BEST OF SPRINGFIELD 2021
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Proceeds to benefit Ansar Shrine Operations
Not Deductible As Charitable Contributions
Every year, we ask our opinionated readers to tell us about their favorite people, places and things in the Springfield area. Over the decades we’ve been doing this, we’ve continued to tweak both the process and the results issue to try to keep things fresh and interesting, and of course, the votes tend to reflect current trends. Last year, all 10 of the most popular categories were food-related. This time around, people seemed to be broadening their horizons a bit more, with museum and Abraham Lincoln historic site cracking the top 10 alongside repeat favorites like donut shop, bakery and horseshoe. And in a nod to the pandemic, place to see a play or musical outdoor and outdoor dining were also popular categories. We also tweaked our theater categories to recognize virtual performances and added a podcast category due to popular demand. Wondering how all this works? Here are the answers to the most common questions we hear:

Q. Are the results real? Don’t you just pick your advertisers to win?
A. The Best of Springfield results are based on what our readers chose as the best, which is not always the same as what our staff would prefer. Just ask the advertising department, there are many winners who have never spent a dime with us and others who frequently advertise but failed to win their category. While advertising helps remind people to vote for you, it certainly doesn’t guarantee the outcome.

Q. Why didn’t national companies or chain stores win some of the categories? If you’re a locally owned business, shouldn’t you support other locally owned businesses?
A. See previous answer. We encourage our readers to vote (and shop) local, but ultimately, we don’t control the votes.

Q. Why wasn’t ______ category included?
A. There are already more than 200 categories, so from a logistical perspective we have to consider the attention span of both the voters and readers. However, we do add and subtract categories based on reader interest and current events (we brought back the comedian category this year in response to reader requests and added several categories specific to the pandemic). Keep in mind that there needs to be at least four or five contenders in a category to make it competitive, so if you’re asking for “Best battery store,” “Best place to buy a musical instrument,” or “Best auctioneer” (all actual requests we’ve had), we’re taking that into consideration. If you think of a great category we’ve missed, email our associate publisher, James Bengfort, at jaben@illinoistimes.com.

Q. Why wasn’t ______ one of the options when I voted?
A. We hold an initial nomination round beginning in mid-August. The top five vote-getters in each category move on to the final voting. So if you want to lobby for a particular person or business to win, the time to start is in the nomination round.

Q. Why don’t all of the winners have a write up this year?
A. We used to publish a short blurb on each of the winners, and it can be hard to find something different to say each year. Starting last year, we switched to a format with longer (but fewer) profiles. We now try to highlight new winners and categories to make it more interesting and informative for the reader.

We welcome comments on this, or anything else in our publication, which can be sent to letters@illinoistimes.com. – Michelle Ownbey, publisher
Feldco 50% off Windows promotion represents a 50% savings on full retail price of the window, only as detailed in the Feldco retail price list and does not apply to doors or installation of woodwork and/or other options/materials. (Model #5655 Thermal Replacement Windows, minimum 4 windows). List prices may not necessarily be the price at which the product is sold in the trade area. Installations performed by factory trained independent contractors. Promotion cannot be combined with any other offers, coupons or promotions. Subject to credit approval. Interest accrues during a 12-month promotional period, but all interest is waived if the purchase amount is paid before the expiration of the promotional period. All sales, promotions and offers may be discontinued at any time at the sole discretion of Feldco Factory Direct, LLC. Offer expires 11/30/2021.

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LOCAL LIVING AUTHOR

Shatriya Smith

Shatriya Smith wants to be the capital city's first poet laureate – an honor that doesn’t, but should, exist – and should first be bestowed on Smith, partially for her being creative and visionary enough for the idea in the first place. In addition to her writing, Smith is a fierce community organizer who likely has as many connections as any public official in Springfield. Currently she is helping lead the Marcus Garvey-Harriet Tubman Cultural Arts and Research Center, a nonprofit with a focus on empowering impoverished and disadvantaged kids through arts education.

Even through the pandemic, she has kept busy, helping organize music lessons for kids who wouldn’t have access to them otherwise, for instance. She has recited her poetry at multiple rallies during the recent Black Lives Matter movement uprising, as she has for numerous years prior for other human rights causes. Smith is open about overcoming dyslexia in order to work with words and make them mean something that moves many.

Smith lives on the east side of Springfield, in a home that once belonged to her late grandmother, who was also heavily involved in the community. Smith credits her grandmother with urging her to share her feelings, something that otherwise was not encouraged during her childhood. “My grandma broke that curse for me. So I’m free because I am able to be descriptive about my feelings, and share this understanding of where I’m coming from,” Smith told Illinois Times in an interview earlier this year.

Springfield is lucky to have Smith as someone communicating across many divides that have historically segregated the capital city. Her genuine commitment and embodiment of a progressive, welcoming spirit is an asset to Springfield and her star only continues to rise.
RESOUNDING & ROMANTIC
Saturday, November 6, 2021
7:30 PM at UIS Performing Arts Center
Shostakovich  Rachmaninoff  Zare
ilsymphony.org

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Finalists: Don Gray, Josh Langfelder, Tony DelGiorno, Andy Goleman

USE OF PUBLIC MONEY
Schools
Finalists: Salvation Army Warming Center all year, road repairs, year-round branch and leaf pickup, Lincoln Library (Springfield’s public library)

BUSINESS GIVING BACK DURING THE PANDEMIC
Cafe Moxo
411 E. Adams St., 788-8084
Finalists: Willow and Birch Salon, Aztca Mexican Grill, HSHS St. John’s Hospital, Chadito’s Mexican American Grill

APARTMENT COMMUNITY
Lake Pointe Apartments
1600 Toronto Road, 529-2900
Finalists: Lincoln Square Apartments, The Villas Downtown, Prairie Vista Apartments, Monroe Garden Apartments

CLERGYPERSON
Fr. Jeff Grant - Blessed Sacrament Parish
1725 S. Walnut St., 528-7521
Finalists: Eddie Lowen - Westside Christian Church, Rev. Susan Phillips - First Presbyterian Church, Martin Woulfe - Abraham Lincoln UU Congregation, Jeff Nelsen - Cherry Hills Church

DRINK
BARTENDER
Darcy at Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery
500 S. Sixth St., 670-0627

SPECIALTY COCKTAIL
Casa Real Margarita Flight at Casa Real
3100 W. White Oaks Drive, 303-5323
Finalists: Bloody Mary - Boone’s, Spicy Raspberry Margarita - Roots Latin Grill, Bloody Mary Bar - Brewski’s Pub, Suicide Shot - Clique

LOCAL PODCAST
Ray Lytle's Morning Disaster
Long a staple on the Springfield-area radio scene, Ray Lytle moved into the internet radio world more than five years ago and brought his popular Morning Disaster program along for the wild ride. Basically, the podcast our readers voted to be the best is a variation of the irreverent talk show that Ray "the Master of Disaster" is known for and successfully produced live on air for decades.

Recorded for posterity and available at www.morningdisaster.net, you can listen to the very first podcast from May 18, 2015, when, according to information on the link, “after 10 long years, a sound from the past returns to the internet” all the way up to, well, whatever Ray and his cast of characters are talking about today.

Some of the crew Ray had on the popular WQLZ show that started all this wonderfully nutty behavior crop up now and again, plus there’s a never-ending revolving cast of interviewees, crazy call-ins and much more, including silly stories about the late Jim the Photographer and whatever pops into the funny, fertile and seriously comedic, irreverent mind of Ray Lytle. Show participants listed on his website currently include Sh*t Stain Steve, Niki (she’s been a Disaster worker since the 90s), F’ing Jason and Shawn Balint, plus Fat Nick and Fit Nick, who are two different Nicks that Ray brings on the show.

The strength of this unscripted, unpredictable and sometimes unbelievable online-radio-show-turned podcast rests on the perky and quirky personality of Ray as he tries to help us make sense of this wild and wooly world in which we live while interacting with these fellow disaster-makers. Our readers agree enough with that to say this is the best we have, and we’re all good with that, too.

WINE BAR
Cooper’s Hawk Winery & Restaurant
2501 Wabash Ave., 321-9100
Finalists: 3Sixteen Wine Bar, It’s All About Wine, Curate, The Corkscrew

WINERY
Danenberger Family Vineyards
12341 Irish Road, New Berlin, 488-6321
Finalists: Hill Prairie Winery, West of Wise Winery, Cooper’s Hawk Winery & Restaurant, Walnut Street Winery

NEW BAR
1st & 3rd Boutique and Wine Bar,
105 S. Seventh St., Petersburg
Finalists: Brewski’s Pub, Clique, Whiskey Jack’s, The Winner’s Circle

HAPPY HOUR
Boone’s
301 W. Edwards St., 679-3752
Finalists: JP Kelly’s Pub, Webbles Bar & Grill, Bella Milano, Brewski’s Pub

MARGARITAS
Xochimilco
2941 W. Iles Ave., 546-3116
Finalists: Aztca Mexican Grill, Casa Real, Blue Margarita Mexican Bar & Grill, La Fiesta

BEER GARDEN
Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery
500 S. Sixth St., 670-0627
Finalists: Curve Inn, Locals Bar - Pawnee, Buzz Bomb Brewing Company, Boone’s

CRAFT BREWERY
Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery
500 S. Sixth St., 670-0627
Finalists: Hand of Fate Brewing Company, Springfield Beer Company, Buzz Bomb Brewing Company, Engrained Brewery & Restaurant

BEER SELECTION (ON TAP)
Buzz Bomb Brewing Company
406 E. Adams St.
Finalists: Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery, Finley’s Tap House, Springfield Beer Company, Sky Lounge

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Congratulations
to all the winners and finalists in this year’s
Best of Springfield contest.

We appreciate all you do to serve our community and keep us safe during these challenging times.
**BEST OF SPRINGFIELD 2021**

**OVERALL BAR**

**Route 66 Motorheads Bar,**
Grill & Museum

600 Toronto Road, 679-7323

Finalists: Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery, Curve Inn, Buzz Bomb Brewing Company, Springfield Beer Company, Clique

**COFFEEHOUSE**

**Grab-A-Java, Inc.**

1702 S. Sixth St., 523-5282
3115 Hedley Road, 698-9773

Finalists: Wm. Van’s Coffee House, Scoop Du Jour, Custom Cup, Grateful Coffee Co.

**JUICE OR SMOOTHIE BAR**

**Smoothie King**

605 W. Jefferson Street, 670-1962
4319 Yucan Drive, 679-4590


**FOOD**

**BAKERY**

**Incredibly Delicious**

925 S. Seventh St., 528-8548

Finalists: Nothing Bundt Cakes, Three Twigs Bakery, SmallCakes Cupcakery and Creamery, Cakes by Ashley

**BREAKFAST**

**Charlie Parker’s Diner**

700 W. North St., 241-2104

Finalists: Le Peep, Biscuits + Brunch, Ritz’s Lil Fryer, Brunchfield Cafe

**BRUNCH**

**Biscuits + Brunch**

2661 Chatham Road, 670-1501

Finalists: Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery, Le Peep, Boone’s, Brunchfield Cafe

**CHEF**

**Aurora Coffey - Luminary Kitchen & Provisions**

3121 Hedley Road, 679-1819

Finalists: Keith Loukinen - Loukinen’s on 4th, Michael Higgins - Maldaner’s Restaurant & Catering, Joseph at Joseph’s Fine Cuisine, Howard Seidel - Brunchfield Cafe

**VIRTUAL/ONLINE THEATER**

**PERFORMANCE - FEMALE LEAD**

**Mary Kate Smith**

*Songs for a New World*

Within the strange, pandemic world of 2020, theater shows were not able to be safely presented and venues struggled to come up with ways to produce performances for audiences. At the Hoogland Center for the Arts, videotaped performances were made available online and *Songs for a New World* by Jason Robert Brown aired in October 2020.

With only four actors in the show, and little interaction necessary or desired, the piece seemed to be just right for such a taped online performance. Mary Kate Smith did such an extraordinary job in portraying her character that readers decided she was the best female online performance this year. The seasoned and well-respected actor was joined by Damien Kaplan, Justin Branker-Carter and Jasmine French, with Craig Williams II directing, along with Cory Brown leading the orchestra and playing piano to make this extra-special play shine as incredibly as it did even without the normalcy of a live, intimate setting.

Smith is no stranger to the local theater scene, known for her spectacular lead spot in *Bright Star* at the Legacy Theatre back in 2019 as well as many other popular performances, including doing her winning role in *Songs for a New World* years ago for another local theater production.

