

Grownups getting stronger

ReGeneration

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Spring 2023

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Photo courtesy The Bressmer House



New owners polish an old gem – The Bressmer House, 913 S. Sixth

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Cover photo by Jean Campbell

ReGeneration Spring 2023

ReGeneration is the magazine for active and creative grownups, members of The ReGen generation. The ReGen is age 50-plus, yet this generation is not so much an age but a lifestyle. The ReGen includes people willing to try new adventures, to give back, to reinvent themselves and their community. They've done it all at least once before, so they like "re-" words: reenergized, resurrected, reclaimed.

Our cover story, about Tony and Ann Libri taking on the challenge of restoring to active use the former Benedictine University and Ursuline Academy campus, shows grit and determination by active seniors with a passion to give back. "Learning humility," written by a young man who respects his elders, teaches a lesson we all need to learn. And "Chat with a robot," explores the world of artificial intelligence, while asking the robot to explain it all too.

There's a lot here for the active 50-plus crowd, the ones we call "Grownups getting stronger." Please send your reactions and suggestions to editor@illinoistimes.com.

–Fletcher Farrar, editor

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The colorful lobby at The Seasons

Seasons senior living starts with **Z**

Zaubis cultivate a family atmosphere

By DiAnne Crown

Z is for ... the owners of the Seasons active retirement residences just off Koke Mill Road on Conifer Drive in Springfield. Z stands for Zaubi, as in the family built-owned-operated Seasons Pine Creek and Seasons Under the Oaks. For the residents, Z clearly stands for Zest, as in zest for freedom and independence. It's a mutually rewarding relationship. We talked with Zane Zaubi, who showed off Pine Creek and introduced some of the residents.

Mary Viner, 80, was preparing a classic pea-and-cheese cube salad for the

evening's potluck supper when we rang the bell of her pretty, light, one-bedroom apartment. "I moved in four years ago this March," she says, and wishes she'd made the move earlier.

Viner sold her Leland Grove home of 29 years and loves the freedom. "I wish I'd been here 10 years ago. I got tired of taking care of it. The leaves. The gum balls." Here, she says, "I can look out the window and see someone mowing my lawn – and it's not me! I run around quite a bit visiting my grandchildren. All I have to do here is walk out and lock the door.

I don't even have to stop the mail when I leave town.

"This is the best-kept secret in Springfield," Viner continues. "You can sit out and make friends. It's not like a high-rise, where you don't know people."

Viner has high praise for property manager Zane and his parents, Steve and Kim Zaubi, who built Seasons Pine Creek in 2005 and Seasons Under the Oaks in 2009. "The staff is the best part. They do a lot of things they don't need to do," such as hosting seasonal parties, "their treat."

Caterpillar retiree Ron Thompson and

his wife feel the same way about the staff. “Zane’s on a pedestal with us.”

And it’s not just Mel-O-Cream days, guest bands, cocktail hours and other special activities throughout the week that the residents and staff enjoy. “There’s just something different about when you walk through the Seasons doors,” Zane says. “It’s togetherness and community, not that ‘nursing home’ feel. It’s so inviting.”

Creating a family feel was the Zaubis’ goal from the start. “It’s completely family-owned and operated,” says Zane. “I grew up in these halls with a lot of grandmas and grandpas.”

Affordable independence

Seasons is a lease-only, independent-living, 55-plus community. It doesn’t offer nursing care or memory care. However, it is fully accessible, and age-in-place services and amenities are available “a la carte,” such as adaptable apartments, personal car service (not a big bus) available for \$12.50 per hour for errands and appointments, and more.



Zane and Neehad Zaubi. Inset: A Z over the front door reminds all that the Zaubis extend their welcome.

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“Time passes. Needs change,” says Zane. “The monthly apartment lease doesn’t include a list of services you don’t need every month,” says Zane. “but residents can bring any supportive services they may need, whether it be in-home help, grocery delivery, or other services. You have the peace of mind to have help if and when you need it, but you don’t have to pay for it when you don’t.”

As a result, he continues, the activity level is higher and the average age is lower than at many other places. People who move into Seasons “want the freedom to really retire, not manage their sump pumps, and yard maintenance, and all the other upkeep. We have people here who still drive, still work, still travel. Seasons allows them to leave, lock the door, come back and pick up where they left off.”

Lock the door and go, or stay in and relax with friends

“We do our best to promote a very active lifestyle with walking paths, exercise rooms, private patio and second entrance for every apartment, a private party room and commercial kitchen residents can use for their own events,” he says, “and the simple fact of having friends who will grab you to go out for dinner. People get up and out and keep moving.”

The connection to the outdoors is especially attractive for residents who like to sit outside together, watch the wildlife, visit the pond and enjoy nature. “During COVID,” Zane says, “residents would tell me they were going out to meet at the corner pub.” It turns out, several of them had adjacent corner apartments where they would sit outside on their patios and have cocktails in the evening together, all socially distanced. Friendly. “You get the truest sense of community here,” Zane says. People actually ‘neighbor.’”

Bonita Mathews, age 79, had moved from Pawnee into Seasons Pine Creek three days before we met in February. “It’s so relaxing here. That’s what it’s all about. To relax and enjoy things. It’s an absolutely beautiful place, and everyone’s so friendly. I’m so pleased to be here. It’s like a whole load’s been lifted off my



Relax around the fire at Seasons Pine Creek.

shoulders.”

The Zaubis’ vision of an active retirement community works for Springfield’s senior housing market. “Springfield is such a deeply rooted community,” Zane says, “I see people who love to travel, but they want to keep a home base here.”

Packets that detail features, prices and floor plans are available in the properties’ lobbies. For a closer look, tours are available by appointment. For anyone researching a possible move, Zane encourages inquiring about annual rate increases, (3% every other year at Seasons) “to understand the commitment you’re making.”

It’s not the biggest property in town. “We have 60 units,” Zane says, “to make sure people can have friends and make friends and feel comfortable. Finding

the right size was important to my dad and mom. This is the dream they chased. There is a small Z over the front door. There is a huge sense of pride being a small piece of these people’s lives. We’re very passionate about it.”

Seasons offers one- and two-bedroom ground-level suites with interconnecting corridors and private patios. Prices start at less than \$1,500, including all utilities except phone and cable television. Lease rates go up based on size, features and amenities. For more information, call 217-698-5780, or visit www.seasonsseniorliving.com.

DiAnne Crown is a frequent contributor to Illinois Times and notices an increased frequency of senior living assignments. Coincidence?



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Restoration of **Benedictine campus** is coming along

Tony and Ann Libri provide update on restoration efforts

By Jean Campbell



Tony, Ann and daughter Isabella in front of a stained-glass window in the Music Conservatory.

In the fall of 2021, Tony and Ann Libri took on a monumental project when they decided to purchase the buildings on the 25-acre property that served originally as Ursuline Academy, then as a Benedictine University campus until 2018 when the school closed. Their goal is to bring the campus back to life and return the buildings to their former glory for the public to enjoy. They are putting lots of time, energy and love into the project.

At age 66, Tony could be slowing down and taking life easier, but he seems to have unending energy, especially when it comes to historic preservation. He and Ann are passionate about retaining the character of structures and neighborhoods. Tony said when you do what you love, it's not really work, it's more like a hobby. However, he also acknowledges certain limitations.

"We realized that we couldn't possibly restore all the buildings ourselves, so we gathered some friends who share our dream of preserving the architecture of these historic landmarks," said Tony. "We secured buyers who were interested in restoring several buildings, including the King's Daughters Home, the Ursuline Gymnasium and the Brinkerhoff Home. Gordon and Tammy Fidler bought the Brinkerhoff Home and reopened it in 2022. They lease some space to businesses and offer venue space for parties, receptions and other events. It has quickly become popular and is nothing short of spectacular."

Tony adds that another building, the Becker Library, is now completely restored and has space for businesses to lease. He says it is a great building and suggests it would make an excellent training facility.

