, both peer review distinctions.

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A Springfield company with worldwide outreach

By Gabe House

Lothar Soliwon wasn't prepared to idly watch time pass by when he retired from the state of Illinois a couple years ago. The former marketing manager decided to utilize his extensive experience working with companies and municipalities – both large and small – by opening an international consulting firm.

And with that, Springfield began playing host a little more than a year ago to ZG Worldwide. ZG stands for Zukunft Group, the “zukunft” meaning “future” in German.

“ZG Worldwide is a wide-spectrum, specialized business-development company that has major components in media and health care,” said Soliwon, a German-born citizen who was raised in Springfield. “What’s unique is our international component. We have people in Shanghai, Vancouver, Buenos Aires ... and we also have people in China.”

Soliwon was quick to point out, though, that a number of his 35 associates are located in Illinois as well. ZG Worldwide works on the local, national and international levels, so the varied assortment of associates – and their myriad skillsets – is necessary when one looks at the many consulting areas ZG offers services in. A quick glance at the firm’s informational brochure lists everything from individualized weight-loss consulting all the way up to architectural consulting for new business

ventures. To call it a wide array would be an understatement.

“We welcome inquiries, and we’ll give free initial consultations if someone is interested,” Soliwon said. “If they have special needs, maybe we can fulfill them; we have so much. We have a human capital strategic management person, we have someone who specializes in improving fire and police departments ... we have bits and pieces for all sorts of different things.”

ZG Worldwide charges a five-percent commission for its consulting role in bringing clients and associates together. Soliwon said that in his experience most commission fees begin at 10 percent, particularly in large, multinational consulting firms. Project pricing is ultimately determined by ZG’s associates, who are encouraged to price in accordance with local rates.

“(The associates) have a good feel for business conditions in their country,” Soliwon said. “I don’t have a feel for what skills are going for in Argentina, for example, but we encourage them to be reasonable.”

Soliwon credits several factors for ZG Worldwide’s ability to offer such competitive fees. Location, of course, is the primary one. Being based in Springfield has certain advantages.

“Skyscrapers in downtown Chicago command a lot of money for office space,”

Soliwon said.

Also, leaps in telecommunications technology have made international business a simpler affair. And, Soliwon said, ZG further reduces cost by having its stable of international associates.

“The beauty of this ... if you want to send someone to China, the costs add up quickly,” Soliwon said. “For a \$60,000 project, thousands of additional dollars in travel costs can be a deal-breaker. Why not just figure out if the person already in China can do this work for you? It’s the name of the game.”

ZG Worldwide, in Soliwon’s words, tries to keep things simple and streamlined. Many of its associates don’t have brick and mortar offices. They cover multiple states (or countries, in the case of international associates), and they often work for other consulting firms at the same time, so they have a network of connections.

“We have a lot of contacts who would be available on an ad hoc basis for a project,” Soliwon said. “What’s good about us is that for larger projects, we can build teams easily across various disciplines. Some projects just require knowledge that our other people don’t have, and we don’t expect people to be jacks of all trades.”

Of course, this subcontracting kind of approach could lead to potential issues. Soliwon, though, says he trusts ZG

associates when they need to bring in help. Also, some of the responsibility ultimately falls on the clients themselves to properly vet those whom they may hire.

“In a way, we’re putting some of the onus on the client,” Soliwon explained. “We encourage them to ask a lot of questions, because it doesn’t cost anything to have a dialogue. We want them to feel entirely comfortable.”

Although ZG Worldwide has been operating for more than a year, Soliwon said it’s been a challenge thus far to get the word out about the burgeoning business. There’s been a great deal of interest, he said, but building a client base in the consulting world can be a long-term challenge.

Soliwon does have a timetable, however, for when he expects things to take off for ZG Worldwide.

“My goal is about three years to really build momentum, but I’m pleased so far, because this is a new company,” Soliwon said. “I feel very fortunate that I found something to do that is fun, and it’s something I’m interested in. Eventually, I want to actually have a brick and mortar facility in Springfield somewhere, perhaps downtown, once we really get the momentum going.” □

Gabe House can be reached at hauz_20@aol.com.

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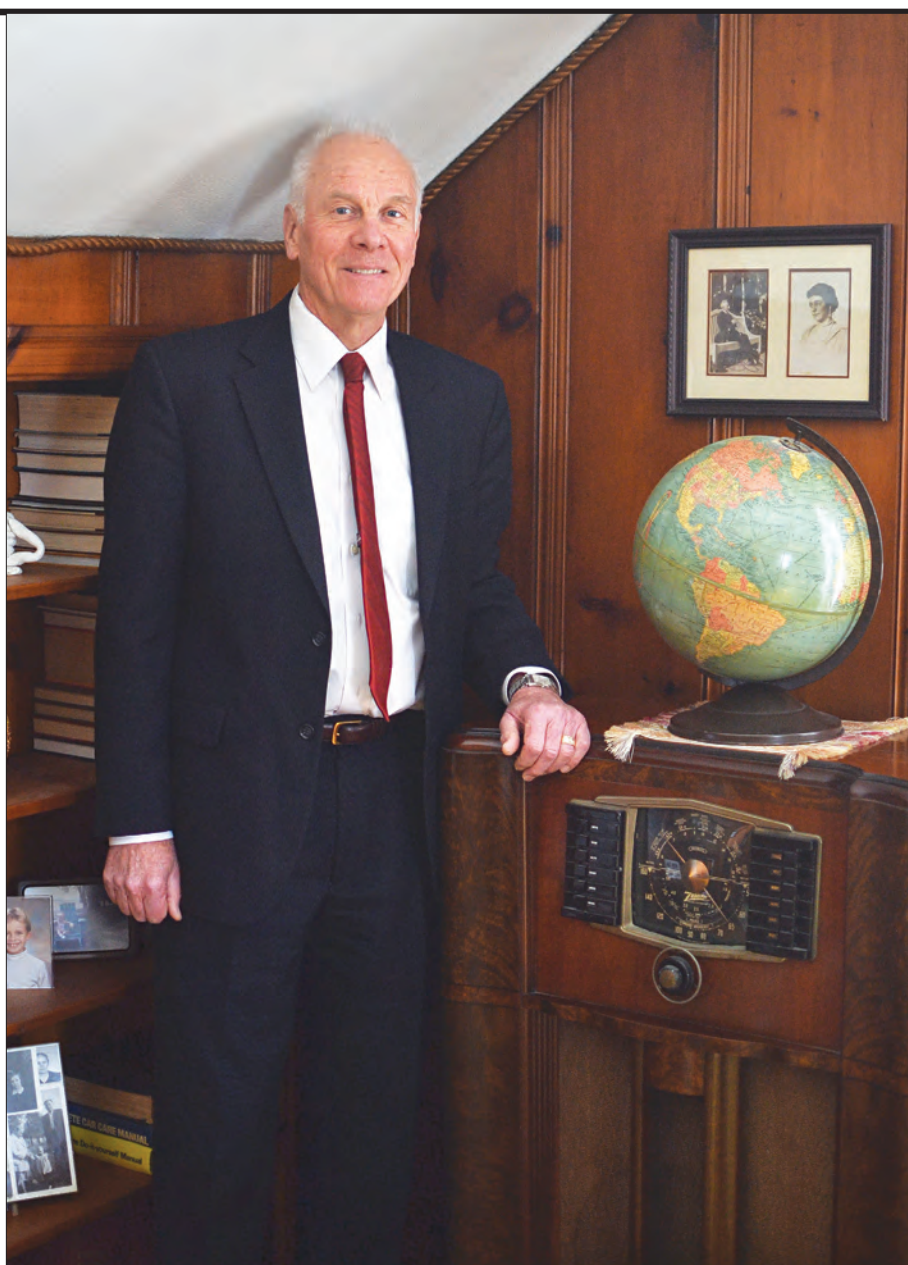
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Lothar Soliwan, owner of ZG Worldwide.

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From Guernsey to Springfield, Gemma Long is all about the people

By Colin Patrick Brady

Gemma Long loves connecting people, fostering awareness and enhancing synergy in both analog and digital worlds.

A European transplant to Springfield from Guernsey in the Channel Islands, she is an enthusiastic spokesperson for her homespun public relations firm, Gem PR & Media, where she serves as managing director. One indispensable skill a PR manager must have is the ability to create and diversify relationships between people and agencies – a role that Long believes she was destined from an early age to perform.

She feels that the Channel Islands were a great place to have grown up and enjoys any opportunity she gets to travel back to her home. Of the character of Guernsey, Long says it is “absolutely stunning – like going back in time.” However, Springfield is not without its own stunning features. She finds autumn here especially lovely, backdropped by a dazzling palette of different colored leaves we here on the prairie may take for granted. Her self-proclaimed practice of “leaf peeping” is a concept likely unfamiliar to her compatriots back on the Channel Islands but was described with great enthusiasm by Long.

She founded Gem PR&M in August of 2013

and is ever keen to diversify her portfolio – branching out to include a concentrated website along with Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook presences. With equal levels of prognostication and determination, Long told herself at age 16 that she would one day have her own public relations company. Recognizing the need to build and maintain strong relationships with peers, clients and the media, she has lived up to her youthful prophecy and indeed found success in public relations, all while adhering to her own prescribed model.

Long discovered early on that media outlets were generally more receptive if submissions were tailored to a given publication's audience. For instance, once a client would provide her with a press release, she would take it upon herself to learn the written style of the targeted publication and then tailor the piece to be both content and style-specific to the publication as well as meeting a client's desires.

A key to success in public relations, Long feels, is networking. Locally, she is affiliated with the Springfield Jaycees, Business Networking International (BNI) and Illinois Women in Leadership (IWIL). “Getting to know people is essential,” Long emphasizes.