Perhaps the way the songs seemed to fit into the pandemic world as we knew it in October 2020 and redefined the many uncertainties we faced at that peculiar time helped to define Smith’s part and allow her talents to soar for this version that seemed on topic. As some say, extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures, and she stepped up to the stage and delivered an extraordinary performance even without a live audience to inspire the production, and for that we say, Bravo and well done.
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LATE-NIGHT EATS
The Dublin Pub
1975 Wabash Ave., 793-6871
Finalists: Gabatoni’s Restaurant, Star 66 Cafe, Route 66 Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum, Smokey Bones Bar & Fire Grill

NEW RESTAURANT
Mission BBQ
2401 Wabash Ave., 275-5610
Finalists: Curate, Luminary Kitchen & Provisions, Sweet Basil Cafe, Brunchfield Cafe

OUTDOOR DINING
Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery
500 S. Sixth St., 670-0627
Finalists: Home Plate Bar & Grill, Incredibly Delicious, Route 66 Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum, Curate

PLACE FOR DATE NIGHT
Cooper’s Hawk Winery & Restaurant
2501 Wabash Ave., 321-9100
Finalists: Bella Milano, Loukinens’ on 4th, Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery, Joseph’s Fine Cuisine

SERVER AND LOCATION
Samantha Judd - Aztca Mexican Grill
2753 Chatham Road, 546-6906
Finalists: Gina - Route 66 Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum, Shawna Stevenson - Smokey Bones Bar & Fire Grill, Ella Kovalichuk at Brunchfield Cafe, Nichole Palsen - Route 66 Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum, Morgan - Papa Murphy’s Pizza

TAKE OUT
Magic Kitchen
115 N. Lewis St., 525-6975
4112 N. Peoria Road, 525-2230
Finalists: D’Arcy’s Pint, Mekong Cafe, Cafe Moxo, Bella Milano

FOOD DELIVERY
Head West Sub Stop
1124 W. Jefferson St., 793-9101
3311 Robbins Road, 726-9202
2432 Denver Dr., 744-7990
1281 Toronto Road, 585-7990
530 E. Capitol Ave., 789-9101
3325 S. Sixth St., 679-2477
450 State St., Rochester, 498-1182
401 S. Main St., Jacksonville, 271-1614
136 S. Oakland Ave., Decatur, 791-6623
Finalists: Antonio’s Pizza, Gabatoni’s Restaurant, Cafe Moxo, Jimmy John’s

VIRTUAL/ONLINE THEATER
PERFORMANCE - MALE LEAD
Keith Bradbury
Spirit of Lincoln
The name Ken Bradbury is synonymous with local, original theater. This script by the late Jacksonville-based playwright introduced us to people who lived in the area during Lincoln's lifetime to express how the spirit of the Great Emancipator, beyond the scope of his political and presidential experience, touched their lives. The portrayals, done in Ken's inimitable style, were taken from local legends, stories and tales (the music was by Roger Wainwright, Bradbury's longtime musical collaborator) and written as imagined by Bradbury.

This online version, directed by Hope Cherry at the Springfield Theatre Centre back in November 2020, gave Keith Bradbury, Ken’s brother, the opportunity to play the part of William Berry, Lincoln’s business partner for the store in New Salem. The playwright himself portrayed Berry in the only other previous production, done in 2009. Keith felt the responsibility of reprising the role created and performed by his late brother, and was “deeply touched” by such an opportunity.

It seems the online audience was touched as well by the connection and rendering enough to vote Keith as the best male performance this year during such a strange time for theater workings. Videotaped by the STC, then broadcast on streaming platforms, the play, according to Cherry, also helped to promote the legacy of Ken’s voluminous work, something both he and brother Keith are keen to do. And by winning this category, they’ve certainly and successfully helped to keep the name of Ken Bradbury out among the theater-going public, and much of that credit goes to this fine and heartfelt performance by Keith Bradbury.

FINE DINING
VELE
3241 W. Iles Ave., 210-2177
Finalists: Loukinens’ on 4th, Cooper’s Hawk Winery & Restaurant, Chesapeake Seafood House, Bella Milano

FOOD TRUCK
The Taco Joint
230½ South Grand Ave. East, 331-3536
Finalists: Aztca Mexican Grill, Vose Concessions event food trailer Korndogs, Cooper’s StrEATside Bistro, Gilly’s Championship BBQ & Catering

DRIVE THRU
Chick-fil-A
2431 Wabash Ave., 546-2000
Finalists: Route 66 Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum, Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery, Luminary Kitchen & Provisions, Loukinens’ on 4th

OVERALL RESTAURANT
D’Arcy’s Pint
661 W. Stanford Ave., 492-8800
Finalists: Route 66 Motorheads Bar, Grill & Museum, Obed and Isaac’s Microbrewery & Eatery, Luminary Kitchen & Provisions, Loukinens’ on 4th

BURRITO
Aztca Mexican Grill
2753 Chatham Road, 546-6906
Finalists: Xochimilco, Taco Gringo, La Fiesta, The Taco Joint

TACOS
Tacology 201
3266 W. Iles Ave., 679-6448
Finalists: Xochimilco, Aztca Mexican Grill, Taco Gringo, The Taco Joint

MEXICAN RESTAURANT
Xochimilco
2941 W. Iles Ave., 546-3116
Finalists: Aztca Mexican Grill, Moroleon Tropical, Casa Real, La Fiesta, Blue Margarita Mexican Bar & Grill

BBQ
Mission BBQ
2401 Wabash Ave., 275-5610
Finalists: Li’l Willy’s BBQ, Smokey Bones Bar & Fire Grill, Hickory River, Gilly’s Championship BBQ & Catering
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for the votes of confidence!

We appreciate you.

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With cannabis now legalized in Illinois for adult use, Springfield residents have a number of dispensaries to choose from. Ascend’s Horizon Drive location has stood out from others for Illinois Times voters in a market that’s both very new and already robust.

“We are very invested in Springfield’s community of patients and consumers, and we’re thrilled to see the positive impact we’ve had over this past year since we opened our first Springfield location,” said Chris Melillo, Ascend’s chief revenue officer. “We are especially proud of our robust selection of brands curated to appeal to a spectrum of patient and consumer preferences.”

Melillo said Ascend’s partnership with its West Coast brands have given Ascend’s Horizon Drive location and Springfield-area consumers access to some of the nation’s most popular products. He said the dispensary will be looking to expand its Ozone brand cannabis offerings in particular in the near future.

“It is a privilege to operate in such a dynamic and promising market and to see how our neighbors in Springfield share our sentiment,” Melillo said.

With well-appointed facilities, friendly staff, a good selection of products for those purchasing cannabis recreationally and a convenient location near other east side retailers, it’s no surprise Ascend’s Horizon Drive location was recognized by our readers.
Mixing the very best of the old with the most trendy of the new...

Holiday Kickoff Event
Fri, Nov 5 & Sat, Nov 6
SAVE THE DATE

421 W Springfield Rd, Taylorville IL
Hours: Monday - Saturday 9am - 6pm
Open LATE until 8pm first FRIDAY of the month
LIVE SALE Saturdays 7pm on Facebook

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3121 Hedley Road, 679-1819

Finalists: The Feed Store, Maldaner’s Restaurant & Catering, VELE, The Barn

PIZZA
Gabatoni’s Restaurant
300 E. Laurel St., 528-9629

Finalists: Antonio’s Pizza, Di Carlo’s, Nancy’s Pizza, La Piazza Cucina Italiana, Rosati’s Pizza

RESTAURANT FOR DESSERT
Pease’s at BUNN Gourmet
2941 Plaza Drive, 793-1840

Finalists: Incredibly Delicious, Luminary Kitchen & Provisions, Cooper’s Hawk Winery & Restaurant, Joseph’s Fine Cuisine

SEAFOOD
Chesapeake Seafood House
3045 E. Clear Lake Ave., 522-5220

Finalists: Carter’s Fish Market, Anchors Away, VELE, Loukinens’ on 4th

SOUL FOOD
MJ’s Fish & Chicken Express
716 E. Enos Ave., 572-0257

Finalists: Boyd’s New Generation Restaurant and Catering, Clay’s Popeye’s BBQ, Jerk Shop Go, Anchors Away

SPORTS BAR AND GRILL
Home Plate Bar & Grill
2571 Koke Mill Road, 679-3313


STEAKHOUSE
Texas Roadhouse
2540 W. Iles Ave., 698-5700

Finalists: Old Luxembourg Inn, Alexander’s Steakhouse, LongHorn Steakhouse, Outback Steakhouse

CLERGYPERSON
Fr. Jeff Grant
Blessed Sacrament Parish

Jeff Grant is just an Illinois farm boy who finds himself shepherding a different kind of flock. The pastor of Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church is known for his stirring homilies and pastoral demeanor. But mostly he’s known for his gentleness.

“Every day when Blessed Sacrament school lets out, he stands at the door and waves and speaks to the students as they leave the building,” principal Nicole Kuhlman said.

The Highland, Illinois, native has been a priest for 39 years, the last 10 of which have been as pastor of Blessed Sacrament.

“I knew I wanted a career where I could serve people, and the advantage of being a priest is that you can serve the spiritual lives of people,” Grant said. “It’s not easy, but it’s certainly a rewarding life.”

Blessed Sacrament is one of the largest parishes in the Springfield area, serving 1,400 to 1,500 families. Before the pandemic, average weekend Mass attendance was about 1,200 people.

“Father Jeff is the most caring and compassionate person I have ever met,” said parishioner Scott Reimers of Springfield. “He really serves the souls of his congregation. He gets calls day and night from people needing him to come to the hospital to serve a sick person. He is a humble man.”

Five years ago, Grant worked for six months as a missionary to Kenya where he volunteered as a parish priest at the Kakuma Refugee Camp, located approximately 600 miles north of Nairobi.

He said he found that experience to be fulfilling, much like his work in Springfield.

“I would do the sacraments there just as I do within the walls of Blessed Sacrament,” he said. “I usually traveled with an interpreter. Of course, when I heard confessions, an interpreter couldn’t be present. Sometimes their English would be broken, and I’d have trouble understanding them. But I take the view, God understands them.”

Reimers added, “Every action, every explanation, every decision from Father Jeff comes first from compassion. He leads both our parish and our school so well because of his consideration and understanding of everyone. He truly lives the calling of serving others and helps each of us to be a better person just by his example.”
ILLINOISTIMES.COM/PROMOTIONS
for contest entry and details

ADULT COSTUME CONTEST

Upload a photo of your 2021 costume creation. Winners from each category win cash and prizes.

sponsored by

Crystal Head VODKA
19 Crimes.
NEW BAR (OPENED AFTER 8/1/20)
1st & 3rd Boutique and Wine Bar, Petersburg

The verdict is in, and folks decided the best new bar is more than just a bar. The business, located in a cool old building on the west side of the square in Petersburg, features a boutique with clothes, gifts and assorted goodies downstairs, plus wine, entertainment and a stylish space upstairs.

Started by two sisters who were both educators and looking for a change, Liz Carter and Maggie Adkins turned a far-fetched, dreamy idea into a rocking, relevant reality in the space of several months. The intriguing name came from their order in a family of four sisters (you can ask them who is first and who is third) and it was in the fall of 2020, while dealing with the frustrations of teaching remotely, they decided to seriously look at opening a place together.

When the building they both knew and admired as residents of Petersburg came up for sale, they purchased it and began the adventure. The official opening happened on June 5, 2021, after spending months teaching while working on the building nights and weekends. The upstairs area was originally intended to host private parties and events, but with the popularity of the wine bar, the room is now fully dedicated to being open to their enthusiastic and ardent patrons.

Their always-popular charcuterie board is available in different options, including the recently introduced to-go box, and there are the unusual and the usual varieties of wine for your drinking pleasure, plus regular live music to entertain the happy, new-bar-going crowd.

With all the excitement of other places opening on the Petersburg square in the coming months, the sisters are perhaps poised to expand beyond the new bar category next year. As more and more folks make the ’burg on the Sangamon River a destination, the little wine bar (and boutique) that could may be a future, as well as a current, Best of Springfield winner.
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CHINESE

Little Saigon

Springfield loves its Asian foods, and this year our readers have decided that Little Saigon tops the charts in this category. While it was recognized in the category for best Chinese food, Little Saigon serves up primarily Thai and Vietnamese cuisine in an atmosphere that gives a nod to its Southeast Asian heritage.