The buildings the Libris are restoring include the Music Conservatory, St. Joseph's Chapel, Ursuline Academy and three housing units that previously were used as convents and student housing. Upon purchase, the buildings were immediately donated to Preservation, Inc., a nonprofit established by the Libris, who are now knee-deep in restoration work. They spent 2022 stabilizing building exteriors and cleaning up the grounds.

Of all the buildings, Tony says the Conservatory

was in the worst shape. “We needed to replace the roof on the Conservatory, which is a huge 15,400-square-foot space,” explains Tony. “We also repaired leaks in other building roofs, replaced about 100 broken windows, installed exterior lighting, replaced gutters, removed dead trees and overgrown bushes and disposed of more than 30 dumpsters of material.”

The Libris are now focusing on the interiors. They are replacing rotting floors, installing new heating and cooling systems and making electrical repairs.

“Our first priorities are completing the Conservatory and St. Joseph’s Chapel,” notes Ann. “The Conservatory will be a beautiful gathering place for celebrations, receptions, theater productions and, of course, all kinds of music. It is acoustically excellent. It has stunning archways on both floors, an exquisite stained-glass window and 15 private music rooms. The Chapel will also be a lovely venue. We hope to open both the Music Conservatory and the Chapel later this year, at least on a limited basis.”

The plan for the former Ursuline Academy is to turn it into an artisans’ complex. Each room will house a different kind of artistry, such as painters, jewelry makers, sculptors and so on. Tony says the building is in pretty good shape, but it will likely take the rest of this year to complete the work, so the couple is looking at an opening of early 2024.

The Libris are working on designs and ideas for the last three buildings (former housing units) before starting interior renovation. These structures are slated to open in 2024.

“We are excited that the campus will also provide space for The Matthew Project,” says Tony. “Ann is the executive director of the nonprofit, which provides food, clothing, tutoring, mentoring and life skills to homeless children in District 186. Our dream is to bring the arts to these wonderful but underserved children.”

Overall, Tony says things are going well. He notes that the price of everything has doubled since they started, which

has slowed progress a bit, but they are determined to keep moving ahead with the support of the community.

Ann and Tony believe there is a need to preserve the past. They point to the Lincoln sites, The Vachel Lindsay Home, The Dana-Thomas House, The Elijah Iles House and the Hoogland Center for the Arts as examples of how Springfield has honored historic buildings rather than tearing them down.

“Ann and I have always shared a love for historic houses, architecture, wrought iron gates, columns, you name it,” says Tony. “We love Springfield, and we have a vision of how this campus can be saved and become a beautiful place to serve and entertain the community.”

For more information or to make a donation, visit www.preservation-inc.com. For inquiries, contact Tony at 217-836-7669 or tonylibri@cs.com.

Jean Campbell is a Springfield freelance writer who loves to tell stories of interesting people, places and organizations.

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Learning humility

**Find ways to step
back and see a
bigger picture**

By Tim Hahn

Humility is a delicate quality. It has been said that humility is the foundation for all of the other great virtues in life. Qualities like compassion, patience and steadfastness all benefit when they are grounded in humility. Like a blank canvas that all things spring from, it requires a high level of awareness. Like walking on the razor's edge.

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less." — unattributed

Humility can easily turn into thinking and acting as if one is less worthy than another, as well as turning into ego righteousness looking for accolades. It cannot be put on display and shown off. True humility takes birth in the heart. It takes birth when our hearts become vulnerable and tender. Contrary to the idea that this is weakness, it is in fact strength. A heart that is clear and open can hold and see more of something; a heart with conditions and attachments is

less likely to handle and see with clarity.

To open the heart we must understand what stains and blocks it. Tools like Vipassana meditation, a dharana (focused concentration) using nonjudgmental observations, teaches us to notice thoughts, senses and emotions as they are. As easy as it may sound, to see in a truly unattached way can take lots of practice. We are so connected, and in most cases attached, to our perceptions. When the subject (us) is less

attached to the thought and emotion, it is easier to see the bigger picture. Like stepping back from a piece of art. If we are standing two inches away from something, then take two or three giant steps back, we see a completely different picture. By observing in this way we are not missing out on anything, we are in fact seeing more.

Ram Dass, the late great Western dharma teacher, used the analogy of looking at a small framed picture of a cloud. Within the frame we see the cloud only and assume that is all of it. Our identity is with the cloud, it represents who and what we think we are. If we were to expand the frame to a larger and greater view, we would see so much more – the sun, more clouds, birds, stars and ultimately the entire sky. If there were a storm, we would also see how “this too shall pass” and that it is just another element in the sky. The sky, always present and encompassing all things, is awareness. What we see from our subjective view is not the complete view. We have to find ways to step back, to see a bigger picture, a greater awareness that includes all of life. Humility is inclusive like that.

There is a great saying from the East: “There are things you know you know, things you know you don’t know and things you don’t know you don’t know.” Humility is seeing from this point of view. It is also knowing that we will naturally move back to that “small cloud” identification, so we have to keep practicing and reminding ourselves to step back. This is the razor’s edge, this is the high-level awareness needed to truly be humble. To live with a greater sense of everything and everyone requires this larger view, and acknowledging that we will mess this up. It’s not about being perfect as much as it is about paying attention. The intelligence of ignorance is having a level of awareness that knows it doesn’t know. If we live clearly knowing this, then we have a greater chance of remaining alert to everything.

Tim Hahn runs CrossFit Instinct with his wise wife, Molly, and is a yoga and dharma teacher in Springfield.




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Super-size the fun in southern Illinois

Visit Metropolis, home of Superman, a casino and more

By Mary Bohlen

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's Superman's hometown! Sort of.

Those of us who grew up on comic books know the superhero's fictional home was Metropolis. Its deep southern Illinois twin is out to help us relive our youthful fantasies with a giant statue of Superman and a jam-packed museum dedicated to him.

The town along the Ohio River also hosts an historic state park, a casino and a nearby draw for scuba divers from around the world, making Metropolis a good place to spend a day or two. Still, it is fair to say Superman puts Metropolis on the map.

That is no accident, according to Trish Steckenrider, tourism director for the Greater Metropolis Convention and Visitors Bureau. The town started in the late 1800s, long before superheroes made their debut.

"The founders thought we would be the Chicago of Illinois because of our location on the river and named it accordingly," she says. Nearly a century later, when the comics industry declared Superman's hometown to be Metropolis, people started asking if the town was named for him.

Some creative locals decided to embrace the fun and got National Periodicals Publications, the forerunner of D.C. Comics, to declare in 1972 that Metropolis, Illinois, would be Superman's official home, Steckenrider says. "We have a contract still in effect today that allows Metropolis to use the tagline 'Home of Superman' for economic and tourism purposes."

The connection pays off for the town as thousands stop for a photo in front of the iconic statue, built in 1993 next to the Massac County Courthouse. Containing 4,000 pounds of bronze, the statue rises 15 feet.

Two blocks north, a Lois Lane statue and a "Daily Planet" globe further celebrate the tale of newspaper reporter Clark Kent turned superhero and his love interest, Lois.

Visitors can learn more of the story by stopping at the Super Museum, housing one of the largest collections of Superman memorabilia in the world. Longtime fan Jim Hambrick opened the museum in 1993, beginning his collection with a Superman lunchbox when he was a child. His family carries on the tradition.

Today the small museum includes a dizzying array of artifacts from movies, TV shows, comics and games. Costumes, props, toys, advertisements and photos grace the walls and cubicles. Life-size mannequins portray various Superman



Superman looms 15 feet high in downtown Metropolis, Illinois, making the statue a popular photo spot for tourists. Photo by Brent Bohlen



Statues of Lois Lane, Superman's love interest, and the logo for the *Daily Planet*, where Lane and Clark Kent, aka Superman, worked as newspaper reporters, draw interest in Metropolis. Photo by Mary Bohlen

characters.

A gift shop offers Superman T-shirts, toys, comics and other souvenirs. A Superman figure bursts forth from the wall outside the museum.

The museum, gift shop and statue are popular spots for the 15,000-20,000 fans who flock to Metropolis for the annual Superman Celebration, June 10-12 this year. Steckenrider says a main feature is the chance for fans to interact with celebrities affiliated with Superman movies and cartoons the town brings in every year. (This year's crew will be announced later this spring.)

