

Springfield

2017 Issue No. 5 Vol. 13

SCENE MAGAZINE



Profiles

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(COVER)

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FARRELL GAY
STEPHANIE KENT
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PUBLISHER

Bill Stokes

BUSINESS MANAGER

Miriam Stokes

PHOTOGRAPHY

David Fitch, Gus Gordon, Jamie Graff,
 Donna Loundsberry, Juli Pennell,
 Mike Sheehan, Bill Stokes, Phil Wheat

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Julie Cellini, Gus Gordon,
 Lisa Rigoni, Samantha Schrage, Bill Stokes,
 Karen Ackerman Witter

GRAPHIC DESIGN ASSISTANT

Riley Hulligan

ADVERTISING

Phone: 217-753-2000

<http://www.ss-mag.com/advertise>

email: mediakit@ss-mag.com

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On The Cover: Val & Chris Butler

2017 United Way Campaign Chairs



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Kelly Cunningham
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kelly.cunningham@pnc.com
pnc.com



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PHOTO BY BILL STOKES

Chris & Val Butler

2017 UW Campaign Chairs

Chris and Val Butler from Butler Funeral Home, have been long time supporters of United Way. I had an opportunity to interview them before the official UW Kick Off meeting on Sept 9th. We sat on their back patio on a beautiful August evening talking about UW and the needs of our community.

BY BILL STOKES

Chris and Val were given a list of questions and Val responses were so well written, I'm sharing them in full. Based on the nearly 2 hours of dialogue, I believe they will do a great job for our community in leading the UW Campaign this year. The campaign officially kicked off on September 9th.

What inspired you to take on the campaign?

The decision to serve as campaign chairs didn't come quite as easily for me, as it did for Chris. I was initially a little worried that between work and our girls and our other community involvement, that our plates were already full—spilling over, actually. It didn't take long, maybe 24 hours, for me to come around though. All I had to do was to think back to all of the United Way events we've previously attended—all the stories we've heard over the years about the amazing things United Way was helping organizations to do for the most vulnerable in the community. I thought, if we're going to get behind any cause in the community, it should be this one. It's actually like getting behind 24 causes, because that's how many local non-profit agencies the United Way provided funding to last year.

Also, I was raised by an amazing single mother who struggled for years to make ends meet and to provide for my sister and I. She utilized community services, like those supported by the United Way (some are still funded by UW), when my sister and I were young. While Chris' family was beginning to invest in the community and create a family legacy of giving to the United Way, my family was actually utilizing services funded by the United Way. So, for me, being involved with United Way is really like coming full-circle—

from being on the receiving end to being able to pay it back and pay it forward—in a big way.

What do you hope to accomplish this year?

Simply put, we hope to raise as much money as we can for United Way. As Chris mentioned, we're embracing high expectations and we're asking the community to do the same. Every contribution counts and every increase over last year's giving positions the United Way to do even more good in our community. After all, when the individuals, families, and organizations that United Way supports succeed, we all succeed—the entire community succeeds.

What do you like about United Way?

We love that United Way is a comprehensive organization—that it has the ability to take community dollars and share them across a spectrum of community needs. And, we love that they take the time to actually research the issues in the community that our local non-profit groups are working hard every day to address. United Way provides a safety net for families in crisis, and create opportunities for those seeking a better life. They don't just solve the problems of this particular day, or this particular year—they lift people up, so that they too can be part of the long-term solution to tackling some of our community's toughest problems.

What can the average person do to help the UW mission?

We have been asked by many of our friends and family, "How can we best support the United Way?" The first thing we tell them is to participate in their employer's United Way Campaign. Most employers make this

really easy to do—a quick form to fill out and they can even set up easy payroll deduction. We tell people that if their employer does not conduct a United Way Campaign to respectfully inquire as to why that might be and to encourage them to consider meeting with someone to learn more about it. **Another thing people can do, if they don't have a campaign at the office or if they're retired is to participate in the new Text to Give program by texting "2017GIFT" to 41444.**

We also encourage people to get educated about the needs in our community. Many people think they know, but in reality, its incredibly eye opening to learn more about the scope of the work our local non-profits are doing.

Tell me a few things about the two of you, what you like doing together, how you balance family and work, what you do for fun, etc...

It's no secret that we work a lot, but we try not to bring that work home. We love being present with our children (Camilla, 6) and Audra (4). They both play soccer and baseball, so we're on the move a lot. Like many parents, we're constantly trying to strike that magic balance between being good business owners, good parents, and good stewards of our community. The girls are still young, but we're already finding ways to ensure that they are mindful of what's going on in the community, about the needs that others have, and about how we can help financially, with our time, and with our voices.



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\$1,300,000 familywise®
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myfree
taxes.com

MyFreeTaxes.com has helped local households receive income tax refunds in excess of

\$660,000

125,000

books have been delivered to local preschoolers through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.



Illinois
2-1-1
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3,000
people called 2-1-1 for information and referrals last year.

YOUR INVESTMENT GOES FARTHER

100% of your contribution to United Way's Community Fund goes to support health and human service programs in Sangamon and Menard County. Fundraising and administrative costs are underwritten by the United Way Endowment and the generous support of Ameren, BUNN, The Horace Mann Companies, Illinois National Bank, U.S. Bank, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage and one company wishing to remain anonymous.



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United Way of Central Illinois
www.springfieldunitedway.org



BASIC NEEDS

*Supporting a safety net of
food and shelter*

- Emergency Food
- Emergency Shelter

EMERGENCY FOOD



1 in 7 people in our
community experience
food insecurity*

175,139

Meals Served
in first two quarters of
grant year

55,332

Pounds of Food
Distributed in first two
quarters of grant year

EDUCATION

*Helping children learn, achieve
and succeed while engaging
families and communities.*

- Kindergarten Readiness
- On-Time Achievement
- Graduating with a Plan

FUNDED PROGRAMS

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Illinois
Capital Region
Comprehensive Mentoring

Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Illinois
McClelland Learning Center
Project Learn

Community Connection Point
Ready for Tomorrow

Compass for Kids
Camp Compass
Compass

Memorial Behavioral Health
The Children's MOSAIC Project

One Hope United
Foster Grandparent Program

Springfield Urban League
Freedom School

Teen REACH
Wee Grow

United Cerebral Palsy Land of Lincoln
Learning Without Limits Summer Camp

FINANCIAL STABILITY

*Providing individuals & families
the education, skills, and supports
needed to lead financially stable lives*

- Financial Literacy
- Work Skills Support
- Stable Housing

WHY FINANCIAL STABILITY IS IMPORTANT

When people are able to find decent jobs, provide for their families and save for the future, they and their children are more likely to enjoy healthy lives and succeed in school.

DID YOU KNOW?

26% of households
in our county
are burdened by housing
expenses exceeding 30% of
income.*

6.1% of households
in our county
are unbanked - not utilizing
safe, secure, and affordable
banking services.*

TEACHING KIDS TO HAVE a good mourning.

Explaining death to a child who is experiencing loss for the first time can be difficult, especially when you're struggling with your own grief. But, we know the best time to help a child is at the time of loss. We prepare children with The STAR Class – *Special Time to Always Remember™* Program. This free service provides support to children of all ages with a sensitive approach that includes stories, pictures, discussion and an art activity.

The days surrounding a death of a loved one can be confusing and scary for children, but it doesn't have to be. We can help.



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they're old enough to grieve.

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HEALTH

*Activating and inspiring our
community to get healthy and
stay healthy*

- Access to Health care
- Mental Health Services
- Community Health Advocacy

ABOUT COMMUNITY HEALTH

Participants in both the Sangamon County Community Health Needs Assessment and United Way of Central Illinois' Community Conversations identified **Access to Care** and **Mental Health** as the top health priorities for our community.

Despite implementation of the Affordable Care Act, **1-in-10** residents in our community are uninsured.*

About **one in four adults** and **one in five children** have diagnosable mental, emotional, or behavioral disorders.*

Community Leaders Guild Reception

The Community Leaders Guild held a reception benefitting the United Way of Central Illinois on August 9 at the Horace Mann Plaza. The event was hosted by Guild Chairs Peter "Cass" and Julie Casper, along with Community Builders Chairs Mark and Lara Donovan.



Sandy Figurski, John McCarthy and Jennifer Gill



Dr. David Graham, John McCarthy and Peter Graham



Hal Barton, Tandra Wagner and Debbie Thompson



Cass and Julie Casper



John and Jenny Bozarth



Lara and Mark Donovan



Val and Chris Butler



Heather Sarra, Desiree Logsdon and Angie Comstock



Mark Barthel, Greg and Kari Lutchka and Jarid Brown



Mary Loken, Debbie Thompson and Ginny Conlee



Randy Wolter, Bruce Beeman, Tim Londrigan and Brent Beeman



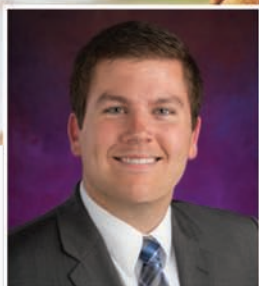
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KEN LAM

MUSIC DIRECTOR

ILLINOIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

BY LISA RIGONI

Ken Lam is originally from Hong Kong and has global experience in life and in music. His passion for music is undeniable, as is his desire to share it with others. He believes music should be presented as something to experience fully. That is exactly what he delivers as the music director of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra (ISO). Maestro Lam officially took the reins of the ISO July 1, after rising as the unanimous choice after a two-year search. He becomes the fourth director, guiding the ISO into its 25th year.

