

THE BUZZ MAGAZINE



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JULY 2023 | VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 164

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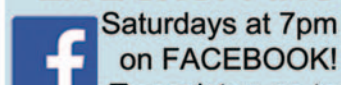
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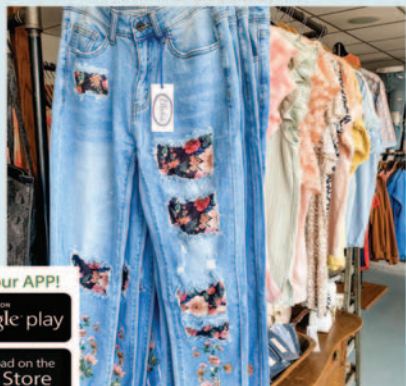
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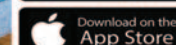
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ALTON: Alton Exchange Mall • Alton VFW Alton Visitor's Center • Altonized Credit Union Alton Little Theatre • Alton Truck Stop • Auto Butler • Best Western Premier Hotel & Conference Center • Big Lots • Castelli's Restaurant China Buffet • China King • Country Meadows Antiques • Duke Bakery • Farm & Home • Farmstone Roots • Halpin Music • Hayner Library Hit-n-Run • Frank's Restaurant • Lerie's Hidden Treasures • Lockhaven Golf Course • Mineral Springs Mall • My Just Desserts • National Tire & Battery • One Stop Shop • Poputopia • Post Commons • Riverbender.com • Schnucks Spencer T Olin Golf Club • Theodora Farms Tucker's Automotive • US Bank • What's Crackin' **EAST ALTON:** Hit-n-Run • Ken's Coins **AUBURN:** Bewitching Botanicals Carol Rae's Thrift Shop • Slaughterhouse Brewing Company **BELLEVILLE:** Belleville Flea Market • Blanquart's Rusty Gem Vintage Market Local Lucy's Gift Shop • Schnucks **BENLD:** #5 Mine Winery • Bend Libary • EJ's Bistro and Gaming • Nature's Bliss • TJ's ZX Convenience Stop • Randy's Market **BETHALTO:** Eagles Nest Restaurant • Hit-n-Run • Imo's Pizza • JR's Flooring • New China • Roma's Pizza • Schnucks The Mail Box Store **BREESE:** Applebee's Dairy King • Eddie's Rise 'n Dine • PJ's Diner **BRIGHTON:** Altonized Credit Union • Spring Garden Restaurant • Shell **BUNKER HILL:** Bunker Hill Library • Country Vibes Vendors & More • Jumpin' Jimmys **CARLINVILLE:** Boente Shell • The Body Depot • Carlinville City Hall • Carlinville Hospital • Carlinville Library Catholic Charities Thrift Shop • Collected Boutique • Dottie Jo Boutique • Grandpa Joe's West End • Hawthorn Coffehouse & Boutiques • It Is What It Is Antiques & Collectibles • Lighthouse Antique Mall • Lighthouse Too • Mother Road Antiques • My Sister's Closet • Plaza Cafe Potrillo's Mexican Grill • Rabbit Hole Thrifts Sievers Equipment • Starr's Primal Meats • Wall Street Financial • Wood Duck Bar and Grill **CARLYLE:** Clinton County Historical Society Old 50 Cafe • Ten Pin Antique Mall **CARROLLTON:** Bev's Baskets & Bows • The Pharmacy Plus **CENTRALIA:** Poor Boys Portable Buildings and More **CHATHAM:** AJ's Corner Apple Barn • Beads-n-More • Farmstead Primitive Co Sangamo Brewing Company **COFFEEN:** Caseys • Hair Designs **COLLINSVILLE:** ABRA Auto Body • Antiques & Accents by Vadna Collinsville Area Recreation District 10 • Collinsville Historical Museum • Collinsville Public Library • Edible Arrangements • New China Restaurant • Ravanellis Restaurant • Rich's Record Emporium • Rural King • Schnucks • Sizzor Shak Salon • Spirito's Italian Store • Suncatchers Swing City Music **COLUMBIA:** Birds Nest Designs • Schnucks **COTTAGE HILLS:** Circle K Convenience Mart • Cottage Hills Bar & Grill Polly's Restaurant **DECATUR:** Plume Body Shop • Rusty Rooster Antiques • The Drive-In Antiques • The Whistle Stop • Never Fogotten Thymes Antiques • Wabash Deopt Antique Center **DIVERNON:** Rusty Star Marketplace • Tammi's Treasures, Antiques & More **DONNELLSON:** JR's Mini Mart • Petroski Windows, Doors & Floorcovering • The Loose Caboose **DORSEY:** Aljets Automotive **DUPO:** Daugherty Public Library • The Shoppes@510 **EDWARDSVILLE:** All Natural Pet Center • Bella Milano • Chicken Coop Collectables • Circle K Convenience Mart Dierbergs • Edible Arrangements • Edwardsville City Hall • Edwardsville Flea Market • Glazy Squares • Goshen Butcher Shop • Green Earth

Grocer • Jerry's Tire Sales • Los Tres Amigos Madison County Archival Library • Massage Luxe • My Treasure House • Sacred Grounds Cafe • Schnucks • Sgt Peppers Cafe • The Store Wang Gang Asian Eats • Wild Birds Unlimited Nature Shop **EAST ST. LOUIS:** Schnucks **ELSAH:** Green Tree Inn **ELWIN:** Elwin Antique Mall **FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS:** Schnucks **FARMERSVILLE:** Bank & Trust • Boente Shell Farmersville Public Library • The Rooted Home **GILLESPIE:** Gillespie City Hall • Gillespie Public Library • Gotcha Latte E-Cafe • Miner's Restaurant • Sullivan's Drug Store **GIRARD:** Debbie's Underground Hair • Docs Just Off 66 Magic Beans Coffee House • Kruse Automotive Money Talks Thrift Shop • Pleasant Hill Village Boente Shell **GLEN CARBON:** Allison's Comfort Shoes & Boots • Eden Village Retirement Center • Exactime Watch & Clock • Glen Carbon Heritage Museum • Glen Carbon Public Library • Meridian Village • Office Max • Our Health Club Spa • The Sports Academy • US Bank • Weeping Willow **GODFREY:** CHIC N PIG • Dentistry with TLC • IMO's Pizza McDonald's • Mr. Donut • My Antique Store Professional Hearing Associates • Quantum Vision Centers • Round Table Restaurant • Shang Hai House • State Farm/Karen Wilson **GRAFTON:** Aerie's Winery • Drifters • Grafton Pub • Grafton Zip Line • Grafton Visitor's Center Grafton Winery • Reubel Hotel • Rustic Retreats Schnucks • Tara Pointe Inn **GRANITE CITY:** Apple Tree Restaurant • Gateway Medical Center Pharmacy • Granite City Township Hall • Great Wall Chinese Buffet • Hit-n-Run • Jerry's Cafeteria • Mama Mia's Restaurant • Novel Idea Bookstore and More • Old 6 Mile Museum • Schnucks Sissy's Space Boutique • Ravanelli's Restaurant Re.Viv.Al • Teri's Route 66 Diner **GREENFIELD:** Bev's Baskets and Bows • Broken B **GREENVILLE:** Almira Manor • Corner Cafe Greenville Public Library • Third Street Market **HARTFORD:** Hartford Public Library **HAMEL:** DK's Market • Poor Boys Portable Buildings and More • The Other Place on the Hill • Weezy's Bar & Grill **HIGHLAND:** 2 BELOVED BOUTIQUE • Broadway Bar & Grill • Highland Chamber of Commerce • Highland Emporium Huddle House • Urban House Restaurant • The Chocolate Affair • Highland Nutrition Center Highland's Tru-Buy • Lee's Fine Jewelry Michael's Restaurant • Peacock Bakery & Cafe The Refined Sellers • Vintage Vibe on Main **HILLSBORO:** Hillsboro Public Library • Hillsboro Rental • Sage on Sage • The Dressing Room Consignment & Resale Shop • TCCU-Taylorville Community Credit Union **HOLIDAY SHORES:** Behmes Market • Gilliganz Bar & Grill **IRVING:** Grandma's Kitchen **JERSEYVILLE:** 2nd Time Around Consignment Shop Beyond the Backyard Gate • Farm & Home • Jerseyville Community Hospital • JCH Hope Chest Resale Store • Jerseyville Library • State Street Antiques and Collectibles **KEYESPORT:** Dean's Convenience Stop • Keyesport Village Hall **KINCAID:** Kincaid Diner **LEBANON:** Cobblestone Eatery • Lebanon Visitors Center Moon Penguin's Emporium • Robin's Nest Antiques • Tiadaughton House **LITCHFIELD:** A&D Electrical Supply • The Briar Rose • Casey's (Union Ave) • Denny's Restaurant • EJ's Bistro and Gaming • The George Press • Hair 51 Salon Hearts United Thrift Store • Holiday Inn Express Jubelt's Bakery • Litchfield Indoor Flea Market M&M Sevice Company • Nelson Audiology Quality Inn • St Francis Hospital Gift Shop

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OUR MISSION: to promote pride in our region, its heritage and its people, by sharing their positive and uplifting stories, and to provide a cost effective means of advertising for the many locally owned, small businesses, to aid in their success.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Well June was a wild and crazy month and I am so happy to have this July issue of The Buzz ready for you finally. Gardening has taken up a lot more of my time than in past years with battling Japanese beetles and the drought. All the plants look good though and I am thrilled that the milorganite seems to be working. I have green beans! The deer have not destroyed them as they did last year. I can't wait until I have some garden fresh green beans and tomatoes!

I hope you read all the stories each month but pay special attention in this issue to the stories about local small businesses **LUFKIN ENVIRONMENTAL** and **SKITOPEL**.

Skitopel is an insect repellent made in Bunker Hill and having used it since my interview with them, I have to tell you - nothing has ever worked better for me. When I use name brand commercial repellents I have to reapply them literally every 15 mi-

nutes or so and I still get bit by everything from mosquitos to flies and more. They are full of chemicals, they stink, they are sticky and dry out my skin. Skitopel works for a minimum of 2 hours, and usually twice that long, for me. With all natural ingredients and an oil based carrier, I feel better about using it on my body, and it even helps soften my skin. Since it's made from all natural products, I can safely use it on my dogs too. The deer flies have been vicious for them - and me - this year.

I won't go into detail about Lufkin Environmental - it's in the story. But I cannot emphasize how totally pleased we are with the work they did for us, and their commitment to customer service and satisfaction. I don't usually give out recommendations for contractors, but I have complete confidence in them!

Cute story about the recipe in *Follow My Fitness* this month. When I told Tony I was making Zucchini Pizza Casserole for lunch, he wrinkled his nose and said, "Yuk!"



During a recent visit, grandson Baby J got to get in the pool for his first time!



So I didn't tell him when it was done, just dished up some for myself. I guess he liked the way it smelled and looked though because when I returned to the kitchen to put my dishes in the sink, a huge helping was missing and he said, "That's good stuff!" If you like pizza, make sure you give Zucchini Pizza Casserole a try!

used to, but we do have the youngest grandchild, pictured above. J is quite the character and he ADORES his grandpa. The picture on the left is his first time in the pool. Excuse the pink baby float... it's the only color we had! It floats the same as a boy color. J loves the water too, so I am loving my little swim buddy!