We think our readers are drawn to Little Saigon for things like its Pho soups that can warm even the coldest soul. The aromatic and deeply flavored broth is the perfect vehicle for thinly sliced beef, onions, noodles, and cilantro. Or its papaya salad that packs a deceptive amount of heat that’s balanced by just the right amount of sweetness. Diners also seem drawn to Little Saigon’s large variety of fruit freezes – nice when you want to cool off from some of their spicier entrees. A variety of beers are also available to serve the same purpose, including some authentic Thai and Vietnamese beers that hit the right spot.

But Little Saigon isn’t all about spice. There are plenty of traditional Asian dishes that offer just as much flavor but without the heat, like noodle salads topped with meat or egg and served with vegetables with a tangy and sweet dressing. Service is always extremely friendly, and the space is kept clean.

Lastly, our readers liked that Little Saigon not only has the kind of food that handles takeout well (important in these days of COVID), but that the staff goes out of the way to package it up so that nothing spills. Small touches like this garnered Little Saigon the win this year.
The Animal Protective League’s Upcoming Events

Harry Potter Trivia Night

Friday, November 12, 7:00 p.m.
(Doors open at 6:00)
Columbian Grand Hall, 2200 South Meadowbrook Rd.

Costumes Encouraged!
Not a Harry Potter fan? That’s ok, it’s general interest trivia except for one magical Harry Potter round with special prizes!

- Cash Prizes (TBD based upon reservations)
- Raffle Prizes & Silent Auction!

Donate cat food (we’ll accept dog food too) and receive up to 20 free raffle tickets! Dry cat food and canned pet food are especially needed.

For more information go to www.apl-shelter.org or call Deana at (217) 361-6212.

$150 per table
(If paid in advance by November 5th)
or $20 per person at the door
(Tables 8-10 people — Max of 10)

No messy store-bought food welcome. Please purchase drinks.

All proceeds benefit the Animal Protective League

November 12—Harry Potter Fall Trivia Night
Get your group together for a fun night of trivia, including a special Harry Potter themed round with special prizes! Join us at the Columbian Grand Hall at 2200 South Meadowbrook Rd.

$150 per table (max 10 people) or $20 per person. Doors open at 6 pm and trivia begins at 7 pm. Bring dog or cat food to donate and receive up to 20 free raffle tickets. Dry cat food and canned cat food are especially needed. Costumes are encouraged!

Now through November 12—Wreath Orders
Order fresh, hand-made Christmas wreaths, door arches and swags now through November 12th. They are made using balsam fir and white pine and accented with red velvet bows and pinecones!

November Adoption Events
Every Saturday, 11 am - 4 pm & Sunday, 12 - 4 pm at PetSmart
Nov 13 & 14, PetSmart National Adoption, 11 am - 3 pm
Nov 26, PetSmart, 3183 S. Veterans Pkwy, 11 am - 3 pm

For more information, visit our website at www.apl-shelter.org or call 217-544-7387.

Adoption Corner

Bowser is a little over 2-years-old and is jubilant and bouncy when he sees people or treats that he likes. Bowser does a happy dance whenever it’s walk time!

Lillianne is 6-year-old sweet and cuddly girl who has been overlooked because she loves to hide under or inside things, especially warm blankets!

Ruby, a 2-year-old border collie mix, is an athletic dog with beautiful (and fast) long legs! Ruby would do best in a home that will exercise her mentally and physically!

Yelena is a 2-year-old brown tabby and white feline. He is an expressive and talkative cat that really appreciates attention and treats!

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Aurora Coffey was much of the visionary genius behind the former American Harvest Eatery, as she is now for Luminary Kitchen & Provisions in Springfield. “She really is the driving creative and organizational force behind the business,” says Jordan Coffey, her husband and business partner.

The two met in a kitchen, working for August Mrozowski and his wife, Sharon Ehrat, both of whom owned and operated Augie’s Front Burner, the downtown restaurant that closed last year. Mrozowski may technically be retired, but he continues to provide support to the Coffeys. Mrozowski says in addition to Aurora’s talent in the kitchen, she has a keen sense of marketing. “She’s an amazing writer,” adds Ehrat. “She’s a very giving person, also.”

Aurora studied at Robert Morris Culinary Institute in Chicago and learned from some of the best in the contemporary culinary world, including Chef Rick Bayless, host of a popular TV show about Mexican cuisine. Aurora also spent more than a year working in the kitchen of the House of Blues in Chicago.

Part of what Mrozowski and Ehrat helped pass down to the Coffeys was a passion for farm-to-table fare. In addition to locally sourced products being fresher and of higher quality, “You’re supporting the community as a whole,” says Mrozowski of buying from local vendors and farmers.

“She’s very well-versed and knowledgeable in seasonal ingredients,” says Jordan about Aurora. Aurora is the one who develops and conceptualizes the ever-changing menus based on the seasons, a practice that American Harvest was known for and which Luminary carries on.

Jordan speculates that what Aurora is most proud of to date, professionally, is the opening of Luminary over the past year, which seems to have made a splash in the food and service industries.

“The Coffeys are down-to-earth folks who will tell it to you straight. They have big hearts to match their big personalities. Earlier this year they held a mental health fair, inviting everyone in the service industry. They announced Luminary will be closed during the week of Oct. 26-Nov. 2 this year, so that their hard-working staff can have a rest. And they have recently donated meals to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Illinois.”

In a broader sense, all of their hard work is motivated by their two young sons. Jordan speculates that what Aurora is most proud of to date, professionally, is the opening of Luminary over the past year, which seems to have made a splash in the food and service industries.

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In a broader sense, all of their hard work is motivated by their two young sons. Jordan says Aurora has especially worked hard to “establish a successful business that can sustain our lives at home.”
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CHILI

The Chili Parlor

Springfield is a chili town – there's no doubt about it. There are even fights over whether it's spelled with one or two “l”s. And Springfield's favorite kind of chili is tavern chili, with the Chili Parlor bringing home the win this year. It's a Springfield institution that's been around for more than 50 years, which is a great track record.

The Parlor has even been featured in *Bon Appetite* and on national TV, particularly for its firebrand chili. Eat a bowl and you get your name featured on the restaurant's walls. Eat five or six and you're likely the star of that show, although we know of one local, who prefers to remain anonymous, who beat that record! Spice levels are almost infinitely customizable, thanks to the Parlor's unique meat blends. All chili comes with copious amounts of crackers (to help soak up some of that yummy oil) and each table has a bottle of vinegar. The combination of the two helps make the firebrand's heat manageable.

But diners also come to the Parlor for camaraderie – you're almost guaranteed to know some of your fellow diners. Owners and staff are also incredibly friendly. And don't forget about their dogs (plain or with chili) and tamales. Finally, we like the fact that no matter how old-school the Parlor is, it has come up to date with the times and now takes credit cards instead of just cash.
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FINE DINING

VELE

VELE definitely comes to mind when thinking about fine dining in Springfield, which is why our readers voted it as the city's best fine dining establishment. VELE's décor creates an upscale ambiance that pairs well with its carefully crafted menu.

The menu is about modern coastal Italian food with a focus on small plates meant to be shared among diners. If you are undecided on which small plates to try you can't go wrong with the spicy calamari or filet bites. The chef is well-versed in perfectly pairing flavors together to create an upscale experience. The menu is tight and focused with each dish packing flavor, but not overwhelmingly so. There is also a strong wine and cocktail list.

Along with the small plates, VELE also has a handful of pastas, seafood, steak and lamb. If you are looking for something a little lighter to start out your meal, the grilled Caesar salad is always a hit. For those who aren't afraid of little spice, check out the spicy seafood spaghetti made with hand-rolled squid ink spaghetti for the entrée. You can't go wrong with the filet or lamb lollipops, either.

Have no doubt, if you come to VELE, you will have a fine dining experience. There's not a bad dish in the house.
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**DIETITIAN**

Erin Zepp - Memorial Wellness Center

Finalists: Amanda Figge - Springfield Clinic, Donna Chestnut - HSHS St. John’s Hospital, Lauren Parish - FitClub, Amy Sheehan - DaVita

**INDEPENDENT-LIVING COMMUNITY**

Concordia Village
4101 W. Iles Ave., 793-9429

Finalists: Lewis Memorial Christian Village, Brenden Gardens, Hickory Glen, Fair Hills Residence

**ASSISTED-LIVING COMMUNITY**

Concordia Village
4101 W. Iles Ave., 793-9429

Finalists: The Villas Senior Care Community, Lewis Memorial Christian Village, Bridge Care Suites, Springfield Supportive Living

**WOMEN’S HEALTHCARE CENTER**

Springfield Clinic

Finalists: HSHS St. John’s Hospital, Planned Parenthood, Memorial Medical Center Women’s Healthcare, SIU Women and Children’s Clinic

**DENTIST**

Prairie Dental Group
2900 Greenbriar Dr, 546-0412

Finalists: Baines Dental Wellness, Renken Dentistry, Dental Group of Springfield, Springfield Dental Care, Magna Dental

**GYM OR FITNESS CENTER**

FitClub

FitClub West 2811 W. Lawrence Ave., 787-1111
FitClub South 3631 S. Sixth St., 787-8348
FitClub North 2701 E. Sangamon Ave., 788-8250

Finalists: YMCA, Ahh Yoga, Orangetheory Fitness, Rail Splitter Fit Co., Vivacious Wellness Personal Coaching

**MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO (ADULT)**

John Geyston’s Martial Arts Academy
1929 W. Iles Ave., 546-6762

Finalists: Gracie Humaita, Springfield Karate and Fitness, Shudo Kan Karate Club, Sangamon Aikikai, Kaizen Shotokan Karate Club

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**FOOD TRUCK**

**The Taco Joint**

For a lot of places, a taco is a side dish or a supporting player, something to be added on to a larger meal. In addition to its burritos, quesadillas and other creations, The Taco Joint treats its tacos like the main event, based on the level of attention to detail. It has the vibe of your favorite Mexican restaurant or food truck in any major city you’ve visited.

Chef Manny Jerez said authenticity in its dishes is an important selling point for The Taco Joint.

“We try to offer customers real Mexican flavors. The way we make the items, the way we cook, we try to stay close to the way they make it in Mexico,” Jerez said.

While the food is great, The Taco Joint is also a quick, easy, attractively priced place to grab lunch while buying local and feeling satisfied. With a convenient location at Second Street and South Grand Avenue for those looking to make a quick stop for lunch, speedy walk-up service and comfortable outdoor spots to sit and dig in, it’s easy to see why the place is a popular spot during the lunch rush for nearby employees and commuters alike.

Jerez personally recommends the tacos de birria, The Taco Joint’s flavorful take on tacos with Jalisco-style beef stew as the starting point.
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INDIAN

Gateway to India

Springfield has a surprising amount of ethnic food options, and that’s a great thing. For Indian food, the vote is in – head on over to Gateway to India. While it might be short on ambiance – who cares, you go there for the food. Any place that serves such delicious piping hot and fresh naan bread is well worth the visit.

Visitors can order off the menu or try the very popular lunch buffet, something our readers missed during the darkest days of COVID. If you have never tried Indian food, the buffet is a great way to get a taste of many different Indian items, but be sure to come hungry because there’s a lot to try.