Pursuing his passion

In Hong Kong, he said, it was imperative for young kids to play instruments or do something that was extra to ensure they could get into school. "Young kids in Hong Kong play musical instruments. We actually don't do a lot of sports, because there is not a lot of room in Hong Kong," he explained. "Music is very competitive. I played piano, violin and sang, and I did that through my teenage years." Then Lam went to England for boarding school. "I continued to play the violin, and I wanted to play in college."

His parents didn't support that career path. "My mother said, 'Well, shouldn't you think about making a living, rather than indulging in music?' So, I listened to her, and studied economics and law at Cambridge University. I did keep playing the violin in my spare time, but went to law school and became a (finance) lawyer in London." Lam practiced law for 10 years and worked all over the world. "Eventually, I was relocated to the Hong Kong office of my firm."



When he returned he began playing in the community orchestra and singing in the community choirs. "At one of these rehearsals, the conductor didn't show up, and someone asked if anyone else could do it. I raised my hand and said, 'I will do it.' That is how I started conducting. I never had a conducting lesson. I didn't have a music degree. I guess I had some passion. I loved music."

His passion for music intensified. People liked the way he conducted. Before he knew it, he was asked to do a concert. "I decided then, I'm conducting, I should probably learn how to conduct properly. So, I went to conducting workshops in Europe, typically in the summer. It's when

conducting teachers from all over the world scout out new students. They want to meet them, and they want to recruit students for their respective studios. At the end of one of the workshops he said, the teacher, Gustav Meier, a well-known conducting teacher in the states was leading one of the workshops. He was the Director of Conducting at Tanglewood for many years. After one of the conducting workshops, Lam boldly talked to him, "I want to get better at conducting, what should I do?" He responded with an invitation to Peabody Conservatory where he had taught. He passed away last year, in his late 80s. When Lam studied with him, Gustav was already in his late 70s.

Changing course

"He said the law didn't change very often, and suggested I take a break." Lam took the advice of the professor and arranged a break from practicing law. Lam said, "That break became one semester, then two semesters, then three." It eventually became a long enough break to complete his conducting studies. "I was very lucky, I think, because people saw me with different experience than others. Most young conductors studied music or an instrument at college, and then they'd go on to get a graduate degree in conducting," he said, and gave a little chuckle as he continued. "I didn't see many lawyers who gave up their careers to go study conducting. When I switched I was pretty much the only person who did that, and I somehow got some great opportunities."

After Peabody, Lam went to the Aspen Music Festival as a conducting fellow and



the National Conducting Institute. He did that for three consecutive summers. "That was really, really fortunate, because those festivals are hard to get into. Then I got my first job, where I was assistant conductor for the Cincinnati Symphony. Then I got my second job as associate conductor for Education for the Baltimore Symphony, and then a couple years later, I got the Charleston Symphony, in South Carolina, as music director. A couple years later, I got the Illinois Symphony, as well. For me, it's been a dream come true!"

Following his dream

In listening to Lam, it is evident he loves what he does. His voice is clear and upbeat as he shares his story. His smile comes across as he outlines his career path. "I still feel like I'm on holiday. It's really true. I used to conduct it in my spare time, and I loved it. I still love it. Even as

we speak (via phone) I am at the Brevard Music Center in North Carolina, and just had two rehearsals today. I am absolutely loving it. It's the most wonderful thing," he said. "As a lawyer, I was working 90 hours a week behind a desk. I realize how lucky musicians are to be able to make music and be, hopefully, in touch with something really beautiful whenever we go to work.

"It's also incredible the people I meet along the way. It's true that music brings everyone together. With a background in law and business, I never lose sight of that. Most of my (law) clients were big banks. I worked for a very large international law firm, and I was one in like 8,000 or something like that. It was a very high-pressured environment."

Interestingly, he said he played the violin while he was a lawyer, but when he began

conducting, he stopped playing. Studying took up too much time. He said he became a little rusty and put the violin away. Instead, he helps others play. As he watched conductors work, he found it interesting that while they are in front of the musicians, at the podium, they are rarely speaking a word. All of the communication is done with their body and facial expressions. "We think we are controlling everything," he said, again with a faint laugh in his voice. "Yet, we are so not in control. The best thing for conductors to do is become the music that we are conducting. That's how I like to think about it," he said. "We have our whole body to use ... our hands, the baton, the arms. We have our face, our eyes, our shoulders, eyebrows, everything. In some ways, it's like acting. You are acting out the music, but it has to be genuine. You become sort of a physical manifestation of the sounds.

"The reason is that when a musician sees that, it helps them know why they play the music. They already know how to play. Music is really a non-verbal form of communication. Somehow, we must convey the music with our body. It's very interesting, actually."

Lam works with students at the Brevard Music Center. There are always a couple of students who are interested in conducting, he said. They ask Lam, as I did, how do you motivate people to play to a crescendo versus a decrescendo, for example? They point out that at times both hands are used. Sometimes only one hand. Why do you do that? How do you know when to do that?

"It's actually very hard to say. It's like you and me now, having a conversation. I can't plan it. I have to react and sense what you are thinking. Whether you think I am being relevant, interesting or whether you think I am totally boring or off the mark. It's through subtle things. I think musicians are very good at that. Musicians are very sensitive people. You know, when you look at someone, and you see their body language, you can perceive whether someone is interested or not.

"I have to be a very good mind reader. I have to be a very good body language reader. I have to be a leader, using whatever tools I have to motivate people to give their best and to somehow share my vision of the music. I need to have an array of weapons to do that. Sometimes I persuade them. Sometimes I try to inspire them. Sometimes, you know, I have to be stern. 'Come on, you know that's not right. Fix it.' The good news is technically, I am in a position of authority. You have to use that authority

very carefully. Sometimes you give them a gesture that invites them to play the way they want, and sometimes you are a little more strict. You want them to play the way you want. I think it's no more complicated than when you are having a genuine conversation, a discussion. It's very similar."

He reflected on his first job as assistant conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and shared his analogy. "My job was to sit in the hall and help guest conductors. You listen in rehearsal and give feedback. What I was also able to see was that every single guest conductor could go up there, conduct the same symphony orchestra and within five minutes the sound of the orchestra is completely different," he explained. "If a conductor is sincere and honest, knows his score and knows what he is doing, the orchestra will play with a very generous and sincere sound. If the conductor is selfish and conducts all for his own glory, the orchestra will sound like that. If the conductor is harsh, not friendly, the sound that comes out of the orchestra will sound harsh and not terribly friendly. It's amazing how such a different sound can come from the same group of people."

Lam then laughed aloud and joked, poking fun at himself, "So, I don't know what the Illinois Symphony Orchestra will sound like." After our conversation, I would say Illinois Symphony musicians and attendees are in for a season of concerts full of beautiful, diverse sounds, expressed with generosity and passion.

What to expect?


An energetic and expansive repertoire is planned for the 2017-2018 season and can be found at <http://www.ilsymphony.org/season-at-a-glance.html>. "We ultimately want to inspire. I hope it is contagious for the players and for the audience." Music selections will include everything from Tchaikovsky to Mahler, Bernstein to Mozart and Beethoven to John Williams. Concerts will be shared with audiences in both Springfield and Bloomington. Opening nights are Oct. 27 in Bloomington and Oct. 28 in Springfield.

Personal life

Lam is 47, never married. "If I had married in my 30s, I wouldn't have made the switch from law to music. It's not an easy life, travelling. It's a sacrifice. There are many of those along the way," he said, then paused. "It is really precious, though. Music is a language." Oh, and his parents ... went to all his concerts. His mother, who has passed, was proud of his musical ac-

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complishments. His Dad still shows up at his concerts from time to time. They loved when he worked with Neil Sedaka. "They were of that same generation. They knew every word to every song," he said. Lam has one brother and one sister. He plays golf and tennis. He has received awards and recognitions too many to list. Among them, the 2015 Johns Hopkins University Global Achievement Award.

He has led prestigious orchestras and choirs all over the world. For a complete list of his awards, achievements, affiliations, and aspirations, check out the Illi-

nois Symphony Orchestra's website (listed above) and, also, kenlam.org. Read about the many places he has served, inspiring people, making a difference and sharing stories through music. Even better, go see and hear the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, and experience his work first-hand.



The ATHENA Leadership Award®

The 2017 ATHENA Leadership Award® banquet was held on July 27th at Erin's Pavilion. The ATHENA Leadership Award® is presented to a woman who is honored for professional excellence, community service and for actively assisting women in their attainment of professional excellence and leadership skills. From an outstanding field of 10 nominees, this year's award was presented to Rev. Margaret Ann Jessup of Douglas Avenue United Methodist Church.



2017 ATHENA committee: Back row: Jennifer Sublett, Emily Rabin, Andrea Ferrero-Violet, Heather Burton, Amy Hagen, Diane Rutledge, Shane Squires, Gemma Long; Front row: Sheila Feipel, Cheri Plummer, Darlene Kmett
Not pictured- Cindy Davis, Gay Davidson, Kayla Graven, Kyle Jennings, Shannon Jones, Stephanie McDonald, Nalo Mitchell, Grace Nanavatti, Lisa Smith, Makenzie Smith, Darlene Weaver, and Vikkie Becker.



ATHENA nominees: Kelly Thompson, Barb Stamer, Julie Henderson, Emily Becker, Margaret Ann Jessup, Val Yazell, Jamie Stout, Annette Schott, Misty Buscher, Rasha Said



Amy Sherwood, Jamie Stout, Sarah Beuning, Amber Spainhour



Dale, Emily, and Cathy Becker



Diane Newell, Dorothy Newell and Lara Lebeck



Brooke Thomas and Annette Schott



Diane Rutledge



Emily Rabin and Emily Becker



Mike and Misty Buscher



Valera Yazell and Janet Cook



Rev. Margaret Ann Jessup and Molly Berendt



Rev. Margaret Ann Jessup



Tina Prather and Kayla Graven



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BY BILL STOKES

Memorial's FESTIVAL of trees

*Stephanie Kent is this year's
Festival of Trees, Chairperson*

Memorial's Festival of Trees is an annual event that raises money for health-related projects and programs at Memorial Health System and in the Springfield community. Since 1989, the Festival has raised more than \$4.6 million dollars and with annual attendance of more than 35,000 people, it has become one of the most popular family-oriented holiday traditions in central Illinois.