“Nurturing peoples’ abilities and mentoring are fantastic concepts as is encouraging young minds.” Long feels that allowing persons of any age who show interest in the field of public relations to learn from her experience is an indispensable resource. She described nurturing a young student in her native Channel Islands through social media outlets, remarking that “the younger generation is innately connected to the technology of the day” and that “individual tutorial groups are exclusively done through digital media.”

She firmly believes that public relations will continue to grow and flourish in a digital world. However, despite the encroaching presence of technology in all our lives, Long still favors the simple, handwritten thank-you note and reports having recently provided her niece with a box of pre-stamped stationery to encourage sending her aunt overseas longhand written letters as frequently as possible.

Gemma Long has lived full time in Springfield since the middle of September 2014, arriving filled with enthusiasm to make it a great place in which to do business. Long states that she loves working with startups, helping them to diversify and

grow, and believes in utilizing established local businesses to support and foster other new fledgling businesses. Particularly enthused about Springfield's downtown and its potential, Long opines that “the existing economy is important and supporting the community in which you live – nurturing the young minds living there – is equally important.”

Long is proud of being a Guernsey girl and of her British heritage. She states that at least once or twice a day someone will comment upon her accent and she finds it to be “a real door-opener.” Applications like Skype and FaceTime make her job – particularly on the international front – much easier as face-to-face contact (even virtually) brings a more personal touch to her public relations work.

Long feels like she has two homes: one in the Channel Islands and another here in Springfield, both populated with friends, family, colleagues and peers. She remarks that her team is a fantastic group of people, and together they foment plans for the future of their PR team.

While doing her undergraduate studies in the UK, Long worked for a local Guernsey paper for four years, covering the

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political and health scenes. Then during her summer holidays she did public relations work for a local company. Ten years ago, while attending graduate school at Bond University on Australia's Gold Coast – she received her MS in 2005 – Gemma met her husband, Chris.

Gem PR & Media offers a multitude of products, including press service, traditional media and digital public relations, and copywriting. Corporate social responsibility also figures heavily in the Gem PR & Media plan – including managing of campaigns and procuring of charities that align with a business and its core beliefs. Long says that success in her field is not “measured by output but by outcome. Our business is based in relationships. I love my clients, watching their businesses grow, and ultimately putting back into the economy.”

Gemma Long expects to continue to use Springfield as a base of operations and in her own words is “very keen to continue to grow our network.” She feels the future of Gem PR & Media will include internships, further work with charitable organizations and increased opportunities for education in the field of PR.

“Our business is people,” she says. Gem PR& Media can be found on the web at www.gemprmedia.com as well as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn □

Colin Patrick Brady can be reached at colinpatrickbrady@hotmail.com

Gemma Long, Managing Director of Gem PR & Media.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TWITTER.COM/GEMMA_LONG



I enlisted in the Marine Corps after high school. After being discharged, I wasn't immediately ready to continue my formal education, so I entered the workforce. I quickly realized that without a college degree, my options were limited. Once I'd made the connection between higher education and success, it was my time to enroll, and choosing LLCC was an easy decision. I had some great professors with extensive real-world experience. I graduated with an associate degree and zero debt. Five years later, I completed law school and became a licensed attorney. My successes can be attributed to the staff and professors at LLCC, who believed in me and set me on the right path forward.



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WE-CI will hold its monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 14th, from 5:30- 7:30 pm at Lake Pointe Grill, Program Topic: IDEA FEST. Bring your topics for future programs. Help provide our members with timely and relevant programs. The costs for the meeting is \$20 for members, \$10 for guests, and \$25 for walk-ins. Contact Cherrill Lewis at 622-0189 for more information or reservations@we-ci.org.

Illinois Women in Leadership (IWIL)

IWIL will hold its monthly luncheon from 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 15th at the Sangamo Club. Steve Thomas will be our speaker and he will discuss how to make the word a better place in spite of “weird” people. Part of his mission... Make work culture fun! The cost for members (early registration) is \$18. Non-members and walk-ins are \$23. Reservation forms are available at www.iwil.biz.

Association for Women in Communications

AWC will hold a lunch meeting on Wednesday, January 14 from 11:30-1 p.m. at the Sangamo Club. Victoria Ringer from Downtown Springfield, Inc. will discuss how they market the downtown area and share tips of the trade. Members are \$17, guests are \$22, students \$11. RSVP to programs@awcspringfield.org.



To have your event added to the Women's Calendar of Events, Please fax your information to (217) 753-2281 or e-mail to info@springfieldbusinessjournal.com



Have a cup of coffee with a Springfield leader

By Eric Woods



As one of Springfield's biggest advocates, Desiree Logsdon loves the affordable cost of living here as well as the ease of getting around the city. "We can get anywhere in 12 minutes, unless there is a train," she said. She also enjoys the people as well as the ease of forging networks, both personal and professional. "As long as you are willing to lean in, you are good to go." Logsdon is very supportive of our local airport, as she frequently travels for her job, but does wish that more flights out of Springfield were available. In addition, economic development continues to be an area on which to focus in order to build a stronger community, according to Logsdon. She currently serves as president of the International Women's Coffee Alliance, is on the board of the National Association of Convenience Stores, and is the chair of the Illinois Women's Symposium.

Growing up, Logsdon thought about becoming a teacher, but that idea was mainly due to there being few other options for women when she was a child. "Back then women were not coached to do other things," she said. Following college, Logsdon took the only job she could find, which was as the talking Christmas tree at Bergner's. "Nobody was hiring in 1980, and that is all I could find. I was inside the tree pulling the

lips." Not long after Logsdon landed a job as a food service specialist for the Illinois State Board of Education where she would travel around examining school lunch programs.

Logsdon has worked for the Bunn family for the past 30 years. She has three core responsibilities in her current position. The first, marketing strategy and branding, is utilized globally. She also heads up the corporate citizenship program. "This involves everything we do to be a better citizen in our industry," she said. The program advocates industry and community outreach. The Bunn family is very supportive of the Springfield community, according to Logsdon. A new partnership between the Bunn family and the Pease's candy company takes up the rest of her time, as the two companies work together to help bring more products to the Pease's stores. "That part of my job is really fun. It is good to help a great Springfield brand."

Visiting Central America is a frequent occurrence for Logsdon. "Coffee is grown in third world countries. It is the second largest-traded commodity in the world," she said. "About 70 percent of the work is done by women, but 95 percent of the land is owned by men. There is a lot of hunger and poverty over there." Logsdon, through her work with the International Women's Coffee Alliance,

tries to help these workers have better lives.

Logsdon learned about getting back on the horse after falling off, both literally and figuratively as her father broke horses on a farm. "It hurt to get thrown off, but I learned to get back on. It was a great lesson in determination," she said. Along with determination, Logsdon feels people need to learn the soft skills in order to succeed. "There are so many intelligent people out there, but they need to have a great handshake and look people in the eye. Put the phone down, look up, and have a conversation."

Logsdon has long been a champion for Springfield and intends to continue for as long as she can. In 2012 she was even named a finalist for the Springfield First Citizens Award. "I care so much about this community. It meant the world that I was recognized by my peers for the community I love," she said.

Times are exciting at Bunn, as they have just introduced a new automatic espresso machine about which they are very excited. "We are proud to have put our name on that machine," said Logsdon. They will also be launching a water dispensing machine that will dispense both sparkling and still water in the near future. Logsdon has received many opportunities to grow

within the Bunn Corporation and does not think about leaving or retiring. "I am challenged every day working for the Bunn family. I am all in." □

Eric Woods can be reached at ericw93@aol.com.

Desiree Logsdon

Title: SVP of Marketing, Communications, and Corporate Citizenship, Bunn-O-Matic Corporation
E-mail: desiree.logsdon@bunn.com
Education: B.A. in Home Economic Education from Western Illinois University
Family: Husband - Bill

Favorites -

Hobby: Cooking
Movie: *The Pursuit of Happyness*
Book: *The Bridges of Madison County* by Robert James Waller

Tidbits -

Frequently travels to Central America
Loves blogging about the coffee industry
Collects martini shakers



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Creative mom juggles work and family

By Eric Woods

Brandy Renfro grew up in Franklin, a town of roughly 500 people. When she moved to Springfield in 2005, it was like moving to the big city. "This is as big as I can go. There is a big enough variety of things to do but it is also small enough to where you are bumping into people you know," she said. Renfro is very happy living in the capital city but she is concerned about crime. "The rate of crime scares me."

As a child, Renfro wanted to be President of the United States when she grew up. Throughout school she served on the student council and was even president of the student body during her senior year of high school. She was also valedictorian of her high school class, which was a huge accomplishment growing up. Her first job was working at Hamilton's Catering while in high school. "It was a good experience. They were a little mom and pop shop and had a successful business," said Renfro. After college, Renfro first found work with a company where she sat in a cubicle on the phone answering insurance questions all day. This job was not one she wanted to stay with long term. "It was very hard to be creative."

Renfro holds a certification in digital

design from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. She spent 10 years as a photographer at the Illinois Senate before taking on her current role. Renfro now handles the majority of communications. "I oversee the creative core," she said. This includes the photography department, audio and video, social media posts, and all other multimedia outlets. She also oversees two websites, illinoisenatedemocrats.com and IlikeIllinois.com. "We have come so far since President Cullerton came on board. We have become the leading force in social media. Our goal is now 10,000 followers in social media."

Early in life Renfro learned that people have to believe in what they are doing. "I like to motivate the younger staff and get them excited about their job," she said. Renfro knows she will still be doing something creative 10 years from now and managing an online presence, but she is very interested in how the future will affect the lives of her children. "I wonder how technology will face this generation."