There’s so much more than curry here – there are wonderful combinations of savory and sweet, and some earthy intensity thanks to all sorts of spices and aromatics. Not sure what to try? Don’t worry, the staff seems to have an instinct for newbies and are glad to help the uninitiated take a culinary tour of the subcontinent. Do yourself a favor and try one of the goat or lamb dishes, and make sure to try a paneer dish (freshly made cheese). Not quite that adventurous? There’s always tandoori chicken or biryani (rice with spices and richly flavored with saffron). And don’t worry about heat – Gateway can accommodate just about every palate.
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**BEST OF SPRINGFIELD 2021**

**MEDICAL SPA (BOTOX, FILLER, ETC.)**  
Springfield Clinic Medical Spa at The Center for Plastic Surgery  
2901 Greenbriar, 528-7541  
Finalists: Thrive Wellness Therapy, Eye Candy Salon & Spa, Meraki Salon & Spa, Luxury Psychiatry and Medical Spa, Timeless Beauty MedSpa

**SPA (NO INJECTIONS USED)**  
Willow & Birch Salon  
521 E. Washington St., 726-7050  
Finalists: BJ Grand Salon and Spa, Inner Health Spa, Revive Wellness & Massage Spa, Massage Envy, Mane Moxie Studio

**ESTHETICIAN**  
Stevie Lievens - Willow & Birch  
521 E. Washington St., 726-7050  
Finalists: Holly Watts - Holly Rose Skincare, Tammy Burris Brow and Skin Studio, Jade Hart - Jade Esthetics, Bekah Huston Skincare

**MEDICAL EQUIPMENT**  
Memorial Home Services  
644 N. Second St., 788-4663  
Finalists: Vono Medical Supplies, American Medical Supply, Springfield Clinic

**COSMETIC SURGEON**  
Dr. Nicole Sommer - SIU Medicine Cosmetic Clinic  
2201 W. White Oaks Drive, 545-8000  
Finalists: Dr. Nada Berry - SIU Medicine Cosmetic Clinic, Dr. Joel Wietfeldt - Springfield Clinic Center for Plastic Surgery, Dr. Robert Russell - Heartland Plastic Surgery Center, Dr. Raj Sinha - Springfield Clinic Center for Plastic Surgery

**CHIROPRACTOR**  
Dr. Tana Frisina - Frisina Family Wellness  
1533 S. MacArthur Blvd., 787-4345  
Finalists: Sammy Waggener – Waggener Chiropractic and Wellness Center, Dr. Shay Reid - Reid Family Wellness, Dr. John Curry – Curry Chiropractic, Bill Richie – Westside Pain Clinic

**HEARING-AID CLINIC**  
SIU Audiology  
720 N. Bond St., 545-8000  
Finalists: Springfield Clinic, Kerr Hearing Aid Center, Inc., Heartland Hearing, Inc., Hear Well Hearing Care Centre

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**NEW RESTAURANT (OPENED AFTER 8/1/20)**

**Mission BBQ**

Mission BBQ is new to the Springfield scene, but it is certainly no stranger to serving up top-notch barbecue and all the fixings. Mission BBQ is a chain that was formed about 10 years ago by two friends who believed there is “nothing more American than BBQ. And nobody more American than the brave men and women who have sworn to protect and serve our communities and our country.” One of the unique things about Mission BBQ is that every day at noon the national anthem is played, the flag is displayed on all screens and diners are asked to stand. Mission BBQ’s menu is typical of a barbecue joint. The meats are always tender, with the perfect amount of smoke. Whether you choose the brisket (which comes moist or lean), the pulled pork or the chicken, you won’t go wrong. We’ve heard very few complaints. If you haven’t tried the smoked sausage yet, it’s a must.

Don’t forget some sides to perfectly compliment all this delicious barbecue. Mission BBQ has a star lineup of side dishes – including green beans with (yum) bacon, fresh cut and never frozen fries, and Maggie’s mac-n-cheese. Seasonal sides and sweets are available as well.

For those looking for something a little outside the box, Mission BBQ also offers salmon and smoked meatloaf along with entrée salads. While Mission BBQ is only counter service, there are plenty of staff circulating, clearing tables and checking on all patrons. It’s a nice touch, and is just one of the reasons it was voted best new restaurant.
Thank you to the Illinois Times readers for choosing me as the “Best County Official”

“I’m honored to be selected “Best County Official” for 2021. Thank you for trusting and believing in me. I want you all to know that I truly love what I do and I’m motivated to continue serving you. Thank you!”

— Sangamon County Sheriff, Jack Campbell
In this crazy new world we're living in, we've all heard stories about how hard it is to find staff that will show up, let alone good staff who are invested in their jobs and who care about their customers. So when our readers vote someone as Springfield's best server, that really means something.

This year's recipient is Samantha Judd from Aztca Mexican Grill. Samantha, who's been there for five years, is described as outgoing, passionate and as someone who goes above and beyond for her diners. But there's a lot more than most diners see — Samantha's an active member of our community.

Beyond the restaurant, Samantha works two other jobs while also raising her two children with her husband and coaching one of her children's football teams. One reader commented that she wasn't sure when Samantha had time to sleep.

We asked the owner why he thought Samantha was voted as the best server, and he immediately responded that she makes her guests feel welcomed, valued and important. And, it doesn't hurt that she keeps customers' tables filled with some of Springfield's best salsa (pro tip — ask for the hot salsa as well) and tortilla chips. Also, ask her about what margarita to get — she won't steer you wrong. The recognition for Samantha is well-deserved.
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CAR DETAILING

Precision Auto Detailing

Owner Trevor Miller was previously a barber for 17 years. With a history of entrepreneurship in the family, Miller decided to open his own business in 2013. It was a blend of his interests – cutting hair and detailing automobiles. Both sides of his business were successful, but as his employed barbers began to branch out on their own, Miller decided to focus full-time on cars.

In addition to detailing, Precision Auto also provides window tinting, bed liners, truck and car accessories (including audio installation), undercoating, painting, auto body repair and full restorations from the ground up. With a crew of nine full-time employees, Miller says his niche is providing custom work. “We all love what we do,” he said.

Miller considers himself a good resource when people are feeling out a problem. If they can’t do it there, he will refer them to someone who can. “I spread the wealth,” notes Miller. But with providing custom work, there is a lot the shop can do. Miller gave an example of his shop’s painter doing a custom helmet for a new goalie for the Springfield Junior Blues. Come to them with a project, and they will do their best to supply a solution.

Miller attributes his success to using only high-quality products in his shop, as well as his exceptional customer service. “Everything we use are normally top-of-the-line products,” says Miller. “We stay up on the times and what products are the best. I think that keeps us up there. Also, the way we do things. We love cars. We love what we’re doing.”
These **LEADING LAWYERS** have been recommended by their peers to be among the **TOP LAWYERS in Illinois**.
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<td>Med-Mal Def; PI Def; General; Products Liab Def; Transportation Def; Toxic Torts Def</td>
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<td>Close &amp; Privately Held Business; Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>James G. Fahey</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Civil Appellate; Employment; Mgmt; PI Defense: General</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Clark Germann</td>
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<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Close/Private Held; Minerals/Nat Resource; Real Estate: Comm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen F. Hedinger</td>
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<td>Animal; Environmental; Minerals/Natural Resource</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael G. Horstman Jr.</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Assoc/Non-Profit; Close/Private Held; Real Estate: Comm; Tax; Indiv; Trust/Will/Estate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian D. Jones</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Bankruptcy; Close/Private Held; Employee Benefits; Real Estate: Comm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John A. Kauerauf</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Close &amp; Privately Held Business; Employment; Mgmt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kirk W. Laudemant</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Med-Mal Defense; PI Defense: General; Profi Malpractice Def; Transportation Def</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James M. Morphew</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Election, Political &amp; Campaign; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa A. Petrelli</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Comm/Lit; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin; Land Use/Zoning; Real Estate: Comm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David A. Rolf</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>A6; Comm Lit; Land Use/Zoning; PI Defense: General; Real Estate: Comm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peggy J. Ryan</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>John R. Simpson</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Tax; Individual; Trust/Will/Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen A. Tagge</td>
<td>Sorling Northrup</td>
<td>217.544.1144</td>
<td>Banking: Close/Private Held; ADR; Comm Lit; Real Estate; Comm; Tax; Business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These **EMERGING LAWYERS** have been identified by their peers to be among the **TOP LAWYERS** in Illinois who are age 40 or younger OR who have been admitted to the practice of law for 10 or fewer years.

**Brittany Kink Toigo**  
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**Ashley D. Davis**  
FeldmanWasser  
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**Samantha A. Bobor**  
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**Matthew A. Brewer**  
Stephen P. Kelly, Attorney at Law  
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Workers’ Compensation

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A Division of Law Bulletin Media—est. 1854
“What Springfield really needs is a good party!”
Audrey Kondelis’ exuberance and excitement is evident upon meeting her. She is full of ideas to make parties as vibrant and fun as possible. “Pole Barn Chic is a one-stop shop,” notes Kondelis, who can take care of all party details with her in-house staff, including flowers, balloon structures and other decorations, caterers, bartenders, photographers and a DJ.

“I just want to make people happy, make them smile and laugh,” says Kondelis, on her business goals. “Being able to do that for people means a lot to me. I know how important it is to be happy, and remain happy.”

From her start in March 2020 with a Mardi Gras-themed birthday party, including a Grammy-nominated Zydeco band from New Orleans, Kondelis has orchestrated a variety of parties to liven up Springfield, from small, intimate events to grand occasions.

Kondelis is in the process of building her own venue, with permits awaiting signatures before breaking ground, hopefully in the near future. Her 12,000-square-foot venue will be a pole barn on the outside with chic design on the inside, to reflect her company name.

Set on eight acres on South Sixth Street off Toronto Road, the building is scheduled for completion in the first half of 2022. Bookings for summer 2022 events will begin as soon as ground is broken for construction. The building will include seating for 500 people, a dance floor and smaller rooms for more intimate parties.

“We have so much fun coming to this town,” says Kondelis.
POOL & SPA SUPPLIES
M & M Pools/Spas
1202 W. Jefferson St., 787-1468
Finalists: The Pool Center, Illini Pools, Southern Ledge Pools & Patios, Aqualand Pool & Patio

POOL BUILDER
M & M Pools/Spas
1202 W. Jefferson St., 787-1468
Finalists: Lambert Custom Pools, Knob Hill Landscape Company, Southern Ledge Pools & Patios, Springfield Fiberglass Pools and Spas

PAINT STORE
Don Smith Paint Co.
1724 S. MacArthur Blvd., 522-9919
Finalists: Sherwin Williams, Dellert’s Paint Company, Menards, Lowe’s Home Improvement

PAINTER
Dan Deweese Painting and Wood Finishing
4745 Industrial Ave., 638-3143
Finalists: Category 5 Painting, ProFinish Painting & More, Clinic Painting, Bobby Shaw Building and Remodeling

HOME REMODELING COMPANY
Buraski Builders
3757 S. Sixth St., 529-5172
Finalists: Sutton’s, Dirty Construction & Remodeling, Bobby Shaw Building and Remodeling, Gene Caudle Handyman Service

KITCHEN DESIGN
DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen
3730 Wabash Ave., 529-9300

HOME FURNISHINGS
Hendricks Home Furnishings
217 N. Springfield St., Virden, 965-3337
Finalists: Magnolia Lane, Habitat for Humanity ReStore, La-Z-Boy Furniture, Carpet Weavers, Consign & Design

CARPET & FLOORING
Staff Carpet
304 W. Browning Road, 528-4879
Finalists: Carpet Weavers, Arizona Tile, Hendricks Home Furnishings, Champ’s Floor Covering

RESIDENTIAL CLEANING SERVICE
Maids R Us, Inc.
757-8872
Finalists: Cardinal Cleaning, Lady Made Cleaning, LLC, Golden Rule Cleaning, Inc., Blue Ribbon Cleaning

PAVING/DRIVEWAYS
Ron Furman & Sons Paving
3600 N. Dirksen Parkway, 528-9407
Finalists: Illinois Paving, Concrete Impressions, MDS Custom Concrete, Meyers J. Mize Co.

PLACE TO BUY A MATTRESS
Just Beds
3120 Montvale Drive, 698-6179
Finalists: Verlo, Hendricks Home Furnishings, Denver Mattress, Sleep Number

HARDWARE STORE
Ace Hardware on Wabash
1600 Wabash Ave., 787-5100
Finalists: Menards, Noonan True Value, Lowe’s Home Improvement, True Value - Stevenson Drive

FURNITURE STORE
Hendricks Home Furnishings
217 N. Springfield St., Virden, 965-3337
Finalists: Ashley Homestore, La-Z-Boy Furniture, Springfield BoxDrop Mattress & Furniture Direct, Consign & Design

KIDS’ STUFF
CHILDREN’S SUPPORT ORGANIZATION
Mini O’Beirne Crisis Nursery
1011 N. Seventh St., 525-6800
Finalists: Compass for Kids, Children’s Miracle Network, Girl Scouts of Central Illinois, Girls on the Run of Central Illinois

PEDIATRICS CENTER
HSHS St. John’s Children’s Hospital
415 N. Ninth St., 757-6394
Finalists: Memorial Care - Koke Mill, Springfield Clinic Pediatric and Adolescent Center, SIU Center for Family Medicine, Frisina Family Wellness

FLOWER SHOP
Fifth Street Flower Shop
Fifth Street Flower Shop has been around for a while – since 1931, to be exact, when Truman Cole purchased Cole Flower Shop from his father and renamed it Fifth Street Flower Shop. Though its location moved several times throughout the decades, it moved back to Fifth Street and into its current location at 739 S. Fifth in 1991.