The three-day celebration also includes games, costume contests, music, a collectors' auction, a car show and plenty of food.

Fort Massac State Park on the Ohio River also draws a crowd for its encampment the third weekend of October, Steckenrider says. Other times the park offers picnicking, camping, disc golfing, hiking, fishing, boating and hunting during season. The park's location on the river's bank yields scenic views of the bridge that connects Illinois to Paducah, Kentucky.

A paved 3.6-mile bike and hike path beginning at the Superman statue and going through the state park is wheelchair accessible.

Nearby Mermet Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area is another spot to fish, hike, boat and hunt in season. The area features a 452-acre lake and bike trails.



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More famous among scuba diving enthusiasts is Mermet Springs in Belknap. Steckenrider calls it “one of our hidden gems in southern Illinois. People come from all over the world to train, and it is a big playground for divers.” The deep spring is 8.5 acres and contains some underwater attractions added to enhance dives, including a 747 airplane used as a movie prop.

Those who prefer indoor activities may be drawn to Harrah’s Casino along the river in Metropolis. Steckenrider says the full-service casino is a major draw to the area and includes a hotel, dining rooms and live entertainment.

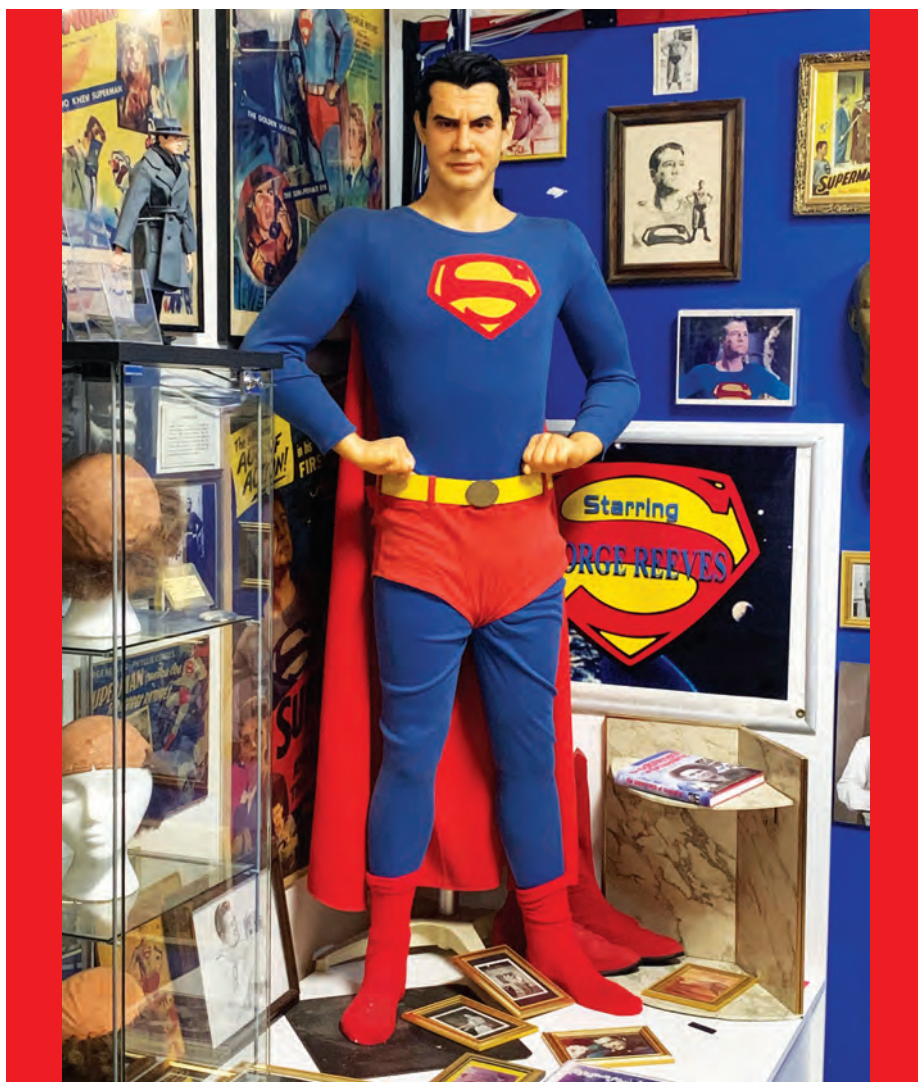
Other lodging options include several

chain hotels and inns. Steckenrider notes that most non-chain restaurants in Metropolis are mom-and-pop operations popular with visitors.

Visitors also can find lodging and restaurants across the river in Paducah, home to the National Quilt Museum, mural art on the city’s floodwalls and several historic sites.

For more information about Metropolis and its surroundings, go to www.metropolistourism.com.

Mary Bohlen, a former wire service reporter and UIS journalism professor, writes about nearby travel for Illinois Times and ReGeneration.



Mannequins of actors who have portrayed Superman in movies and television shows are part of the memorabilia in the Super Museum in Metropolis.
Photo by Mary Bohlen



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First floor living room PHOTOS COURTESY THE BRESSMER

Reborn at 170 years old

New owners polish an old gem – The Bressmer House, 913 S. Sixth

By DiAnne Crown

Just about 30 years after settler John Kelly built the first cabin in Springfield in 1820 at what is now Second and Jefferson streets, Virginian Hiram Walker purchased land for \$210 from city founder Elijah Iles a few blocks south and east. There he built a two-story, gable-roofed, provincial Federal-style brick home and carriage house.

By 2003, when the Historic Sites Commission published Fever River

Research's survey of Old Aristocracy Hill (a comprehensive and fascinating account of the neighborhood from Springfield's earliest days, complete with first-person accounts and archival photos), the home had been transformed into the stately Queen Anne-style Bressmer/Baker mansion of today, and it was one of the few properties rated as "excellent" for its historic integrity – thanks to its owner,

the late Springfield attorney Doug Brown, who died in 1998 at age 64. Brown's work on the property included a careful, thoughtful renovation of the interior for office use.

In November of 2021, business partners James Lucas and Ben Bledsoe purchased what had become a stately Queen Anne-style mansion at 913 South Sixth Street, christened it "The Bressmer," and six months later opened

it for business as furnished luxury apartments.

House and business are doing fine.

National Register of Historic Places, 1982

Charles Kirchner's successful nomination of the home to the NRHP details major expansion, extension and remodel in 1855 in a more Italianate style by prominent local merchant John Bressmer; and work done by architect Charles Wesley Shinn for businessman William B. Baker in 1889 that added the Queen Anne features we see today.

According to the nomination form, "The Bressmer/Baker House, as it exists today, closely resembles its appearance in the 1889-1900 era, with several exceptions. This was the era in which the house was remodeled in the Queen Anne Style ... including a domed turret,

overhangs, use of varying materials, elaborate wooden trim, half-timber and stucco, clustered brick chimneys, leaded and stained glass ... The house contains approximately 5,500 square feet of space."

Today, visitors experience an opulent Victorian mansion that has been home to many prominent Springfield business owners and their families since Springfield's earliest years, a structure that has been redesigned by leading area architects, and a commercial property that once served as offices and now welcomes guests for luxurious overnights and extended stays.

Lucas and Bledsoe are proud of their new property. They call it The Bressmer.

Arrive and Thrive, hospitality in luxury lodging

Business owners Lucas and Bledsoe met in a real estate investment group.

Sensing their goals and styles might align nicely, they bought a property together. "We saw each other taking action week after week and wanted to find a way to work together," Lucas says. They now own properties in California where Lucas is based, Tennessee where Bledsoe is based, and Springfield, where family and Lucas' fiancé call home.

They wanted to create short-term rentals in small, boutique hotels that are more than B&Bs, he says. Their passion is in the details. Carefully chosen decor, subtle themes, and fully furnished apartments with kitchens suit a wide variety of visitors. "It's really about hospitality," says Lucas.