Try to stay cool. Keep an eye on pets and senior neighbors. And pray for rain.

~ TLC

Now that Kaiden and Bayleigh are older they don't spend as much time with us as they

What's Your Favorite Sound of Summer?

The coo of a Mourning Dove?
The laughter of children playing?
Distant thunder on a hot summer's night?
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Advertisers in this special section will include any retail business including resale and consignment stores, thrift shops, boutiques, furniture stores, antique malls and more - plus fall markets. Participating businesses will be featured on a map on the center spread so consumers can effectively plan their shopping adventures! They will save this map and use it over and over again for their shopping excursions - until the 2024 issue comes out.

RESERVE YOUR SPACE TODAY BEFORE WE SELL OUT!

FULL CENTER SPREAD MAP

Shop til you Drop
THE BUZZ MAGAZINE'S 7TH ANNUAL AUGUST 2022 EDITION Fabulous FINDS Shopping Guide
A COMPREHENSIVE SHOPPING GUIDE
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Shop til you Drop
THE BUZZ MAGAZINE'S 8TH ANNUAL AUGUST 2022 EDITION Fabulous FINDS Shopping Guide

RED PINS indicate participating businesses

Participating Businesses:

1. House + Garden • 1133 Governor • Springfield
2. Springfield Vintage • 2115 S. 5th Street • Springfield
3. Unique Enchantments • 1313 Stevenson Drive • Springfield
4. Farmstead Primitive Company • 460 N. Main • Chatham
5. Mulberry's Antiques • 106 E. Mulberry St • Chatham
6. Revolving Botanicals • 415 W. Main • Auburn
7. Rusty Star Marketplace • 14335 Frazee Rd / I-55 to Exit 82 • Divernon
8. Tamm's Treasures • 490 West State Route 104 / I-55 to Exit 82 • Divernon
9. Lighthouse Antiques • 125 E. Jackson / on the Square • Virdon
10. The Rooted Home • 116 Elevator Street • Farmersville
11. It's What It Is • 150 Carlville Plaza • Carlville
12. My Sister's Closet • 345 S. Side Square • Carlville
13. Collected Boutique • 122 East Side Square • Carlville
14. Bev's Baskets & Bows • 608B Main Street • Carrollton
15. JCH Foundation Antique Shop • 201 S. Jefferson • Jerseyville
16. 2nd Time Around • 905 S. State St. • Jerseyville
17. The Alton Exchange • 2390 E. Homer Adams Parkway • Alton
18. Country Meadows Antiques II • 401 E. Broadway • Alton
19. My Antique Store • 1007 West Dief • Alton
20. Rustic Roads • 200 W. Ferguson Ave • Godfrey
21. Chicken Coop Collectables • 114 First Ave • Edwardsville
22. Edwardsville Flea Market • 1506 Troy Road • Edwardsville
23. The Shoppes of 510 • 510 N. Main St • Dupu
24. Bird's Nest Designs • 107 W. Gundlach • St. Columbia
25. Let's Fine Jewelry • 919 Main Street • 26 E. Belleville
26. Vintage Vibes on Main • 919 Main Street • Highland
27. The Refined Sellers • 1007 Washington St • Highland
28. The Chocolate Main • 1011 Broadway • Highland
29. Warehouse 300 • 300 S. King Oak Street • Trenton
30. Pocahontas Antiques • 311 W. Johnson St • Pocahontas
31. The Chipping Frog • 7479 Route 41 / Exit 33 on I-55 • Worden
32. The Pink Elephant • 900 Veterans Memorial Drive • Livingston
33. Your Enchanted Crystal • 429 W. Frontage Road • Staunton
34. Ichi to be Stitches • 18130 Ronken Road • Staunton
35. Mayfield's & Mullins • 120 S. Hillbard • Staunton
36. Mercantile on Main • 101 W. Main • Staunton
37. Vintage Station • 900 N. Main • Staunton
38. LaBella Flori Garden Center & Greenhouse • 18581 White City Road • Staunton
39. Country Vibes • 513 N. Washington • Bunker Hill
40. The Briar Rose • 216 N. State St • Litchfield
41. Hearts United • 110 N. Jackson • Litchfield
42. Creekside Kettleworks • 509 S. O'Bannon • Raymond
43. The Dressing Room • 221 S. Main • Hillsboro
44. Reale State • 301 S. Main • Hillsboro
45. Sage on Sage • 509 S. Main • Hillsboro
46. Nokomis Gift & Garden • 123 Morgan Street • Nokomis
47. Taylor Trading • 316 E. State Street • Nokomis
48. Beyond Burlap • 344 US Hwy 51 • Pana
49. Dear Yesteryear • 316 E. State Street • Taylorville
50. Ellabee's • 503 W. Springfield Rd • Taylorville
51. Little Luxuries • 115 S. Washington • Taylorville
52. StoveHouse on Market • 204 W. Market • Taylorville
53. Wonder & Rhyme • 204 W. Market • Taylorville
54. Unique Enchantments • 110 S. Main • Taylorville
55. The Wooden Flower • 1111 Spresser • Taylorville
56. Sunny Knoll Organics • 2215 W. Spresser • Taylorville

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HAPPY DAYS APPEAR TO BE HERE AGAIN

2023 started off much better than prior two years

Looking at the year-to-date returns of the major US Stock Market indexes from January 1st of 2023 through June 16th of 2023 gives investors a lot of hope. The Standard and Poor's 500 stock index is up 15.8% and the NASDAQ is up 31.4%. The technology sector is back to booming returns primarily due to supply chain issues being over with.

The top three out of 11 equity sectors of the S&P 500 reflect excellent performance for technology as well as consumer spending. The leading sector in the above mentioned time period is information technology with a year-to-date return of 41.6% and communication services are up 36.8%. The third leading sector is of particular interest as it defies much of what we've been reading and hearing about regarding a recession. Consumer discretionary is the third leading sector and this represents consumer spending on items that many would consider luxury. It is up a total of 29.9% since January 1st as it reflects increased spending by consumers particularly for travel as well as large purchases such as automobiles. In fact, Porsche reported in the first quarter of this year that its total sales had increased by 38.6% compared with the same quarter last year.

The bottom three sectors of the S&P 500 are energy with a negative return of -6.6%, utilities with a year-to-date negative return of -3.8% and finally healthcare with a negative return of -2.3%.

The electric car industry certainly is experiencing rapid growth in the United States and should continue to do so. In fact the tax credits for purchasing certain electric vehicles make it even more attractive as several vehicles are eligible for a \$7,500 tax credit and some vehicles qualify for a reduced tax credit of \$3,750. There are

income limitations imposed by the IRS that do not allow high-income taxpayers to receive these tax credits. If you're in doubt, you may do a search of which vehicles are eligible for which tax credits and compare your taxable income to the limitations imposed in order to be eligible for these tax credits.

Tesla is certainly in the news as they are the industry leader in building charging stations throughout the United States. Up until recently, only Tesla automobiles could plug into the Tesla charging stations. This is changing quickly as the White House has negotiated with Tesla to open up 3,500 new and existing superchargers along interstate highways to non-Tesla automobiles. Recently Ford and General Motors have reached agreements with Tesla to allow their electric vehicles to utilize Tesla charging stations. In fact both automakers will refit their electric vehicles in future model years to have a plug-in designed to match Tesla's outlets. Currently they will need to outfit their existing electric vehicles with an adapter that will allow them to utilize Tesla's charging stations. It was recently announced that Rivian will be the latest automaker to collaborate with Tesla so that their vehicles can utilize Tesla's supercharging network. Tesla has reached out to Toyota to see if they are also interested in such an agreement but as of June 20, nothing has been finalized.

We believe that alternative energy and electric cars and trucks represent a tremendous opportunity for investors. If you would like to discuss how these developments might fit into your investment portfolio or if you're a new investor and would like to begin investing, reach out to us at 1-800-303-9255 and speak with Carl Zeidler, CFP or John Zeidler CFP, CPA. 📞

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BY TARA L. CALE



April Robbins and her husband Joe love the outdoors and spend a lot of time outside on their 17 acres outside of Bunker Hill. They were never bothered much by biting insects like mosquitos, deer flies, etc. - unless they went somewhere else, and then it seemed they would get eaten alive. They finally figured out why this was. April has been gardening her entire life, learning from her late grandmother (Dorothy Wood) who was well known in the area for her gardening skills. The Robbins' home is surrounded with all types of plants - flowers and herbs. April discovered they had unknowingly created a natural insect shield around their home with plants that are natural repellents.

Wanting everyone to be able to enjoy the outdoors as much as her family did, April decided to try to use these herbs to make insect repellent candles. With some research, trial and error and help from family and friends for testing, she created an all natural candle that was highly effective as an insect repellent. In 2019 she decided to start

making the candles to sell.

"We started out making the candles in our kitchen. Our dining room table was covered with candles," she said.

Of course she needed a name for her company and in working with a trademark lawyer who suggested making the company name as original as possible, while telling what the product does, and without incorporating the overused term "skeeter," April combined the words mosquito and repellent to make Skitopel®. Skito (mosquito) pel (repellent).

Starting a new small business is tough. It's imperative you get the word out and make the product available to consumers.

April began attending local markets and found some local stores who support small business that allowed her to put her products on the shelves. Candle sales increased, and then her children encouraged her to make a spray repellent.

"This was a bit more challenging, and required much more research," April added. "We personally have very sensitive skin so

I wanted to make sure this spray would be safe for everyone."

Skitopel® expanded... from the kitchen to the basement.

April played around with different formulas for the spray repellent until she discovered one that seemed to be the most effective. But she wanted to be sure, and sent the product to a lab in Texas to be tested.

"We were elated when the results came back that our repellent spray was certified to be 100% effective for up to two hours," she said.

Does two hours not sound like a lot of time to you? It's actually a very long time for a repellent to work. Personally, if I am outside doing lawn work, gardening, etc, I am reapplying insect repellent frequently - at least every 30 minutes, and sometimes as often as every 15 minutes. This is insect repellent that includes DEET, which is supposed to be effective for up to seven hours. Biting insects love me for some reason and I am highly reactive to most insect bites

and stings, so a good, effective repellent is a lifesaver for me. What truly amazes me about Skitopel® is that it works on most all biting insects. For years I have been buying separate products to combat Buffalo Gnats, as most repellents are not effective against them. No more though. Skitopel® will repel mosquitos, horse flies, deer flies, buffalo gnats... even ticks and chiggers!

All Skitopel® candles and insect repellents are 100% all natural, made with herbs grown right on the Robbins' property. April grows the herbs, harvests them, dries them and grinds them into a fine powder, brews them like a tea then adds them to a "carrier" for her candles and sprays. No chemicals are added to any product so they are completely safe - even for pets (testing has not been done for pet safety but just think about it... it's natural herbs and oils). There is also no harsh smell. Whether you're headed to a game, a stroll in the park or woods, a family barbecue, a day at the lake or camping trip, Skitopel® has you covered so you can enjoy



Top Left: April Robbins hand crushes herbs used in her insect repellent candles and sprays. Later she will use a more refined method to grind the herbs into dust. Top Right: April poses with her spray repellents, a young plant, and boxes of product ready for delivery to area retailers that carry Skitopel®. Bottom: Skitopel® candles and sprays are 100% natural, locally produced and designed to allow you to enjoy the outdoors more, without worrying about harmful chemicals.

the outdoors pest free! Additionally, the candles can be used indoors for their calming and relaxing properties.