Eight years ago, Sara and Doug Camp purchased the flower shop from longtime owners Patrick and Robin O’Connor. Manager Nicki Shaub has been with the new owners all the way.

Shaub says the COVID-19 pandemic closed their shop for about six months, as the floral industry was hit very hard. Entire fields of flowers were discarded, as big weddings were postponed or transitioned into informal affairs. The industry continues to struggle to find equilibrium. Fifth Street Flower Shop has temporarily discontinued providing flowers for weddings due to shortages and has focused on other special occasions.

Shaub says the three full-time employees of the shop have aimed to stay positive throughout the disruptions wreaked by the pandemic. “If it weren’t for our customers coming together, it would be a hard struggle for us,” says Shaub.

Not only are there a lot of emotions in dealing with the disruptions in the floral industry from the pandemic, but Shaub notes they relate to the emotions of their customers. “What we try to do is to help the other person who is struggling or having an awesome experience. We go through every emotion they do.” Sometimes it means providing a literal shoulder to cry on. “We’re a part of everybody’s family,” notes Shaub.

Shaub says it is an amazing experience to repeatedly be recognized as the Best of Springfield. “We feel the love and truly appreciate it. It helps us get through our everyday life at the store.” She notes that their high standards of quality for the fresh flowers and plants they sell, as well as their exceptional and personal customer service, are the keys to their success.
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BEST OF SPRINGFIELD 2021

ORTHODONTICS
Dr. William Groesch • Groesch, Longos & Middleton Orthodontics
2534 Farragut Drive, 546-4674
Finalists: Dr. Jason Aleman • Tuthmr Orthodontics, Dr. Thomas Longos • Groesch, Longos & Middleton Orthodontics, Dr. John Middleton • Jacobs & Middleton Family Dentistry, Sugar Creek Orthodontics

PRIVATE SCHOOL
Little Flower Catholic School
900 Adlai Stevenson Drive, 529-4511
Finalists: Sacred Heart-Griffin, Montessori Children’s House, Springfield Christian School, Christ the King School

PUBLIC SCHOOL (9-12)
Springfield High School
101 S. Lewis St., 525-3100
Finalists: Rochester High School, Southeast High School, Glenwood High School, Ball Chatham

PUBLIC SCHOOL (K-8)
Rochester CUSD 3A Schools
4 Rocket Drive, 498-6210
Finalists: Ball Chatham School District, Sherman Elementary, Franklin Middle School, Iles Elementary School

TUTORING OR LEARNING CENTER
Sylvan Learning
2747 S. Sixth St., 280-8963
Finalists: Children’s Dyslexia Center, Kumon Math and Reading Center of Springfield

DAY CARE CENTER
Silverleaf Children’s Academy
3220 Pleasant Run, 679-2029
2175 S. Fourth St.
100 S. Cardinal Hill, Rochester
Finalists: My Friends Discovery Center, Calvary Christian Preschool & Daycare, Lake Shore Learning Center, Kimmy Kare’s Daycare

SUMMER CAMP
Springfield Art Association art camp
700 N. Fourth St., 523-2631
Finalists: Lake Springfield Christian Assembly, Compass for Kids, YMCA gymnastics camp, Lake Springfield Baptist Camp

LAWYER
Greg Sgro
with Sgro, Hanrahan, Durr & Rabin, LLP

Those who know him best might say that Gregory Sgro puts the “Greg” in gregarious. The longtime Springfield attorney is known for his social nature, humor and wit. He’s also exceedingly trustworthy, says Donald Hanrahan, who works with Sgro at the law firm of Sgro, Hanrahan, Durr, Rabin and Bruce, LLP.

“He’s honest and he’s expeditious. When he tells you he’s going to do something, he does it, and he does it when he tells you he’s going to do it,” says Hanrahan. “The depth of his experience and his knowledge of key actors in Springfield – I don’t think there’s an attorney in town that’s better at it.”

Hanrahan says part of Sgro’s knowledge of the city stems from his father, Sam Sgro, who owned the St. Nicholas Hotel, where many Illinois politicians historically held residence for their wheelings and dealings in Springfield. Sam Sgro was also a real estate developer, a legacy that his son carries on.

Sgro, who has 35 years of experience in law, specializes in real estate development and civil litigation, as well as estates and wills. “His depth of knowledge in real estate comes from the fact that he’s in it himself,” says Hanrahan. A 2014 article profiling Sgro in Leading Lawyers magazine said he had developed 500 acres of real estate, including subdivisions, with more projects in the pipeline.

Sgro has three adult children, one of whom is an associate with the law firm. “His commitment to the law and to his real estate business has never interfered with the primary goal in his life, which is to raise those kids, and he did a great job,” says Hanrahan.

SWIM LESSONS
YMCA
601 N. Fourth St., 544-9846
4550 W. Iles Ave., 679-1625
Finalists: Academy Bullets Swim Club, Nelson Center - Lincoln Park, Bearsharktopus Aquatics, Colony West Swim Club

DANCE STUDIO
Above & Beyond Dance Company
207 S. Walnut St., Rochester, 414-4808
Finalists: Kinner & Co. Dance Studio, Studio M Dance Centre, Dance Arts Studio, Inc., Springfield Dance, Tracey and Heather’s Dance Synergy

MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO (KIDS’)
John Geyston’s Martial Arts Academy
1929 W. Iles Ave., 546-6762
Finalists: Gracie Humaita, Progressive Kenpo Karate, Cardio Kickboxing and Krav Maga, Shudo Kan Karate Club, Kaizen Shotokan Karate Club

GYMNASTICS
Springfield Gymnastics Center
3040 Hamlin Parkway, Suite B, 787-4386
Finalists: YMCA gymnastics camp, L & M Gymnastics, Outlaw Athletics, The CoMplex by Studio M Dance Center

CAMP FOR KIDS
Girl Scouts of Central Illinois Camp Widjiwagan
Finalists: Lake Springfield Christian Assembly (LSCA camp), YMCA gymnastics camp, Boys & Girls Club, Lake Springfield Baptist Camp

KIDS’ ART CLASSES
Springfield Art Association
700 N. Fourth St., 523-2631
Finalists: China Towne Ceramic & Fired Art Studio, Kids’ comic drawing classes at SAA, Garvey Tubman Cultural Arts & Research Center

CHILDREN’S CLOTHING STORE
Once Upon a Child
4225 Wabash Ave., 679-7134
Finalists: Carter’s, Just Kids, Little Liars Clothing, Johnny & June,
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KID-FRIENDLY PLACE
Kidzeum
412 E. Adams St., 679-2123
Finalists: Ergadoozy, Washington Park, Knight’s Action Park, Nelson Center - Lincoln Park

FAMILY FUN SPOT
Knight’s Action Park
1700 Knight’s Recreation Drive, 546-8881
Finalists: Washington Park, SCHEELS, Kidzeum, BounceTag

KIDS EAT FREE
The Dublin Pub
1975 Wabash Ave., 793-6871
Finalists: Home Plate Bar & Grill, MCL Cafeteria

KID-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT
Cafe Moxo
411 E. Adams St., 788-8084
Finalists: The Creek Pub & Grill, IHOP, Home Plate Bar & Grill, Red Robin Gourmet Burgers

KIDS EVENT
Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular - Thomas Rees Memorial Carillon
1740 W. Fayette Ave., 546-3853
Finalists: Illinois State Fair, SCHEELS Safe Family Saturday, Little Flower Parish Heritage Days, Springfield Jaycees Christmas Parade

MUSIC
BASS PLAYER
Jeff Cunningham
Finalists: Ty Ellis, Eric Tinsley, Bruce Williams, Nick Beal

DRUMMER
Eric Austin
Finalists: Kevin Klickna, Josh Szerletich, Michael LaFrance, John Peters

GUITARIST
Jeff Wheaton
Finalists: Cooper Marx, Jack Stege, Richard Stone, Brad Blankenship

HORN PLAYER
Dave Littrell
Finalists: Frank Parker, Dennis Jones, Kerri Donovan, Brian Moore

KEYBOARDIST
Roger Wainwright
Finalists: Ashley Staley, Stan Rapp, David Coonrod, Ezra Casey

MUSIC FESTIVAL
Old Capitol Blues & BBQ
Finalists: Downhome Music Festival, Levitt AMP Springfield Music Series, Legacy of Giving Music Festival

LIVE MUSIC VENUE - SMALL
Curve Inn
3219 S. Sixth St., 529-5806
Finalists: Buzz Bomb Brewing Company, Crows Mill Pub, Weebles Bar & Grill, Dumb Records, Burger Bar and Back Door Lounge

LIVE MUSIC VENUE - LARGE
Danenberger Family Vineyards
12341 Irish Road, New Berlin, 488-6321
Finalists: UIS Performing Arts Center, Sherman Village Park Amphitheater, Illinois State Fair grandstand, Boondocks Pub

WEDDING DJ
Troy Armstrong
Finalists: Aaron “Uncanny” Phillips, Cory Brown, Chad Burton

DJ
DJ Mike - Curve Inn
3219 S. Sixth St., 529-5806
Finalists: Dave Isaacs - Third Base and Curve Inn, Blee - Crows Mill, Yatti DNY - WetBar

SONGWRITER
Gracia Harrison
Finalists: Avery Kern, Ella Gibson, Cody Lee Moomey, Keagan Cross

VOCALIST FEMALE
Ashley Staley
Finalists: Gracia Harrison, Avery Kern, Brandy Kristin, Ella Gibson

In the 1980s when brothers Brig Sorber and Jon Sorber needed to make some money after school, they asked their mom, Mary Ellen Sheets, to create a logo — two stick people in a truck — and to put an ad in the local Lansing, Michigan, weekly newspaper. The brothers used an old truck to move families in the local area and when they left for college, the phone kept ringing. Mom continued answering the calls until she realized she had an empire on her hands. Well, maybe not an empire, but a business that would grow to be a national franchise, aptly named Two Men and a Truck.

The mission of Two Men and a Truck is to continuously strive to exceed customers’ expectations in value and a high standard of satisfaction. Community service is also an integral part of its business plan. The fastest-growing franchised moving company has donated thousands of service hours in communities across the nation and in 2019 alone, the franchises donated more than $3 million worth of moving services to people and organizations in need. This spirit was a big influence in developing the tagline, “Movers Who Care.”

Dan and Renee Shunk own the Two Men and a Truck franchise for central Illinois and opened their first location in Champaign, followed by one in Bloomington and then Springfield in 2014. The Shunks purchased the former Chase branch on North Grand Avenue in 2019 and Two Men and a Truck relocated to the larger space.

At the time, business development manager Travis Blaney said, “I love how Springfield has welcomed us and allowed us to do our thing. It’s a great location. We’re looking forward to being here for a long time.”
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(217) 546 1234  3151 Pleasant Run, Springfield, IL 62711
VOCALIST MALE
Kid Ziggy

Finalists: Jason Mckenzie, Billy Szerletich, Keagan Cross, Cody Lee Moomey

PLACE TO DANCE
Curve Inn
3219 S. Sixth St., 529-5806

Finalists: Danenberger Family Vineyards, Weebles Bar & Grill, Crows Mill Pub, Clique

PLACE FOR KARAOKE
Curve Inn
3219 S. Sixth St., 529-5806

Finalists: The Blue Grouch Pub, The Alibi, Burger Bar and Back Door Lounge, Weebles Bar & Grill

OPEN MIC
Curve Inn
3219 S. Sixth St., 529-5806

Finalists: Jess Cloyd at Buzz Bomb Brewing Company, The Blue Grouch Pub, Kortney and Sam, Trails End Saloon

ORIGINAL MUSIC BAND
Unchained

Finalists: Lick Creek, Wolf Crick Boys, The Lovelom, Enamel

COVER MUSIC BAND
Captain Geech and Shrimp Shack Shooters

Finalists: Deja Voodoo, Unchained, Sleeping Dogzz, LiveWire

OVERALL BAND
Captain Geech and Shrimp Shack Shooters

Finalists: Unchained, Lick Creek, Deja Voodoo, Off the Wall

CHORAL GROUP
Rochester Madrigals

Finalists: Titan Fever-Glenwood High School, Springfield Choral Society, Williamsville High School Madrigals, SHG Encore

RETAIL
PET RETAIL STORE
Wild Birds Unlimited
1930 S. MacArthur Blvd., 789-6468

Finalists: PetSmart, Pet Supplies Plus, Tails To Remember Pet Services, Farm and Home Supply

CLOTHING STORE - MEN
Jim Herron Ltd.
2935 Plaza Drive, 753-8036

Finalists: SCHEELS, Men’s Wearhouse, Reverie Apparel, H&M

CLOTHING STORE - USED
Clothes Mentor
2329 W. Monroe, 698-8485

Finalists: Springfield Vintage, Goodwill, Second Time Around, Just Kids,

CLOTHING STORE - WOMEN
Gypsy Soul
3450 Liberty Drive, 679-0174

Finalists: District 23, Eye Candy Boutique, Willow and Birch Salon, Bella Boutique

PRODUCE SELECTION
Old Capitol Farmers Market

Finalists: Hy-Vee, Meijer, Harvest Market, Aldi

SEAFOOD SELECTION
Robert’s Seafood Market
1615 W. Jefferson St., 546-3089

Finalists: Carter’s Fish Market, Hy-Vee, Harvest Market, Schnucks

MEAT SELECTION
Humphrey’s Market
1821 S. 15th St., 544-7445

Finalists: Magro’s Meat & Produce, Country Market, Turasky Meats, Hy-Vee, Schnucks

GROCERY STORE
Hy-Vee
2115 S. MacArthur Blvd., 726-1001

Finalists: Aldi, Meijer, Schnucks, Harvest Market, County Market

BEST OF SPRINGFIELD 2021

STORAGE FACILITY

Stuff-It Storage

Harvey Horton spent a few years carefully researching the storage industry and coming up with a detailed business plan. He opened Stuff-It Storage in March 2020, and immediately went into adaptation mode as the COVID-19 pandemic altered our world significantly.