That makes The Bressmer ideal. The building is a historic property. The historic town itself attracts tourists, politicians and people in the medical community. And the pair believes



The 5,500-square-foot Bressmer House, 913 S. Sixth St., today closely resembles its appearance in the 1889-1900 era.



Third floor master bedroom



The Lincoln Office, third floor

Springfield has a lot of growth potential.

The types of visitors to The Bressmer, says Bledsoe, “run the gamut across multiple industries.” Couples may rent one room and stay for one or two nights, legislators and travel nurses may rent for longer stays. Larger groups, family reunions or wedding parties all wanting a place where they can all live in one space may stay for a week or a weekend. It varies, so check dates as far ahead as possible, but don’t assume they’ll be booked, he says. Visit the website, or come visit for a preview. “We love showing people the house and are always as accommodating as possible.”

“We see a lot of opportunity in Springfield, especially in the regeneration of the downtown,” Lucas says. “We’re excited to be a part of the community. And we want to partner with other places in town. Everyone wins when everyone wins.”

For more information, visit www.thebressmer.com.

My husband and I loved this! I took so many pictures! Such a great afternoon. The kids even loved it. - Penny

We had the BEST time!!!! The exhibit is AMAZING, and we had so much fun looking at each item, reading the signs at the displays, interacting in the "rec room", playing songs on the jukebox, playing atari, trying out the phones...I could go on and on. - Jennifer

between boomers and millennials...



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Chat with a **robot**

How intelligent is artificial intelligence?

Karen Ackerman Witter

On Nov. 30, 2022, Open AI, the artificial intelligence research laboratory, launched ChatGPT, which created a viral sensation. Individuals can create a free account and start a conversation to get “artificial” answers to questions in seconds.

ChatGPT is both fascinating and frightening. This is a common reaction when new technologies with huge opportunities and consequences enter the public domain. Artificial intelligence (AI) is integral to many businesses and already part of our daily lives. Voice assistants such as Siri and Google Home,

Face ID that unlocks smartphones, and personalized marketing that appears on your social media based on what you look at online, are just a few examples. New AI chatbots are the latest phenomena. Given the far-reaching impacts, it is worth learning more about these new technologies and potential applications.

A Feb. 1, 2023, *Insider* article by Sindu Sundar explains that “Chatbots like GPT are powered by large amounts of data and computing techniques to make predictions to string words together in a meaningful way. They not only tap

into a vast amount of vocabulary and information, but also understand words in context. This helps them mimic speech patterns while dispatching an encyclopedic knowledge.”

Many students likely experimented with ChatGPT more quickly than their teachers. In a school setting, ChatGPT might be seen as a tool for cheating, but also can be an effective tool for learning. Potential applications extend across all sectors of society and promise to be transformational. Ultimately, the technology is a tool for humans to use

knowingly and responsibly, recognizing that accuracy is not its best quality.

Jeff Schneider recently moved back to Springfield after working in Austin, Texas, in the tech industry for 30 years. He is a serial entrepreneur and tech executive with a strong interest in artificial intelligence and wrote the first book related to using the programming language Java. His desire is to explore the potential of new technologies to solve real-world problems and make a positive impact on society. He believes there are opportunities for job growth in central Illinois related to these new technologies and hopes to spark curiosity by people of all ages. He and others recently presented a program on artificial intelligence and ChatGPT at Innovate Springfield.

Schneider explains that previously AI researchers had limited success focusing algorithms on computational linguistics – understanding grammar, syntax, parts of speech and other language parameters. The big innovation was creating

algorithms based on large language models, applying statistics related to word groupings and associations. This led to chatbots that are now open for anyone to try. Results aren't always accurate. Schneider says researchers are trying to take the smarts of ChatPGT to connect with truthful databases. "If the model doesn't have enough information on some topic, it merely finds the most likely words to finish the thought. Future versions will do a better job saying 'I don't know' and tapping into more data sources," said Schneider.

ChatGPT was the first to garner widespread public attention. Other companies are rushing to release their own version. Microsoft recently launched its new Bing chatbot. Newspaper reporters discovered an unintended consequence. Responses from the chatbot became belligerent after a lengthy series of questions. Microsoft has since limited the number of conversations. Technologies will evolve rapidly in

response to ongoing AI research.

Clearly artificial intelligence and chatbots will disrupt jobs, given their ability to synthesize a vast amount of information in seconds. David Brooks wrote in the Feb. 3 *New York Times* (In the Age of AI, Major in Being Human) that "AI will probably give us fantastic tools that will help us outsource a lot of our current mental work. At the same time, AI will force us humans to double down on those talents and skills that humans possess." Some of those unique human skills he cites include empathy, situational awareness and a distinct personal voice. He writes that AI is "missing a humanistic core." His hope in the age of AI is "that it forces us to more clearly distinguish the knowledge that is useful information from the humanistic knowledge that leaves people wiser and transformed."

To try out ChatGPT and create a free account, go to <https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/>.

Ask the bot about ChatGPT

What could be better to explain ChatGPT than ChatGBT itself? The following response was generated in seconds by ChatGPT.

Q. What is ChatGPT, and what are the pros and cons of using it?

A. In the world of artificial intelligence, ChatGPT has become a household name. This innovative technology has made it possible for computers to understand natural language processing and respond to human queries just like a human would.

At its core, ChatGPT is a language model developed by OpenAI, an artificial intelligence research laboratory. It is designed to process natural language queries and generate responses that are coherent, logical and grammatically correct. Essentially, it allows computers to understand and communicate with humans in a more human-like way.

The advantages of ChatGPT are many. First and foremost, it allows for a more natural and efficient interaction between humans and computers. With ChatGPT, users can ask questions or make requests in a way that feels natural to them, and receive responses that are relevant and helpful. This can be particularly useful in customer service situations, where users may have complex questions or issues that need to be addressed quickly and accurately.

Another advantage of ChatGPT is its versatility. Because it is designed to understand natural language, it can be used in a variety of applications, from chatbots and virtual assistants to search

engines and content generators. This makes it a powerful tool for businesses and organizations looking to automate certain tasks or improve their overall customer experience.

However, there are also some potential drawbacks to using ChatGPT. One of the main concerns is that it may not always provide accurate or reliable information. While ChatGPT is designed to generate responses based on the data it has been trained on, it may not always have access to the most up-to-date or accurate information. This can be particularly problematic in situations where the stakes are high, such as medical or legal inquiries.

Another potential issue is that ChatGPT may be prone to bias. Like all machine learning models, ChatGPT is only as good as the data it has been trained on. If the data is biased in some way, this bias may be reflected in the responses generated by the model. This can be particularly problematic in situations where the model is being used to make decisions that affect people's lives, such as hiring or lending decisions.

Despite these potential drawbacks, there is no denying that ChatGPT has revolutionized the way we interact with computers. Its ability to process natural language and generate coherent responses has opened up new possibilities for automation and improved customer experiences. And as the technology continues to evolve and improve, we can expect to see even more innovative applications of ChatGPT in the years to come.

EXPLORE YOUR Community

By Daron Walker

See what's happening near you

As events may be canceled or rescheduled at the last moment, please first check with the host or venue when making plans to attend an event.

MARCH

"Dreaming"

Fridays, Saturdays, 12-6pm. Through April 29. The Pharmacy's first 2023 quarterly exhibit, "Dreaming", continues with works including pieces by emerging artist Elijah Miller. View a wide range of media including blown glass, glass mosaic, graphite, metal work, mixed media paintings in both acrylic and oil, pastels, photography and sculpture. Free. The Pharmacy Gallery and Art Space, 623 E. Adams St., 217-899-9786.

"Lasting Impressions"

March 3 through April 1. Presented by the Illinois Prairie Pastel Society. Open during regular gallery hours. Free. Edwards Place, Springfield Art Association, 700 N. Fourth St., 217-544-2787.

Luck of the Irish Green Garb Contest

Fri., March 17, 11:30am-1pm. Join in the fun of the Green Garb contest, complete with Shamrock Punch and Irish tunes. Prizes awarded for first-place and second-place winners. Senior Services of Central Illinois, 701 W. Mason St., 217-528-4035.