April is very proud of the fact that Skitopel® became certified as a female-owned business, just this year, by the National Women Business Owner association (NWBOC), and that production has moved out of her home into a pole barn building erected specifically for the business. She has retired from her previous employment, and now focuses solely on Skitopel® full time.

I would like to reiterated that Skitopel® products have been thoroughly researched, tested and certified. April worked with a variety of advisors, lawyers and even the EPA to make sure that everything is legal, registered and approved. Skitopel® products are available at various locations throughout Illinois and Missouri, including but not limited to: most Ace Hardware stores, a large number of County Market and Country Mart locations, several Rural Kings, a variety of

lawn and garden centers (LaBella Fiori in Staunton, Maryville Feed & Home Supply, Plant Land Garden Center in Breese, etc) and many other locations for your convenience. A complete list of locations that carry Skitopel® can be found on their website, and you can also order online.

Skitopel® is available in 20 ounce candles in lavender, lemon balm and mint scents. Sprays can be purchased 4 oz or 8 oz bottles (lemon and mint scents only) and April says there is no plan to expand to include other products, or scents.

“This simple line up of products is really all you need for safe, effective, 100% natural insect repellent,” she said. “My hopes are that someday though, Skitopel® will be a household name.”

To order online, or for more information about Skitopel® visit www.skitopel.org. You can also find Skitopel on Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok and You Tube. 🐝



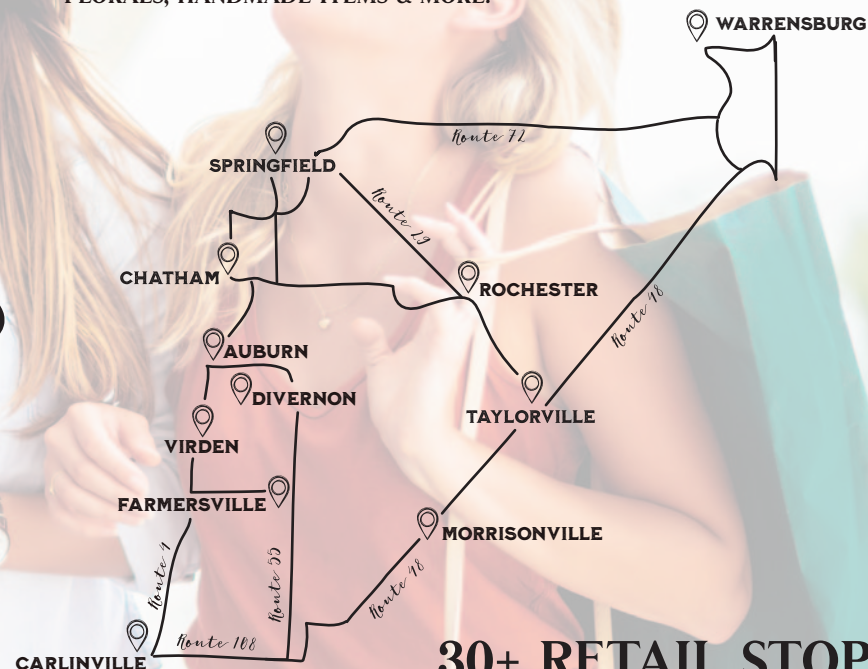
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BY TARA L. CALE

Tyler (Ty) Lufkin and his crew, Lufkin Environmental, have made quite a name for themselves in the southern states of the country. We're talking about Louisiana, Florida, the Carolina's and other states that are too often ravaged by severe storms and hurricanes. For the past five years Lufkin has been the main force behind clean up for such storms, providing the best equipment, and best workers, for the job.

The first storm they worked was in Colfax, Louisiana and their work made such an impact, that Ty was asked to manage all 23 crews working the clean up effort. That kind of recommendation gets you noticed. Mobile, Alabama was so impressed that after the storm clean up, Lufkin Environmental was hired to take over tree work throughout the entire county. The same thing happened in Sarasota, Florida.

Why am I telling you this? Because Lufkin Environmental is based in Springfield, and they have changed their perspective, and now want to have the same impact here, focusing on proudly serving their home base of central Illinois. Of course, we don't have to worry about hurricanes here in Illinois, but there are plenty of tornadoes and severe storms here at home. Lufkin Environmental

can handle storm clean up efficiently and effectively, yet they are so much more than storm clean up.

Let me tell you first how I discovered Lufkin Environmental, and then I will give you the back story...

We've been needing some tree trimming done at our house for quite some time. We've had our trees trimmed a few times in the past, but weren't too happy with the work, and it seemed a bit high priced. For the past 6-9 months we have been trying to get someone to come and give us a quote on doing the job correctly. Out of about six local companies we contacted, one bothered to show up for a quote, and the price was extravagant... in my opinion. Granted, tree trimming is hard, hot work and we had quite a few very large trees we wanted pruned, and a few we wanted removed completely, plus several stumps that needed removed from past trimmers. So even though I thought the quote was high, that company WAS the only one that showed up to even give us a quote, so I agreed to the price. He told me they were very busy, would get to us in 30-60 days, took my business card and promised to follow up with me. That was over six months ago. I have never heard from him since.

In the meantime, our trees continued to grow. Many were choking out sun to the yard preventing grass from growing, they were filled with dangling limbs from past storm damage, and unsightly and uneven growth.

Ads for Lufkin Environmental ironically started popping up on my Facebook feed. I ignored them for awhile, because frankly, it looked like a very large company (very nice, professional ads), didn't say anything about being local, and I assumed the price would be outrageous. But, after more disappointments from those that said they would come to look/quote... and didn't...I finally clicked on the ad for a free quote. A free quote can't hurt anything, right?

A few days later I got a response from Ty himself. The first question I asked was "Where is your company located?" When he said Springfield, I inquired further. He was at our house within 24 hours to take a look, had a written quote by the end of the day, with a price half of what the other company had quoted. I agreed to his proposal and his crew was on site just five days later!

Don't think that I hired Lufkin because the price was cheap (although compared to what we have paid sub-par trimmers in the past, and what the most recent quote we

received for this job was, it WAS cheap), although that was surely a bonus. The main reason I hired Lufkin was that by the time Ty and I got done walking our property, with me explaining what I wanted done, and listening to his comments and recommendations, I probably would have paid him double the highest quote we had received... I was that impressed!

Ty first asked what I had in mind for our trees. He explained that I wanted to be too aggressive with some, that removing more than 30% would be detrimental to the life of the tree. Ty showed me how to determine if a tree was healthy, dying, and if one could be saved although it had some problems. He advised me which ones I should remove due to location and health of the tree, which ones I could trim and how much, and which just needed a little shaping to look good. No one had ever provided this type of information to me before. They just asked what I wanted cut, and chopped it off. Or not. Because half of the time they didn't do what I asked.

That's just the start of the impressive traits of this local company. I will get to more later. But let me backtrack just a bit, and tell you why Lufkin Environmental, who had



This little guy is the reason Ty Lufkin decided to focus his business on home turf. The remaining photos are taken from various job sites, both local and down south during major storm clean up.



a really good thing going with storm clean up down south, is concentrating now on home turf.

Ty Lufkin had no vision of running the type of company that he now so proudly calls his own. He was a banker, flipping houses on the side. His house flipping business often required the services of a tree trimming company. Ty found one he liked, that did a good job at a fair price, and the two men became friends. The owner of the tree company came to Ty one day and asked him to partner with him in the tree industry, explaining that there was good money to be made in the storm clean up arena. But he needed a partner with a little financial backing to get it started. Ty agreed with the vision and agreed to come on board. And the storm clean up gig was indeed good. Even so, for reasons unknown, Ty's partner bailed on him, leaving him with tens of thousands of dollars of equipment to be paid for.

"I didn't know trees, at all," Ty explained. "My forte was managing people, managing the crew, and that's a big part of this business. So when my partner left me high and dry, I wasn't sure what I was going to do, but I soldiered through it."

Ty already had high end equipment, now he needed workers that knew how to use it, with a good work ethic, courteous and professional demeanor, that looked at this as a career, not just a paycheck. Ty was able to hold onto some of the best crew members, and hired more, the best of the best. He paid them above average, and insisted on high standards, working side-by-side with them, learning from their expertise as the company progressed. He also started researching, studying and educating himself, both formally and on his own, to learn all he could about trees and the industry, in an effort to keep this

wooden ship from sinking. Lufkin Environmental thrived!

So why did they stop the huge storm clean up jobs in the south? It's something simple, that everyone can understand. Family.

Ty now has a 6-month old son, Tyson. Many of his crew members have young families or are just starting families. They don't want to be on the road, far from home, far from their families for days, weeks and months at a time. And Ty discovered that this area is very lacking in quality companies that offer the services provided by Lufkin Environmental - a niche they can fill very efficiently.

"In the 'tree world' there are a lot of illegal operators. They hire anyone willing to work for a set pay for a day that don't really know what they are doing, they have inadequate equipment, and they are not insured. These type of operations give the tree trimming industry a bad name. I wanted to change that, and give the customer more."

"Customer service in the tree industry has always been lacking," Ty said. "But not with Lufkin. Our crew has credentials, they are paid well, drug tested, courteous and professional with great attitudes. They love what they do and they are happy to be providing our services for you."

Lufkin Environmental has certified arborists, and crew members that are line (electrical) and skid steer certified as well. All crew members, including Ty, take continuing educational classes annually to stay up to date, and maintain the professional certifications that put them "a cut above" many other tree trimmers.

Still thinking this sounds like an "expensive" company? I already told you that their price was almost half any other quote I had

received, but more importantly, Lufkin showed up, and followed through.

Ty explained it further by saying, "Most homeowners will only see us bring a bucket truck, chip truck and skid steer. We make your job site the most cost effective it can be for what you need done. But, we do have specialized equipment if it's needed."

"We won't be the cheapest, and we won't be the most expensive quote you get," he continued. "We usually come in the lower to middle range. But you won't find a more qualified crew, a more professional crew, or a bigger bang for your buck."

In addition to being 100% recommended by Home Advisor, check out some of the impressive local customer reviews they have received:

"Top notch folks to work with. Have dealt with them several times on major projects and not one issue with any aspect of work with them."

"Absolutely recommend this company! Ty is very quick and responsive which is always appreciated. As a contractor myself, having a company doing the quality work that I set my OWN standards to, is top notch. Will definitely continue to work with Lufkin on all projects within this company's wheelhouse!"

"We ourselves are a fully insured and well-equipped land clearing and excavating company. We hired Lufkin Environmental to take care of the overhead trees that we couldn't quite handle. Ty & Lufkin employees are sure to impress. I would not hesitate to recommend them to anyone!"