To have a career in the communication field, Renfro feels that although a degree in communication is helpful, one in business is also advisable. "Take specialized classes.

Social media, photography and design are all good," she said. "Learn enough to where you can do it all, and never underestimate the value of social media."

Renfro and her department just finished with the inauguration of the 99th General Assembly. "Over 200 tickets were passed out," she said. "We did the signs, tickets, programs, and were there to make people feel welcome. It was like a wedding with 59 brides."

Balancing work and family has been challenging, but Renfro has been able to manage well. She considers having twins to be her greatest achievement. "It is mentally, physically and emotionally draining, but I am really proud of them already," she said. She is also proud to be able to work full time and still devote time to her children. She eventually wants to take her whole family to Disneyworld when they are old enough.

Renfro will continue mixing work and family in her life as long as her career remains fun. "I will retire if I ever stop enjoying it," she said. "If not, I will work as long as I can." □

Eric Woods can be reached at ericw93@aol.com.



Brandy Renfro

Title: Deputy Director of Communications, Illinois State Senate
E-mail: brenfro@senatedem.ilga.gov

Education: B.A. in journalism and art from MacMurray College

Family: Husband - John; Children - Kaelynn and Karly (twins), and Payton

Favorites -

Hobby: Photography
Movie: *The Nightmare Before Christmas*
Restaurant: Mario's

Tidbits -

Collects vintage cameras
Member of dance team in college
Wants to visit Easter Island

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Interior design is a class act at LLCC

By Teresa Paul

Lincoln Land Community College has scheduled a six-week program called the Interior Design Series which meets once a week on Wednesday evenings.

The Interior Design Series was created with the do-it-yourself individual in mind. Top design professionals from the Springfield area will help students learn ways to freshen up their home and make it feel new without breaking the bank.

There are six classes included in the series: Closets; Pantries and More; Interior Design – Trends, Common Issues and More; Kitchen and Bath; Tile – From Floor to Backsplash; About Color; and Window Treatments.

Jamie Stout, Director of Community Education at LLCC, invited the instructors from local businesses to both offer tips on home improvements as well as to encourage those that attend to shop local.

“Usually when I teach a class like this I do an overview of window treatment types to help people make sense of the different options available,” said Susan Day of Exciting Windows. “There are so many choices. I will help guide the class to what will be the most beautiful and the most functional.”

Day will review different types of soft treatments, such as drapery and fabric tops along with blinds, shutters and shades. She will also touch on the topic of automated shades.

“We do a lot of shades with remote controls which are now more affordable than they were in the past,” Day said.

“For those who are do-it-yourselfers, most but not all brands can be found online. If you can measure, order and install. I can give guidelines for the most and least expensive window treatments – what will last with kids and pets and get the most for your money,” Day said.

Day does all in-home service and does not operate out of a storefront.

“I bring my samples with me so I can be in the room where the window treatment will be,” Day said. “I am using the light available in the room in order to make the right color selection for the treatment I am helping the customer design.”

Day said the Interior Design Series classes will help novices make smart decisions for any home renovation.

Jamie Llosa, decorator and color consultant at Don Smith Paint Company, will instruct her class on color use in the home. During her session, students will learn how the effects of color create the look of different spaces. Llosa will help assist the student in allowing their furniture, lighting and artwork to all flow together.

“People come in the store a lot with their blueprints when they are building or remodeling,” Llosa said. “People like to do home improvements themselves but they are really scared about making a mistake. Most people do not like to paint. They also do not want to redo the work.”

“The biggest thing I will go over is undertones of colors and how that affects

different situations,” Llosa said. “We do a lot of in-home color consulting and also for businesses. Lighting can change everything when you are in the space. What you pick out at the store will not necessarily look good at your house or your business.”

Llosa said there is a 50-50 split between those who will do the painting themselves and those who are having their interior painted by a professional.

“We offer a contractor list,” Llosa said. “Sometimes contractors will send their customers in to get help with color choices.”

KSID Interiors works on residential and commercial projects. Owner Kris Salter will review examples of design challenges homeowners typically face, along with helping students to best utilize the space they currently have.

“We help a lot of homeowners who do not really know what to do with their space,” Salter said. “Our business does a lot of what I will be teaching in the class.”

Salter has been in business as KSID Interiors Inc. for nine years and has been in interior design for 25 years.

“We will talk about laying out a room,” Salter said. “How to apply today’s trends to your own space. What things are doable on their own and what might need a professional to help with the project.”

Curt Trampe, owner and operator of DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen of Springfield (see story on page 20), said if you are

considering remodeling your kitchen or bath, there is a list of skills that you will need.

“We realize that doing it yourself does not work for everybody,” Trampe said. “Certain people have skills that will lend themselves to be more successful at doing their own projects than others.”

“A big part in the decision process is asking yourself how much time do you have available to invest in your project,” Trampe said. “Cost is also a factor. You can save money if you are doing the labor yourself.”

DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen of Springfield is specifically in the business to help those who do not want to do it themselves and want a turnkey scenario.

Trampe said he will point out typical issues with remodeling kitchens and bathrooms in the class and also provide resources for students to receive information and provide different solutions.

“Maybe you have friends that have certain skills and can come alongside you to do the project together,” Trampe said. “It is about finding that balance that works for you.”

For information about attending the series, contact Jamie Stout at 786-2432. All classes open March 16. □

Teresa Paul is a personal lines account manager in the Taylorville office for Dansig Insurance. She can be reached at 565-9535 or teresadawn1970@yahoo.com.

With high demand and low inventory, apartment hunters likely to encounter competition

By Zach Baliva

Owners looking to rent a residential property in the capital city can expect plenty of phone calls in 2015. Overall, Springfield and the surrounding areas are following a national trend – homeownership is at an historic low which has pushed many people into the rental market.

Although 2014 was in some ways a good year for real estate (Illinois home prices recovered every month but sales were lower than in 2013), a slow recovery combined with other factors to impact would-be homeowners. Millennials with large student loan balances struggle to qualify for a mortgage and their parents who are preparing for retirement often delay purchasing in an uncertain economy.

Locally, Springfield's unique blend of industries and seasonal employers adds to the pool of renters. Doctors, clinicians and other medical professionals who come to town for employment might not stay long-term. CEO's and other C-suite leaders might hang on to their out-of-state homes while renting here. Politicians, lobbyists and others who interact with state government during parts of the year often prefer short-term leases. Mike Buscher, president of the Capital Area Association of Realtors says these elements combine to create a robust rental landscape. "Supply and demand is at play around Springfield, and anecdotally, rental

prices have ticked up over the last few years," he says.

During the global recession, investors scooped up foreclosed homes, turning the properties into rentals that will sell once demand increases. That trend has made the market more diverse than usual in Springfield. A new rental exchange search engine on the Capital Area Association of Realtors website lists a two-bedroom near Lanphier High School for \$600 a month and a 4,080-square-foot, 4-bedroom home near Illini Country Club for \$2,700.

Buscher doesn't expect things to change much in 2015. "Everyone knows someone who is looking for a rental, and that will be the reality this year," he says. "If you put a sign in the yard, a home could be rented within a week."

Seth Morrison agrees. Morrison, who operates Springfield Rentals and works with his father's company, Morrison Properties, says owners that provide a good product in Springfield don't have to wait long to find renters. His strategy is to buy the "worst building on the block" and transform it into an upper-tier apartment. Although he works in several parts of Springfield, Morrison would like to see a greater downtown movement and says he encourages young professionals and families to take advantage of the growing food and entertainment options there.



There are positive signs in the housing market, but things are still moving slowly. In the first month of 2015, average home sale prices rose 12.9 percent over January 2014's price to \$96,000. The total number of homes sold, however, dropped nearly 4 percent to 179, and the average number of days on the market for all homes sold in January increased from 104 in 2014 to 123 this year.

The Obama administration recently announced policies to reduce Federal Housing Administration home loan insurance premiums in a move to help first-time homebuyers enter the housing market. "It was too easy to get a loan, then it was hard, and I think it will go back toward the middle this year," says Buscher.

Changes in the marketplace continue to move slowly, and many players are waiting to see how Illinois evolves under a first-time

governor. If jobs rebound, tenants and buyers will come – and so will builders. A glance at building permits shows that many on file cover multi-family units and apartment buildings. Fewer are for single family homes.

In the real estate community, optimism is high as the market chugs along. "We need more houses to sell, and if the new governor can create jobs or bring back some state workers, that will help," says Buscher, adding that state jobs have dipped from 20,000 to 13,000. "If we recover even 500 of those, it would tip the scales on both housing and rental markets."

Although interest rates hover around record lows, they're likely to increase eventually. When they do, the move upwards may create a lull for realtors as the market adjusts. However, owners turned renters and first-time buyers can still get back into the housing market as the economy recovers. For someone paying \$1,400 a month in rent, a five percent interest rate on a home mortgage remains attractive. Investors who have been holding on to rentals will put many properties back on the market. "It's a cycle that will keep realtors rolling through any interest rate increase," says Buscher. "There will be a lot of active buyers. We're excited." □

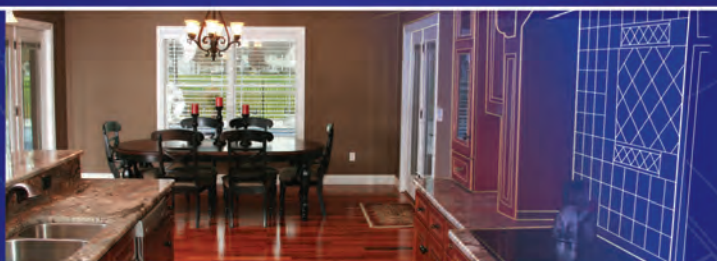
Zach Baliva is a media producer and journalist living in Springfield.