Jeff Dunham: Still Not Canceled

Fri., March 17, 7pm. \$5-\$49.50. BOS Center, 1 Convention Center Plaza, 800-745-3000.



Spotlight on Ice show, March 18 and 19. Nelson Center Ice Arena.

"Martin Luther King Jr.: A Commemoration"

Tuesdays-Saturdays, 12-4pm. Through April 15. "Martin Luther King Jr.: A Commemoration," Celebrate King's life and legacy. Learn details about his childhood and his efforts to fight for racial and social equity 217-391-6323. Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum, 1440 Monument Ave.

"Art for the Ages"

Tuesdays-Saturdays, 12-4pm. Through March 31. An exhibit of art from Springfield District 186 students. Art being exhibited celebrates Black history and includes drawings,

paintings in tempera, oil, watercolor and three-dimensional figures. AAHM has framed the pieces for the display. Free. African-American History Museum Springfield, 1440 Monument Ave., 217-391-6323.

"Growing Up X"

Jan. 28-May 13. Gen X, the often-overlooked Forgotten Generation lies between Boomers and Millennials. Learn about the cultural touchstones that shaped this generation's youth, the last generation to have had an analog childhood. illinoisstatemuseum.org. Illinois State Museum, 502 S. Spring St., 217-782-7386.

"Here I Have Lived: Home in Illinois"

Feb. 23-Jan. 21, 2024. New exhibit invites visitors to explore stories of home. Visitors can connect through artifacts, videos and interactive features about how people have imagined, created and found home in Illinois. Free with admission. Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, 212 N. Sixth St., 217-558-8844.

"Back Home"

Sundays, 1-3pm and Tuesdays-Saturdays, 4-6pm. Through March 26. Canvas painting exhibit by Jamie Woodward. Free. David Bourland Gallery, 939-C S. Durkin Dr., 217-381-4735.

Let's Get Fit

Mondays-Fridays. A chair-based group exercise program designed to meet the needs of older adults who are looking to incorporate more physical activity into their lives. Classes consist of aerobic, strengthening, balance and flexibility exercises. Meets in person and via Zoom. Senior Services of Central Illinois, 701 W. Mason St., 217-528-4035.

Spotlight on Ice Show

Sat., March 18, 2, 7pm and Sun., March 19, 2pm. The Springfield Figure Skating Club presents "They're Playing Our Song!" This theater on ice features popular productions such as Mary Poppins, Shrek, Showstoppers and 42nd Street. springfieldparks.org. \$7-\$12. Nelson Center Ice Arena, Lincoln Park, 1601 N. Fifth St., 217-753-2800.

Maple syrup time demonstrations

March 18-19, 8am-12pm and March 25-26, 8am-12pm. Join a garden naturalist for maple tree tapping. See the entire syrup-making process from tree tapping to boiling the sap down into syrup. Dress for the weather. Adults \$10, kids 4-12 \$5, kids 3 and younger free. Lincoln Memorial Garden, 2301 E. Lake Shore Dr., 217-836-5400.

Wooden It Be Lovely furniture sale

Sat., March 18, 9am-1pm and Sun., March 19, 11:30am-3pm. Sale of more than 200 pieces of hand-painted furniture benefits Wooden It Be Lovely, a nonprofit that hires women healing from lives of poverty, addiction and abuse. Douglas Avenue United Methodist Church, 501 S. Douglas Ave., 217-546-4631.

Shiitake Mushroom Workshop

Sat., March 18, 10am-12pm, 1-3pm. Learn techniques used to grow shiitake mushrooms on logs and using mushrooms to make a double-extract tincture. Includes walking tour of the logs and a foraging tour to identify turkey tail mushrooms. \$35. Shiitake Mushroom Workshop at Black Oak Woods, Petersburg, 21472 Indian Point Ave., 217-652-4566.

Winter Old Capitol Farmers Market

Sat., March 18, 8am-12pm and Saturdays, 8am-12pm. Through April 15. Union Station, 500 E. Madison, 217-544-1723.

Spring Floral Display

March 18-April 9. Noon to 5pm Saturday-Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday. Easter lilies and lush foliage fill the exhibit hall and conservatory for the 50th annual floral display. Washington Park Botanical Garden Exhibit Hall, 1740 W. Fayette Ave., 217-546-4116.

Abate Swap Meet

Sun., March 19, 10am-3:30pm. \$5-\$10. Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, 801 Sangamon Ave., 217-725-8047.

Springfield Flea Market

Sun., March 19, 8am-3pm. Antiques, vintage, collectibles, crafts, new and used. Illinois State Fairgrounds Illinois Building, 801 Sangamon Ave., 782-6661. Admission \$1.50. Children younger than 12 free with an adult. \$1.50. Illinois Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, 801 E. Sangamon Ave., 217-782-6661.

"In the Shadow"

Mondays-Thursdays, 11am-6pm and Thu., April 6, 5:30-8pm. Through April 13. "In the Shadow" is an exhibit of ceramic works by Decatur-based artist Jennifer Holt. Holt's mixed media sculpture and installation art revolve around concepts of time, place and memory. UIS Visual Arts Gallery, HSB 201, One University Plaza, 217-206-6506.

Chair aerobics for seniors

Mondays, Wednesdays, 9-10am. Chair aerobics is suitable for everyone, with gentle exercises that develop flexibility, strength, balance, coordination and fitness. Call for more information. athenschristian.net. Free. Athens Christian Church, Athens, 1411 E. Route 29, 217-636-8463.

Drawing studio

Tuesdays, 6:30-9:30pm. An opportunity to improve drawing skills, hand-eye coordination and analytical skills in a studio setting. Work in the medium of your choice. All skill levels are welcome. Donations are welcome. The Pharmacy Gallery and Art Space, 623 E. Adams St., 801-810-9278.

Glucose and blood pressure screens

Fourth Wednesday of every month, 9:30-11:30am. Provided by SIU School of Medicine. Senior Services of Central Illinois, 701 W. Mason St., 217-528-4035.

Happiness Is Al-Anon

Wednesdays, 12pm. Meets in person and via

Zoom. For in person, go through south glass doors. For Zoom, call for link info. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 815 S. Second St., 217-899-6041.

Springfield Chess Club

Wednesdays, 5-7pm. Casual games for the public and club members of all ages and skill levels. Meets weekly at the White Oaks Mall food court. Free. White Oaks Mall, 2501 Wabash Ave., 217-726-2584.

Backgammon Club

Wednesdays, 6-9pm. Live backgammon. Lessons available for beginners. First time entry is free. Harvest Market, 3001 Veterans Pkwy., 217-622-9447.

St. John's Nursing Students Spring Visits

Thursdays, 10am-12pm. Through April 20. Join great conversation, education and a lot of fun as the St. John's College students return for activities and games. Senior Services of Central Illinois, 701 W. Mason St., 217-528-4035.

Staying Connected Al-Anon

Thursdays, 5:15pm. Zoom only. Call for link. Via Zoom, Springfield, 217-415-3489, 217-652-8131.

The Christians

March 24-25, 7:30pm, Sun., March 26, 2pm, March 31-April 1, 7:30pm and Sun., April 2, 2pm. hcfta.org. \$18-\$20. Hoogland Center for the Arts Peggy Ryder Theatre, 420 S. Sixth St.

Once

March 24-25, 8pm, Sun., March 26, 2pm, March 31-April 1, 8pm and Sun., April 2, 2pm. This is the regional premier of this musical about how an Irish musician and Czech immigrant are drawn together on the streets of Dublin over a shared love of music. Their collaboration evolves into a love story. Show features songs from the critically-acclaimed movie. \$18-20. Hoogland Center for the Arts LRS Theatre 1, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

Seasons of History Fashion Show

Sat., March 25, 1pm. Experience a classic fashion show like the earliest fashion parades that took place in Paris salons in the 19th century! Show takes guests on a journey spanning about 500 years. Guests will not only get to see fashions of all kinds from those periods, but also how those fashions changed during the seasons. Models will parade through the parlors of Edwards Place wearing summer gowns, winter coats and more. \$15. Edwards Place, Springfield Art Association, 700 N. Fourth St., 217-523-2631.