This year's chairperson is Stephanie Kent. She has been a volunteer for the Festival of Trees (FOT) for 8 years. She said every year FOT enjoys the support of many volunteers. Some volunteers have been helping for decades. Two volunteers that stand out in Stephanie's mind, who have been volunteering for the Festival for more than 20 years each, are Jim Marblestone, who handles the money, and Margaret Woodall, who is in her 90's, helps sell train tickets. Stephanie was adamant that without

all the volunteers this event couldn't happen.

The theme this year is Skates, Sleds and Snow. To help bring this outdoor theme to the event they are building a simulated ice pond with a manikin skating on the ice and sledding on a hill. The designers of the trees and wreaths like having a theme to follow which helps to create ideas for their creative talents. Stephanie came up with the theme by remembering what it was like when her kids were growing up. Her kids would play for hours sledding on the snow, skating on their frozen pond out back and eventually come home soaking wet. Reflecting on these memories it seemed clear that an outdoor theme was right for this year's Festival.

At the FOT, there is something for everyone. Even on Thanksgiving Day they are busy from 4pm to 8pm.

To enhance the daily experience of the event they bring in local talent to entertain visitors and fill the Orr Building with festive music and sounds. Starting at 10:30 am everyday, except Thanksgiving Day, there is scheduled entertainment.

For the children, every year they have an area where kids can meet Santa Claus. He comes in high demand and Stephanie says he even takes requests for private visits away from FOT.

It was obvious to me that Stephanie loves working with all the volunteers who make this event as popular as it has become. She told me story after story about the special moments that happen every day during the Festival of Trees.

For more information go to:
MemorialsFestivalofTrees.com



Stephanie & Craig Kent with Amanda Johnson who works for Memorial Medical Center Foundation and manages the Festival of Trees.



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W O M E N *for* W O M E N

A Legacy of Women's Philanthropy in Springfield

BY KAREN ACKERMAN WITTER

Changing lives and making a lasting impact. That is the result of the Women for Women giving circle now celebrating its 10th anniversary. Women for Women is an initiative of the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln. Its purpose is to positively affect the lives of women and children in Sangamon and surrounding counties including Cass, Christian, Logan, Menard, Morgan, and Montgomery.

Since its inception, Women for Women has awarded nineteen grants to fourteen organizations totaling \$226,752. The Women's Fund endowment now exceeds \$580,000. This is a remarkable accomplishment, considering the fund was established during the depths of the recession.

While on vacation in Hilton Head, S.C., Karen Hasara read a local newspaper article about a women's giving circle. Knowing there are many generous women in Springfield, she was inspired to pursue this idea with the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln. Giving circles enable like-minded, philanthropic people to pool resources to make a greater collective impact by doing more as a group than they could do as individuals. Hasara, along with Judy Stephens, Mary Loken, Lisa Stone, and Ginny Conlee, were those like-minded philanthropic women who jumped on board early and formed the original steering committee.

Hasara is not surprised the giving circle is so successful. She says, "Women for Women has created a legacy of women's philanthropy in Springfield." She and the other members of the original steering committee are delighted that so many women from diverse backgrounds are involved and there are lots of young women to carry on what the founders started. Several members of the Community Foundation's Young Philanthropists have joined Women for Women. The first to do so was Sarah Beuning, and she now serves on the steering committee.

Positively affecting the lives of women and children

The goal is to fund projects with a lasting impact. Hasara recalls the very first grant – a mentoring program that matched students in Springfield public schools with women athletes at the University of Illinois – Springfield. Through this program, many of the girls realized for the first time that they could go to college.

Grants have impacted women and children in many different ways, such as:

- enabling at risk and homeless youth to have access to summer camps and summer academic tutoring,
- nurturing and supporting mothers recently released from incarceration,
- providing mental health and well-being services for women and children,



Steering Committee Founders: Mary Loken, Karen Hasara, Judy Stephens, Lisa Stone & Ginny Conlee



Champagne toast at the Founders Recognition Ceremony



Founders Recognition Ceremony – October 16, 2013

- introducing girls to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) careers, mentoring at-risk women and girls, and
- helping girls build self-esteem and develop life-skills.

Recognizing Women Helping Women

Affectionately known as the “Atta Girl” awards, Women for Women annually presents “Women Helping Women” awards to outstanding female community leaders who have gone above and beyond to foster positive change in the lives of women and children. Since 2008, 23 women and one women’s organization have been honored with this recognition.

Making it possible

The original goal was to recruit 100 founding members to donate \$1000 per year for three years. Each year 75% of the member donations go toward the permanent endowment, and 25% is allocated for grants. A portion of the earnings on the endowment is also added to the member contributions to

fund the grant program. The formula ensures the principal continues to grow. In the first year \$10,000 were awarded in grants, and in 2017 grant awards totaled \$40,000.

Women for Women reached the 100-member milestone in 2013. Achieving this goal was not the end, but rather a new beginning. The

Stacy Reed, Community Foundation Vice President for Programs, says, “the simplicity of the model is key to the success.” Women donate \$1000/year, but there are no additional requirements. There are three annual events: a summer kick-off recruitment event, fall educational luncheon for members only, and a spring members-only reception to

announce grant awards. Through these events members learn about issues facing women in our community and beyond and how their dollars are making a difference. Members are not expected to volunteer, but there are opportunities to do so by participating on several committees.

A steering committee oversees all aspects of Women for Women. Three women have served as steering committee chair: Karen Hasara, Jane Denes and Susan White. With

more members and more dollars for annual grants, Denes helped refine the grant-making model and process, which has become increasingly sophisticated. Efforts were made to avoid duplication of services, encourage collaboration



2017 Award Presentation to The Parent Place, Steering Committee Chair Susan White (far left) and Grant Committee Chair Peggy Ryder (far right) present check

number of members continues to grow, as does the endowment. At the suggestion of Judy Stephens, cumulative giving levels were established, which encourages ongoing giving beyond the initial three-year commitment.



*2014 Grant Award Presentation to the Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois,
2014 Steering Committee Chair, Jane Denes (far right) presents the check.*

and document impacts more rigorously. Denes says, "Women for Women is committed to being the best stewards of members' donations as possible."

Current steering committee chair Susan White says, "What initially drew me to Women for Women was the ability to fund larger projects because my donations were pooled with others. But, it was the leveraging of those contributions and my growing understanding of the strategic targeting of those funds that kept me interested. Our grant process is thoughtful, deliberative and data-driven. We strive to give our members frequent feedback about how the grants assist women and children in the Land of Lincoln."

Karen Hasara says Women for Women would not have worked without the connection to the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln. With its mission of "connecting people who care with causes that matter", the Community Foundation is the perfect umbrella organization for Women for Women. The Community Foundation

manages the endowment fund and provides essential administrative staff support.

The Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year. What started in 2002 as a modest organization with one fund and about \$800,000 in total assets has grown to more than 180 funds and nearly \$30 million in assets. "So much of the Community Foundation's growth is tied to the success of this wonderful giving circle," says John Stremsterfer, president and CEO of the Community Foundation. "Many of these generous women have gone on to establish their own funds at the Community Foundation to carve their own path for charitable giving. It's just a very generous group of people."

Looking to the future

There is no doubt the original steering committee created a sustainable giving circle that will continue far into the future. The goals going forward are to build and increase a more diverse membership, be an innovative grant-maker, cultivate

leadership among members and ensure high member satisfaction. Founding member Peggy Ryder served as this year's grant committee chair and reflected on the growth of the giving circle since its first grant award nine years ago. "By joining together, we have become more thoughtful and engaged philanthropists," says Ryder. "Being a member of Women for Women and serving on the grant committee is an extremely rewarding and humbling experience. You see the great power that can come from women pooling their resources to make our community a better place to live, and you also get exposed to some of the most critical issues facing local women and children."

If you would like to learn more or get involved with Women for Women, contact the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln at 217-789-4431 or info@CFLI.org



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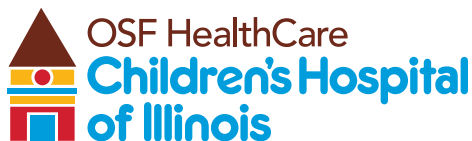
*Sawyer Kaufman
Neonatology patient
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2017-18



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Three examples demonstrate how Women for Women is positively affecting the lives of women and children in Sangamon County.

Girls on the Run inspires girls to be joyful, healthy and confident. Jennifer Sublett, director of Girls on the Run, says, "Our mission is a great match with the ideals of Women for Women. Girls on the Run has partnered with Women for Women on three grant projects which have brought our life skills and physical activity programs to more junior high girls, expanded community sites, and provided financial assistance to schools with an average scholarship rate of over 70%. The most recent grant helped Girls on the Run purchase an entire new set of our curriculum to support our volunteer coaches and program girls. It is amazing to watch this giving circle grow and increase their community impact through philanthropy."