"I had three huge maple trees dangerously close to my home. From the first call to Tyler,

I was confident they were top notch. After accepting the proposal, his crew was on time, and very professional. Chad and Scott made me feel very comfortable when they showed up, and I watched them work, as most homeowners would. This crew amazed me with their accuracy of downing these large maples so close to our home! The job was completed as scheduled and so professional that I will recommend them to all of my contacts. Lufkin went out of their way to ensure that we were happy with every detail, which puts them the highest on a slim list of professional companies that doesn't just look at the bottom line, but what their customer really wants, and needs. Thank you Tyler, and your crew, for being customer relative!"

If you are in need of tree pruning or trimming, tree removal, bracing/cabling, stump grinding, land clearing or storm clean up, there is only one logical company to call - Lufkin Environmental. Estimates are provided within 24 hours after response to your call/message, and your job will start within one week from acceptance of the quote (Mother Nature willing!). That is because Lufkin has multiple crews, many doing commercial line work (which is not time sensitive), so crew members can be pulled from the lines for residential jobs if needed.

A quick tip from Ty: "Never accept a quote with a price range. Get a solid quote, in writing, before anyone starts your job. True professionals in this industry can provide an accurate quote, and honor that quote."

Lufkin Environmental's website is undergoing some updates right now, so in the meantime, if are interested in more information, find them on Facebook, or call/text for a free estimate at 217-750-2195. I assure you that you will not be disappointed! 🐾



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The **ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM** is the official library and museum of the 16th U.S. president. Experience pivotal moments in Lincoln’s life and enjoy immersive displays and amazing shows that explore the human costs of slavery and war. View Lincoln and his family through artifacts not found anywhere else in the world! Numerous exhibits explore Lincoln’s life from his boyhood in a Kentucky cabin to his 1860 campaign for President of the United States.

The **LINCOLN TOMB STATE HISTORIC SITE**, designed by famed sculptor, Larkin Mead, is nestled in Oak Ridge Cemetery. Within the walls of this stunning granite monument is the final resting place of Abraham Lincoln, his wife, Mary and three of their four sons. (Lincoln’s oldest son, Robert, is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.) At the entrance to the tomb itself, there is a bronze bust of Mr. Lincoln where visitors from around the world have stopped to rub

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the nose of the statue for good luck.

Make a stop at the **LINCOLN MEMORIAL GARDEN** for a truly zen experience. A woodland and prairie garden with over five miles of trails lead you on a journey through the Illinois landscape Lincoln would have known. Depending on the season you visit, you could discover springtime dogwoods in full bloom, colorful prairie wildflowers of summer, burnished autumn leaves, or snow-covered maple trees bursting with sap. Located on the shores of Lake Springfield and designed by landscape architect, Jens Jensen. Be sure to visit the **GARDEN'S NATURE CENTER** and Split Rail Gift Shop.

Enjoy 10-days of thrills and excitement at the family-friendly **IL STATE FAIR!** World renowned concert artists, food, carnival rides, livestock shows, agricultural exhibits, free entertainment, harness racing, auto racing and food GALORE! All of this and so much more at this year’s Illinois State Fair, August 10-20 in Springfield!

Historic Route 66 runs through Springfield and provides many unique stops, including

Route 66 Motorheads Bar, Grill, Museum & Motordome Entertainment Complex; a classic car restaurant with a themed menu, serving great food and delicious drinks among the backdrop of the Route 66 & Motor Museum. While there, snap a pic with the World’s Largest Outdoor Route 66 Shield!

Make plans to be at the **23RD ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ROUTE 66 MOTHER ROAD FESTIVAL**, September 22-24 in historic downtown Springfield. The cars, music, fun and nostalgia that Route 66 has brought to generations will roar into town! Experience the thrills of the burnout competition, enter a car or just spectate and enjoy! Food, music displays and tons of family fun await!

While you’re here, visit the Route 66 Gate 2 Experience at the IL State Fairgrounds. Walk the entire Illinois Route 66 corridor in microform from Chicago to the Chain of Rocks Bridge in one spot, marvel at the Neon Sign Park, feel the magnitude of a 25’ tall, fiberglass Route 66 muffler man, and learn more about the Green Book and Route History Metaverse Experience.

The Cozy Dog Drive In is a traditional Route 66 diner that became a part of the history of The Mother Road, and the history of Springfield, when, in 1946, inventor Ed Waldmire introduced the “Cozy Dog” - the famous “hot dog on a stick.” The Waldmire family still makes this delicacy today. Inside the diner, located on Old Route 66 since 1949, you’ll find an amusing selection of Route 66 memorabilia, souvenirs, and delightful taste treats.

Maldaner’s Restaurant is a creative American establishment with a focus on farm to table food. Established in 1884, Maldaner’s is the oldest continually operated restaurant in Springfield on Route 66.

Plan to relax and enjoy one of more than a dozen wineries and breweries in the Springfield area. These locally owned businesses offer the best in craft beer, wines and delicious noshes in beautiful settings, many with outdoor garden areas, live music and special events.

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BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

BY KRIS HART

I love talking shop with folks! And of course, by “shop” I actually mean “gardening.” It’s funny and I’m not sure why, but I, along with everyone I talk to, have been really late getting the majority of our garden goodies in. My melons and squash are just now getting going. A lot of my plants are taking off, but a lot of them are just getting their true leaves. Was it the weather? Was it life? I’m not sure, but many of us are in the same boat. If you’re on or ahead of schedule, I genuinely congratulate you! If you’re like me and you’re working on a delayed schedule, let me encourage you to keep going and to not give up! I’m always amazed in the blaze of summer how many plants tend to catch up.

I frequently hear the question “Is it too late to put this in?” No matter what it is, I NEVER say yes. I may say wait a few months and give it a go in the fall, but I never

say “yes.” Most often, I will encourage you to plant it anyway no matter what it is. It has been my experience that sometimes you may be too late to get a great harvest from this plant or that, but most often, you still get something from it. What’s more, if you never plant, you for sure will never get a harvest. It’s best to at least try!

In the past, I never would have planted kale or cabbage in my summer garden. Last year though, I saw that a neighbor had a kale plant that did amazing. Every time I drove by, I rubber-necked her garden so hard and in such amazement that in the blaze of summer, her kale plant was still doing great. The fact that it never bolted absolutely floored me. So this year I’m growing kale and cabbage just to see. So far, the kale is doing great, and the cabbage looks like I may actually get groceries from them too. I’m feeling pretty optimistic.



A quick photo in my garden this month.

The great thing about gardening is that even if you feel like you may have failed in an area, nothing is ever a complete loss. Any plants you pull from the garden without it having given you any food or flowers, can still give you several things.

1. It gave you experience. This is invaluable. To harvest knowledge is never a loss.
2. As described in last month's issue, it can also be used as fertilizer.
3. If you have any livestock, you can always feed it to those animals. This can offset your feed bill and I love that my chickens

turn my spent plants and weeds into compost and eggs.

No matter how “late” you feel like you are, it’s never too late to put a garden in. You may even be surprised at how well your plants end up doing. You certainly will gain lots of experience and wisdom for next year’s garden.

I hope this information is helpful and you get out there and get your hands dirty! Please feel free to share your experience and tips on my Instagram or Facebook page @Bottom-ViewFarmIL. 🐛

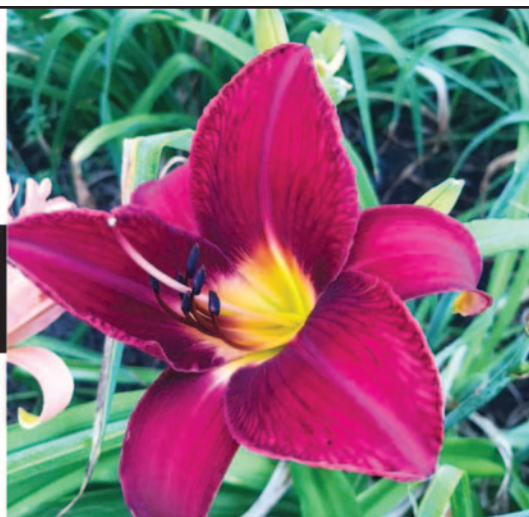
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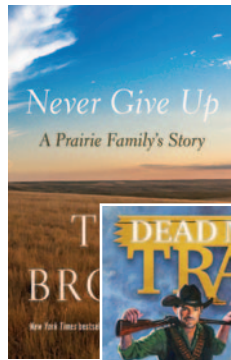
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SPUR AWARD WINNING WESTERN WRITERS AND MORE

BY GEORGE RISHEL



The Spur Awards, the annual awards by the Western Writers Association, honor the best in books related to the American West.

Nate Morgan won the 2023 Spur Award for best paperback western for *Dead Man's Trail*. Carson Stone hopes for a peaceful life on his Idaho ranch. But when he defends a family ambushed by murdering marauders, he makes a terrifying discovery: a death list full of upstanding citizen names and dollar amounts. Then the local sheriff is gunned down in broad daylight, leading Carson to take on a job he never wanted - lawman. Morgan's latest paperback western is *A Short Rope for a Tall Man* with Carson Stone back in the hunt for a killer.

The best western traditional novel award went to Ann Parker for *The Secret in the Wall*, set in the late 1800s in Leadville, Colorado. Inez Stannert owns a saloon in Leadville and is a card shark. Then she takes in the orphaned daughter after a local prostitute is murdered. They move to San Francisco. When a skeleton tumbles from the wall of her latest business investment, the police seem only interested in the bag of Civil War-era gold coins that fell out with it. She enlists the help of a local private investigator to find out who wanted to keep a murder buried.

The story of Billy the Kid is more myth and legend than truth. But Melody Groves seeks to get at the real Henry McCarty in *Before Billy the Kid*, winner of the best western biography. The author explores the early life of the infamous outlaw born Henry McCarty but also known as Henry Antrim, Kid Antrim, and William H. Bonney - the teenage boy who loved to sing and dance. The young man was polite, educated, and popular but had the bad luck to be orphaned at 15 and left with no one to guide him through life.

Mark Lee Gardner's *The Earth is All that Lasts: Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and the Last Stand of the Great Sioux Nation*, was a finalist for the best western historical non-fiction. Although the two Lakota chiefs defeated Custer and are among the most famous American Indians to ever live, their

full stories have not been told until this book. Both grew up on the high plains of the American West when vast herds of buffalo roamed, but neither knew a time without white intruders - from fur traders to Bluecoats to settlers. This book is a grand saga, both triumphant and tragic, of two fascinating and heroic leaders struggling to maintain their people's freedom against impossible odds.

But whites weren't the only "intruders" on the high plains. Historians Richard Edwards and Jacob K. Friefeld wrote *The First Migrants: How Black Homesteaders' Quest for Land and Freedom Heralded America's Great Migration* (releases August 1st), which recounts the Black migration from the South to the Great Plains from 1877 to 1920. They exercised their rights under the Homestead Act to gain title to 650,000 acres, settling in all of the Great Plains states - some in Black communities, some alone. All sought a place where they could rise by their own talents and toil, unencumbered by Black codes, repression, and violence.

A more modern and more personal story comes from Tom Brokaw in *Never Give Up: A Prairie Family's Story*, where he shows the values and lessons he absorbed from his ancestors, parents, and others who settled in South Dakota and worked hard to build lives on the prairie. The story centers on Tom's father, Red, who began working in the family hotel - the Brokaw House - in the second

grade. Later he took his family from town to town as he worked construction jobs including building the Ft. Randall and Gavin's Point dams. His recorded memories of the hard times of his early life inspired this book.