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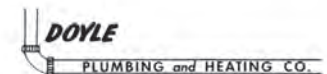
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Tom Doyle • 217-243-1013



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INTERIOR DESIGN



Exterior of DreamMaker Bath and Kitchen on Wabash.

PHOTOS BY MARANDA POTTERF



A sample of a DreamMaker interior.

continued from cover

Trampe said in this respect DreamMaker was the perfect fit, giving his now specialized operation training, support and preferred vendor relationships. Perhaps the biggest boost for his business was the ability, as a franchisee, to meet with other DreamMaker partners around the country on a regular basis to discover what worked and what didn't in relation to factors such as advertising, marketing and profit and loss variables.

"It provides you with a great way to lay their P&L next to your P&L. How are they getting by with paying only this much for insurance? How can they get their labor rate that low?" The identical business model of a franchise made such comparisons quick and easy.

The DreamMakers company has a program called "next level groups" where franchise owners are paired up to pool resources. "We'll go to their business for about two and a half days," says Curt, "take a tour and review employees, see what they're doing and as a group make recommendations. What they're doing well, what they need to improve on. That's been huge."

Curt, a certified kitchen and bath designer, says the decision to go with DreamMaker was a "no-brainer" despite some customers telling him he was nuts going away from his already successful business model.

"That was one of the things that, business-wise, DreamMaker's process really

brings to the table," he says. "We were able to pull all those pieces together. People will walk in the door and say 'I want to do my kitchen, I don't have a clue of where to start,' so we ask questions to find out what's important to them. We work with our clients and find out what they want to do, establish a budget, help them make all of their selections right here – we're not sending them all over town to make selections – and then we also have a production staff that does the projects for them, so there's not the disconnect between the design side and the production side. So it's a pretty seamless experience for our client."

Deb Trampe, who handles marketing and PR for the franchise, says that DreamMaker

has certainly provided valuable design training but she credits Curt's innate listening skills for their satisfied client base. "There are designs we probably wouldn't pick out for ourselves but which the customer loves. He listens to them very well. What's important is that they be happy and comfortable in their own space."

To visit DreamMaker in their new space, head over to 3730 Wabash Ave. on Springfield's west side to learn more about this successful local business. □

Mark Thoma is a freelance writer and online video producer at WebVidz.com in Springfield. He can be reached at mpthoma2003@yahoo.com.




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Curt and Deb Trampe, owners of DreamMaker Bath and Kitchen in Springfield.



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HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS

Sources: Springfield Area Home Builders Association; The Builders and Remodelers.
(Listed by number of full time employees.)

	BUSINESS NAME STREET ADDRESS CITY/ST/ ZIP	PHONE (-) FAX (=)	WEBSITE (www.) E-MAIL	NUMBER OF FULL TIME EMPLOYEES	PARTNERS/ PRINCIPALS	% REMODEL RENOVATION	% NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION	YEAR EST'D
1	Buraski Builders, Inc. 3757 S. Sixth St. Springfield IL 62703	217-529-5172 217-529=9356	buraski.com buraskibuilders@yahoo.com	29	Frank Buraski, Pres.; Barbara Buraski, Sec./Treas.; Jason Buraski, Heather Sobieski	50%	50%	1981
2	Moughan Builders Inc. 3140 Cockrell Lane Springfield IL 62711	217-899-5484 217-793=6013	moughanbuilders.com jim@moughanbuilders.com	21	James E. Moughan, David P. Moughan	10%	90%	1992
3	Michael von Behren Builder, Inc. 3537 S. Douglas Ave. Springfield IL 62704	217-698-8484 217-698=8486	mvbbuilder.com mike@mvbbuilder.com	19	Michael J. von Behren, Pres.; Cheri M. von Behren, Sec./Treas.	80%	20%	1982
4	Griffitts Construction Co., Inc. 1501 N. Dirksen Pkwy. Springfield IL 62702	217-522-1431 217-522=5809	griffitts.net griffitts@griffitts.net	12	Harry Griffitts, Vicky Griffitts-Runyon	95%	5%	1953
5	Zinn Construction, LLC 1323 Hawthorne Chase Sherman IL 62684	217-496-3112 866-359=0816	zinnconstruction.com phil@zinnconstruction.com	11	Phil Zinn	10%	90%	2003
6	Bobby Shaw Property Maintenance and Remodeling 3351 S. Sixth St. Frontage Rd E., Suite 5 Springfield IL 62704	217-546-3973 217-546=6410	bobbyshawmaintenance.com bobby@bsmaint.com	10	Bobby Shaw, Owner	90%	10%	1987
7	Creasey Construction of IL., Inc. PO Box 9286 Springfield IL 62791	217-546-1277 217-546=1760	creaseyconstruction.com creaseyconst@comcast.net	9	Jan Creasey, Pres., Lisa Creasey	60%	40%	1983
8	Craig Ladage Builders, Inc. 14915 Kennedy Road Auburn IL 62615	217-438-9206 217-438=5706	craigladagebuildersandstorage.com clbuilders@royell.org	8	Craig Ladage, Debbie Ladage	40%	60%	1977
9	Illinois Builders & Contractors, Inc. 4120 S. Second St. Springfield IL 62703	217-585-9490 217-529=9456	ilbuildersandcontractors.com ilbuilders2@yahoo.com	7	Fred Pryor	90%	10%	2003
10	All-C Construction, Inc. 3004 Great Northern Drive Springfield IL 62711	217-787-1900 217-787=1901	allcconstruction.com allcconstruction@att.net	6	Frank Conder, Paula Conder	20%	80%	1999
10	Timber Creek Home Sales, Inc. 2800 Via Rosso, Suite 1 Springfield IL 62703	217-585-8900 217-585=8908	timbercreekliving.com frank@timbercreekliving.com	6	Douglas Daniels, President; Frank Hoover, Sales Manager	0%	100%	1999
10	Coady Construction Co. Inc 143 Circle Drive Springfield IL 62703	217-502-0602	adamcoadyconstruction.com coadyconstruction@comcast.net	6	Adam Coady	20%	80%	2006
11	D & S Builders 30 White Road Glenarm IL 62536	217-529-6288 217-697=8149	todd@d-sbuilders.com or dan@d-sbuilders.com	5	Todd Dudley, Owner, Dan Schrage, Owner	40%	60%	1995
11	Hasara Construction Co. Inc. 125 E. Main St. Rochester IL 62563	217-498-1472 217-498=1472	hasaraconstruction.com j.stites@comcast.net	5	John H. Stites, Jr., Pres./Owner	5%	95%	1976
11	Roth Homes 350 Williams Lane Chatham IL 62629	217-483-6086 217-483=5200	www.rothhomesinc.net	5	Terry Roth	25%	75%	1984
12	Robert McCurley Contractor, Inc. 4152 Mt Zion School Rd Springfield, IL 62711	217-670-0608 217-679=3533	www.robertmccurleycontractor.com bobmccurley@comcast.net	4	Bob McCurley, President Ki McCurley, Sec./Tres.	30%	70%	1968
13	Ryan Homes & Development, Inc. 500 W. Monroe, Suite 2W Springfield IL 62704	217-523-3976 217-523=3990	homesanddevelopment.com paula.ryan2321@gmail.com	2	Mike Ryan, Paula Ryan	30%	70%	1974

HBAI honors Springfield builders

By Scott Faingold

Paul Phillips was installed as the 2015 president of the Home Builders Association of Illinois during its December 10, 2014 installation banquet in Champaign. The HBAI also named its senior officers for 2015 and inducted five members to its Housing Hall of Fame during the banquet held at the I-Hotel & Conference Center.

Phillips is a partner with Armstrong Construction in Bloomington and a member of the East Central Illinois HBA. He is the third president from the East Central Illinois local who has served as HBAI president in the past 20 years and will represent HBAI as a trustee to Build PAC, the political arm of the National Association of Home Builders. Phillips also serves on the NAHB Building Codes & Standards Committee.

Along with Phillips, senior officers installed for 2015 were Kevin Chaffin (immediate past president), Bill Ward (executive vice president), Dean Graven (senior vice president), Heather Runge (first vice president), Debbie Miller (second vice president), Pat Franz (secretary) and Allen Drewes (treasurer).

The HBAI Housing Hall of Fame inductees included Bill Basic, Mark Harrison, Edd Knight, Shawn Luesse and Doug Sutton Sr. They join members Robert Arquilla, Richard Brown, Jack Lageshulte, Lynn Krause, Terry Paul, Mike Hyrn, Chester Moskal, Mark Fulford, Larry Kinsella, Lou Stephens and Ed Sorenson.

This year's inductees:

Bill Basic

Basic served as HBAI president in 2012 and 2013. He is credited with leading the effort to defeat the Illinois State Fire Marshall's Fire Sprinkler Mandate and for supporting legislation that re-established mechanics' lien rights erased by the Illinois Supreme Court.

Mark Harrison

Harrison, who passed away in 2013, served as executive vice president from 1990 to 2008. He was responsible for the purchase of the Home Builders Headquarters along with the expansion of the association's duties and membership services. Harrison's wife, Liz, and their two daughters, Lacey and Maggie, accepted his induction.

Edd Knight

Knight served as president in 2005. He is credited with the passage of the Illinois Residential Building Code Act, a state law recognized by NAHB as the Outstanding Government Affairs Achievement for 2004. He was instrumental in the creation of the HBAI Quality Assurance Program.

Shawn Luesse

Luesse served as president of HBAI in 2003. He is the only member to chair the Government Affairs Committee for three



Tripp Sutton, Lou Stephens (Chairman of the Housing Hall of Fame Committee), Doug Sutton Sr. (inducted into the Housing Hall of Fame), Doug Sutton Jr. and Michael Sutton.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY HBAI

years. He is credited for defeating attempts by utility companies to charge impact fees on developers for utility installations into new developments.