MOSAIC Moms is part of a broader community initiative involving multiple partners to transform the way children's mental healthcare is provided in the Springfield area. Over three years Women for Women provided \$60,000 to address the mental health and well-

being of women and children who have very limited social support and connect them to Memorial Behavioral Health (MBH) for services they need. This was the first organization to receive multi-year grants. The larger MOSAIC (Meaningful Opportunities for Success and Achievement through Service Integration for Children) initiative embeds MBH therapists in schools, physician offices and other community settings and provides early identification and intervention behavioral health services. Jan Gambach, CEO of Memorial Behavioral Health, says, "the biggest changes occur when intervention and support come early. The whole premise of MOSAIC is to identify issues and address them before they become problems and before the problems become patterns and illnesses and disabilities. Our goal is to ensure access for all children to high-quality care with a focus on early identification and intervention. Grants from Women for Women for MOSAIC Moms helped fund parent engagement and support, which was a missing component of the broader initiative."

The Parent Place is a child abuse prevention organization that teaches positive parenting skills. The Parent

Place received a \$17,000 grant for The Nurturing Mothers Education and Support Program. This program is for mothers recently released from state correctional facilities and the Sangamon County Jail and mothers referred through the Sangamon County Family Court and other social service agencies and organizations. The focus is on positive parenting and child development, positive discipline, concrete support, social and emotional competence of children, and healthy parent-child relationships. It uses evidence-based strategies founded on the belief that mothers need to first nurture themselves from within in order to transfer their caring onto others. The goal of this program is to equip these mothers with positive parenting skills, techniques and support so they provide a healthy environment for themselves and their children. The Parent Place director Bridgett Burke says, "for years The Parent Place has seen great success in this program, but it was specifically for mothers who had a case with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). There are many mothers who do not have a DCFS case, but very much need the support. Because of this grant we are now able to provide these services to them."

Toast of the Town - Route 66

The Dennis and Cathy Bringuet Family and Ace Sign Company hosted a Route 66-themed Toast of the Town on behalf of HSHS St. John's Foundation at the offices of Ace Sign Company on First Street in Springfield on July 15. The Toast of the Town events benefits the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital.



Carolyn Houston, Kris Maurer and Barb Bonasinga



Megan and Dr. Chad DeFrain, Brandy Grove and Allyson Strauch



Dennis and Cathy Bringuet



Drs. Stefan and Natalia Kosak



Dr Randy and Karan Ross and Al Gietl



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FARRELL GAY

FOUNDER OF THE TIMEPIECE MUSEUM OF ILLINOIS WATCHES & SANGAMO CLOCKS

AT THE ELIJAH ILES HOME

BY JULIE CELLINI



A Selection of the Mary Todd Line of Women's Watches made by the Illinois Watch Company that was once located in Springfield

Dressed in a crisp blue shirt and sharply creased slacks, Farrell Gay arrives at a downtown restaurant for a casual lunch, apologizing for his appearance.

"I usually wear a sport jacket," he explains sheepishly. "Trying to dress well goes way back to when I had no decent clothes to my name. I told myself then that someday I would dress like the successful people did."

Growing up in Iowa during the Great Depression, Gay says he scrounged for everything, and always envied people who dressed well.

"Back then I worked every job I could find to pay for an education and help my parents and siblings survive. I'm 84 now, but I still recall envying the well-dressed business people I'd see on the street. I promised myself that someday that's how I was going to look."

A Springfield resident for much of his adult life, Gay credits perseverance and luck for his success.

He got through college on loans and grants, working multiple odd jobs. It was enough to fund a bachelor's degree at a small college in Iowa. After graduating, he landed his first job in the business world, working for a start-up produce company selling fruit and vegetables.

He recalls his first investment was in his appearance.

"I bought my first new suit. Plus some French cuff shirts and cufflinks," he laughs. "Of course I was way overdressed, especially since I was the only guy in a one-man office. But I thought that's how successful people looked. Dressing well is something that has

stayed with me through my whole life."

Now retired, after nearly 50 years working in an international fruit and vegetable brokerage business that brought him to Springfield in 1964, Gay's love

of fashionable clothing and accessories has stayed with him. His collection of nearly 500 elegantly styled antique watches and time pieces still drives his ambition. So much so that he and his wife Ann established a timepiece museum at the historic Elijah Iles house in downtown Springfield so he could showcase his 500-piece collection.

Gay says his interest in Illinois watches began in the 1980's when his sons, Todd and Cole, went into the men's clothing business with a shop aptly named Farrell's.

Now a Joseph A. Banks franchise, the store is located in the Gables mall, which Farrell co-developed on the city's far west side. It still displays pieces from his collection. But the majority of his timepieces and memorabilia is now on display at the historic Iles house in downtown Springfield where Farrell and his wife Ann volunteer as interpreters for tourists.

"We love to talk about the Illinois Watch Company that used to be right here in Springfield," he says. "It produced beautiful watches and time pieces. It's a brief piece of our city's history. But in the 1920's and 1930's the company made some 800,000 timepieces in a plant on the city's north side."

Gay eventually purchased the building as an investment in 1979. Formerly known as Sangamo Electric Co., it now houses the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

"Owning that building is what sparked my interest in watches. When I learned about all those timepieces that had been manufactured there. Nobody knows for sure how many were sold at jewelry stores throughout the country. The estimate is about 800,000 Illinois

wristwatch movements were made right here in Springfield."

"I have always loved good style," he says. "Owning that building sparked my interest in high quality time pieces from a bygone era. It was especially interesting that they were made and distributed here in Springfield."

"Of course, there were no malls or big box stores or online sales back then. People bought pocket watches, and eventually wrist watches that were only sold at jewelry stores. And Illinois watches--made right here in Springfield--are still considered by collectors to be among the finest and most elegantly styled of any from the 1920's and 1930's."

Dressed for greeting tourists, Gay sports one of his favorite watches from his vast collection.

"I always hope someone will ask me what time it is," he jokes.

The Iles House is open to the public for tours on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm, April through October. There is no charge for tours; however, a voluntary donation of \$3.00 or more per person is suggested. The house is also available for special events by reservation.

Their website is <http://ileshouse.org>

Julie Cellini is a Springfield freelance writer.



Another very rare watch. It is called a purse watch and was carried by the women of the time in their purses. They were elegant in design and fully protected in the purse by the casing.

Nineteenth Century Fashion Show

The Springfield Art Association hosted the Nineteenth Century Fashion Show at the Edwards' Place in Springfield on August 26. The event featured the collections of local's personal collections of 19th century fashions, and benefitted the restoration project of the second story of Edwards' Place.



Tom Travis Rebekah Lange, Jon Austin, Pam Brown, Pam VanAlstine, Miranda Bailey-Peetz



Ted and Dawn Henry, Dr. Sandra Yeh and Dr. Gregory Kane



Arlene Cooney, Marilyn Ferricks and Barbara Williams



Carol, Gavin, Lillian, Colin and Lee Shafer



Lauren Rodriguez, Cheryl Lee and Belinda Chan



Audry and Sheri Brinkmeyer



Mary Disseler, and Marguerite Brauer



Mary Mehan and Monica DeGrauwe



Tori and Karen See



Linda Cox, Dorothy Selinger and Rita Linscott



Stephanie Thomas, Gene Walker and Rosemary Connolly

8th Annual Springfield Oyster & Beer Festival

A savoring of flavors was the theme at the 8th annual Springfield Oyster and Beer Festival for Charity on September 2 at parking lot of the Inn at 835 Historic Hotel. Featuring locally and nationally-recognized craft beer and ale vendors as well as a fresh oysters paired with fine local fare, the event benefits a Springfield area charity, or charities.



Joy and John Roate



Brian and Lori Reardon



Tim, Angie and Erin Van Brooker and Josh Trenter



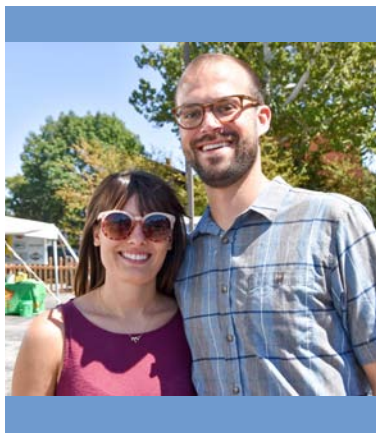
Jenny and Derek Zarring and Jeff Berendt



Jessica Lorenson and Amber Fifer



Heather and Eric Pfeiffer



Nicole and Mitch Kaufmann



Julie Billingsley and Chad Jordon



*Anna Davidson and
Shannon McAtee*



*Jessica Lorenson and
Amber Fifer*

Summer Soiree

The Family Service Center hosted their annual Summer Soiree at Danenberger Family Vineyards in New Berlin on June 24. The event for the non-profit social-service agency featured a silent auction to benefit the functions of the agency focusing on families through adoption, foster care and counseling. The Family Service Center is the product of mergers of several predecessor organizations, including the Home for the Friendless (later called the Children's Service League), Associated Charities (later known as the Family Welfare Association), Springfield Day Nursery, Colored Children's Service Bureau, and Child and Family Service.



Jill and Bob Egizii, Kirk Neslund and MaryAnne Manko



Rita and Kirby Bruntjen, Jobi Tabb, Dick and Vanessa Hauversburk



Pat Corcoran, Alexa Edwards, Brittney Dehmke, Nevin Ozyurt



Shannon Mathis, Victoria Ringer and Lisa Ellis



Kelly and Russell Hurst



Marilyn and Jeff Regan



Christine Lindsay and Mike Baker



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Sara Upton and Daniel Warren



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Sponsor Appreciation Party

Denim & Diamonds Sponsor Appreciation Party was hosted at the home of Lois and Dr. Jerry Kruse in Springfield on September 14. The event was a kick-off party to the upcoming 17th Annual Denim & Diamonds Gala, a fundraiser benefitting the Simmons Cancer Institute at SIU Medicine.