Many other interesting books release in July. Andrew Leland tells his personal narrative of his transition from sightedness to blindness and his quest to learn about blindness as a rich culture of its own in *The Country of the Blind: A Memoir at the End of Sight*. Colson Whitehead continues his Harlem saga, begun in *Harlem Shuffle*, in *Crook Manifesto*, a powerful and hugely-entertaining novel that summons 1970s New York in all its seedy glory. Whitehead is a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner. Alan Paul takes a look back 50 years in *Brothers and Sisters: The Allman Brothers Band and the Inside Story of the Album That Defined the '70s*. That album not only was the band's bestselling one, but was influential musically and culturally.

In *Lexington: The Extraordinary Life and Turbulent Times of America's Legendary Racehorse*, historian Kim Wickens takes us back to the Civil War era, and recounts how this racehorse became the most successful sire in American racing history. As most racing fans know, pedigree matters. Lexington's offspring and bloodline won more money than those of any other thoroughbred. Twelve of the 13 Triple Crown winners

descend from Lexington.

The talented Jon Klassen returns in another solo effort with his retelling of a Tyrolean folktale in *The Skull*. In a big abandoned house, on a barren hill, lives a skull. When a brave girl runs away, the lonely house beckons. Yet both the girl and the skull are afraid of something. Can the girl save them both? A story that is mysterious and foreboding, yet empowering. 🦊

George Rishel is the owner of The Sly Fox Bookstore, located on the West Side Square in Virden. Find The Sly Fox on Facebook or at www.slyfoxbookstore.com.

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The new 10-foot by 7-foot steel monarch butterfly sculpture mounted 25 feet in the air next to Interstate 55 north of Litchfield, Illinois. All photos by Cheryl Eichar Jett.



Along Route 66

ROUTE 66 PRAIRIE AT LITCHFIELD GETS GIANT MONARCH BUTTERFLY SCULPTURE

BY CHERYL EICHAR JETT

Route 66 travelers often encounter a giant Muffler Man, a flashing neon sign, or some other large “eye candy” to alert them to an attraction. Now, a giant monarch butterfly sculpture along I-55 north of Litchfield draws attention to the Route 66 Prairie, an eight-acre tract of prairie vegetation just north of the highway weigh station on the east side of the northbound interstate lanes.

The prairie's new “attraction alert” is a steel butterfly 10 feet tall by 7 feet wide on a 25-foot pole angled toward the interstate to call attention not only to the prairie, but to the Monarch Flyway as well. Sculptor Tom Foppe of Foppe Visual Communication in Highland designed and made this beautiful piece of roadside art. Incidentally, this is the company that designed and constructed all the exhibits for the Litchfield Museum & Route 66 Welcome Center just a few miles south of the prairie.

The butterfly sculpture arrived at the prairie on a flatbed trailer about 10 am on Thursday morning, June 15, with a small but excited local crowd awaiting its arrival and

its mounting atop its new permanent home next to the busy interstate lanes of I-55. After photos with the butterfly on the trailer, the truck pulled it out onto the prairie next to the pole which would support it. A crane lifted the steel butterfly up into the air to allow it to “alight” on its perch, where it was securely bolted.

The Route 66 Prairie is a native Illinois prairie site on the east frontage road / Route 66 between Litchfield (exit 52) and Carlinville (exit 60). Naturalist Henry Eilers of Litchfield is the primary force behind creating the prairie tract, which was created around 2007 based on an inter-governmental agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and which consists of restoration and maintenance of original prairie. There are about 298 species of plants recognized at the prairie, with infrastructure in place to educate the public.

A welcome addition to the prairie a couple years ago was an ADA-compliant concrete walkway extending south-north out into the prairie from the parking lot. For

Route 66 enthusiasts, it's fun to contemplate that this walkway was constructed over an old roadbed – a piece of the historic highway! A specified width of prairie on each side of the new walkway was allowed for construction and was completely reseeded after construction was completed. Other welcome additions to the prairie in recent years have been the graveled parking lot plus attractive and informative signage.

The Montgomery County Natural Area Guardians, a county group authorized by the State of Illinois, works many hours at the prairie restoration site and raised funds for the project. Partners in the project have been the Route 66 Monarch Flyway and the Illinois Monarch Project, a statewide initiative which works to conserve the breeding and feeding habitat of the monarch butterfly. Besides numerous donations to the project, some of the funding was raised by retired nurseryman, naturalist, and the primary force behind the prairie, Henry Eilers. This arm of the funding was accomplished by contributing seeds from numerous prairie plants to

the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway!

The Route 66 Monarch Flyway is a 66-mile-wide corridor stretching from Chicago to St. Louis. Route 66 just happens to follow the natural migratory path of the monarch. IDOT manages roadside vegetation in its right-of-ways, but the Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway has a wider footprint of 33 miles on each side of the route. This gives more promotion and visibility to the need for more habitat for the monarchs to eat and rest on their 2,000-mile trip between their summer breeding grounds and winter hibernation.

You can get to the Route 66 Prairie by following the frontage road/Route 66 north from Litchfield or south from the Carlinville exit (#60) off I-55. 🐛

Cheryl Eichar-Jett is the author of numerous books and articles about Route 66. Find her at www.route66chick.com and www.cheryleicharjett.com.



Naturalist Henry Eilers stands in front of the newly-arrived butterfly sculpture.



The new ADA-compliant Route 66 walkway into the prairie.



Natural Area Guardians (L to R) Glenn Savage, Ken Schaal, and Henry Eilers, and monarch butterfly sculptor Tom Foppe.

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NO PET STORE PUPPIES DAY SPREADS AWARENESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST PUPPY MILLS

BY MAGNUM THE DOBERMAN

On Tuesday, July 21, the ASPCA will be celebrating national No Pet Store Puppies Day. As part of the ongoing effort to end the suffering inflicted upon dogs through the puppy mill pipeline, No Pet Store Puppies Day shines the light on the dark recesses of the cruel puppy mill industry. This is a great time to educate your friends and family about what happens in puppy mills and remind them not to buy puppies, or pet supplies, from pet stores that sell puppies, and adopt from a shelter or rescue group instead.

Puppy mill cruelty is a national problem and animal lovers are realizing that when a person chooses to purchase a puppy from a pet store that decision comes at a cost, and it is dogs in puppy mills who pay the price. There are approximately 6,000 to 10,000 puppy mills (licensed and unlicensed) in operation in the United States, each filled with suffering canines. These breeding dogs spend their lives in large-scale commercial breeding operations where profit is given priority over the well-being of the dogs. You've seen news reports on such facilities revealing how these dogs are typically housed in tiny, overcrowded cages in unsanitary conditions, without proper veterinary care or even adequate access to food and water. Many live their entire lives without ever experiencing human affection. Females are bred at every opportunity with little or no time between litters for their bodies to recover, in order to produce as many puppies as possible and generate more profit for the mills.

Here are some sobering statistics:

- Fewer than 3,000 of the estimated 10,000 puppy mills in the nation are regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- The number of breeding dogs trapped in wire cages throughout the country in licensed and unlicensed facilities: approximately 500,000.
- The number of puppy mill puppies who are taken from their mother and sold each year: 2.6 million.

As people continue to shop for a canine companion rather than adopt a dog in need of a home, approximately 1.5 million companion animals lose their lives each year in shelters from coast to coast.

Puppies born at a puppy mill often suffer from behavior, congenital and hereditary problems as a result of irresponsible breeding practices, the unsanitary surroundings of their birthplace and the stress and unhygienic conditions of the cages they are put in during transport to a pet store. Puppies are typically sold to pet shops as young as eight weeks of age. Since most pet store puppies come from puppy mills, this cruelty is perpetuated every time a puppy is purchased from a pet store.

Maybe you have your heart set on a purebred dog. Statistics state that 25% of dogs who find themselves in the shelter system are purebred. Rescue organizations are also an excellent option. Along with rescues that offer a new lease on life to a variety of dogs and cats, there are also organizations which specialize in saving and rehoming specific breeds. As you know, my mom loves Dobermans. She has had several purebred Dobs that were adopted through Illinois Doberman Rescue. I was adopted through Cause for Paws, which has many breeds available, but specializes in Doberman rescue. They often has purebred puppies as well - I was surrendered with my mother and eight siblings. A quick online search can find the rescue or shelter nearest you.

Almost all pet store puppies come from puppy mills. If the pet store employee says the puppy came from a private breeder, ask them to show you the paperwork identifying the puppy's breeder and origins. If he or she refuses to do so or is reluctant to show you the paperwork, consider that a red flag.

Pet stores hope to sell all their puppies so they can go back for more and keep the cycle going. In reality, however, hundreds of them are not purchased. The nightmare of what happens is heartbreaking. In the best-case scenario, animals that are not picked out go back to the breeder. They may hang around the pet store for a while but after they have outgrown the age of selling, they are taken back.

Since the breeder had initially sold them to the pet store, they will have to buy them back. In most cases, they give healthier younger puppies in exchange for 'unwanted' older puppies. The latter will then become a breeder dog to keep the puppy mill going.



IS THIS OKAY WITH YOU?

Puppy mills dogs are typically housed in tiny, overcrowded cages in unsanitary conditions, without proper veterinary care or even adequate access to food and water.

A pet store may also decide to give the puppy away if it is not bought on time. First, it marks down the price hoping it will attract interested buyers. If they are unsuccessful, they will count their losses and pass the pets to interested parties. These can be friends, families, employees, etc. But because of the losses incurred, not many dogs are given away. Dogs that don't manage to get a buyer may be left out in the cold. It is not uncommon to come across those that don't care about the dog's welfare at all. As long as they are past the age of selling, cannot breed, or are very sick, they will be disposed of anywhere. Some pet stores drop them off at a nearby shelter, a humane option of dealing with pups that don't sell.

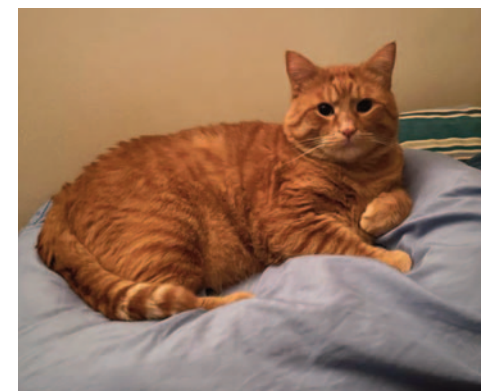
If you're ready to stand with the ASPCA against puppy mills, here are a few ways you can raise awareness and help puppy mill dogs right now.

Check out their No Pet Store Puppies website - www.NoPetStorePuppies.com to find out if your state regulates commercial breeders and how you can help end the cruelty. Sign the pledge that you won't buy anything from pet stores that sell puppies - and tell everyone you know not to shop at those stores either.

Spread the word. Visit aspc.org and

watch a video about Molly and her faithful pup, Joey, and learn why you shouldn't shop at pet stores that sell puppies. Then share it with your friends and family on all your social media channels.