Doug Sutton, Sr.

Sutton served as president of HBAI in 1989 and on a record number of committees at NAHB. He trained hundreds of remodelers

on how to better run their businesses and was named NAHB Remodeler of the Year. Doug is owner of Springfield based Sutton's, which has served the Springfield and surrounding Central Illinois areas for over 68 years. Sutton's is a full service construction firm offering exterior and interior remodeling, insurance reconstruction, handy man and new home construction services. □



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RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE AGENCIES

Sources: The real estate agencies; Illinois Association of Realtors website (<http://www.illinoisrealtor.org/>), MLS Firm Market Share Report. + - does not include commercial division. ++ - does not include properties solely owned and sold through the developer. (Ranked by sales volume Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2014.)

	BUSINESS NAME STREET ADDRESS CITY/ST/ ZIP	PHONE (-) FAX (=)	WEBSITE (www.) E-MAIL	MANAGING PARTNER(S) / OWNER(S)	NUMBER OF LICENSED AGENTS	TOTAL TRANSACTIONS	SALES VOLUME	% OF BOARD	YEAR EST'D
1	The Real Estate Group, Inc. 3701 W. Wabash Ave. Springfield, IL 62711	217-787-7000 217-787=7779	thegroup.com info@thegroup.com	Michael J. Buscher, Managing Broker; 26 individual broker/owners	125	2,578	\$441,126,655	38.46%	1997
2	Re/Max Professionals 2475 W. Monroe St. Springfield, IL 62704	217-787-7215 217-787=8957	viewspringfieldhomes.com	Michael D. Oldenettel, Managing Broker; Al & Linda Young, Owners	83	1,908	\$274,226,769	23.91%	1986
3	Coldwell Banker Honig-Bell 3201 Old Jacksonville Road Springfield, IL 62711	217-547-6655 217-547=6659	cbhonig-bell.com	Don Cave, Managing Broker	39	425	\$60,659,907	5.29%	2000
4	Re/Max Results Plus 1046 W. Morton Ave. Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-9613 217-243=7183	www.jacksonvilleillinois-homes. com	Scott Eoff, Managing Broker Judy Eoff, Owner	7	289	\$35,150,500	3.06%	1996
5	Grady Realtors Inc. 1501 S. MacArthur Blvd. Springfield, IL 62704	217-753-2121 217-726=2211	gradyrealtors.com sold@gradyrealtors.com	Patrick Grady, Betty Grady	8	145	\$20,502,700	1.79%	1969
6	Kennedy Real Estate LLC 400 W. Market, P.O. Box 764 Taylorville, IL 62568	217-824-8888 217-824=5080	kennedyrealestatellc.com info@kennedyrealestatellc.com	Helen Kennedy, Managing Broker	13	209	\$20,364,000	1.78%	2011
7	Blane Real Estate Inc. 121 E. Douglas Petersburg, IL 62675	217-652-7521 217-652=3262	blaneinpetersburgil.com homes@blaneinpetersburgil.com	Judy Blane-Olesen, Peter Olesen	3	144	\$20,432,212	1.78%	1950
8	Steve Hills, REALTORS 900 S. Main St. Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-9589 217-245=4198	stevehillsrealtors.com hills@jInc.net	Dianne Steinberg	5	195	\$20,260,499	1.77%	1965
9	Campo Realty, Inc. 610 Sixth St. Pawnee, IL 62558	217-625-4663 217-625=4664	camporealty.com nick@camporealty.com	Nicholas Campo, Managing Broker	8	146	\$15,615,375	1.36%	2001
10	Charles E. Robbins Real Estate Inc. 2144 S. MacArthur Blvd. Springfield, IL 62704	217-525-2112 217-525=2275	charlesrobbins.com res@charlesrobbins.com	Art Seppi, Managing Broker	15	111	\$15,058.949	1.31%	1962
11	Wrightsmen-Musso, Ltd. 159 N. Springfield St. Virden, IL 62690	217-965-4115 217-965=5021	wmlrealty.com tmusso@wrightsmenmusso.com	Dom M. Musso, Todd M. Musso	16	190	\$14,147,664	1.23%	1940
12	Grojean Realty and Insurance 360 W. State, P.O. Box 697 Jacksonville, IL 62651	217-245-4151 217-243=7573	grojeanagency.com grojean@grojeanagency.net	Charles Grojean, Tom Grojean	9	149	\$13,970,935	1.22%	1947
13	Century 21 Real Estate Associates 2030 Timberbrook Springfield, IL 62702	217-789-7200 217-789=2600	reahouses.com kgraham367@aol.com	Kevin Graham	21	109	\$11,883,995	1.04%	2004
14	Craggs REALTORS, Inc. 650 N. Webster, P.O. Box 109 Taylorville, IL 62568	217-824-8131 217-824=9315	craggsrealtors.com skcraggs@aol.com	Stephen B. Craggs	7	114	\$11,625,305	0.99%	1971
15	Do Realty 600 South 6th Street Springfield, IL 62703	217-391-3636 217-391=3666	dorealty.net BPO@dorealty.net	Stephanie L. Do, President/Broker	1	272	\$11,508,347	1%	2002
16	Curvey Real Estate, Inc. 611 Springfield Road, P. O. Box 677 Taylorville, IL 62568	217-824-4996 217-287=2111	curveyrealestate.com curvey@ctitech.com	Bernard A. Curvey, Owner/Broker; Joe Curvey, Managing Broker	9	108	\$11,371,814	0.99%	1985
17	The Real Estate Firm Inc. 1340 S. State St. Springfield, IL 62704	217-547-5500 217-522=5906	dennislpolk@gmail.com	Dennis L. Polk	16	86	\$9,887,700	0.86%	1989
18	Prairie Property Solutions 1027 Junction Circle Springfield, IL 62704	217-670-1865 217-670=0771	ppsrealty.com	M. T. Vann, Managing Broker	7	60	\$6,661,429	0.58%	2012
19	Snelling-Chevalier Real Estate Inc. 621 Seventh St. Pawnee, IL 62558	217-625-2411 217-625=7513	snelling-chevalier.com gail@family-net.net	Gail Chevalier Zini, Managing Broker	6	56	\$6,641,675	0.58%	1986
20	Prudential Classic Properties 230 W. College Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-243-0500 217-243=1580	pruclassicproperties.com jp@jamespate.com	James D. Pate	6	60	\$5,183,475	0.45%	2004
21	Advantage Realty 933 South Grand Ave. West Springfield, IL 62704	217-528-1000 217-528=1026	528-1000.com advantagerealty1@hotmail.com	Marty Benoit	10	28	\$3,082,000	0.44%	1987



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It's what's inside that counts

By Roberta Codemo



A sample of a KSID bathroom design.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KSIDINTERIORS.COM

One of the best-kept secrets in the Springfield area remains the interior design and home staging industry. While demand for these services has not reached the levels it has in major cities, industry professionals are seeing steady growth locally.

"I hear 'I didn't know you did that' all the time," said Kris Salter, who opened KSID Interiors in Williamsville in 2006. A registered interior designer in Illinois and National Council for Interior Design Qualification certification holder, she graduated from Illinois State University with a degree in interior and environmental design and has worked in the field for 25 years.

Anyone can call themselves an interior designer without having a degree, training or education in the industry. Illinois does not require interior designers to be registered with the state. Salter is one of only a few registered interior designers in the Springfield area. She brings her deep background and industry knowledge to her business.

Salter works with residential and commercial clients and can do everything except the mechanical, electrical, plumbing and structural work. During the past two years, she has seen an increase in the number of new residential clients. "People are finding

out about us," she said, crediting television and the Internet with ushering interior design into a more general public awareness.

"Homeowners are stretching the boundaries," said Salter. "They know what they like; they just don't know how to make it work." She works with clients to find solutions to their design challenges and offers both technical and decorative services. She has close relationships with area builders, architects and vendors.

Salter works with 15 to 20 clients at a time and said 30 to 40 percent of her business is new clients. She helps with budgeting and planning, developing design plans and finding the best places to purchase items for the best value. "We're not just about pretty solutions," she said.

Working with an interior designer is a win-win situation for the client, saving time and money while alleviating stress, whether the project is remodeling an existing home or designing a retail space. Salter and her team can design one room or an entire home and works within the client's budget to create a customized space that reflects the client's needs and tastes.

"The end user is the person living in the space," said Salter. When a potential client calls and asks what she thinks needs to be

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A sample of a KSID bedroom design.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KSIDINTERIORS.COM

done, she turns the question around and asks what they think needs to be done. "Everything we do is for them," she said.

Salter doesn't feel a need for more like businesses entering the local market. "Each business has its own niche," she said. "We balance each other out." What she does see the need for is more retail options for the design industry. She often has to travel to Chicago and St. Louis.

The local interior design industry hasn't changed much during the past five years. "Trends are slow to get here," said Salter, who has seen green trends emerging. Where she sees new trends is on the commercial side of her business. For the most part, her clients want to continue doing things the way they've always done them.

Salter loves what she does. "I want us to keep changing and growing," she said.

Home Staging Specialist



Rachel Hinkle

PHOTO BY LINCOLN-BERRY PHOTOGRAPHY

First impressions count. "It takes 30 seconds for someone to decide whether a home is right for them or not," said Rachel Hinkle, a professional home stager who started The Springfield Home Staging Company after moving to Springfield five years ago. She is the only non-real estate agent home stager who is also a member of the Capital Area Association of Realtors.