Seasons of History Fashion Show is March 25 at Edwards Place, Springfield Art Association.

The Ritz

Sat., March 25, 5:30-11pm. One of the largest events held annually for the central Illinois lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. In its seventh year, The Ritz is a casually elegant affair that features a three-course dinner, an evening of dancing and a celebration of the progress made by the LGBT community during the past year. Deadline for tickets is March 17. Crowne Plaza Springfield, 3000 S. Dirksen Pkwy., 217-741-4603.

All Ages Improv

Sat., March 25, 7-9pm. Presented by Capital City Improv. Join members of CCI's Teen Improv troupe for an evening of comedy for the whole family. Watch as they team up CCI members for scenes and games made up on the spot. \$15. Hoogland Center for the Arts Club Room, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

Cat adoptions

Fourth Saturday of every month, 12-3pm and first Saturday of every month, 12-3pm. Through Dec. 2. Forever Home Feline Ranch will have cats available for adoption. Opportunities are also available for fostering and volunteering. Donations welcome. Ace Hardware, 1600 Wabash Ave., 217-787-5100.

Pancake and sausage breakfast and silent auction

Sun., March 26, 8am-12pm. Reservations are now being accepted. Call or visit the website. lincolnmemorialgarden.org. Lincoln Memorial Garden, 2301 E. Lake Shore Dr., 217-529-1111.

IC Fine Arts Series: Momena Quartet

Sun., March 26, 3pm. The ensemble's

eclectic vision encompasses contemporary music of all aesthetic backgrounds alongside great music from the recent and distant past. Adults \$15, students free. Illinois College Rammelkamp Chapel, Jacksonville, 1101 W. College Ave., 217-245-3192.

Coin Show

Sun., March 26, 9am-3pm. U.S. and foreign coins, ancient and modern coins, gold and silver bullion, state quarters and paper money. Over 70 dealer tables. Hosted by the Central Illinois Numismatic Association. Free for members and children under 16. \$1. Northfield Inn, Suites and Conference Center, 3280 Northfield Dr., 217-523-7900.

Financial literacy training

Tue., March 28, 5-7, 6-8pm. Create a better financial future for yourself. This bi-monthly financial literacy training will help you to create your financial dream. The connected services will help you navigate every aspect of budgeting, planning and enhancing your finances. Hosted by the Springfield Urban League. Call for more information. Springfield Urban League, 100 N. 11th St., 217-528-0895.

Festival de Mujeres 1979

Wed., March 29, 6-7:30pm. How did Latinas empower themselves, their families and communities in 1970s Chicago? Learn how through the 1979 Festival de Mujeres, a street fair in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, the cultural and activist heart of the Mexican Midwest. Free. UIS Brookens Auditorium, One University Plaza, 217-206-6245.

Soirée for the Bob Freesen YMCA

Fri., March 31, 6-11pm. Entertainment by 90's Daughter. Reserve tickets at the Bob Freesen YMCA front desk or call 217-245-2141 by March 1. \$30 in advance or \$35 at the door. \$300 for reserved table. Hamilton's, Jacksonville, 110 N. East St., 217-675-2720.

Sunshine 66: A Hotel Music Festival

March 31-April 2. Check out the lineup on the Facebook event. Route 66 Hotel and Conference Center, 625 E. Saint Joseph St., 217-529-6626.

APRIL

Lincoln Presidential Half Marathon

Sat., April 1, 7:30am. Run through history in Abraham Lincoln's hometown, including past



The Ritz celebration is March 25 at Crowne Plaza.

his law office, his tomb and the only home he ever owned. USATF certified course. Go Abe!. Downtown Springfield, Downtown.

Spring Lawn & Garden Sale

Sat., April 1, 8am-5pm and Sun., April 2, 9am-4pm. The Spring Lawn & Garden Sale is back at the Orr Building for 2023. Show features flowers and plants, garden art, decks and patio, hot tubs and more. Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, 801 Sangamon Ave., (217) 528-3033.

Breaking Boundaries

Sat., April 1, 2, 7pm. An innovative performance by the Springfield Ballet Company that brings the beauty of classical ballet contrasted with neo-classical dance works. Children \$17, adults \$23-\$30. UIS Performing Arts Center, One University Plaza, 217-206-6160.

Zoo opening weekend

April 1-2, 10am-5pm and Sun., April 2, 10am-5pm. The Henson Robinson Zoo opens. On the first weekend in April, guests at the zoo can enjoy a day with warmer temperatures to kick off the season. The zoo will take this weekend to introduce you to the new animal friends that have been added since the closure. \$5.50-\$7.50. Children 2 and under are free. Henson Robinson Zoo, 1100 E. Lake Shore Dr., 217-544-1751.

Ethical Artificial Intelligence: An Industry Perspective

Wed., April 5, 6:30-7:30pm. Artificial Intelligence (AI) represents an enormous opportunity to advance human well-being. This topic is being tackled by an odd mixture of ethicists, attorneys, statisticians, computer scientists and regulators. Talk will discuss different conceptions of Ethical AI from the perspective of these parties. Free. UIS Student Union Ballroom, 2251 Richard Wright Dr., 217-602-6245.

Having Our Say

April 7-8, 7pm. "The Delaney Sisters' First 100 Years." Starring Kathryn Harris and Patricia Davis as Sadie and Bessie Delaney, who take the audience on a remarkable journey through the last hundred years, recounting fascinating events and anecdotes drawn from their family history and their careers as pioneering African American professionals. hcfta.org. \$18-\$20. Hoogland Center for the Arts Peggy Ryder Theatre, 420 S. Sixth St.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group

Second Tuesday of every month, 1-2:30pm.

The best thing you can do for the person you are caring for is stay physically and emotionally strong. Support groups offer comfort and reassurance, and can be good sources of practical advice and even humor. Senior Services of Central Illinois, 701 W. Mason St., 217-528-4035.

U of I Lunch and Learn Series

Thu., April 13, 11am and Tue., May 9, 11am. Mark Flotow, anthropologist and author, will discuss his book *In Their Letters, In Their Words: Illinois Civil War Soldiers Write Home*, a collection of quotes from letters written by Illinois Civil War soldiers to loved ones. Future dates will have other topics. \$38 includes lunch. Illini Country Club, 1601 S. Illini Road, 217-206-6058.

IC Fine Arts Series: Hub New Music

Fri., April 14, 7:30pm. The Boston-based ensemble has commissioned dozens of new works and continues to usher in a fresh and culturally relevant body of work for its distinct combination of flute, clarinet, violin and cello. Adults \$15, students free. Illinois College Rammelkamp Chapel, Jacksonville, 1101 W. College Ave., 217-245-3192.

Exhausted Paint: The Death of Van Gogh

Fri., April 14, 8pm. This 70-minute, one-act play is built around ideas of disorientation and struggle, often based on van Gogh's extensive collected letters. hcfta.org. Hoogland Center for the Arts Peggy Ryder Theatre, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

Newsies Jr.

April 14-15, 7:30pm, Sun., April 16, 2pm, April 21-22, 7:30pm and Sun., April 23, 2pm. Inspired by the rousing true story of newsboys in turn-of-the-century New York City, *Newsies Jr.* features a Tony Award-winning score. \$15. Hoogland Center for the Arts, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

The Linda Ronstadt Songbook

Fri., April 14, 8pm, Sat., April 15, 8pm and Sun., April 16, 2pm. A concert evening highlighting the songs of Linda Ronstadt and featuring Springfield singer Lori Ann McCabe and a rocking band. \$25 in advance, \$30 day of show. The Legacy Theatre, 101 E. Lawrence, 217-528-9760.

Madagascar the Musical

Mon., April 17, 7-9pm. Based on the DreamWorks' hit animated motion picture and filled with outlandish characters, adventures galore and an upbeat score, this musical is the perfect family outing for audiences of all ages. \$19-\$59. UIS Performing Arts Center, One University Plaza, 217-206-6160.

The Book of Mormon

April 18-20, 7:30pm. The nine-time Tony Award®-winning musical. Simply brilliant. uispac.com. UIS Performing Arts Center, One University Plaza, 217-206-6160.