Make a donation. The ASPCA believes that no dog should suffer for profit, and they are making progress toward ending the abuse, but they can't do it alone. You can help the ASPCA continue the fight against puppy mills, and all animal suffering, by making a donation today at www.aspc.org. 🐾



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Jim Banko donated the miner statue above to the museum. It was the most prized possession of his father, a coal miner.



Chuck & Mary Jo Martin have been instrumental in keeping the museum open since the death of the Will Stone, who originally founded the museum in 2003.

CHRISTIAN COUNTY COAL MUSEUM CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

BY TARA L. CALE

Residents of Illinois are very familiar of the rich history of coal mining has in The Prairie State. What you may not know is that the very first discovery of coal in North America, made by Marquette and Joliet, was in Illinois. They observed and recorded coal outcrops along the Illinois river in 1673. But it wasn't until the 1800's that the settlers first mined outcropped coal - for blacksmithing and other domestic uses. It was a few more years before underground mining started, but by 1848, Belleville became home to the very first underground mining operation.

The mining industry quickly spread along large commercial shipping center with easy and convenient access, like St. Louis and Chicago. However, it wasn't until the Civil War, when Illinois railroads grew by leaps and bounds, that coal mining in Southern Illinois really took off. The first underground mines were little more than extended tunnels, widened into rooms and worked by hand.

The industry continued to grow, and

since, underground mining has been conducted in at least 72 Illinois counties. In a 2008 study by the Illinois State Geological Survey an estimated 201,000 acres of urban and built-up lands in Illinois are in close proximity to underground mines.

Wyoming and Montana are the highest producing coal states, with Illinois coming in at number three.

Christian County boasts many coal mine records, including the state's deepest mine (Assumption, 1,000 ft deep) and the world's largest coal mine, Peabody #10 which was 91 square miles, employed over 1,000 employees and was the first coal mine to have a female underground worker. On a more somber note, Christian County coal mines suffered 296 mining fatalities between 1883-1995.

The mining industry in Illinois was wrought with dangerous conditions, unfair practices, mayhem and murder. Children as young as five years old are said to have

accompanied their fathers to the mines, as the miners were paid by the amount of coal they could bring out, rather than by the hour. Wages were cut by the president of the United Mine Workers of American and miners broke off to form their own Progressive Mine Workers. The unions clashed and started fighting and killing each other. Many of you know about the Battle of Virden (also known as the Virden Mine Riot and Virden Massacre), a labor union conflict and a racial conflict that occurred on October 12, 1898. After a United Mine Workers of America local struck a mine in Virden, the Chicago-Virden Coal Company hired security guards to accompany African-American strike-breakers to start production again. The train carrying these men to Virden was attacked. A total of five detective/security guards and eight striking mine workers were killed, with five guards and more than thirty miners wounded. This was just one of several fatal conflicts in the area at the turn of the century

that reflected both labor union tension and racial violence. Between 1932-1935, the Christian County mining industry was victim to 13 murders and 55 bombings. The Battle of Virden was a turning point in the labor struggle. The discord tore apart families - and entire communities.

Good or bad, history is history, and we love it or hate it, but respect it and can learn from it. Many small towns across Illinois have designated coal mine museums. We featured a story on the Illinois Coal Museum in Gillespie a few years ago. This one is about the Christian County Coal Mine Museum in Taylorville. If you have never visited a coal mine museum before, I urge you to do so. It will give you a whole new respect for miners and their descendants, and also an entirely new outlook on your own life, which is so much grander than what the life of a miner was in the early days. I encourage you to visit more than one - visit them all! Each has its own gems and arti-



The Christian County Coal Mine Museum in Taylorville has many interesting displays which includes a simulated underground mine shaft, an area designated for coal miners' daughters (above) and the simple but unique way they kept track of who was in and out of the mine (bottom right).



facts, its own tour guides, and you will learn something new at each.

The Christian County Coal Mine Museum was founded in 2003 by a man by the name of Will Stone, as an effort to not only present, but preserve, the coal mining history of Christian County. At that time, there was not a designated location for the museum, and it was moved as needed, to whatever donated space was available, based on the generosity of various people. Space was often small and crowded, but the realization of Stone's dream was churning.

Chuck Martin, now Executive Director of the Christian County Coal Museum met founder Will Stone during the first 12 years of the coal mine museum's existence. Like Will's family, Chuck's family was deeply rooted in the coal mining industry. His grandfather was a miner and his father was a miner. In fact, in 1970, Chuck had 23 family members involved in the coal mining industry. Although Chuck himself ultimately chose a different career path, he worked underground as a coal mine laborer himself for several years, during college.

Will voiced his hope to Chuck that someone would keep the museum going after he was gone. Chuck promised that he would.

Will died in 2015 and Chuck took over the museum.

Some time later Chuck met with Jim Banko, whose father had been a coal miner. Jim donated his father's prized possession to the museum, a coal miner statue. Chuck

mentioned to Banko how amazing it would be if they could eventually find a permanent home for the museum. On that same day, Banko mentioned this to his sister, Pat (Banko) Klingler. Four days later, Jim unexpectedly died from a heart attack.

Amazingly, in 2021 Chuck, and all supporters of the museum were granted the wish of a lifetime. Pat, remembering what her brother had told her, and with deep love for her hometown, purchased and donated a building as a permanent home for the museum in the memory of her miner father (John Banko) and her educator/coach/brother Jim. Pat, who is 91 years old and now lives in Florida, is still in constant contact with Chuck, and his wife Mary Jo, who is treasurer for the museum.

The museum started by Will Stone, and it's continuing operation by the Martins, has had its trials and tribulations, but this month, the Christian County Coal Museum, now a fabulous representation for the history of coal mining in Christian County, will celebrate their 20th anniversary. To commemorate the occasion, an anniversary party and open house is scheduled for July 29-30 featuring tours, refreshments, actors portraying miners of the past and answering questions, a speaker on mine rescue, a 50/50 raffle, a sealed bid auction, rifle raffle (or \$500 cash), book sale, door prizes and more. The Martins, along with museum advisor Brian Hawkins, invite you to visit the museum during the open house and learn about the rich



history of coal mining not only in Christian County, but across The Prairie State.

The Christian County Coal Museum is located at 1324 E. Park Street in Taylorville. Hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or by appointment. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated. For more information call 217-526-4408, email cemartin11@aol.com or find them on Facebook. 🐼

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AREA MEN FOUGHT AT GETTYSBURG

160th Anniversary of Epic Battle is July 1-3

BY TOM EMERY

The most famous battle of the Civil War was Gettysburg, widely considered to be the turning point of the conflict.

July 1-3 marks the 160th anniversary of the epic fight, which included a surprising number of men from the Buzz area.

One example was a company of men from Greene and Macoupin counties that was part of the 12th Illinois Cavalry, which was engaged in some of the earliest hours of the three-day battle.

The 12th was part of the command of Maj. Gen. John Buford, who earned a reputation as one of the heroes of Gettysburg. An Illinois product, Buford earned a place in pop culture in 1993, when he was portrayed by Sam Elliott in the docudrama *Gettysburg*.

As in other states, cavalry is often overlooked in the story of Illinois in the Civil War, as the state's seventeen horse regiments have been pushed to the background of history. The 12th, though, is an exception, one of a handful of Illinois cavalry regiments that have earned a measure of fame.

The 12th was predominately a northern Illinois unit, including six companies from Cook County. There were some downstate men, however, including in Company F, which was composed largely of Greenfield troops. Other area men in the company hailed from Chesterfield, Rockbridge, Summerville, and surrounding areas.

The Greene County men included Lt. Henly Reans, a 29-year-old Tennessee native who was a schoolteacher from Fayette, east of Greenfield. There was also Sgt. Jackson Drennan, 22, a Greenfield man whose occupation was listed as "tinner."

The regiment was mustered at Springfield on Feb. 24, 1862. While most Illinois infantry, cavalry, and artillery units served in the western theater, the 12th was one of several from the Land of Lincoln that mainly fought in the East.

Among the notable actions for the 12th was Brandy Station, Va., on June 9, 1863, the largest cavalry engagement of the war.

Four companies of the 12th, including

Company F, were part of the First Cavalry Division under Buford, who had grown up in Rock Island and had become one of the few Union cavalry officers who was widely respected.

There was an Illinois flavor throughout the division, particularly in the First Brigade, commanded by Irish-born William Gamble, who had been a civil engineer for the city of Chicago before the war.

The brigade also included the 8th Illinois Cavalry, another horseback unit largely from northern Illinois. The 8th and 12th Illinois Cavalry units were joined by the 82nd Illinois Infantry to give the Prairie State three regiments in action at Gettysburg.

The 82nd featured one of the more interesting compositions of any Illinois unit. Though the 82nd was predominately a Cook County unit, it was dubbed the "Second Hecker Regiment" in honor of its colonel, Freidrich Hecker, who had fled Germany in the failed Revolution of 1848 and landed in St. Clair County.

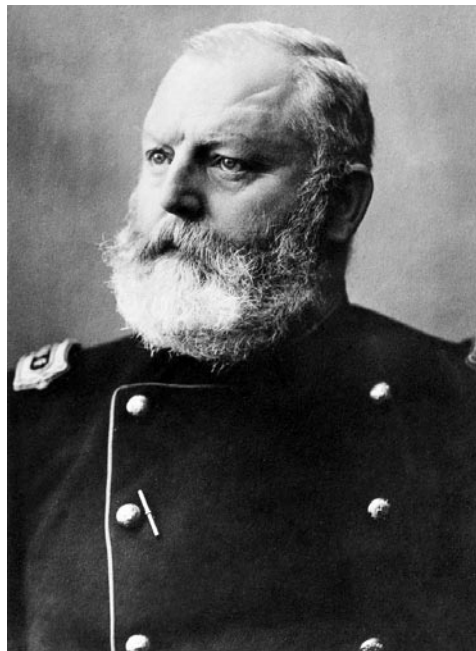
Hecker, who had earlier commanded the 24th Illinois (the "First Hecker Regiment" today is honored in the name of a village in eastern Monroe County).

An estimated two-third of the troops in the 82nd were Germans, one of three Illinois regiments heavy on that ethnicity. There was also a company of Jewish troops in the 82nd, as well as a company of Swedes.

Though most of the men in the 82nd were from Chicago, there were dozens of southwestern Illinois troops in the regiment, including in Company F, which had men from Belleville and Lebanon. There were also Belleville troops in Company G, while Company H was heavy on men from Highland.

Like the 12th, the 82nd fought in the eastern theater for much of its service, and lost heavily at the massive Union defeat at Chancellorsville in May 1863. Hecker was badly wounded at Chancellorsville, and missed the monumental clash at Gettysburg two months later.

At least five men from the Buzz area – three from Belleville, as well as one each from Lebanon and Highland – were killed at



Emil Frey



General John Buford

Chancellorsville.

The battle opened on July 1, 1863, and a formidable stand by Buford delayed the Confederate advance. His defense is considered by historians as key to the eventual Union victory.

Buford described the Southern attack as "three-deep and booming," but his actions helped decide the ground on which the battle would be fought. The late Samuel Blackwell, who authored an acclaimed study of the 12th Illinois Cavalry in 2002, wrote that regiment "and the rest of Gamble's brigade had performed a near military miracle" in their stand.