Hinkle partners with area real estate agents and homeowners to showcase a property's best features. "This is a wonderful business," said Hinkle. "More people need to understand the value that a home stager brings to the real estate market. If they did, everyone would hire one to help sell their home."

Home and Garden Television has helped the home staging industry. "There's a huge demand in our area," said Hinkle. "The market needs to warm up to what we do. It starts with real estate agents. Agents know what the trends are and how homes are selling. Homeowners don't know what we can do."

The Springfield housing market didn't take a big hit during the recession. "It's a very competitive market," said Hinkle. This is one reason agents need to bring in a home stager. "There are a lot of real estate agents for a community this size."

Hinkle works, on average, with four to five clients per month. Her most popular package is a walk-through consultation that costs \$125 and takes up to two hours to complete. She walks the entire property with the homeowner and points out areas that need improvement. For an additional fee, she prepares a detailed report complete with recommendations to maximize your home's appeal and prepare it for sale.

She also offers customized services based on square footage and the client's needs. She will handle everything from painting to helping homeowners rearrange furniture to moving belongings to a storage facility. "I go the extra mile," said Hinkle.

The key to selling your home for top dollar is knowing your target audience and staging your home for that audience. Each room must function as intended. Working with a home stager is "always more affordable than your first price reduction," said Hinkle. "It can make an enormous difference."

Homeowners need to neutralize and depersonalize the space. "You have to make your home no longer your home but make your home someone else's home," said Hinkle. Potential buyers need to see beyond what is there and see the potential of what it can be.

It's not about decorating, cleaning or cluttering your home but about the details. One of her biggest issues is dirty, closed up windows. "Natural clean light changes everything," said Hinkle. "It's the little things that are important."

If a home is priced right and is properly staged, it will sell. Hinkle said all the properties she has worked with have sold within a month or less.

"I love helping people see something new," said Hinkle. □

Roberta Codemo is a full-time freelance writer and started Codemo Writing Services in 2012. She works with small business owners to help create compelling online content and build their web presence. She can be reached at rcodemo@hotmail.com.

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Sources: Capital Association of Realtors, the appraisers.
(Ranked by Number of Certified Appraisers)

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1	Taft Appraisal, Inc. 1999 Wabash Avenue, Suite 205A Springfield, IL 62704	217-787-5533 217-787-6949 barrytaft@aol.com www.taftappraisalinc.com	7	Barry Taft	90% 10%	1989
2	Green Appraisal Service 3624 Wexford Dr Springfield, IL 62704	217-698-1277 360-323-8566 greenappraisalservice@comcast.net www.greenappraisalservice.com	2	Angela K. Chiaro	0% 100%	1994
3	Domer J Huffman Jr Real Estate Appraisals P.O. Box 337 Springfield, IL 62705	217-787-2066 217-787-8377 DomerJ3@gmail.com	1	Domer J. Huffman III, RAA	0% 100%	1969
3	Gary D Harvey, SRA 6400 Preston Dr Springfield, IL 62711	217-483-3534 harveygd@comcast.net	1	Gary D. Harvey	0% 100%	1993
3	Kienzler Appraisal Service 410 South Grand West Springfield, IL 62704	217-525-6050 greg@apraze1.com	1	Gregory Kienzler	90% 10%	1996
3	Michael J. Call Appraisal Service 833 South Grand Avenue West Springfield, IL 62704	217-747-0252 217-747-0254 callappraisals@comcast.net callappraisals.com	1	Michael J. Call	0% 100%	1987
3	Phillips Appraisal 6305 Wind Tree Rd Springfield, IL	217-529-3929 217-529-9351 rjp01@comcast.net phillipsappraisal.com	1	Randal J. Phillips, SRA	0% 100%	2000
3	Williams Appraisals 881 Meadowbrook Road Springfield, IL	217-793-9234 217-793-9274 john.williams50@comcast.net	1	John Williams	0% 100%	1993



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Racing to the top of home building

By Eric Woods

Jim Moughan has lived in the Springfield area his entire life. He has spent the last 10 years living in Rochester but still considers it a part of Springfield. He enjoys the fact that traffic is not bad and that the city has a wonderful medical community. "Some of the best medical facilities in the state are here," he said. He is also a fan of the Lincoln sites. "They are pretty interesting. The museum is a jewel. It is pretty magnificent." Going forward, Moughan hopes to see more of state government return to Springfield with the new governor.

Moughan has been racing cars for the past 35 years and races 10 to 15 times a year. "I race in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Indiana," he said. When he was a child, Moughan wanted to be a race car driver, but eventually he realized that becoming successful in business was a more feasible option. He still races as a hobby but sees himself slowing down going forward. "If I do 10 shows this year that will be fine."

In his early teens, Moughan delivered papers, which lasted for a couple years before he got a job washing dishes in high school. After graduation he became a union painter

and thought about either becoming a general contractor or building houses. "My brother and I wanted to better ourselves," he said. "We decided it would be easier to sell houses we built than to be real estate agents."

Moughan Builders enters its 23rd year in business in 2015. Moughan and his brother, Dave, run the company. They sell lots as well as the homes they build themselves. "We built our first house in January 1992. We are now on number 452," said Moughan. "I handle the business side and the design part. Dave runs the day-to-day and construction of the homes. We also have a designer, job coordinator and draftsman." Although they are busy throughout the year, Moughan said that spring will be their busiest time.

Lately the company has been very busy with the new Ironbridge Estates subdivision in Chatham. "Developing is going well," said Moughan. "These are high-end homes. It is similar to Savannah Pointe and Piper Glen. We have sold 29 lots in the last six months."

Moughan advises those wanting to get into the home-building industry to always keep their word. "My dad taught me to do what you say you will do," he said. "He also

taught me about integrity. Those were the big things."

For those still young and looking for a trade, Moughan recommends going to a school such as the Capital Area Career Center for vocational training. "That is a good place to learn trades. My brother received the 'golden hammer' from there," he said. There are also some strong trade unions which offer apprenticeships. Moughan also stresses hard work and dedication along with being productive on the job. "If you give your employer a good day's work, he will keep you around. We have many two- and three-time customers over the years. No matter the business, customer service should be at the top of your list."

Moughan could see himself retiring in the next 10 years as he would love to start traveling more. "With work there is not a lot of time to travel," he said. "I cannot sit still, though, so I am going to have to be doing something." □

Eric Woods can be reached at ericw93@aol.com.



Jim Moughan

Title: Owner, Moughan Builders
E-mail: jim@moughanbuilders.com

Education: Southeast High School
Family: Wife - Jannette; Children - Kimberly and Jimmy

Favorites -
Hobby: Auto Racing
Restaurant: Bella Milano
Sports team: Fighting Illini basketball

Tidbits -
Favorite subject in school was business
Wants to travel more
Races open-wheel winged sprint cars

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How do you own your home?

By Sarah Jane Delano Pavlik

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

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

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

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

Not all states have tenancy by the entirety, and there are differences between

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

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

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

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

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



to satisfy a debt.

For a husband and wife, this may be the desired result. For a parent and child, it may not.

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

children at his death.

The same analysis applies with children. It is common for a parent to add a child's name to a bank account, particularly when the parent is older and wants some help paying the bills, etc. If that child is added to the account as a joint tenant, that account will pass to the child at the parent's death regardless of any will. That child may or may not share that account with his siblings. Or, he may or may not use it to pay funeral expenses, even if that was the parent's intention. The solution? Add the child to the account as a "convenience signer" and not as a joint tenant. That means the child can sign checks but the account will not pass to him at the parent's death.

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

Sarah Jane Delano Pavlik is an attorney with Delano Law offices, LLC, in Springfield.





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Managing the American dream

By Eric Woods



Mike Buscher

Title: Managing Broker, The Real Estate Group
E-mail: mbuscher@thegroup.com
Education: Certified Real Estate Brokerage Manager (CRB) and Graduate, REALTOR® Institute (GRI) designations
Family: Wife – Misty; Children – Anthony and Courtney

Favorites –
Hobby: Traveling
Movie: *The Shawshank Redemption*
Sports team: Pittsburgh Steelers

Tidbits –
Owner of The Creek Pub and Grill in Chatham
Enjoys traveling to the mountains in North Carolina
Wants to become a more competitive golfer

Mike Buscher is a native of Springfield, having lived here his entire life. He enjoys the friendly atmosphere and the attitude of the people more than anything else. “Springfield is big enough for stuff to do and close enough to bigger locations if you want something more,” he said. “It is a smaller big city.” Buscher belongs to Sangamon CEO, the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, and has been through Springfield’s FBI Citizens Academy.

Although Springfield is a good place to live, Buscher does see a lack of activities for children. He also feels there is an issue with attracting new businesses and economic development. “We are not as pro-growth as some communities around us,” he said.

Growing up, Buscher wanted to be a mechanic but he knew that he did not have the skills for that profession. His first job was as a dishwasher at Butch’s Steak House while in high school. It was during that time he also took a sales class which he thoroughly enjoyed. One of his greatest achievements came in eighth grade as his school won the basketball championship, even though Buscher scored two points for the opposing team in the final game. “That is still a favorite story among the guys,” he said.

For the past 25 years, Buscher has been in the real estate industry, with the past 18 years coming at The Real Estate Group. He is currently responsible for 127 agents within the company. Buscher handles sales, office operations, budgeting, training, and managing any issues that come up. He occasionally goes out into the field with the agents but no longer goes out by himself. “My first three years was nothing but sales,” he said. Over the next several years he added sales management to his repertoire and was splitting the sales and the managing time in half.