*Cindy Davidsmeyer and
Dr. Bob Mocharnuk*



Cindy and Bill Ringer



June and Dr. Edem Agamah, Sarah and Dennis Albanese, Allan Robinson



Tricia and Dr. John Becker



*Evelyn Brandt Thomas and
Jim Corrigan*



Lois and Dr. Jerry Kruse



Mark Birtch, Marilyn Kushak and Harvey Wells



Evelyn Brandt Thomas and Dr. Sherry Simmons



Dr. Sherry Simmons and Patsy Wappel



Trevor Noonan, Alice Hogan and Chris Noonan, Jr.

Dare to be Different

The Prairie Center Against Sexual Assault held the “Dare to be Different” Fashion Show at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel in Downtown Springfield on August 24. The event benefitting the PCASA featured trunk shopping and trendy fashions from local downtown merchants just in time for Back-to School and autumn wear.



Belinda Chan and Cheryl Lee.



Harper and Riley Sabin



Pat Nall and Michelle Larson



Keirstyn Worden, Tori Hedden, Hannah Richards, Katie Luedke, Bess Johnson, Karalee Misner and Brianne Dilbeck



Judi Serra, Lacy Hartley, Mary Midiridavis and Jeannie Serra



Sandy, Ascha and Adalyn Nickell



Debbie Leber and Brenda Stroh



Dana Saal and Lisa Young



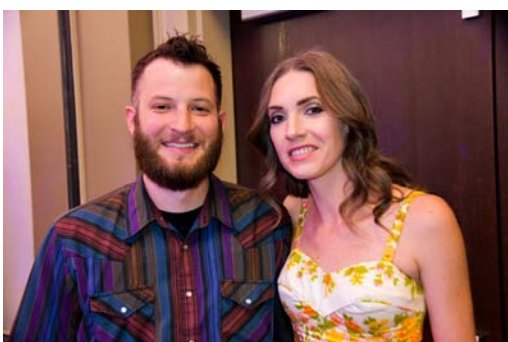
Ella Veith, Sadie Fiedler and Lucas Enlow



Kynda and Vivian Canada



Stacy and Millie Loseke



Erik Larson and Bryanna Bertolino



Mary, Jill and Emily Pfeffer



Terry Rogers and Elen Carpenter

LIZ MORAN STELK

ILLINOIS STEWARDSHIP ALLIANCE



PHOTOS BY MIKE SHEEHAN



BY LISA RIGONI

Liz Moran Stelk, 34, is no stranger to the stewardship of our most basic resource ... good, solid, real food ... grown on the farm. She is Executive Director of the Illinois Stewardship Alliance and has served in the role for seven months.

City girl turned farm-focused

Stelk grew up in Burbank on the southside of Chicago. She came to Springfield as a Capitol Scholar at the University of Illinois, where she graduated in political studies. "I grew up about as far away from a farm as you can get, and I think a lot of people don't think about food, except to enjoy it and eat it," she said initially, and then added, "When I was growing up, my experience with vegetables, for instance, was that I just had to sit at the table 'til they were gone," she said, laughing. "I figured out every way to get rid of peas. As kids we're creative."

She has made a career of advocacy and organizing for many different issues. She has worked for a large healthcare union in central Illinois, on school funding and criminal justice issues. She also has concern for clean water and air and is concerned about how food is produced.

"I wasn't personally motivated enough to do anything about it until about six years ago," she said. "I got really burned out from work and was looking for rejuvenation, to try something different." Her boyfriend at the time, now husband, Dave and she applied for a program through WWOOF, Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms. You apply by selecting an organic farm. "My husband was more interested at that time than I was. He wanted to be self-sufficient. He always wanted to grow his own food. I just wanted to be outside and was interested in doing something really different," she continued. "We were accepted to go work on this farm called Crazy View Farm in Wilsall, Montana.

After we experienced the weeding and the growing and then selling it to the people at the local farmer's market, I felt my eyes were fully opened.

"As someone who had been an organizer and an advocate for such a long time, I knew there were problems and challenges in our food system, but I didn't really know there was an alternative," she explained. "I didn't know you could know your farmer and buy direct and enhance your local community."

She decided this was the work she was seeking. Stelk wanted to bring the skills she had to this field. "I really transformed during that experience, from this kid who had to choke down peas to picking food, like tomatoes off the vine and have these mind-blowing, delicious experiences and thinking about and appreciating where food comes from, how hard it is to grow, how important it is."

Stelk says it's about understanding the practices in agriculture that can grow healthier, more nutritious food. It's better for the food, for people, and ultimately better for the soil and keeping the environment clean. This is what pointed her in the direction of that new career she sought.

She worked as the regional organizer of the Western Organization of Resource Councils in Montana. This allowed her to work with farmers and ranchers in seven states, addressing their needs, from marketing to figuring out how to build a local farmer's markets, to working with state and federal food and agricultural policy issues. "Consolidation of the big food and agribusinesses in the country are challenging," she said. "There are real repercussions from this for family farmers."

It's personal

"Dave and I got married and less than a year later we had our first son, Martin, just under two years old now. Not long after that we were expecting our

second child, Edwin, now eight months old. We decided then to move closer to home, back toward Chicago so we could be near family," she said. "Now those issues hit closer to home. We aren't just feeding ourselves. We have to feed our kids, and have never been more aware of the food we choose. And the food that is affordable and the most accessible for us, is not necessarily the best stuff.

"If I had a goal or a hope, it would be that all people like us have access to high quality food. We are not rich people. I think everyone deserves access to foods that are high-quality, nutritious food that is grown locally by people we can go meet."

Why local food?

Stelk says talking about organic and local, versus produce shipped in, is an especially tricky issue for many different reasons. "On the one hand, we can say, without a doubt, that food grown locally, picked fresh off the vine is the best, nutritionally. I think we can say food that comes from Illinois family farms is gonna have a higher nutrition value for people than foods brought in from other places. "There are challenges to that. There is a whole food system - growing, transportation, building grocery stores to accommodate foods that come in bulk from California or other places. It's cheaper to get, but it's horrible," she explained. "So, the stuff you get locally, that is better for you, costs more. It's harder to get. You have to go to a farmer's market to get it. It is higher in price, because you're paying for production for a real family farmer that lives just up the road. That farmer has to toil to make sure the season's crop is good. Secondly, you have to plan ahead. It's harder."

That is where Stelk's passion comes in. It's better for us. It helps the local family farmer. "The question is how do we make that local food more accessible and more affordable. These are policy questions. What kind of agriculture and food system do we really value that, say, gets support from the Federal Farm Bill,



from Congress. How are rules written so that family farmers have a fair shot in the market?" An example she gave was SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps). "It's a really complicated process for farmer's markets to accept that. We accept it at the Old Capitol Farmer's Market, but it took federal support. It takes technology to support it, a WIFI connection that a lot of smaller communities don't have. It's a complex system.

The Alliance runs a program called the Double-Value Coupon Program at the Old Capitol Farmers Market. "We want to make sure people are getting the nutrition they need. When someone comes in with SNAP benefits, we double every dollar they spend on fruits and vegetables," Stelk said. "It means those buyers get twice as much benefit and the farmers sell twice as much produce at the farmer's market."

Who is being served, how?

The Illinois Stewardship Alliance, founded 43 years ago, is a member-based statewide not-for-profit organization with three major areas of focus:

1. Policy, which is state legislative work and congressional outreach.
2. Local programming to help get good food in the hands of local people. This

includes programs and campaigns like "Buy Fresh, Buy Local," Local Flavors Night, connecting chefs and farmers, which leads to more farm to table options, in addition to the direct to consumer relationships and the Capitol Farmer's Market, which is in partnership with Downtown Springfield Inc. Another focus in this area is the farmer who sell more direct, those who grow specialty crops.

3. The final piece of the bucket Stelk refers to as conservation - how to get more sustainable practices on the land. The Alliance has a farmer on staff, Woody Woodruff, who works directly with farmers on workshops and seminars. The focus is on how to promote soil health, which prevents erosion and keeps pollution from sprays from getting into the waterways.

"We are really proud to partner with the American Farmland Trust and the Prairie Rivers Network. On the local front, we have a lot of partnerships with farmers and organizations, as well," said Stelk. "There are a bunch of organizations that are doing their part." For a complete list and for information on how to get involved go to: www.ilstewards.org

The partnerships, everyone working together at all levels is important to the organization. The numbers (cited on the Alliance website) speak volumes.

- 1500 miles is the average number of miles food travels before it arrives at the local grocery store and takes four to seven days.

- 95 percent of our food that Illinois imports, which means only five percent is produced in the state. That's money not spent on local foods.

- 70 percent of food in the American diet is made up of processed food. "Some of our farmers are barely earning a living wage, and don't have healthcare," a concerned Stelk revealed. "They have to rely on public assistance themselves. We are building programs to help the farmer and educate the public."

At the same time, Stelk said, "Farmers are independent people. They are brave, courageous and take full responsibility. They feel like they have not worked hard enough. We want to continue to create opportunities and systems that move the industry forward. It starts with a strong grassroots effort, which we have."

To learn more about how to get involved, how to become a part of the efforts or to donate, contact the Illinois Stewardship Alliance at 217-528-1563 or via email at isa@ilstewards.org.



Get the Facts



1500 miles

That's the average number of miles that food travels before it reaches your grocery store shelf. It typically spends 4-7 days in travel and must be picked before it is ripe. All of these factors compromise freshness, cost, and flavor.



95%

That's the percentage of food that Illinois imports. That means 95% of the money that Illinois residents spend on food is sent out of state instead of being kept in our local economies.