Blackwell and others believe that Ferdinand Ushuer, a 20-year-old DuPage County man in the 12th, was the first Union soldier to die in the battle. Six troops of the 12th were killed at Gettysburg, including one in Company F, Thomas Blanset, a 20-year-old Irish-born farmer from Adams County.

Meanwhile, the 82nd was driven back to Cemetery Hill, on the northern end of the battlefield, where they held their position for the remainder of the battle. On July 9, the regimental adjutant, Eugene Weigel of East St. Louis, wrote his parents of a harrowing near-miss.

The German-born Weigel lamented that his horse, Charlie, "was shot and killed" in action on July 2, one day after the animal had been "quite calm... the bullets did not bother him." Since Charlie was "crazy," Weigel dismounted to hold the reins.

Around that time, a six-pound shell came hurtling in, killing the horse before crashing into Weigel. He wrote the shell "hit me in the stomach so hard that I was hurled 3-4 feet" and nearly knocked unconscious.

Fortunately, he was spared by a piece of standard equipment. Weigel wrote that his "abdomen [was] blue" but "my canteen, filled with water, had saved me. It had been


flattened like a pancake, but had repelled the shell."

Elsewhere in the 82nd, Emil Frey, who was acting as colonel in Hecker's place, was not so fortunate. A 24-year-old Swiss immigrant, he had settled in Belleville in 1860 and had earlier served with Hecker in the 24th Illinois. Frey was captured in the first day's action at Gettysburg and spent eighteen months in the notorious Libby Prison in Richmond.

Later exchanged, he served out the war and later returned to his native Switzerland, and served as the first ambassador of that nation to the United States from 1882-88. Frey was President of Switzerland in 1894.

Back in the cavalry, Buford's division clashed with enemy sharpshooters on the morning of July 2, then was ordered away from Gettysburg to guard a key ammunition depot.

The 12th spent several more months in the East before being shipped west to Louisiana and Mississippi. Buford, though, was no longer in charge, as he died of typhoid on Dec. 16, 1863, just five and a half months after his brilliant stand at Gettysburg. The regiment was finally mustered out on May 29, 1866.

In 1891, the state of Illinois dedicated a monument on the Gettysburg battlefield to the 12th Cavalry, whose combat record remains among the best of the state's troops on horseback. That same year, a monument to the 82nd was erected as well. 

Tom Emery is a freelance writer and historical researcher from Carlinville, Ill. He may be reached at ilcivilwar@yahoo.com or 217-710-8392.

GRANDMA, TELL ME ABOUT THE GOOD 'OLE DAYS...

This is a continuing series based on the journal of the late Lena Temeyer, the maternal grandmother of the editor, Tara Cale. Grandma T, as she was affectionately called by her 57 grandchildren and so many descendants after that (no one has an accurate count), was born in 1897 and died in 1991 at the age of 93. To read the entire series, which started with the February 2023 issue of The Buzz Magazine, visit thebuzzmonthly.com.

There were five girls at home at first, but soon all of them found work in private homes at "hired girls." I don't know where Minnie or Anna worked. Edna worked for a family named Beller and there met the man she would later marry.

Anna later worked for some people by the name of Palmer. There she met a young man, and they were engaged to be married, but he got sick and died.

Freda went to Vinton to a family by the name of McElroy. She worked there from the age of 14 until she got married. When she started she made \$2.50 per week.

Emma was the fifth girl; older than me. I am the youngest girl. She stayed home. I don't remember this but was told about it. This was in Illinois of course. When Emma was 18, and engaged to be married, she was ice skating with some of the other young folk. She fell and hit the back of her head. She went home with a terrible headache and by the next morning she was paralyzed. The doctor said there was pressure on the brain, but at that time they didn't operate on the brain. I vaguely remember helping to feed her and she couldn't walk. Her left side was the worst - her left hand was drawn and out of shape. But she was so determined to walk! The older girls told about how they helped her, how she would fall but want to get back up again. And I do remember that eventually she could sweep the floor, wash the dishes, and a few other things. She couldn't comb her hair though. Back then all the women and girls had long hair but she couldn't raise her arms enough to comb hers. She was so determined to do her own hair. She would give that helpless arm a swing, sometimes catch it with her other hand, and kept on try-

ing to do more. My parents did all they could for her. There was a chiropractic clinic in Davenport, Iowa where you could rent a place to stay the night and and go to the clinic each day to get adjustments. Edna and Emma went there. I don't remember how long they stayed. Later a chiropractor came around the country and gave adjustments so Emma took them. But I think what helped her the most was her determination to improve. Of course, she couldn't marry if she couldn't take care of herself. In fact, the man that she had been engaged to ended up marrying someone else. But Emma was a good worker and a good boss. She saw to it that we younger children did the things we could do. In the spring she would help rake the yard. She would in some way put the rake under her left arm and use the muscles in her shoulder to help with the pulling and holding the rake. She loved good times, fun, dancing... and children. She seemed to have a way with children. She kept working with herself and finally got to where she could kind of comb her hair. By this time hair was short. She would lower her head almost to her knees, hold the comb, and move her head. She got to where she could dry dishes by setting them on the table and rubbing a towel over them. She started "keeping company" with young man by the name of Jim Rice. He had come to Iowa from Illinois like we had. He and his brother Jesse worked for my papa fro some time. Jim and Emma finally married. They lived on a farm hear our home. Jim was a good worker and well liked by his employer. Emma did all her own work: cooking, cleaning, mending - anything that could be mended on a sewing machine. Mama did their washing, but Emma did her own ironing.

A bit more about Jim....There were no automatic corn pickers back then - it was picked by hand. A corn yield of 35 bushels was average - 50 bushels would have been almost unbelievable. Papa wanted his corn picked pretty clean. That meant most of the husks off. The men got their horses fed, watered and hitched by barely daylight and went to the field. At noon they brought their loads in, scooped them off, ate lunch and back to the field they went. Jim could husk 80 bushels a day - better than most men. They



Corn was picked by hand in the early 1900s. 35 bushels per day was an average yield per person and 50 was almost unbelievable. Back then they got 4¢ per bushel for shucked corn. Illinois native Jim Rice, who married Lena's sister Emma, could husk 80 bushels per day - better than most men.

got 4 cents per bushel back then.

I remember Mama, Herman, Carl and I helping pick the corn. Sometimes my hands and feet would get so cold! Papa said "Stamp your feet!" but that didn't seem to help any. But dinner was always so good and by evening the bed was very welcome.

Minnie was married a year after we came to Iowa. I don't know how she met Virgil Self, as he was from Missouri, but probably at a dance. I remember her wedding. There was a reception at our house after and that

was the first time I tasted Jello! Minnie and Virgil were married December 5, 1906. They had two children: Irene and James. Virgil worked as a hired man. The employers furnished a house and wages. Later Virgil farmed for himself. Minnie was a good seamstress. She often sewed my dresses.

Almost all of my siblings worked for someone else for the most part. Ed did work for Papa for awhile. Freda was the only one who stayed at home until she married. 🐾

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THE PASSION BEHIND DECATUR COIN AND JEWELRY STARTED WITH A SOCK FULL OF COINS

Bennie Strumpher has had a passion for coins since a young age.

"I became interested in coins when I was about 10 years old," he said. "My father worked at a coal mine and they paid him with silver dollars. He brought the coins home in a sock and laid them out on the table. They were pretty, and I fell in love with them."

From sorting through silver dollars in a bank vault as a child, to traveling along the trade show circuit with his family as an adult, Strumpher's love affair with coins helped guide his life.

In 2007 he found a place for that love to take root when he bought Decatur Coin and Jewelry, a business that had been located in downtown Decatur since 1972.

And Bennie isn't the only Strumpher with an affinity for coins. His daughter, Samantha, is happily following in her father's footsteps.

"I went to a lot of coin shows with my dad," she said. "I would take coins around to dealers and sell them for him. I'd leave with a box full of coins and come back with a box full of checks and cash."

"She was really little then, probably 10 or 12 years old," Bennie added.

And she has been by her father's side at Decatur Coin and Jewelry since the very beginning, mostly handling the vintage costume jewelry that customers bring in.

"I love being with my dad and experiencing with him daily the passion he has for this place, and that's helped me create as well," she said.

Handling everything from coins, pocket watches and vintage paper money, to costume, gold and silver jewelry, Bennie and Samantha believe it is their ethics and service that makes their business stand out from the others.

"We are a 'pay-it-forward' organization," Bennie said. "If you have something worth a lot of money, we are going to offer you a lot of money - about 90% on the dollar. We have paid out over 20 million dollars to people just like you over the years."

He added, "We are professional numismatists and travel the coin show circuit buying investor grade coins that we seldom encounter here locally. We know where the value is and many of our long term clients have become wealthy by paying for our experienced eyes. High eye-appeal coins we just sold a few years ago for a couple of hundred dollars are worth thousands of dollars today."

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rare coins, paper money, diamonds, watches, gold and silver jewelry, costume jewelry, turquoise, Native American items, Civil War, military and political items as well as many vintage collectibles. They offer competitive buy/sell prices on American Eagle gold and silver bullion coins, 999 silver rounds and bars and other gold/silver products.

Bennie and Samantha stay busy enjoying their work and customers.

"I don't have to work. I do this because I love it," Bennie explained. "I could have retired a long time ago but I've been doing it for over 40 years and I hope to keep doing it as long as my eyes and health are good."

"I love what I do also," Samantha agreed. "I love all the jewelry, and the coins too."

Decatur Coin and Jewelry is located at 104 N Main Street in Decatur - their home for over 50 years. Store hours are Monday through Friday, 9am-4pm except from 1-1:30 pm for lunch. Weekends are by appointment only and they are closed on all major holidays. For more information call 217-899-4346 or 217-423-0041, find them on Facebook or check them out online at www.DecaturCoinandJewelry.com.