“There is no better career in my opinion,” said Buscher. He advises those hoping to break into real estate to do their research on the industry. “There is no limit on earnings, and you have the flexibility of running your own business. We sell the American dream and help people accomplish that.” Buscher was told early on in his career to treat his job like a business, be professional, do whatever planning is necessary, and dress the part. His first job in real estate was working for Julie Davis, and he credits her as being his biggest professional influence.

Buscher learned quite a bit from his

parents as well, including how to take personal responsibility. “They were adamant about owning up to mistakes and learning from it,” he said. Buscher hopes those who can help the economy will take that advice in order to fix the current problems. “We need to get our finances in order, both on the state and federal levels. If we get it under control, we can keep the economy moving forward for the kids.”

The Real Estate Group has big plans for the future, as they will be starting their own mortgage company which should be up and running by April. Buscher says that it will be housed in the same building where they currently reside, although he admits the space is getting pretty full. “We are going to continue looking at the market, staying strong and riding the wave,” he said.

Buscher plans to retire but not anytime soon. He figures to slow down a bit in the next 10 years but will still be where he is at today. “Real estate is hard to retire from,” he said. “It will be within the next 15 years. There will be a point where it is time to get out.” □

Eric Woods is a freelance writer from Springfield. He can be reached at ericw93@aol.com.




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Amanda High

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Business Owner: David Blanchette

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3617 N. Grand Ave. E.
679-0806
Business Owners: Amie Weaver, Melissa
Richardson

Cherry-Holden Productions

1218 W Monroe
726-9624
Business Owner: Diana Cherry

Sporting JB Marine SC Springfield

4308 Fielding Dr
899-8516
Business Owner: Mark Kuchar

Sugar Creek Quilt Shoppe

3910 Hudson Road
415-2850
Business Owner: Rebecca Sue Heren

CJ Rental Properties

2401 Shabbona
553-5871
Business Owners: Kim Tribbet,
Craig Tribbet

The Roost

216 S. 6th Street
312-952-2079
Business Owner: Rachel E. Bonney

Live Wire Electrical Contracting

109 N. Lake Dr., Atlanta
309-275-3639
Business Owner: Matthew R. Shindel

The Hair Boss

901 Clocktower
787-9014
Business Owner: Amy Chambers

RJH Gold

1483 N. Farmingdale Rd, Pleasant Plains
303-3013
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Julie A. Henderson

Grinder's Gear Review

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414-1747
Business Owner: James Brian Toland

C.W. Meyer Construction

655 S. Oaklane Road
341-2859
Business Owners: Charles W Meyer,
Debra L. Meyer

Nail Bar 66

2337 S. Dirksen Parkway
414-688-4949
Business Owner: John D. Vu

ABC Care

527 S. Grand Ave. West
553-0265
Business Owner: Jevonda R. Ward

The Little Lotus Hut

1913 E. Keys Ave
691-8710
Business Owner: Lynsey M. Monroe

TCJ Chemical Co.

300 Chatham Road
622-2637
Business Owner: Buddy R. Marcum

Duffey's Lawn Care and Maintenance

1502 S Pasfield
503-0948
Business Owner: Leonard Duffey

Luxe Nail Bar

3203 S. Veterans Parkway
546-1168
Business Owner: Nguyen Nguyen

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341-9811
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Michael Nation Jr

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Ronald Beckner PHOTOS BY MARK THOMA

Redneck Mobile Repair

1145 W Monroe St.
816-8465

Like the now forgotten concept of the doctor who makes “house calls”, Ronald Beckner will come to the patient to work on sick cars and trucks.

Beckner, who grew up on a farm and says he’s been a “redneck” all his life, came up with the idea and the name for Redneck Mobile Repair while talking with a friend a few months ago. A mechanic for 12 years who now works out of his truck, Beckner says he can undercut traditional shops by eliminating the need for an expensive tow and the costs associated with shop overhead. He also says he has the Springfield area to himself with the nearest mobile mechanic competitor in Peoria.

Spreading the word through social media and Internet websites, Beckner, who also has plans for traditional advertising, says he also leaves a lot of “Redneck Mobile Repair” business cards on bulletin boards.

Preferring to work in customers’ garages, Beckner says he’ll do just about anything to get a car or truck back on the road – short of swapping out engines or other work that requires the use of a lift.

Still, for a guy who learned how to change the oil on farm vehicles when he was just nine years old, working on cars and trucks under less than ideal conditions comes naturally.

You can reach Redneck Mobile Repair at 217-816-8465 or find the company on Facebook under “Redneck Mobile Repair.” □



Nathan Barber

Anything Pipes

406 N. Dirksen Pkwy.
210-2028

Hoping to capitalize on a rapidly changing attitude towards the legalization of medical marijuana, Nathan Barber has opened Anything Pipes, a sub-business under his five-month-old Anything Store at 406 N. Dirksen Pkwy. in Springfield. Occupying a separate room in the back, Anything Pipes has several glass showcases filled with a variety of smoking equipment.

“We want to be on the front lines of any new business starting in Illinois,” says Barber, “If we can be one of the main guys in Springfield for it then that’s what we want to be. If that’s selling tobacco pipes or cigarette equipment, or whatever is going to help us be a success...you know we’re a young business, we’re eager to get customers in here and do whatever it takes to make them happy.”

In addition to selling pipes that Barber is careful to identify as “tobacco pipes,” he’s happy to show customers the latest in e-cigarettes and “vape pens” – the mechanical devices used to vaporize liquid nicotine.

Barber says getting people through the door is the key to success, and foot traffic into the Anything Store was constant even on a windy and cold Wednesday morning when the temperature outside was just 10 degrees. With medical marijuana now legalized, this may be Anything Pipes’ moment to shine. □

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Leading the Way

Packman joins Hanson's headquarters

Thomas Packman, EIT, engineer intern, recently joined Hanson Professional Services Inc.'s headquarters in Springfield. Assigned to the firm's power and industry market, he will assist with structural design for public agency and private industry clients. Packman previously held an internship at Hanson, during which he performed modeling and detailing using building design software, reinforced masonry design and steel design. He also was a structural designer for an engineering, surveying and planning firm in Waterloo, where he assisted with construction phase design services, bridge design, bridge-load ratings and inspections. He received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), where he was a treasurer of Chi Epsilon, a civil engineering honor society. He is pursuing a master's degree in civil engineering from SIUE.

Tim Goetz celebrates 40 years at Hanson's headquarters



Tim Goetz recently celebrated 40 years of service at Hanson Professional Services Inc.'s Springfield headquarters. Goetz joined the company in 1974. He provides design services and

prepares contract documents for water and wastewater treatment and pumping facilities, highway and railroad bridges and shoreline and flood protection projects. He also has designed support for excavation and retaining wall projects, buildings and civil engineering

structures. He received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1974 from Marquette University. He is a member of the West Central Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers' Central Illinois Section, the Illinois Society of Professional Engineers and the National Society of Professional Engineers. He is a licensed professional engineer in Illinois and New York and a licensed structural engineer in Illinois.

MacMurray launches extensive search for 16th president



MacMurray College has launched a search for its 16th president of the College today. A section of the MacMurray website, www.mac.edu/presidentialsearch contains extensive information on the search process and the college. "This is an extraordinarily important undertaking," said Charles O'Connell, chairman of the MacMurray College board of trustees who will serve as an ex officio member of the presidential search committee. "We are seeking a president who will lead the institution with vision, energy, and purpose over the coming years," he said. "We look forward with excitement to the beginning of the next chapter in MacMurray's rich history." The presidential search committee will begin reviewing applications in late February and is charged with submitting a successful candidate to the board by late spring 2015. The expectation is that the new president will take office during the summer. The search committee is comprised of representatives of the college's many constituencies, including other members of the MacMurray board

of trustees, members of the MacMurray Alumni Board, faculty, students and staff, as well as a representative of the Jacksonville community, James Hinchey, a retired local physician. The search was prompted by the announcement in December that the current president, Colleen Hester, would be stepping down as of May 31. Nominations for the 16th president of MacMurray College may be sent to presidential.search@mac.edu.

Edwards Group Estate Planning & Elder Law Firm welcomes new attorney

Edwards Group, LLC, has hired Chris Flynn as the firm's third attorney. Flynn will primarily assist founding attorney David Edwards with elder law and Medicaid planning issues. Due to the skyrocketing costs of long-term care, and the extended lifespan of many Americans, a new niche in elder law, called Life Care Planning, has recently developed, and Edwards Group is on the forefront of these revolutionary strategies in central Illinois. Because of this, the firm has experienced exponential growth over the last five years. Flynn previously worked as an attorney in the state government, giving counsel to the Governor's Office of Management and Budget, the Capital Development Board and working with the Chief Procurement Office.

1st Global honors ESP Wealth Management, LLC as 2014 Two Diamond Eagle Firm

ESP Wealth Management, LLC, headquartered in Springfield, was recognized for its outstanding achievements at 1st Global's annual national conference held in November at the Omni Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. "Diamond Eagle firms set the

standard of excellence in our business by creating meaningful outcomes for the individuals, families and businesses these firms serve," says 1st Global founder and CEO Tony Batman. "Diamond Eagle firms are more than successful – they are significant because of the dedication of their people to this noble purpose."

2015 CWLP "Smart Solutions" workshop scheduled



City Water, Light and Power's Energy Services Office has scheduled its 2015 free home efficiency workshops, "Smart Solutions." Smart Solutions workshops will focus on home

efficiency solutions that can be made for little or no cost. The workshops will all be held in the Carnegie Room North of Lincoln Library at the corner of Seventh Street and Capitol Avenue. Along with valuable tips on how to lower energy bills and conserve water, the latest information on any current CWLP programs and rebates available will be shared. CWLP's energy experts will also be on hand to work with customers to analyze specific problems customers are currently experiencing and identify potential solutions. All participants will receive free take-home starter kits of weatherization materials and customized water conservation devices. The Smart Solutions workshops last about 90 minutes and are open and free of charge to all CWLP residential electric customers. Pre-registration, which is required, can be completed by calling the CWLP Energy Services Office at 789-2070 or by emailing nrgxprts@cwlp.com. □

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NEWS AROUND THE CLOCK



Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurant

By Thomas C. Pavlik, Jr.