“You adapt and overcome,” says Horton, with the pandemic changing the way he expected his business to grow. “The mobility factor especially was much more advantageous for me last year because people were remodeling, getting new flooring, any number of reasons needed to clear out rooms.”

Much of Horton’s success was his focus on studying the unaddressed but recurring problems of the storage industry. “What I did was started attacking the industry. What I focused on is what isn’t working,” notes Horton. “I wanted to create a solution for those problems.”

It soon became apparent that steel shipping containers were the solution for the most common problems: dust, pests, moisture damage, fire risk and theft. Known as asset relocation containers, or ARCs, these air-tight steel containers at Stuff-It Storage have been fitted with thick steel lock boxes to prevent theft.

One other common problem is a lack of time to visit a storage unit, or no way to get belongings to or from the location. Stuff-It Storage’s valet service tackles this problem head-on, with an ARC delivered to a customer’s home and picked up when filled. Horton also offers custom totes with an identifying bar code that are photographed so that individual totes can be requested for delivery at any time. “When you want particular bins back, we’ll bring them to you. This is especially helpful for things like Christmas decorations,” says Horton.

To reduce the cost of long-term storage, Horton offers ARCs for purchase, with a minimal lot fee rental. Some clients have purchased ARCs for investments, as Horton also rents ARCs to his customers.

Horton’s customer service is another key to his recognition as the Best of Springfield. “When I’m dealing with customers, it may not necessarily be the high point of their year. There’s been a catastrophe, or maybe a problem in the house or their business that needs to be fixed. I’m here to serve the customer, whatever they need. If it’s within my realm to accomplish or provide it, I will do that.”
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Kristin DiCenso

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BEST LAWYER
Gregory P. Sgro
Sgro, Hanrahan, Durr & Rabin, LLP

THANK YOU!
For your nomination and votes.
1119 S. 6th Street, Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 789-1200
DIETITIAN

Erin Zepp

Memorial Wellness Center

Before becoming a dietician, Erin Zepp had 110 pounds of inspiration. “When I was in high school, my mom lost 110 pounds, and so that put our whole family on a healthy living trajectory that I always participated in and thought was really neat and cool,” she said. “But back then, I didn’t understand that it could be a job.”

She entered University of Illinois as a Spanish major but her second semester she took a nutrition class that resulted in her pursuing a different career. “It was taught by a dietician named Rebecca Roach. She changed my life. Within the first week of class, I stayed after and I walked up to her. I was like, ‘I need to know more about being a dietician.’”

In the years since, she has helped thousands of people either lose weight or adjust their diet to accommodate a medical condition. Currently, she works for Fresenius Kidney Care, guiding patients on dialysis to eat in a healthy manner.

“It is a different kind of dietician work than I’ve ever done before,” she said. “My dialysis patients have labs drawn and based on that, we will talk about how we can adjust – either their medications or their food choices.”

“If your kidneys don’t work, you have the potential to build up potassium and phosphorus in your blood. Too much phosphorus makes your bones brittle, and too much potassium stops your heart. Communication with people about what they’re doing between their dialysis treatments is important. We need to help keep their labs in the right space so that they can have the best quality of life possible.”

Before working with dialysis patients, Zepp worked for eight years at what is now known as Memorial Wellness Center, helping folks learn healthy eating habits and develop strategies to lose weight. During that time, she helped more than 1,000 people.

“I love walking with somebody who’s had bariatric surgery, or is planning on having bariatric surgery, through that whole process. It is truly life-changing. I love watching and helping someone make a huge medical step and then navigating everything that happens afterwards. I just love watching what amazing things they do.”

But not all of her patients have had surgery or are considering it. For example, some have just taken nutrition and wellness classes she has led.

Tene Haile of Springfield is one of them. She was in an online support group that Zepp taught. “Erin is so encouraging and upbeat,” she said. “The biggest thing she taught me is to not believe the lies we tell ourselves. Sometimes when you gain weight, you just want to give up and eat anything. But Erin is like, ‘No, we do this one day at a time. Each day is a chance to start all over.’”

Zepp has high expectations for her patients, said Tiffany Turner, lead nurse practitioner and bariatric service manager at Memorial Wellness Center. “She’s strict. She holds people accountable. Our service line is for adults. So, she treats people as adults. She expects people to be accountable for their actions. I think she just does a great job. She approaches it like this: ‘I’m here to help you gain this knowledge, but I need you to do it.’”
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Finalists: Penny Lane, Bewitching Botanicals, Kennedy Sue Gift & Home, Once in a Blue Moon

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Finalists: Piper + Arrows Boutique, Creative Reuse Marketplace, SAA Collective
MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO (ADULT AND KIDS)

John Geyston's Martial Arts Academy

Empowering children and adults to reach their full potential through quality martial arts has been the main mission of John Geyston's Martial Arts Academy since 1982. The studio offers programs in mixed martial arts, Muay Thai kickboxing, Brazilian jiu jitsu, fitness kickboxing, karate and self-defense classes for children, teens and adults.

John Geyston, owner and chief master instructor, understands the challenges of raising kids and encourages parents to enroll kids in martial arts classes, especially those that are having difficulties with learning and behavior. Geyston's programs teach self-discipline, hard work, confidence, respect and humility while promoting health and fitness. He believes the power of martial arts can transform behavior without medication.

Geyston's vision is to build a community by helping people get in shape while learning life skills and embodying the character of a true martial artist. He teaches the importance of upholding the values of courtesy, patience, respect, self-control and integrity.

Programs are offered at two locations: 1929 W. Iles, Springfield and 304 South Walnut, Rochester. John Geyston's Martial Arts Academy offers after-school programs, summer camps and martial arts-themed birthday parties.

COSMETIC SURGEON

Dr. Nicole Sommer
Southern Illinois University Cosmetic Clinic

For over 25 years, Dr. Nicole Sommer has been performing surgeries that make patients' lives better. Sommer is a cosmetic, plastic and reconstructive surgery specialist at Southern Illinois University (SIU) Cosmetic Clinic located in the Institute for Plastic Surgery. She is also affiliated with HSHS St. John's Hospital, Springfield Memorial Hospital and Decatur Memorial Hospital.

Sommer wears many hats in her professional life. In addition to her plastic surgery practice, she serves as a professor for the Department of Surgery, director of the SIU Cosmetic Clinic and director of the Plastic Surgery Residency Program.

Her research interests include breast augmentation, reduction, reconstruction, revision surgery and male breast reduction. Sommer also performs nonsurgical and surgical cosmetic treatment for the face and body, along with migraine surgery. Sommer is a graduate of SIU School of Medicine where she completed a residency in both general surgery and plastic surgery.

“After finishing my residency in plastic surgery, I was most passionate about helping patients interested in cosmetic and breast surgery,” shared Sommer. “I chose to pursue specialized training and experience in breast and cosmetic surgery, in Nashville, Tennessee, at the Institute for Aesthetic and Reconstructive Surgery. I wanted to bring this higher level of expertise in cosmetic and breast surgery back to the Springfield community.”

Photo courtesy John Geyston

Photo courtesy Dr. Nicole Sommer

ONLINE CALENDAR SUBMISSION

Friday by 5pm for the following Thursday issue

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BRUSHVILLE 8PM 11PM
PRIVATE SCHOOL

Little Flower Catholic School

At a time when many private and religious schools are struggling, Little Flower Catholic School is growing. So, what is their secret?

“We have a great pastor in Al (Kemme.) He’s in is his sixth year and he has done a great job at just setting the tone,” principal Bill Moredock said. “And the faculty is unbelievable. They’re here because they believe in our mission. They love the children. They love education. They’re passionate about teaching. They make a difference. I’ve got a lot of experienced teachers who have been here more than 20 years.”

The school at 900 Stevenson Dr. in Springfield draws students from communities as distant as Virden, Girard and Rochester. It also serves families from all parts of Springfield. “We are a south side school that really isn’t in a neighborhood. So, we really have to market ourselves in the community to let people know we’re here,” Moredock said. “We’re a very diverse school. You’ve got kids of all academic abilities, of all colors, of all races and ethnicities.”

Each family at the school is expected to volunteer. They may serve in a variety of capacities ranging from painting rooms and monitoring kids on the playground to driving youngsters on field trips.

While Springfield public schools were practicing remote learning during the last school year, Little Flower continued in-person classes. “This really benefitted us. Parents who hadn’t considered a school like Little Flower before came and enrolled their children because they wanted them in a classroom setting,” Moredock said. “And the great part is that most of those new students who enrolled last year have returned this year.”

Little Flower parent Joe Kulek said it’s the sense of community that attracts families. “We made a point of getting involved in the parish and the school. It was important to us,” he said of he and his wife, Maggie. “And the more you become involved, the more you want to stay. This is our community.”

The Kuleks live on Springfield’s west side but chose to send their three daughters to Little Flower. “We decided it was worth the extra gas money for them to attend Little Flower. Academically, it is excellent, and they have some good, experienced teachers there,” he said. But what do the students think of the school? Well, here is how 10-year-old Jersee Jackson described Little Flower: “Little Flower is a very good school. The people here are very nice; same with the teachers and, Doc, the principal. If there’s a problem with bullying, it’s very rare here. Everyone is very nice. And here we are taught actions speak louder than words.”

Her 10-year-old classmate, Liam Harris, added, “Well, the teachers are nice and we get good lunches. I would say everybody in the school is nice. You make a lot of friends. And you get recess for about 25 minutes. And then we get to do fun things like last year, somebody actually brought pumpkins to the school. And we got to carve them and did a contest. And sometimes when we’re good, we get extra recesses.”

Photo by Scott Reeder
BEST OF SPRINGFIELD 2021

ORIGINAL MUSIC BAND

Unchained

2021 became a turning point for these six cool cats from Rochester, and they’ve got their act together in becoming solidly what they say they are on the group’s Facebook page – a “high energy rock-n-roll band.” Bandmates and best pals, Matthew Runions (drums), Ty Ellis (bass), Cooper Marx (guitar), Logan McKneelan (guitar), Dave Allen (vocals) and Logan McCafferty (vocals), knew each other through the Rochester High School music department and came together with a common cause of playing music they all enjoyed.

Runions started the band in 2018 after his dad suggested the idea, and the drummer kept running with it until this lineup clicked and clattered into a fiery live group that’s been stable over the last two years. The term “rap rock” is their associated genre, but they also cover 90s rock, classic rock, punk, ska, reggae and other types of popular music to win the crowd over with enthusiastic performances at local venues. Or if you want to take them at their word, they proudly and succinctly state on their band website, “We play great music. You should check out a show.”

A good percentage of their music is still covers, which is not unusual when doing a three-hour club show, but the originals are creeping in at a good pace, and that is what our readers seemed to feel was the strong suit for this unshackled sextet. The catchy title of “Psychedelic Picnic” is already chosen for an upcoming spring 2022 release with the recording process in the works. Using the CD as a springboard and calling card, the group intends to work toward playing festivals next summer that encourage and promote original music.