\$47 Million

Check it out: if every Illinois household dedicated just \$10 of their weekly grocery budget towards products raised in our state, a whopping \$47 million would be re-invested in the Illinois economy each week.



17.4 cents

The decline of rural Illinois towns and villages parallels the decline of the farmers' share of each dollar spent on food, from over 40 cents in the 1960s to 17.4 cents today. Buying direct from farmers instead of retailers or distributors insures farmers receive every penny.



70%

That's the percentage of the American diet made up of processed foods. Farm stands and farmers markets increase access to fresh produce and proteins and encourage healthier food choices.

Membership

Membership with Illinois Stewardship Alliance supports diversified family farmers, healthy land, happy animals, stronger communities, and a brighter future for Illinois food and agriculture.

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Miss Illinois 2017

Abby Foster



The Express Clydesdales stayed relaxed as Abby poses with them. These 2000 lb horses are a rare breed among Clydesdales and offered a perfect backdrop for the picture with Abby.

PHOTOS BY BILL STOKES



Abby Foster, the 2017 Miss Illinois Winner, spent a day at the Illinois State Fair on Saturday, August 12th. She started her day being interviewed by Sam Madonia and Tim Schweizer from their on location kiosk at the Illinois State Fair.

The highlight of her morning was assisting the American Business Club (AMBUCS) give away their Amtryke therapeutic tricycles to kids with special needs. Through fundraising efforts at the Illinois State Fair and private donations, Springfield ABC is pleased to provide these bikes free of charge.



Here are several of the recipients of the Amtrykes, posing with their families, members of the American Business Club (in the green shirts) and Abby Foster, Miss Illinois.

BY BILL STOKES

Abby started in pageants when she was 15. Through her hard work and natural talent, she has advanced through a number of pageants to achieve her current title of Miss Illinois.

Today, she is able to use her platform as Miss Illinois to promote a cause about which she is passionate: Youth Mentoring. Through her elementary education studies at Ball State University she has learned that the building blocks for success include help from a mentor. She works directly with an organization called - College Mentors for Kids. For more than 20 years College Mentors has connected college students, with the most to give,

to kids who need it most. Through weekly after-school activities on a college campus, mentors show kids the importance of trying harder in school and help them understand higher education opportunities.

Abby's personal role models are many, but her biggest role model is her mother. As a single mother with 2 children, her mom has raised her to be all she can be. Abby finds constant inspiration from her and seeks her advice regularly.

With one more year left to earn her BA in Elementary Education, her pageant winnings have provided about \$13,000 in scholarship money to apply toward her college costs. She said there is more scholarship money available through the Miss America Pageant which she hopes to earn next month. The Miss America Pageant is held this year on September 10th in Atlantic City, NJ. Abby said that it will be her last pageant. After that, her aspiration to go into school administration will lead her to finish her BA and move on to a Master's degree.

When she is not pursuing her pageant dreams or working on her degree she is outdoors kayaking, paddle boarding or reading a good book while lying in a hammock. She recommends Sheryl Sandberg's book, *Lean In*. She found

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Abby addressing the audience at the Illinois Dept. of Agriculture tent during the presentation of the Amtrykes.

personal inspiration from the book as Sandberg uses research to shine a light on gender differences, and offers practical advice to help women achieve their goals.

Whether Abby goes on to win the Miss America Pageant or not, she will make an impact in whatever she does. The constant media attention, public appearances and interview opportunities are enabling her to practice her communication skills and get the message out about the importance of mentoring and lifting up our younger generation. Her schedule is hectic and the time management skills she is learning to balance it all will last a lifetime.

By the time this article is out we will know whether she is the next Miss America. In my opinion, she is definitely an All-American girl we can trust to make a positive impact on our society. Good luck Abby!



Let's make Dinner

Redefines Dinnertime to Family Time

BY SAMANTHA SCHRAGE

Tami Frye, owner of the meal preparation business Let's Make Dinner, didn't always dream of working in the food industry. Although Tami grew up in a household where dinnertime was sacred and spent summers with her grandmother learning how to cook, she never thought of cooking as anything more than a hobby.

When her position as a manager at JCPenny was eliminated, she decided to take a leap of faith and do something that not only she was good at, but also something that she knew would help other people and the broader Springfield community. For years, she had been visiting a St. Louis based meal preparation business, similar to Let's Make Dinner, and she used these circumstances to start her own business. Four and a half years later, Let's Make Dinner is thriving and helping families all over the city save time, money and live healthier lifestyles.

"The meals we make are much healthier than going out to eat or getting fast food. We always use real food and are conscious of the portions we serve. Even though something sounds healthy, doesn't mean it actually is," Frye said.

One of the most important things to Frye when coming up with the monthly menu is ensuring the quality of the food for her customers. Ordering from food suppliers such as Gordon Food Service, US Foods and other local suppliers, Frye always makes sure the food is all natural.

"Where I buy the food products really depends on the quality. If the quality of the food isn't up to my standards, I immediately change it. The food we prepare meals

with contains no artificial preservatives, flavorings or processed food," Frye said.

The food preparation process is also healthier in of itself. All meals are prepared with food in a raw form in order to preserve the foods original quality and taste.

"We do everything from the raw stage because you can freeze them longer and still keep their quality. If you cook it and then freeze it, you lose a lot of the quality because the moisture seeps out of it. We also test every new recipe to make sure that af-

ter it freezes and is cooked it still has the same flavor, texture and quality," Frye said.

Although the menu is preset every month, Frye says she is always looking for new recipes that she thinks her customers would enjoy. The recipes can also be altered to follow certain dietary restrictions such as gluten free or low sodium.

Orders can be placed over the phone or through the Let's Make Dinner website at least one day in advance. Customers are required to make at least four meals if they come in to make the meals, where all ingredients, utensils and directions are provided. Customers can also pick up the meals or have them delivered.

Once the meals are frozen, they are good for approximately two to three months and take as little as 30-45 minutes to prepare. Customers are able to purchase individual meals, or purchase meals in a bundle such as in the 10 Meal Deal in which meals are made for two, three or six people.

While much of Frye's business comes from single families, Let's Make Dinner also hosts fundraisers, birthday parties, groups who want to make meals together and Girl Scout troops, where Frye teaches the girls how food can be both entertaining and delicious.

"When girl scout troops come in for their snack badge we usually make animals and different shapes with fruits and vegetables. Although most of it is playing with food, it teaches them that you can do more with food than just eat it. Sometimes when food is presented better, it tastes better and



Tami Frye show us her freezer of previously prepared meals. Everyday new fresh meals in their raw form are prepared and stored for her customers. Freezing food in its raw form preserves quality and taste.

sparks their interest in learning more about cooking,” Frye said.

It’s not only young girls who gain cooking skills, it’s also adults who learn proper cooking techniques that will help them cook more than the Let’s Make Dinner meals.

“Most people have no idea how to cook when they come in, but once they make the meals they gain a little confidence to cook on their own and try new recipes,” Frye said.

It’s times like these when Frye gets to work closely with her customers that she is most happy. In addition to hosting events, Let’s Make Dinner also has a partnership with the Memorial Medical Center Foundation where they provide meals for the families of breast cancer patients.

“Working with people is my favorite part of the business. Knowing that I am helping people in their daily lives is what keeps me motivated to make the business the best it can be,” Frye said.

To Frye, the most important thing about meals is the people you get to share them with. Dinnertime is more than just the last meal of the day, it’s a time for families to bond and spend quality time together.

“When you reduce cooking time you have more time to spend with your family which is so important. Dinnertime is a time for families to come together and actually find out more about their lives,” Frye said.

Let’s Make Dinner is located at 2943 West White Oaks Drive and is open Monday-Friday from 10am-7pm and Saturday from 9am-3pm. Orders can be placed through the [Let’s Make Dinner website](http://www.letsmakedinner.biz) or by calling 217-546-4825.



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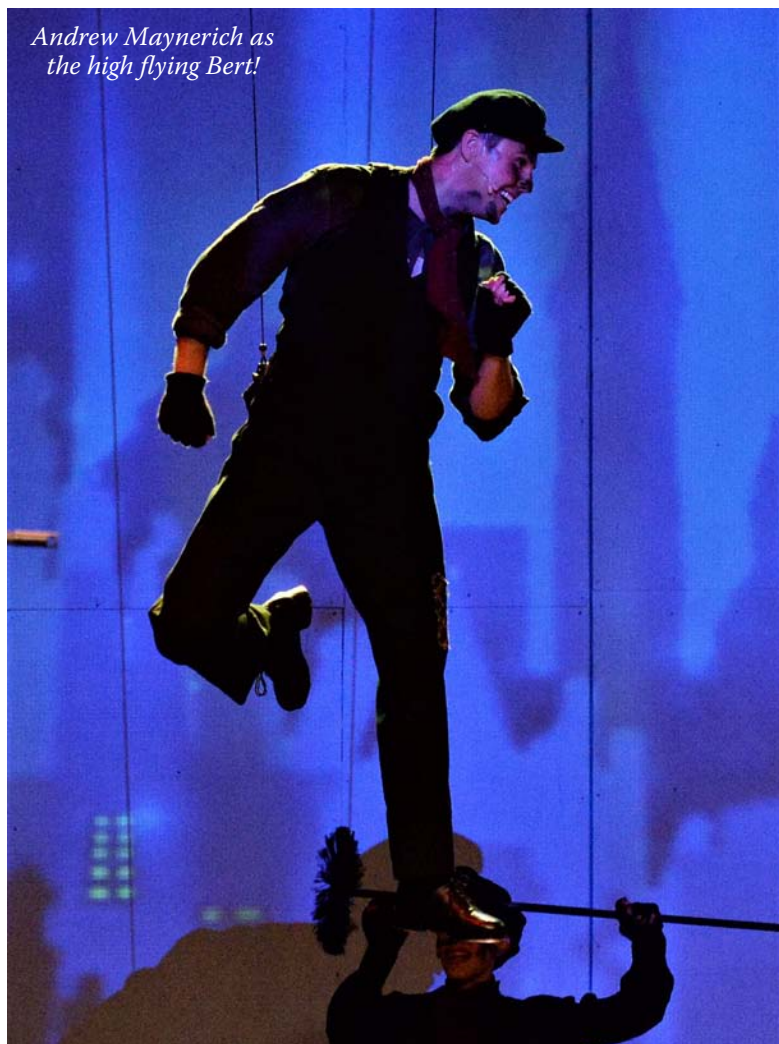
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& OTHERS AS NOTED

MARY POPPINS



It's A Jolly Holiday With Mary

*Andrew Maynerich as
the high flying Bert!*



*Carly Shank singing Being
Mrs. Banks.
(Photo by Gus Gordon)*



BY GUS GORDON

The Muni, Springfield's long-running outdoor theatre, is coming off a very successful 2017 summer season which featured productions of Willy Wonka, Mary Poppins, White Christmas and Grease. All four shows were warmly received by large appreciative crowds.