Capital City Improv Spring Workshops

Thu., April 20, 7-9pm and Thu., May 18, 7-9pm. Want to try improvisational theater? Join Capital City Improv for spring workshops and learn to improv basics and play a variety of improv games. Anyone 12+ is welcome. Space is limited. Please RSVP via the Capital City Improv Facebook Messenger to reserve a spot. Free. Hoogland Center for the Arts, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

Ninth Street Women: Focusing on Lee Krasner & Joan Mitchell

Thu., April 20, 6-7:30pm. Sheri Ramsey will present an hour-long talk about Lee Krasner & Joan Mitchell, two of the women featured in the book, *Ninth Street Women* by Mary Gabriel. American Sign Language interpreters will be present during our spring presentations, thanks to a grant from the Springfield Area Arts Council. Free. Springfield Art Association, 700 N. Fourth St., 217-523-2631.

Orchid info and repotting workshop

Sat., April 22, 10am-2pm. Members of the Prairie State Orchid Society will teach basic orchid care and repotting techniques. Washington Park Botanical Garden, 1740 W. Fayette Ave., 217-546-4116.

Logan County Spring Pickers Market

April 22-23. Art, craft, vintage, antiques and specialty booths. Visit with some of the original actors from The Waltons TV show and check out the vintage camper rally. Logan County Fairgrounds, Lincoln, 1408 Short 11th St., 217-732-3311.

Underground Railroad Spring Bus Tour

Sun., April 23, 1-4pm. Join our tour guides outfitted in 19th century period attire on a tour of sites of the Underground Railroad. Learn the fascinating stories of the brave men and women of our history while riding on comfortable modern buses. The tour starts at Illinois College and ends at Woodlawn Farm. Adult: \$20 children under 10: \$10. Woodlawn Farm, Jacksonville, 1463 Geirke Lane, 217-479-4144.

Venice

Fri., April 28, 7pm. This band is described as quintessentially Californian, with a unique sound that mixes the rock of 70s Aerosmith with the storytelling of James Taylor, and harmonies reminiscent of The Eagles. \$40 or \$45. The Legacy Theatre, 101 E. Lawrence, 217-528-9760.



Fat Ass 5K and Street Party for Charity is May 12 in Downtown Springfield.

Our Town

Fri., April 28, 7pm, Sat., April 29, 2, 7pm and Sun., April 30, 2pm. Thornton Wilder's timeless drama of life in the mythical village of Grover's Corners, New Hampshire, is an American classic. \$18-\$26. Hoogland Center for the Arts LRS Theatre 1, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

Abe's Mini Triathlon

Sun., April 30, 12pm. 100-yard swim, 5-mile bike ride and 1-mile run. Petersburg Square, Petersburg, N. Seventh St. at W. Douglas Ave., 217-341-1309.

UIS Music - UIS/ISYO Peace Concert

Sun., April 30, 3pm. One of several free concerts offered by UIS. Don't miss it! Free. Sangamon Auditorium, UIS, 1 University Plaza, 217-206-6160.

MAY

Moonlight Market

First Wednesday of every month, 6-9pm and Third Wednesday of every month, 6-9pm. Through Sep. 20. A wonderful way to enjoy an evening downtown. Find the works of local artists and artisans, plus dine and sip while you shop. Jackson Street, between Sixth and Seventh streets.

Backyard composting

Thu., May 4, 6-7pm. Learn how to create compost by using the best and most effective methods and materials. Plus, learn about vermicomposting which is composting with worms to create even better compost. Free. Chatham Area Public Library, Chatham, 600 E. Spruce St., 217-483-2713.

Central Park Market

First Thursday of every month, 4-8pm. Through Oct. 5. The Central Park Market features 25-plus local makers and small businesses including food trucks, growers and live music. Downtown Jacksonville, Jacksonville, Central Park, 217-473-7287.

Epic Ending

Fri., May 5. With the Illinois Symphony Orchestra conducted by Joon Andrew Choi. UIS Performing Arts Center, One University

Plaza, 217-206-6160.

UIS Chorus Concert

Fri., May 5, 7pm. UIS musicians in concert. See website for details. Free. Sangamon Auditorium, UIS, 1 University Plaza, 217-206-6160.

Annual Illinois Vietnam Veterans Vigil

May 5-7. To honor all veterans and active duty military with a focus on Vietnam War veterans. Visit the Vietnam Veterans Annual Vigil Facebook page for more information. Veterans Memorial Complex, Oak Ridge Cemetery, 1500 Monument Ave.

Hammer-In

Sat., May 6, 9am-4pm. A bunch of blacksmiths sharing stories and making metal parts the old-fashioned way. The historic buildings will be open for small, socially distanced tours. Beverage service and popcorn available. Clayville Historic Site, Pleasant Plains, Route 125, 217-481-4430.

Maifest 2023

Sat., May 6, 12-4pm. Enjoy adult beverages from many micro-breweries, home brewers, wineries and distributors supplying popular local and national craft beers. Live music and food trucks will be available. Admission is \$25 which includes a commemorative tasting glass and 20 drink samples. \$20. Downtown Jacksonville, Jacksonville, Central Park, 217-473-5081.



Old Capitol Art Fair is May 20 and 21 at Old State Capitol Plaza in Downtown Springfield.

An Evening with Barbra Streisand, Tony Bennett & Lady Gaga

Sat., May 6, 7pm. Renowned tribute artists Steve Leeds and Sharon Owens recreate the music and on-stage magic of Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga, with a little Barbra Streisand, too. \$30-\$32. Hoogland Center for the Arts LRS Theatre 1, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-ARTS.

UIS Music - Solo Recital

Sat., May 6, 7pm. One of several free concerts put on by UIS. Free. Sangamon Auditorium, UIS, 1 University Plaza, 217-206-6160.

First Sunday Midwest Bazaar Spring Fever

Sun., May 7, 8am-4pm. \$5. You never know what you're going to find at this bazaar. Top-notch vendors, food, pet adoption mobile site. You can even visit some alpacas. Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, 801 Sangamon Ave., 217-725-8047.

Fat Ass 5K and Street Party for Charity

Fri., May 12, 5-10pm and Sat., May 13, 7:30am-3pm. This race has generated more than \$1.7 million for charity since 2008. Includes stops for beer, corn dogs, doughnuts and ice cream, because why not? Live music and entertainment throughout the race route, followed by a street party that includes drinks, barbecue and more live music. fatass5k.com. Downtown Springfield, Sixth and Adams streets. \$40-\$60. Downtown Springfield, Downtown, 217-525-1111.

Iron Chef Gala

Fri., May 12, 6pm. Sample the culinary delights of Springfield's finest chefs as they battle it out to win the People's Choice Award for their culinary creations. Monies raised benefit the students of the Ball-Chatham School District. Crowne Plaza Springfield, 3000 S. Dirksen Pkwy., 217-529-7777.

The Color Purple

Fri., May 12, 7:30pm, Sat., May 13, 7:30pm, Sun., May 14, 2pm, Fri., May 19, 7:30pm, Sat., May 20, 7:30pm and Sun., May 21, 2pm. This is a musical adaptation of Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel (and the popular 1985 Steven Spielberg film). *The Color Purple* is a story of hope, a testament to the healing power of love, and a celebration of life. \$20.00. Hoogland Center for the Arts LRS Theatre 1, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

Native Plant Sale

Sat., May 13, 9am-12pm. Native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, multiple milkweed species will be offered, along with many other great species that benefit native wildlife. Hosted by the Illinois Native Plant Society. Illinois State Fairgrounds Reisch Pavilion, 801 Sangamon Ave., 217-243-6055.

Mother's Day Remembrance Tribute

Sat., May 13, 10am. Honoring all mothers and the important roles they have played in our lives. The brief ceremony will be led by on-staff certified celebrant Judy Woerner. Roselawn Memorial Park, 1735 S. Camp Butler Road, 217-525-1661.

Foreigner: The Greatest Hits

Tue., May 16, 7:30pm. \$5-\$95. BOS Center, 1 Convention Center Plaza, 800-745-3000.