Hey, even the Beatles were known for current covers before conquering the world with their own music, so by those standards, Unchained is on the right track to hit the “topperrmost of the poppermost,” and we support and congratulate them for that direction.
SONGWRITER

Gracia Harrison

Known for her spectacular singing voice that landed her a spot on the national TV show, "The Voice," Gracia Harrison is now firmly entrenched into the world of country-pop songwriting as well. After garnering a great deal of attention from "The Voice" appearance, she was the first, and only person to date who yodeled her way onto the show), the central Illinois native worked with some Nashville cats to produce singles and videos and went the usual route of picking songs written by Music City pros.

But now her most recent cut, “hey,” released in May 2021, came from her pen and mind only, and demonstrates she picked up a thing or two from hanging around the big-time songsters. As Harrison approaches nearly 10,000 followers on her Facebook musician page and with over 2,000 likes on her new “hey” single video on YouTube, she is beginning the transition to a one-name artist, to be known simply as Gracia (it’s pronounced “Graysha,” as she explains on her LifeofGracia Twitter feed).

There’s some movement with the single to back up the songwriting prowess as she’s now played on the ACM New Music Friday Night playlist, got a good mention on the music industry website The Country Note and has been added to many well-represented Spotify playlists. She was also a finalist in our BoS female vocalist category this year.

Upcoming plans for Gracia include releasing more songs in the next few months, booking a tour of the Midwest to support the rising music and dropping a CD of new tunes in early 2022 to continue the progression from heartfelt country music singing yodeler to full-time, country pop songstress.
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BEST OF SPRINGFIELD 2021

VOCALIST FEMALE

Ashley Staley

Ashley Staley, half of the popular music duo JackAsh (guitarist and singer Jack Stege is the other member), is the best female singer in town according to our intrepid readers. She takes her singing seriously and has for a long time.

Influenced by the band Heart when starting out, she now respects and listens to Lady Gaga, among other pop female singers currently out there pushing the pipes. She accompanies herself on the keyboards in the duo, but mainly concentrates on the singing and, oh brother, can she put it out there.

As a founding member of the local band Off the Wall, she once asked Jack, the band’s lead guitarist, if he’d be interested in an acoustic-based duo, and that’s how JackAsh came about. Ashley now makes this combo her only singing outlet and very much likes having the ability to choose material fitting to her incredible voice. It also allows her to perform in a more intimate atmosphere where the songs are forefront and the audience interaction is more of a personal conversation than a crowded concert.

As might be expected, the duo does play smaller clubs, but they can also do our larger beer garden areas, because when Ashley sings the world takes notice, as her melodious and mellifluous voice makes any size room seem close, comfortable and inviting, filled with the sweet sounds of her soothing singing.

VOCALIST MALE

Kid Ziggy

A true sign the hip hop, rap and pop movement in central Illinois is not only alive and well, but finally getting the attention it deserves, Kid Ziggy (otherwise known as Zachary T. Geller) claimed honors as our best male vocalist this year. Now approaching 6,000 monthly listeners on Spotify for several singles and plays from his album “Brainstorming,” he also has nearly 5,500 views posted on his latest YouTube video and single, “Bad Influence” (filmed by Visual Paradise), and over 1,300 followers on his Facebook musician page.

In online numbers – and that’s what counts these days – Kid is killing it while carving a path into the world of music-making. Not only does he write and perform original material, he posts regularly on social media sites such as Facebook and TikTok, singing songs by popular artists such as Ed Sheeran, Bruno Mars and Sam Smith, clearly showing he has the pipes to do whatever he chooses when it comes to laying down the tunes. He’s also collaborated with Papa Luke, RJC, Danny J and THE DAMNCLAMMAN in an independent record label based in Springfield called ZiPPiR Collective, who as a group have released two EPs, produced several live shows and developed into a driving force in the music community.

Born and raised in Taylorville, Kid Ziggy makes no bones about wanting to get to the top of the music industry heap and keeps up every day with the work necessary to achieve such a goal. Besides producing and posting songs on his media sites and generally doing what it takes to make some noise on the internet to gain recognition beyond our community, he also performs live at local venues, taking it to the streets for the folks around here.

He’s got the drive, the look, the music, and according to our readers and thousands of social media followers, the voice to carry on to be the best. And you better know that when Kid Ziggy gets going, he’s going to get real gone.
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ANTIQUE OR VINTAGE STORE

Dear Yesteryear

What’s old is new again, and you can find the best of both of these worlds (and so much more) at Dear Yesteryear, a vintage and furniture store located in Taylorville. Owners Lee and Dyanne Skinner have poured their hearts and souls into curating the very best shopping experience, and after taking one step inside the doors, it’s easy to see why it won this year’s award for best retail store.

Chock-full of delightful treasures that you would be hard-pressed to find anywhere else, Dear Yesteryear is the perfect place to while away an afternoon hunting for unique home decor, one-of-a-kind pieces of jewelry or do-it-yourself supplies to transform a precious family heirloom into something truly modern and special.

Feeling left out because you’ve heard so many amazing things about Dear Yesteryear, but aren’t local? Or perhaps there’s something that’s caught your eye and you want to buy it for that special someone who lives out of town? Never fear, because Dear Yesteryear offers easy online shopping, purchasing and shipping options. But for those who reside nearby, hurry out and start shopping at the sweetest vintage and antique store the area has to offer and see why Dear Yesteryear’s tagline is “worth the drive.”
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AUTO SALESPERSON

Brian Wilbern
Robert's Automotive

Robert's Automotive is a family affair. Brian Wilbern works alongside his brothers, Rob and Mike, as well as his father, Bob, whose formal moniker begets the name of the business.

Originally from Petersburg, but now living in Springfield, Brian began working at the dealership about 12 years ago. He attributes his success with customers to not being your typical, high-pressure used car salesman. “We’re very easygoing here. It’s a unique approach.”

When Brian sells a car, he is with the customer at each step of the way. “I help with every aspect of sales process. I’m the one face you see the whole time,” he said, whether it’s filling out paperwork, applying for financing or even programming phones to sync with your new car.

A global computer chip shortage has drastically decreased the number of new cars available for consumers. In turn, this has impacted the used car market, as demand for new and pre-owned cars has not lessened. Brian says that right now, they are selling a lot of cars on consignment, with former customers calling to ask Brian if he can sell the cars they previously purchased from him.

With the chip shortage ongoing for the foreseeable future, Brian is glad his loyal customers are helping him increase inventory. “It’s a cool way to get vehicles, without having access to buying vehicles.”

MOTORCYCLE DEALER

Hall's Harley-Davidson, Inc.

If you ride a motorcycle, you ride for a reason. If you ride a Harley-Davidson, you ride with a passion, a purpose and a dedication to a community. Since 1962, the love of cycles has grown from a Schwinn bicycle and motorcycle shop into what is now Hall’s Harley-Davidson. The locally owned store is a two-story, 43,000-square-foot complex with a complete showroom, service department and line of Motoclothes clothing.

Hall’s is perfectly located off the interstate on the northeast side of Springfield so that riders from Lincoln, Decatur, Jacksonville, Springfield, Litchfield, Taylorville, Quincy and Bloomington can be served.

Come to Hall’s Harley-Davidson to browse the showroom, take a test drive or get a quote on the perfect bike for you. If you are stuck at home, you can still browse social media where you can find plenty of options to shop and participate in benefits and other specials going on in the store.

Hall’s Harley-Davidson is proudly committed to its community and recognizes that success is due to the support of its customers from across central Illinois. The store holds various events to bring together riders and even non-riders, including hosting the Summer Thunder Tour that offers the ultimate in raffle prizes – a Harley-Davidson motorcycle.
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NEW BUSINESS NOT DOWNTOWN
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Nothing Bundt Cakes

With a laser-focused confectionery niche and a top-notch pun name, Nothing Bundt Cakes is the result of married co-owners Kristen and Theo Spilman's combined 40 years of culinary and hospitality experience.

“I feel like the community has received us quite well, and we fill a gap in the sense that you can get a cake that's an elevated product, but at a price point that isn't a wedding cake or an extremely artistic type of styling,” Theo Spilman said.

The business came into being after the couple returned to Springfield after working in the hospitality industry in Europe for a number of years together. When family needs brought them back to the United States, Spilman said they formulated plans to open Nothing Bundt Cakes.

The bakery's specialty, besides bundt cakes of various sizes and flavors, is their method of baking cakes fresh all day long. It allows for a quick turnaround time, whether customers are just looking for a treat or are in sudden, desperate need of dessert for an occasion, Spilman said.

“We can have somebody come in literally last minute for whatever disaster or save-the-date moment, and we can take care of them in very short order,” he said. “We've saved the day on last-minute weddings and helped husbands who have forgotten anniversaries or Valentine's Day.”

Cakes are available in four sizes and a variety of flavors and options, but for his own part, Spilman said his favorite is still the red velvet bundt cakes.
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WINE STORE

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For many people, buying wine can feel a little bit intimidating, but the amazing employees at The Corkscrew have a special way of making shopping for wine fun. They are incredibly knowledgeable, friendly and 100% unpretentious. They have a gift for remembering your face, and oftentimes they also remember what type of wine you bought the last time you were in the store.

Whether you’re looking for a bottle of bubbly for a special celebration, a full-bodied wine to stand up to your holiday meal or an affordably priced bottle of rosé to sip on the front porch with friends, The Corkscrew is certain to have it.

Last fall, owners David and Danielle Anderson relocated the store to a different suite in the same shopping center. The move allowed The Corkscrew to reconfigure the layout and add additional seating, which David Anderson said customers have appreciated.

Like a fine wine, The Corkscrew is getting better with age, making it no surprise that this quaint, local store is our very favorite place to shop for wine.
BEST OF SPRINGFIELD 2021

RETAIL SHOP

Bewitching Botanicals

Jessica Lance opened Bewitching Botanicals in Auburn right before the pandemic took hold. She had started selling her wares at vendor fairs a couple of months before she opened up the brick-and-mortar location in mid-December of 2019. “After such a tumultuous time the past two years, going through a global pandemic together, we’re trying to put a little pizzazz back in everyone’s lives,” says Lance.

Lance helps decorate for events and hosts them at the shop, which is a historical building that used to house a grocery and hardware store. An Auburn native, Lance lives with her husband and five children just a couple of blocks away from the store on the town square. “I love the small-town charm. I really enjoy getting to know my clientele and my neighbors,” she says.

Bewitching Botanicals sells a variety of skin-care products that Lance makes herself. “All of my products are made with USDA-certified organic ingredients. I don’t use any artificial components.” The products include bath bombs, body scrubs and lotions. Lance also carries items from other small businesses that you won’t find in big-box stores, from children’s toys, to cleaning products to clothing for a variety of ages.

Lance has a robust website for her business, which has a staff of five employees. Because of the pandemic, she initially had to change her focus. “I had to completely shift my entire business model from in-store to 100% e-commerce,” she said. Now, the shop continues to sell goods online while also welcoming customers to come check out the items for themselves.
Whimsy Tea began out of frustration. Owner Gordon Davis explained that one of his family’s regular outings was to Teavana, formerly housed in White Oaks Mall. Then the company was purchased by Starbucks, which closed the local outlet, despite initial promises to the contrary.

After the disappointment, Davis and his family decided not to let Starbucks dictate their family’s access to quality teas, and they began to source their own. The business, created and staffed by Davis, his wife, Laura, and daughter Amberly, with assistance from their younger children as well, began as a stand at the Old Capitol Farmers Market. Though incremental progress was always the foundation of their business plan, within a month Whimsy Tea was available at Bunn Gourmet, and now the company’s teas are available at more than a dozen locations. “We’re trying to be everywhere we possibly can,” notes Davis.

A push last summer by Downtown Springfield, Inc. to fill first-floor retail spaces gave the Davis family an opportunity they could not resist: a short-term lease. “We were able to try it out and see if it would work,” states Davis. “It did well.”

When that lease expired, Whimsy Tea moved into a larger space on the other side of Adams and Fourth streets, still right in the thick of the Adams Family business district. “This street is booming. If someone is getting into pursuing their passion, Adams Street is where to do it,” says Davis. “We cultivate the unique – that’s the great thing about downtown. It’s where people go to build their own thing.”

In addition to their fine tea selection and personalized guest experience, Whimsy Tea also hosts open mic nights featuring music, poetry, comedy – whatever talent someone wants to showcase.