PHOTOS BY GINNY LEE

Wineries seem to be popping up all over central Illinois these days. We can now claim our own here in Springfield thanks to Cooper's Hawk's decision to open its newest location at White Oaks mall.

Most wineries in the area are locally owned, destination establishments with an emphasis on wine. Cooper's Hawk, however, is equal part winery and restaurant.

Let's talk winery first. Cooper's Hawk makes its own wines here in Illinois (which are then distributed to its national chain) from grapes grown throughout the country. There's only one brand – Cooper's own house label. It helps cut through the mystery of a wine list.

Cooper's is set up so that, upon entering, you walk into a wine-tasting bar and storefront where you can purchase wine to go. Behind the wine-tasting area is the restaurant itself and a separate bar with counter seating and high tops. The look is contemporary with lots of tile and dark wood. Oak wine barrels are strategically placed to evoke the sense of a California winery. Overall, Cooper's is pleasing to the eye, but perhaps a bit too "corporate" for some tastes. Think Cracker Barrel reinvented in Napa.

My guests and I arrived shortly before noon and were pleasantly greeted and shown to our table. Menus appeared and drink orders were taken, but it took

quite some time for our bread to arrive. Our server apologized and explained the kitchen was just finishing a new batch. Overall it showed that the staff was well trained.

Cooper's menu is quite expansive, although there is a small "lunch-sized entrée" section with a handful of items. We noted that five of the seven options were chicken-based – more variety might help. Actual entrées were priced on the high end for lunch, leaving business lunch diners to choose from burgers/sandwiches, soups, flatbreads, salads and "combinations."

We opted to try the cilantro ranch chicken sandwich (with choice of fries, fruit or Asian slaw – \$11.99), the soy ginger salmon (\$14.99 – with wasabi-buttered potatoes and asparagus); and the flatbread and salad combination (\$14.99). Several other options from the "Life Balance" section of the menu caught our eye (like the chicken potstickers – 570 calories and \$8.99 and the ahi tuna tacos – 442 calories, with pico, avocado and Asian slaw, \$10.99), but apparently nobody was counting calories that day. However, it's a great concept and much appreciated.

We all enjoyed Cooper's delicious pretzel bread – which was worth the wait. My guests enjoyed their dishes and offered solid – not glowing – reviews. I can attest that the fries were delicious and the chicken sandwich appeared to be nicely browned with appropriate amounts of

garnish. The salmon was sized correctly for a lunch portion, but looked to be glazed with something too sweet for my taste. As for my salad (Caesar pesto), it had all of the required elements, but none of the punch it could have delivered. So, too, with my pizza – it was a bit bland until some crushed red pepper came to the rescue.

Service was a decided bright spot. Staff was friendly, attentive and knowledgeable about the menu. Our glasses were well attended. We lingered a bit talking business after finishing our food but never felt pressured to leave. That alone makes Cooper's appropriate for a business lunch. We did note, however, that portions of our conversation were clearly

overheard by our nearby dining neighbors – just remember, "Loose Lips Sink Ships."

At worst, Cooper's dishes are inoffensive. At best, they are on the upper end of Springfield's "chain" scene. One gets the feeling that Cooper's tries to please every palate and, in doing so, never quite excites the taste buds or senses. Coupled with what (to my estimation) seemed a bit higher than average pricing, I remain puzzled over the buzz around its opening. Still, for a solid and safe (if unremarkable) business lunch, Cooper's Hawk won't disappoint. □

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

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Hours:	Mon-Thurs, 11 am – 9:30 pm, Fri & Sat, 11 am – 10:30 pm, Sun, 11 am – 9 pm	Food:	★★★
Wheelchair Access:	Yes	Price:	★★★
Credit Cards:	Yes	Suitability for Business Lunch:	★★★1/2
		OVERALL:	3.75



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Central Illinois' first-ever heated chemotherapy treatment

Joseph Smith, a 74-year-old retired ironworker from rural Cantrall, had been diagnosed with stage 4 of a rare form of cancer when he became the first person in central Illinois to receive a surgical treatment that rinsed his abdominal cavity with heated chemotherapy. The life-saving procedure is known as hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy, or HIPEC. Because of it, Smith has more time with his wife of 54 years, Linda, as they raise the four girls – sisters from 4 to 8 years old – they adopted last year after their mother

was diagnosed with cancer, which later claimed her life. Smith can also continue to work on a 1935 Chevy Master town car that he and his son, Jason, are rebuilding, along with some help from his other son, Jeff. Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and Memorial Medical Center worked together to bring the procedure to the region. Dr. Sabha Ganai, an assistant professor in the department of surgery at SIU School of Medicine, performed Smith's eight-hour procedure on Oct. 8 at the hospital.

Summer internships available at Simmons Cancer Institute

College students interested in a career in medicine or cancer research are invited to apply for one of four internships at Simmons Cancer Institute (SCI) at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. Interns will have the opportunity to learn laboratory and critical thinking skills while immersed in research labs under the supervision of SCI faculty members. Three intern positions are located at the School of Medicine campus in Springfield. The fourth position is located at the SIU Carbondale campus. Qualified individuals will have completed their freshman year of college by June 2015 and not have graduated from college prior to June 2015. Applicants should submit a current college transcript, a résumé 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. Interested applicants should email the required materials as PDFs to Theresa Casson no later than March 13, 2015. For more information, please call Casson at 217-545-2220.

SIU Medical School hosts Diabetes U classes

Southern Illinois University School of Medicine is hosting interactive group classes to help individuals with type 1 and type 2 diabetes. The 'Diabetes U' classes are designed for adults living with diabetes and their support person(s). The interactive classes provide information about living

with diabetes, potential complications, nutrition, testing and monitoring. The two-session courses will be offered on two Tuesdays monthly from 2 - 4 pm and includes a free follow-up class. Class size is limited. Fees are billable and reimbursable by many health insurers. Preregistration is required for participation. For more information or to register, please call 217-545-7985.

Singh Joins Memorial Physician Services-Vine Street as Psychiatrist



Dr. Kuldeep Singh has begun his practice at Memorial Physician Services-Vine Street as a psychiatrist. Singh completed his residency in 2014 in the adult psychiatry training program at Louisiana State University Health

Sciences Center in New Orleans. Board certified in general psychiatry, Singh earned his medical degree in 2009 from American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine in St. Maarten, east of Puerto Rico. He earned his undergraduate degree in bioengineering with a concentration in neural engineering in 2005 from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Singh is a member of the Academy of Psychosomatic Medicine and the American Psychiatric Association. He is from South Holland, Illinois. He and his wife, Ishita, live in Springfield. □



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Website:

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Email:

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Facebook:

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Twitter:

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Editor and Publisher

Fletcher Farrar
fletcher@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Associate Publisher

Michelle Higginbotham
michelle@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Associate Editor

Scott Faingold
scott@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Contributors

Zach Baliva	Ginny Lee
Colin Patrick Brady	Teresa Paul
Roberta Codemo	Sarah Delano Pavlik
Terry Farmer	Thomas C. Pavlik, Jr.
Gabe House	Maranda Potterf
David Kelm	Mark Thoma
Eric Woods	

Production Designer

David Hine
ads@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Editorial Designer

Diane Lyddon
ads@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Business Manager

Brenda Matheis
brenda@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Administrative Assistant

Irma Wallace
irma@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Advertising

James Bengfort
james@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Beth Parkes-Irwin
beth@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Stacie Lewis
stacie@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

Teri Hill
teri@springfieldbusinessjournal.com

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Worldwide Springfield

By Scott Faingold
Associate editor

I was heartened by the positive response to my column last month ("In praise of the small pond"), in which I extolled the advantages of living and doing business in Springfield while decrying attitudes that seem to imply that worthwhile things can only be achieved in larger, more metropolitan communities.

In the early 1990s, when I left Springfield to live in Chicago, one of the biggest draws of the big city was cultural. Back then, movies, music and even books that interested me were often difficult to access here in town and getting what I wanted often necessitated taking inconvenient trips (or placing expensive special orders). As important as these things were to me, it only made sense to move closer to their source.

These days, of course, with the all-permeating fact of the Internet, the notion of this sort of limited cultural access seems laughable and quaint. If anything, there is now too much material available, much of it instantaneous. From the most obscure underground music of yesteryear to the most cutting edge emerging film and video to the immortals of classic literature, none of it is more than a few keystrokes away (the same obviously goes for obscure underground literature, emerging music, classic cinema, etc). Indeed, in the age of Netflix, iTunes and eBooks, the idea of physically relocating for reasons of cultural access seems antiquated indeed.

In the age of perpetual cyber-connection, cultural isolation is not the



PHOTO BY DAVID HINE

only former problem that seems to shrink to insignificance. In this issue of *SBJ* there are two stories about successful consulting businesses using Springfield as a home base for international operations. Gem Public Relations and Media (p. 14) and ZG Worldwide (p. 12) both find central Illinois an advantageous location due to a combination of increased affordability and the ease provided by web-based communication technology.

All of this is potentially great news for Springfield's residential real estate industry as well. If more entrepreneurs start to see Springfield as an attractive locale, the housing market, along with the local economy at large, can only benefit. As I said last month, it is just as easy to have a fulfilling life in a town the size of Springfield as in a larger city. And with just a few more forward-thinking, tech-savvy businesses, things could really be looking up. □

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