I was fortunate enough to have been cast in Mary Poppins in the role of the no-nonsense father, Mr. Banks. And while I have been a part of several outstanding Muni shows over the past 27 years, I was particularly thrilled with the community's reaction to this show.

Mary Poppins is the stage version of the beloved Disney movie about a magical nanny who comes to help bring the dysfunctional Banks family back together. The show featured a large cast that included Mary Kate Smith as the title character, Andrew Maynerich as Bert the Chimney Sweep, Carly Shank as Mrs. Banks, Madi Sweeney as Jane Banks, Cooper Coker as Michael Banks, Karen Gerdes as Ms. Andrew, Sherry Frachey as Mrs. Corry, Kathy Sees as the Bird Woman, and many others.

"Mary Poppins is one of those musicals that many of us were waiting for, and as a result, we had many seasoned performers audition," explained director Craig Williams II. "The cast was a wonderful team that lifted one another to a higher level. It's inspiring to learn from those you are directing, and that's exactly what Mary Poppins was for me."

Local favorite Mary Kate Smith won the sought-after role of Mary Poppins after an involved audition process back in March of 2017, and she was honored to play the "practically perfect" nanny. "It was thrilling and terrifying at the same time," she said. "I grew up idolizing Julie Andrews as Mary Poppins, like everyone else had, so it was a giant task to honor her performance while finding places to sneak in my own characterization."

Smith wasn't the only one who felt a huge responsibility to make sure the audiences who loved the film enjoyed the stage version as well. The entire cast and staff felt the need to get everything just right.

"It's such an iconic movie with memorable music and magical moments that continues to mesmerize viewers to



Mary Kate Smith as Mary Poppins
(Photo by Gus Gordon).



A happy ending for the Banks Family.



*Kathy Sees as the Bird Woman
(Photo by Leon Linder)*



*Mary Kate Smith as Mary Poppins and Andrew Maynerich as Bert
(Photo by Gus Gordon)*



*George Banks (Gus Gordon) discovers
his childhood gingerbread stars.*



A Spoonful of Sugar Helps The Medicine Go Down!.



*Bert with Michael
and Jane Banks
(Photo by Leon
Linder)*



*Karen Gerdes as the evil nanny, Ms. Andrew
(Photo by Gus Gordon)*

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A photograph of a white Mayflower moving truck with green accents. The truck is parked on a road with a sunset in the background.

this day,” said Williams. “Taking on the challenge of bringing that world to life onstage was daunting. Making Mary fly, destroying a kitchen and magically bringing it back together, and pulling a full-sized coat rack from a small carpet bag were all tricks we needed to make happen with ease.”

One of the main differences between the film and the stage version is the way that the roles of Mr. and Mrs. Banks are handled. In the movie, both the mother and father were slightly silly caricatures. Julian Fellowes, the creator of Downton Abbey, wrote the script for the stage version of Mary Poppins, and really fleshed out the characters of George and Winifred.

“Many in the audiences were so surprised by how human and transforming Mr. and Mrs. Banks were in the production,” according to actress Carly Shank, who played Winifred. “I really appreciated how gradually the changes occurred for Mrs. Banks. Just like usually happens in real life, there was no singular moment that gave her confidence in her abilities as a wife and mother - no Ebenezer Scrooge waking up on Christmas morning to a brand

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Photo Credit: David Fitch

new world and brand new attitude. Instead, it was a series of events - of both challenges and failures - that eventually led to the Banks' ability to come together in strength and love for the sake of their marriage and their children."

This more human take on the characters contributed to the show's success, and the positive reaction the Muni's production received.

"I was, and still am, completely overwhelmed," Smith explained. "Strangers still stop me to say how much they enjoyed it, or to ask if I am Mary Poppins! I think it's a testament to how much people love this story, and how much we all need a piece of theatre that reminds us the importance of love, family, and enjoying the time we have together."

Another notable element of this production was the stage design which utilized the talents of Williams, scenic designer Steven Varble and projection designer Brett Rutherford. This was the first production at the Muni that heavily featured projections for backdrops, and it was an overwhelming success.

"There was no real expectation of what the projections would look and feel like," said Williams. "But Steve and Brett brought a vision (to the scenic design) that truly set the bar high."

The cast members are also quick to praise Williams' leadership for helping to make the production as successful as it was.

"Craig's joyous attitude and love for people is absolutely infectious," said Smith. "No one else could have made this show, and the whole experience, as truly special."

"My favorite Craig quote is a thoughtfully stated, 'I really enjoyed that,'" added Shank. "That was a comment I heard from him at my first audition and on numerous occasions throughout the process. He trusted the cast and staff to rise to their roles with his positive support backing them up."

"It is always so humbling to hear of people's enjoyment," Williams stated. "Watching everyone from the smallest of the small to those young at heart enjoying what we worked so hard to create, is what really creates the magic for me."



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Homeowner's Denise & Marty Holman have been married 48 years and lived in 13 homes in 10 different states. They settled in central Illinois to be close to their son Jeff's family. They convinced their other son, Josh and his family to move to Chatham. So after many years of living in various parts of the country their entire family is now together in Chatham. Their 5 grandchildren attend school in Chatham, and they spend their free time watching them grow up and playing baseball, football, soccer, dance recitals and band performances.

They found a lot in the Sweetbriar subdivision (one of the last lots that backed to Lake Springfield property). They hired Doug Hill, owner of Macy Construction to build their home. Denise designed it, taking bits and pieces from their favorite parts of all their past homes, then adding features that coincided with their lifestyle (Sunday family dinners with all 11 Holmans which needed an island to seat 12).

Denise said, "We knew we wanted a pool to lure the grand kids to our home during summer break. The master bath has a door which leads to the screened porch, so the bath doubles as the pool bath."



PHOTOS BY
DESIGN EYES PHOTOGRAPHY
JAMIE GRAFF





The Holman's love to entertain, so everything is conveniently located on one level. Although 2960 sq feet on the main level is plenty for the 2 of them, they had the lower level poured with 9 ft ceilings, two daylight windows, and framed for a full bath, large family room and 5th bedroom.

Denise said, "I enjoyed the building process so much, I decided designing homes and interiors would make a great 2nd career." Previously Denise spent 35 years in a newspaper career in 5 cities and 8 years at Gannett Corporate headquarters in our nation's capital.

~SSM~

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THE SMALL UNSUNG HEROES OF SOLAR SING THEIR SONGS

BY MICHELLE KNOX, PRESIDENT, WINDSOLARUSA, INC.

Many times, when we see photos of solar systems or hear stories of solar installations they are on large homes, commercial buildings or even positioned atop acres of fields, but such images fail to offer a holistic view of the industry.

Solar adoption in the United States got its start back in the 1970s during the Carter administration. Zealous federal government funding programs incentivized its US development with good intent, but much of the money was misallocated without the anticipated growth. When leadership changed, a new position was taken: solar was dead and labeled unsuccessful. In fact, the solar modules that had been installed on the White House were removed.

A resurgence occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s, but solar products, installation and permitting costs were high which limited the ability of most Americans to "Go Solar." Accordingly, early adopters were generally those that were more affluent or retired with discretionary income to support movement toward clean energy. Pricing has dropped from as much as \$10/watt back at that time to around \$3.20/watt, or less, depending on system size.

Solar is more affordable now than ever, but the "word" is not out yet to the masses. Solar product pricing, available incentives and local finance opportunities make going solar a solid financial investment for all—not just those with discretionary income. Owners of installed residential systems are enjoying paybacks of five to seven years for systems that are warranted for 25 years; that's 18 to 20 years of free electricity. Several years ago, two Springfield residents named Phillip Blood and Joel Johnson decided solar was the right choice for them. Their homes are not large, their systems are not big, but these unsung heroes of solar are an integral part of the

industry.

Phillip Blood resides in a quiet neighborhood off of Stevenson Drive. He became interested in solar energy when his brother told him about CWLP offering a Solar Rewards Rebate. He reached out to Bob Croteau in the CWLP Energy Services Office to obtain a list of vendors he could contact. After connecting with a solar developer, he met to review his proposed solar plan and decided he wanted to move forward. "I reached out to people who might be able to support the funding locally and got nothing," said Blood. "So I pursued it through my mortgage company in Texas." They were able to assist him with a home equity line of credit that allowed him to start his



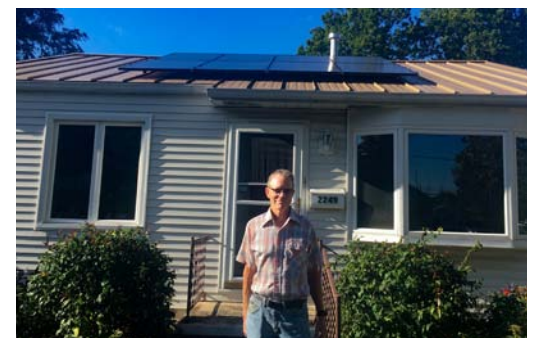
Phillip Blood standing beside his garage upon which he installed his solar panels.

installation in November 2014. Today, we have three local lenders who are willing to finance solar in Springfield: Town & Country Bank, Heartland Credit Union and CFCU.