Whimsy Tea has also become an art venue. “We partner with local artists and they do label art for us. We can offer our artists wall space for free, and if they choose to sell their art, we don’t take a cut. They don’t have to pay rent for art space. We have 23 artists, and probably 130 pieces,” says Davis.

As for future plans, Davis says, “We always wanted to eventually have a tea house. We’re not there yet, but we’re getting there. Incremental progress.”
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November 4th, 2021

Pick up your meal from 4-6 pm at Local 137 Plumbers and Steamfitters
2880 E. Cook Street, Springfield, IL

Program begins at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom and ends at 8:00 p.m.

**Tickets are $40 per person**

**Guest Speakers**

Senator Elgie Sims
Rep. Justin Slaughter
Rep. Sonya Harper
County Clerk Don Gray
IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
Estate of Robert S. Ramsey,
Deceased.
No. 2021 P 562
CLAIMS NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of Robert S. Ramsey. Letters of Office were issued on the 25th day of May, A.D., 2021, to CYNTHIA M. A. CLEAVER, 536 W. Carpenter Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is SCOTT & SCOTT, P.C., 611 East Monroe Street, Suite 200, Springfield, Illinois 62701, for the estate of Robert S. Ramsey.

COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
Estate of Mary Jane Wright,
Deceased.
Case No. 2021 P-292
DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of MARY JANE WRIGHT, of Springfield, Sangamon County, Complex 200 South 7th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62704, and the estate of Mary Jane Wright, as Independent/Administrator, whose attorney of record is SCOTT & SCOTT, P.C., 611 East Monroe Street, Suite 200, Springfield, Illinois 62701.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: JASON E. MILLER,
Deceased.
Case No. 2021 P 286
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: JASON E. MILLER,
Deceased.
Case No. 2021 P 286
DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of JASON E. MILLER, of Springfield, Sangamon County, Complex 200 South 7th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62704, and the estate of Jason E. Miller, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is SCOTT & SCOTT, P.C., 611 East Monroe Street, Suite 200, Springfield, Illinois 62701.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: MARY JANE WRIGHT,
Deceased.
Case No. 2021 P-292
DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of MARY JANE WRIGHT, of Springfield, Sangamon County, Complex 200 South 7th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62704, and the estate of Mary Jane Wright, as Independent/Administrator, whose attorney of record is SCOTT & SCOTT, P.C., 611 East Monroe Street, Suite 200, Springfield, Illinois 62701.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: JASON E. MILLER,
Deceased.
Case No. 2021 P 286
DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of JASON E. MILLER, of Springfield, Sangamon County, Complex 200 South 7th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62704, and the estate of Jason E. Miller, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is SCOTT & SCOTT, P.C., 611 East Monroe Street, Suite 200, Springfield, Illinois 62701.
IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
In the matter of the estate of:
Aaron J. Painter, Deceased
Case No. 2021-P-522
Claim Notice
Notice is given of the death of Aaron J. Painter, the letters of administration were issued to Sandra L. Painter, 5017 Louise Lane, Springfield, IL 62702 as Administrator. Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Circuit Court at the Sangamon County Courthouse, 200 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62702, with the Executor, or on or before, April 28, 2022. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. A notice of claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Executor within 10 days after it has been filed.
Paul Palazolzo
Clerk of the Circuit Court

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SPRINGFIELD, SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE ESTATE OF:
RICHARD D. OLSON, Deceased
Case No.: 2021-P-558
NOTICE OF PUBLICATION OF WILL AND CLAIMS
Notice is hereby given of the death of Richard D. Olson, Letters of Office were issued on October 6, 2021. The name and address of the Executor is Kelly Moore. His address is 1257 N. Second Street, Riverton, IL 62561. James Ackerman is counsel for the Executor. His address is Ackerman Law Office, P.C., 2601 South Sixth Street, Springfield, IL 62702. Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Sangamon County Courthouse, 200 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62702, or with the representative, or both, on or before May 5, 2022. Any claim not filed on or before May 5, 2022, is barred. Copies of the claim must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.
Dated 21st day of October, 2021.
KELLY MOORE, Executor
Prepared by:
James W. Ackerman, Attorney for the Executor

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF:
LEWIS H. ROSE, Deceased
Case No.: 2021-P-335
DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to claimants of the Estate of FRANK W. SCHRAM, deceased. Letters of Office were issued on September 30, 2021, to Joan F. Sherman, Executor, whose attorney is Dwight O’Keefe, Brown, Hay & Stephens, 1000 US Bank Building, P.O. Box 2459, Springfield, IL 62703.
Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at Sangamon County Courthouse, 200 South Ninth Street, Springfield, IL 62702, or with the representative, or both, on or before April 28, 2022, or within three months from the date of the representative, or both, on or before the 25th day of April, 2022, or within 10 days after it has been filed. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
In the Matter of the Estate of
LEWIS H. ROSE, Deceased
Case No.: 2021-P-335
NOTICE OF PUBLICATION
Notice is hereby given of the claim filed by Henry Thomas Eyre praying for the change of name from Noah Thomas Ritter to Henry Eyre pursuant to the statute in such case made and provided.
Dated: Oct. 14, 2021

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF:
HENRY THOMAS EYRE, Petitioner
Case No.: 2021-P-335
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that on Dec. 7, 2021 the Probate Court prayed for the change of name from Henry Thomas Ritter to Henry Thomas Eyre pursuant to the statute in such case made and provided.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
In the Matter of:
KEVIN WICKER, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NONRECORDED CLAIMANTS, Defendants
Case No. 2021CH00005
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE
Notice is given to defendants,UNKNOWN OWNERS and NONRECORDED CLAIMANTS, of the following described real estate, that the above entitled mortgage foreclosure action is now pending, and the day on which any default which may be entered against said defendants is NOVEMBER 22, 2021. The Plaintiff has certified that the above described real estate is sufficient to identify it with reasonable certainty as follows:

(f) The names of all plaintiffs and the case number are identified above.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF:
LEWIS H. ROSE, Deceased
Case No.: 2021-P-335
NOTICE OF PUBLICATION
Notice is hereby given of the claim filed by Henry Thomas Eyre praying for the change of name from Noah Thomas Ritter to Henry Eyre pursuant to the statute in such case made and provided.
Dated: Oct. 14, 2021

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF:
LEWIS H. ROSE, Deceased
Case No.: 2021-P-335
NOTICE OF PUBLICATION
Notice is hereby given of the change of name from Henry Thomas Ritter to Henry Thomas Eyre pursuant to the statute in such case made and provided.
Dated: Oct. 14, 2021

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE STATE BANK & TRUST, an Illinois banking corporation, Plaintiff,
and
KEVIN WICKER, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NONRECORDED CLAIMANTS, Defendants
Case No. 2021CH00005
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE
Notice is given to defendants,UNKNOWN OWNERS and NONRECORDED CLAIMANTS, of the following described real estate, that the above entitled mortgage foreclosure action is now pending, and the day on which any default which may be entered against said defendants is NOVEMBER 22, 2021. The Plaintiff has certified that the above described real estate is sufficient to identify it with reasonable certainty as follows:

(f) The names of all plaintiffs and the case number are identified above.
IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ILLINOIS
SANGAMON COUNTY, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, A Municipal Corporation, Plaintiff,
vs.
R & R CAPITAL HOLDINGS LLC, MEDAX, INC., CHARLES BELLEMEY, TERRY A. BRUNNER, CHESEY RENNE LYNN BRUNNER, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS,
Defendants.

Case No. 21-MR-1327

NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF ACTION

NOTICE IS GIVEN TO R & R Capital Holdings, LLC, Charles Bellemey, Terry A. Brunner, Chelsey Renee Lynn Brunner, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants that a Complaint for Demolition was filed in the above named court on October 14, 2021 for demolition of the structure or structures located on the real estate commonly known as 213 Eastman Avenue, Springfield, Illinois, and legally described as:

The East 38 feet of the West 76 feet of Lot 1 and Lot 2 in Block 7 of Furniture Factory Park. Situated in Sangamon County, Springfield, Illinois.

PUBLICATION having been filed, notice is hereby given to Donald B. Hamblin a/k/a Donald E. Hamblin, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants that a Complaint for Demolition was filed in the above named court on October 14, 2021, and is now pending.

Notice of Pendency of Action

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ILLINOIS
SANGAMON COUNTY, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, A Municipal Corporation, Plaintiff,
vs.
DONALD B. HAMLIN A/K/A DONALD E. HAMLIN, SANGAMON COUNTY, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS,
Defendants.

Case No. 21-MR-1326

NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF ACTION

The requisite Affidavit for Service by Publication having been filed, notice is hereby given to Donald B. Hamblin a/k/a Donald E. Hamblin, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants that a Complaint for Demolition was filed in the above named court on October 14, 2021, and is now pending.

Notice of Pendency of Action

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ILLINOIS
SANGAMON COUNTY, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, A Municipal Corporation, Plaintiff,
vs.
CARA JENNETTE CARTER AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF SAMUEL J. CARTER, CHARLES BELLEMEY, ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS,
Defendants.

Case No. 21-MR-1325

NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF ACTION

The requisite Affidavit for Service by Publication having been filed, notice is hereby given to Cara Jeanette Carter as Administrator of the Estate of Samuel J. Carter, Charles Bellemey, Illinois Department of Revenue, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants that a Complaint for Demolition was filed in the above named court on October 14, 2021, and is now pending.

Notice of Pendency of Action

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ILLINOIS
SANGAMON COUNTY, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, A Municipal Corporation, Plaintiff,
vs.
DARLA J. WILSON, GUARDIAN TAX LLC, SANGAMON COUNTY AS TRUSTEE FOR TAXING DISTRICTS, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS,
Defendants.

Case No. 21-MR-1348

NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF ACTION

The requisite Affidavit for Service by Publication having been filed, notice is hereby given to Darla J. Wilson, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants that a Complaint for Demolition was filed in the above named court on October 20, 2021, and is now pending.

Notice of Pendency of Action

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ILLINOIS
SANGAMON COUNTY, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, A Municipal Corporation, Plaintiff,
vs.
DARLA J. WILSON, GUARDIAN TAX LLC, SANGAMON COUNTY AS TRUSTEE FOR TAXING DISTRICTS, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS,
Defendants.

Case No. 21-MR-1349

NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF ACTION

The requisite Affidavit for Service by Publication having been filed, notice is hereby given to Darla J. Wilson, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants that a Complaint for Demolition was filed in the above named court on October 20, 2021, and is now pending.

Notice of Pendency of Action

IN THE COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ILLINOIS
SANGAMON COUNTY, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, A Municipal Corporation, Plaintiff,
vs.
NANCY ANN VISNESKY, ANTHONY M. VISNESKY, JR., SANGAMON COUNTY AS TRUSTEE FOR TAXING DISTRICTS, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS,
Defendants.

Case No. 21-MR-1350

NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF ACTION

The requisite Affidavit for Service by Publication having been filed, notice is hereby given to Nancy Ann Visnesky, Anthony M. Visnesky, Jr., Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants that a Complaint for Demolition was filed in the above named court on October 20, 2021, and is now pending.

Notice of Pendency of Action

LEGAL NOTICE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS / RFP

VENDING MACHINE SERVICES

The Springfield Mass Transit District d/b/a Sangamon Mass Transit District (SMTD) is seeking proposals from a qualified, responsible, and responsive vendor for the supply of VENDING MACHINES. The scope of work and specifications is outlined in the bid documents.

Proposals will be received in SMTD Administration Office at 928 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62703-2497 in SEALED envelopes marked “RFP #2022-01, Attn: Michelle Alexander,” NO LATER THAN 2:00 PM CENTRAL TIME December 1, 2021. The RFP documents may be obtained from the Office of SMTD, 928 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62703-2497 or by downloading the RFP from SMTD’s website (www.smtd.org) or by emailing purchasing@smtd.org to request a copy.

Any contract resulting from this RFP shall be conducted upon compliance with all provisions of the RFP documents. Additional or any contract resulting from this proposal is subject to financial assistance contracts between and/or among SMTD, the United States Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation. Acceptance of any proposal may be subject to concurrence by the Illinois Department of Transportation. The right is reserved to accept any proposal or any part or parts of any proposal and all proposals. Acceptance of any proposal may be subject to concurrence by the Illinois Department of Transportation and the United States Department of Transportation.

FURTHERMORE, SMTD, the United States Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation reserve the right.
THANK YOU FOR VOTING US
BEST SUB/SANDWICH AND FOOD DELIVERY!

ORDER ONLINE HEADWESTSUBS.COM FOR DELIVERY