Illinois Product Farmers Market

Thursdays, 3:30-7pm. Through Sep. 28. Local meats, produce, dairy products, baked goods, honey and jams, craft beers, woodworking, jewelry and more. Plus live entertainment and a food truck. Illinois State Fairgrounds, The Shed, 801 Sangamon Ave., 217-524-9129.

Old Capitol Farmers Market

8am-12:30pm. Wednesdays and Saturdays from May 20 to Oct. 28. Local cheese, produce, meats, art and more. Downtown Springfield.

Springfield Area Highland Games and Celtic Festival

Sat., May 20, 9am-10pm. Want to prove you have what it takes to be a soldier in historic Scotland? You can try to toss a 20-foot-long caber, throw a 56-pound weight over a raised bar or show you play well with others during a tug-of-war. Event includes bagpipe bands, food, storytelling and Scottish goods. \$8-\$15. Sangamon County Fairgrounds, New Berlin, 316 W. Birch St., 217-488-2685.

Old Capitol Art Fair

Sat., May 20, 10am-5pm and Sun., May 21, 10am-4pm. Set against the backdrop of the Old State Capitol, the art fair is the jewel of the Midwest. This tradition of fine art has brought artists and shoppers from across the country flocking to downtown Springfield's two-day outdoor art gallery for 60 years. Free. Old State Capitol, 217-785-7960.

Springfield Pridefest 2023

Sat., May 20, 11-12am. Bringing it "Back to the Streets" on the gayest of days. A day of embracing diversity and celebrating the local LGBTQ community. Kid's area, live entertainment, great vendors and food and drinks. Organized by the Phoenix Center. phoenixcenterspringfield.org. Downtown Springfield, Fifth Street and Capitol Avenue. Free. Downtown, 217-528-5253.

Springfield Sliders vs. Illinois Valley Pistol Shrimp

Wed., May 31 and Mon., June 5. Robin Roberts Stadium, 1415 N. Grand Ave. E., 217-753-0700.

JUNE

Nate Bargatze: The Be Funny Tour

Thu., June 1, 7-9pm. Hailing from Old Hickory, Tennessee, stand-up comedian Nate Bargatze is selling out shows around the world. \$39.75-\$69.75. UIS Performing Arts Center, One University Plaza, 217-206-6160.

Levitt AMP Springfield Music Series

Thursdays, 6pm. Through Aug. 3. A variety of musical acts perform Thursdays from June 1 through Aug 3, 6-8:30pm. Free. downtownspringfield.org. Y Block, Main Stage, Fourth and Jackson streets, 217-544-1723.

Legacy of Giving

Fri., June 2, 5pm-12am and Sat., June 3, 12pm-12am. Over 60 music acts on five stages. Two days of music, arts, crafts, kids' entertainment, food trucks and sporting events. All proceeds benefit local charities. logmusicfest.org. Old State Capitol Plaza, 217-361-5678.

Show TBD

June 2-4, 8:30pm and June 7-10, 8:30pm. The Muni is holding off until May 1 to announce the first show of the season because of contractual obligations. However, it says the show is an all-time classic musical drama that has graced the stage multiple times. Reserved seating \$22. Lawn seating \$15. Children 5 and younger are free on the lawn. The Muni, 815 E. Lake Dr., 217-793-6864.

8K Trail Race

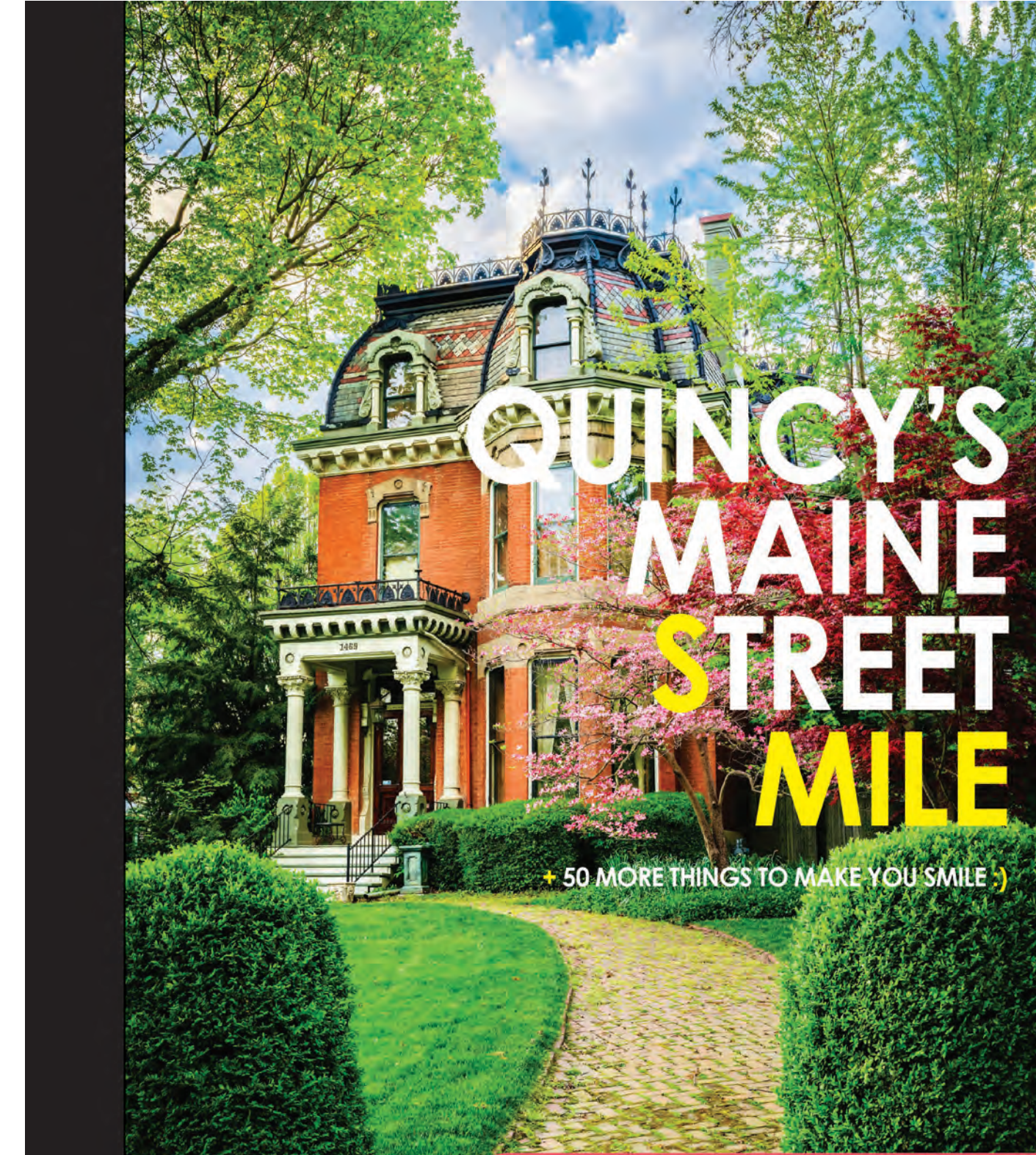
Sat., June 3, 7:30-9:30am. Race over the scenic trails and pathways of the historic garden, along the trails next to Lake Springfield and throughout the Ostermeier Prairie Center grounds. Kids can participate in a Fun Run for \$6. \$30 or \$40 after April 15. No on-site registration on race day. \$30-\$40, \$6 for children. Lincoln Memorial Garden, 2301 E. Lake Shore Dr., 217-529-1111.

Sangamon County Fair

June 14-18, 7-12am. This is a classic Midwestern county fair featuring livestock shows, a queen contest, midway, music and top-notch entertainment. \$5-\$10. Sangamon County Fairgrounds, New Berlin, 316 W. Birch St., 217-488-2685.

Juneteenth Celebration Weekend

June 15-19. A communitywide celebration with a variety of family-friendly events, music and special displays at area museums. Find more information on the Juneteenth Inc. Springfield, IL Facebook page. 217-572-0234.



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