The pictured install is comprised of (14) 280 watt American-made SolarWorld modules for a total system size of 3.92kW. Blood says, "[It is] awesome! I check very often to see where I am at compared to my meter. I'm still breaking very close to even." Blood's plans for the future include adding a few more modules to his system so he can turn down his air conditioning in summer beyond the 78 degrees he keeps it set at and have his system continue

to provide him a net/net situation. "If you own your home and don't plan on moving in the next five years, go solar," says Blood. "Once you get your system paid off, then you will have the advantage of selling your house quicker on the market nowadays because that is going to be one heck of an advantage having solar panels pre-installed."

On the other side of town, just off of North Grand, resides Joel Johnson. Joel is an avid environmentalist working for the EPA as a paralegal. In May 2015, Joel decided to install solar panels on his new metal roof. "I've been into environmentalism for a long time and I just decided to make it more personal... wear it on my roof," Johnson said. "I don't expend a lot of electricity so I



Joel Johnson installed solar panels on his new metal roof. His panels are covering 80% of his electric bill.

didn't think I'd have a huge savings, it was a lot about symbolism. I like the technology, the energy efficiency...the cleanness of the technology."

Johnson had been thinking about going solar for about a year before doing so. He had attended a talk at Lincoln Library on solar and then spoke with some of his fellow Springfield Bicycle Club friends that had already made the choice to install solar at their homes/businesses. He realized that "real people were actually doing this." Joel did not require financing for his solar system comprised of (8) SolarWorld 270 watt black on black modules.

"I had enough funds to cover the solar system but took out loans to do other things with the house," Johnson said. He replaced his roof and upgraded his electrical service prior to his install.

"My solar system is covering about 80% of my electric bill-a lot of [what's left] is the meter charge so I can't get rid of that," Johnson said. In addition to his solar system working toward his desired environmental efforts, he is a biking enthusiast who recently returned from a Canadian biking trip. He built his own solar greenhouse in the backyard in which he cultivates plants for the pollinator garden located in his backyard. This is a man who not only talks the talk, but walks the walk.

"Take advantage of any incentives that are out there," Johnson said. "It's not going to be an immediate payback, but it's a good medium for long term investment. I think it holds its value well and the components keep their efficiency over the years. It's always going to be generating a product for your benefit."

The 2017 Solar Tour is coming up on Saturday, October 7th from 10 AM – 3 PM. Both Phil and Joel's systems are featured as part of this self-directed tour as well as many other residential systems in Springfield and throughout Sangamon/Menard County. Participants can drive to the sites themselves or the Springfield Bicycle Club will be leading morning and afternoon bicycle loops featuring solar sites near Southwind Park (morning) and sites between Sherman and Cantrall (afternoon). The afternoon loop will end at Rolling Meadows Brewery who will be hosting an Abraham Lincoln event that same day with fun-filled festivities. A van tour will also be available. For more details, visit illinoissolar.org and/or Springfield Bicycle Club or WindSolarUSA's Facebook pages.



A rooftop view of Phillip Blood's solar array.

How The Numbers Line Up

A sample of economic performance for a 10kW system

Estimated installed cost	\$30,224
Federal Tax Credit or Treasury Grant	\$9,067
System cost after first cost incentives	\$21,157
Value of REC Sales in PV.	\$10,156
System cost after all incentives	\$11,001
Value of year 1 to year 10 power production	\$16,787
5-7 year payback on initial investment.	

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Clean Eating For Your Pets



Pet owners who practice clean eating for their own diet are beginning to wonder if they should be feeding their dogs a cleaner diet too. Many have already decided that feeding their dogs foods that include fresh vegetables, fruits and unprocessed meat is the right way to go. Others have decided to keep feeding their pets the traditional pet food (kibble) but incorporate a little fresh food from time to time. However the majority of pet owners leave pet food preparation to the manufacturer's and buy all their pet's kibble by the bag.

Regardless of what you feed your dog there are ways to tell if your dog is eating a healthy diet. The American Kennel Club says on their website, that if your dog produces a firm, healthy stool, is active and fit, and has a healthy appetite, then your choice of dog food is probably working just fine. They also state that your veterinarian is a valuable resource to help you decide if the food you are feeding your pet is adequate for their current needs. Just like humans your pet's dietary needs can change over the course of their lives.

If you decide to incorporate clean eating into your pet's diet what would it look like? Terry Walters, a best selling author and dog owner, believes that clean eating for both humans and pets is about eating food as close to its natural form as you can find. Whole fruit, vegetables and unprocessed meat is very recognizable and eating those foods with no artificial preservatives,



coloring and flavorings is getting you very close to clean eating. Whereas we shouldn't be eating raw meat your pet could eat it but doing so requires careful handling and for safety reasons cooking the meat is advisable.

Getting away from kibble and other forms of processed dog food may not be

practical or likely in some households but keeping whole foods from your dog's diet need not be something to fear or avoid. The benefits are numerous. Just like for humans, there are so many benefits to whole food eating that it simply makes sense to feed them to your pet. Whole vegetables supply more phytonutrients & vegetable fiber than can be found in the grains included in kibble. Phytonutrients are protective and include antioxidants and anti-inflammatory molecules. They also are antiviral, antifungal, antibacterial and anticancer. They supply enzymes to help with digestion. Vegetables help treat all degenerative disease processes in humans and pets.

Some of the more forward thinking dog food manufacturers are now putting together kibble formulas that include fruits and vegetables. So if you are committed to kibble but want to get some veggies in your pet then look for brands that use real, recognizable, non-GMO ingredients. If you want to introduce more whole veggies and fruits into your pet's diet then do so

gradually and monitor their stools. Tell your veterinarian on your next visit so they can look for indications of malnutrition or allergic reactions. They may even have some good recipes and ideas on how to incorporate more whole foods into your pet's diet.

BY BILL STOKES



SPRINGFIELD OFFICE
1711 Wabash Avenue
Springfield, IL 62704
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Celebrity Bartender Fundraiser

The Girls On The Run (GOTR), held an 'All in the Family' Celebrity Bartender event where celebrity hosts Lisa Pretrilli, Ryan Bangert, Bridget and Pat Selinger, Misty and Mike Buscher and Dr. Tammie Klein and Judge Patrick Kelley competed against each other for the most tips. The tip donations benefit the GOTR which is an international, non-profit prevention program focused on preparing girls ages 8-13 to run a 5k and educating them about the importance of healthy physical and emotional lifestyles. The event took place June 14 at the Brickhouse on Springfield's Westside.



Patrick and Bridget Selinger, Abbey and Larry Grubb



Kathy Grubb and Lisa Belz



Victoria Henderson, Lara Lebeck and Chelsea Jones



Alessia Marocco and Emilie Leach



Dan Poludniak and Ron Schwermin



Jackie Alexander and Brooke Cooper



Kasey Fernandez and Kristi Jones



Ryan Bangert and Lisa Petrilli



Terry Carter and Matt Gallois



Liz and Carl Hart

Raise a Glass for HOPE

Raise a Glass for HOPE, a fundraising event held August 16 at the Corkscrew in Springfield benefitting the nonprofit organization HOPE (Helping Other People Excel). HOPE is a Springfield based mission to help Nicaraguan women and young girls achieve self-sufficiency by empowering them through good healthcare and education.



Brooke Marcille, Gabrielle Allmon and Leanne Bucci



Lisa Stone, Donna Gibney, Cara Tabatabai and Amy Gelber



Debbie and Scott Erb



Georgia and Terry Winson



Linda Green and Ann Robertson



Pilar Mayorga and Daniela Triana



William Ramirez and Isabelle Allmon



Pat Ryan and Edwilyn Colwell



Butterfly Release

The 9th annual Butterfly Release took place at the Simmons Cancer Institute's (SCI) Thomas Garden of Hope with founder Evelyn Brandt Thomas overseeing the event on June 17. One Monarch butterfly was released for each donation in memory of victims or in celebration of survivors of cancer. Sponsorships benefit the continued cancer research through SCI and stay within the region.



Jan Kanpp, Sharon Nation and Cheryl Ten Eyck



Karol Young, Cindy Moreno and Shelby Moore



Evelyn Brandt Thomas and Necole Powell



Cindy and Lauren Ringer and Cora Smith



Cindy Parkhill, Sue Tin and Connie Klutnick



Desiree, Rachel and Erin Brown



Gio Capriolo and Andres Morales



Michael, Sarah and Jillian Albanesev



Senator Larry and Sally Jo Bomke



Bob and Dean Naugle



Alex and Allison Lovdahl



Jenny Broughton, Pam Barringer, Evelyn Brandt Thomas and Denise Harney



Addi and Kristi Lessen

The 2017 Great American Eclipse

*Photos by Phil Wheat using a Canon 7D Mark II
Focal length was 600 mm. Exposure was 1/10 sec at f/11*



What made this eclipse extra special is that it was the first time since January 11, 1880 that a total solar eclipse occurred exclusively over the continental United States—no other country could see the totality. That is why it was called the The Great American Eclipse!





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