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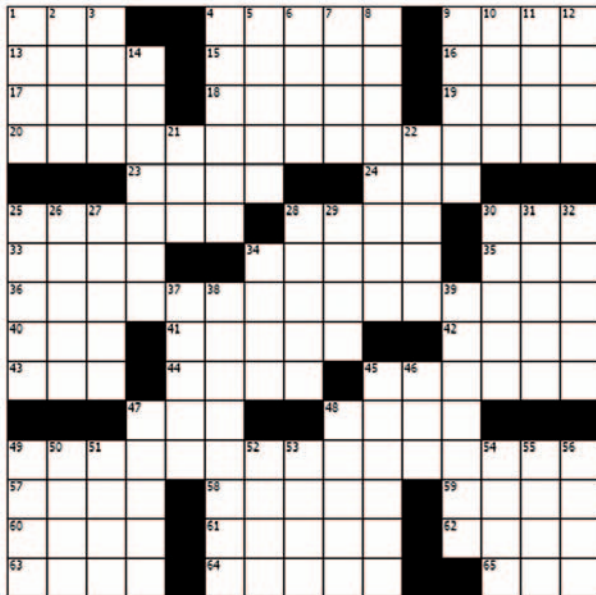
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Across

1. Cultivate
4. Venetian navigator
9. Police unit
13. Costner or Fonda character
15. Small egg
16. Coral or rose
17. Westernmost of the Aleutians
18. Pitcher's bag
19. Tijuana traffic sign
20. Beginning of an ungrammatical quip
23. Below the CEO, perhaps
24. Writer Fleming
25. Cager's target
28. Muddy walk
30. Gel
33. Italian wine center
34. Fats Waller's instrument
35. Three-time heavyweight champ

36. Middle of the quip
40. Bloomers around the neck
41. They may be closed
42. Philosopher Descartes
43. 1040 entry (Abbr.)
44. Part of A&E
45. Scotch land owners
47. One of the Chaplins
48. Farm building
49. End of the quip
57. Didn't hoof it
58. Pulitzer poet W.H.
59. Fanciful pitcher
60. "Metamorphoses" poet
61. Kent portrayer, in film
62. What gliders do
63. Bat Masterson's prop
64. Ford lemon

65. Sgts. superiors

Down

1. Wave type
2. Pledge
3. Art Deco designer
4. Trumpet's cousin
5. Declares openly
6. Australian wilderness
7. Hodgepodge
8. They may mount
9. Andorra's neighbor
10. Determination
11. What you pay to play
12. Some ring decisions
14. Peter, Peter's diet
21. "Come as you ___"
22. Gog's partner
25. Blubbers
26. Word before and after "to"
27. It's hoisted in a pub
28. Submerges
29. Falls behind
30. Curved sword
31. African antelope
32. Neap and spring
34. Pub order
37. Cafeteria items
38. Nuts and bolts, e.g.
39. Amazin' Mets 1969 victims
45. A Barrymore
46. Priest's vestment
47. Goteborg resident
48. Actor/comedian Martin
49. Fast food pioneer, Ray
50. Suddenly bright star
51. Norse god
52. Colored
53. Laudatory poems
54. Too far off base?
55. The important part
56. Bumbles

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TWO SUMMER CLASSICS - COMBINED

BY CHEF ANTHONY

Picnics and cookouts are almost guaranteed to have sides like potato salad, pasta salad and baked beans. Although I enjoy all of these things, I often get bored with the same side dishes. At least in preparing them.

I recently attended a group picnic and one of the side dishes was corn salad. Amazed as you may be, I had never had corn salad. Apparently corn salad is a classic summer side dish that I was not aware of. This recipe included the corn (of course), avocado, red onion and tomatoes - and it was delicious.

Potato salad is a classic side dish I AM aware of. So I began to wonder, what would happen if you combined the two? I had to do some research to find a basic corn salad recipe anyway, since I had failed to request

the recipe at the picnic, and I discovered that someone had already thought of combining corn salad and potato salad. I gave it a try and was not disappointed.

Produce from your own garden or locally sourced ingredients from area farmers markets will make this recipe extra special. Grilled potato and corn salad goes great with burgers...or really any grilled meat. It has nice color for a pleasing presentation also. I encourage you to try it at your next cook out, picnic or summer gathering.

I may even try to throw in some tomatoes and avocado on my next preparation of this recipe. That's the great thing about recipes... you can alter them in any way you like, or can imagine, to make them your own. Don't be afraid to get creative when you cook! 🍷



GRILLED POTATO AND CORN SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds medium Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into 1/4-inch thick slices
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 poblano peppers
- 4 medium ears sweet corn, husked
- 6 green onions
- 2/3 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 cup crumbled Cotija cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1-1/2 teaspoons grated lime zest
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- Optional: Lime wedges, fresh cilantro leaves and additional crumbled Cotija cheese

DIRECTIONS

Place potatoes in a large saucepan; add water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook, uncovered, 5 minutes. Drain potatoes and toss with 1 tablespoon oil.

Grill poblanos, covered, over high heat until skins are blistered and blackened on all sides, 8-10 minutes, turning occasionally. Immediately place peppers in a small bowl; let stand, covered, 20 minutes.

Reduce grill temperature to medium heat.

Meanwhile, brush corn with remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Place potatoes in a grill basket. Grill corn and potatoes, covered, over medium heat until tender and lightly browned, 12-15 minutes, turning occasionally. Cool slightly.

Grill green onions until blackened, 5-6 minutes. Cut into 1-in. pieces and place in a large bowl. Peel off and discard charred skin from poblanos; remove stems and seeds. Cut peppers into 1/2-in. pieces and add to onions. Cut corn from cobs; add corn and potatoes to peppers.

In a small bowl, whisk sour cream, mayonnaise and lime juice until blended; stir in cheese, cilantro, zest, salt and pepper. Add to potato mixture, stir to coat. Refrigerate, covered, at least 1 hour before serving. If desired, top with additional Cotija cheese, cilantro and serve with lime wedges.



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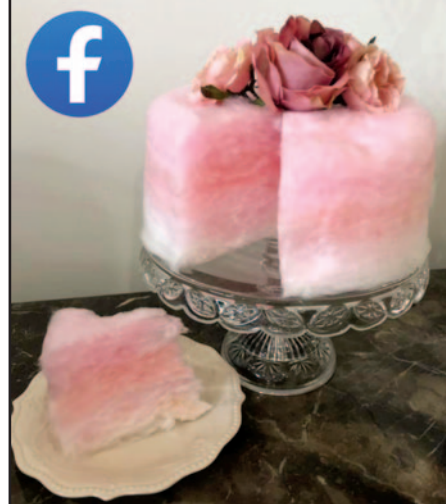
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COLUMBUS DAY

BY JUSTIN CHILDRESS

I know its nowhere close to October and this Columbus may not have sailed the ocean blue, but he has however sailed in his film-making career. Chris Columbus, who I mentioned briefly in a previous article about a Martin Scorsese comedy, really needs written about more because what he has produced and been involved with for 30 plus years is remarkable.

Columbus, like so many wannabe filmmakers was a struggling screenwriter in film school. Living in a loft in Manhattan the young student had a mouse infestation and worried that he might be nibbled on in his sleep. A story both frightening and fascinating ruminated within him. And remembering his dad mentioning gremlins in his car creating automobile problems while growing up, as well as always visiting strange shops in Chinatown while attending NYU, everything hit him at once. He thought what if there were strange creatures in one of those shops?

He thought up a Chinese word for the name of these critters and Mogwai hit him, a word that means devil in Chinese. *Gremlins* consumed the screenwriter, cranking out page after page with this high of inspiration. The first draft of the script was an "R" rated bloody and twisted horror movie which Columbus sent too many a production company all giving collected rejection to the script. One man did like it however and his opinion mattered quite a bit. That man was Steven Spielberg. Columbus about had a heart attack when the famed filmmaker called him up out of the blue to meet and discuss *Gremlins*.

Columbus was surprised Spielberg had a liking to his disturbing horror script, yet, Spielberg would only produce the script on some conditions. First, he wanted to tone down the violence a lot and he wanted it more family friendly and to have one of the gremlins to be the hero, Gizmo of course. Columbus would have been a fool to argue and he totally agreed.

With Spielberg as producer and Joe Dante of *The Howling* fame as director, *Gremlins*, with its strange dark humor and Norman Rockwell meets *It's a Wonderful Life* satirical - feel was gifted to theater audiences in 1984.

The movie was an overwhelming and surprise success. Even though critics were

mixed on the movie some parents let their hatred known expressing disappointment with *Gremlins*, in that they expected *E.T* but got menacing creatures instead. Interestingly enough, *Gremlins* as well as *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* both released in 1984, both produced and/or directed by Spielberg, became the two movies that would give birth to the PG-13 rating because of their content. So, you can thank Steven Spielberg for the rating.

The following year both Columbus and Spielberg would reteam, this time both men screenwriting and Spielberg producing the classic *The Goonies* a movie that will always have a connection to *Gremlins* with the casting of Corey Feldman in both movies as well as a minor character explaining the plot of *Gremlins* in one scene. The movie was a labor of love for Spielberg, coming from personal stories of his friends helping him with dyslexia and the bond they shared. Columbus wrote it with memories of going to coal mines as a kid in Ohio.

The Goonies was another surprise hit and it's safe to assume its popularity like the goonies themselves will never say die.

In 1987 Columbus would take a step up from screenwriter to director with, *Adventures in Babysitting*, a comedy that amazingly juggles both dark and light-hearted humor. The comedy was a springboard for actress Elizabeth Shue, who usually took a backseat playing the girlfriend of the lead in supporting roles. She proved she could carry a comedy. The movie would play a whole lot better today because of the young Sara character's infatuation with the superhero Thor. With all *The Avengers* and superhero obsession today, 80s audiences just weren't the biggest fans then preferring action heroes, still it didn't hurt the movie to yet again be a hit out of nowhere.

Now on a hit track record moving up in his career, the best was just about to come to the new director. Columbus was set to direct *Christmas Vacation* but clashed too frequently with star Chevy Chase and reluctantly had to step down from the project. Feeling like he let writer/producer John Hughes down by doing so, he apologized sincerely only for Hughes to give him yet another Christmas comedy script. It was *Home Alone* which Hughes wrote in just a few days. Columbus leapt at the chance to



The movie "Gremlins," released in 1984 was an overwhelming success for unknown screenwriter Chris Columbus.

direct, knowing it was magic, but how magical he wasn't sure until it was released and became his biggest money-maker of his career. No surprise here, the movie stayed number one at the box office for 14 weeks.

After its successful sequel in 1992 Columbus would still do no wrong directing *Mrs. Doubtfire* in 1993, another huge win at the box office.

Columbus has a knack for showing both the innocence and fun of youth and mixing in the fear and danger of adult life He would next direct the first two *Harry Potter* movies

and moving up again to producer helping a no name director by the name of Robert Eggers by producing his movies *The Witch* in 2016 and *The Lighthouse* in 2019, both low budget and successful horror movies.

Columbus has indeed sailed and continues to do so. 🐉

Justin Childress loves movies and has been writing about them for as long as he can remember. Contact him at jchilli1981@gmail.com.

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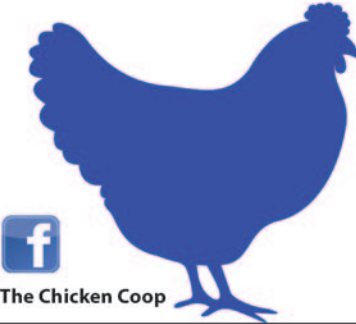
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DOWNSTATE ILLINOIS RESIDENT WAS SURVIVOR OF TITANIC

Shipwreck is Back in News With Loss of Submersible

BY TOM EMERY

Recent news headlines were dominated by the loss of a submersible to view the remains of *Titanic*.

The *Titanic* is the most famous shipwreck in American history, even though the ship was British, and sank in international waters. A downstate Illinois resident was among the survivors.

Richard Becker, who lived in Jacksonville in the late 1930s and early 1940s, was among the 712 survivors of the *Titanic*, which smashed into an iceberg in the north Atlantic late on April 14, 1912. At the time, he was two months shy of his second birthday.

Due to his tender age, he had virtually no memories of that horrific night. But his sister, Ruth, became one of the most visible of the ship's survivors late in life, and was a frequent interview subject.

Becker was born on June 26, 1910 in Kondaikanal, India, where his father, a Lutheran minister, was serving as a missionary. The elder Becker and his wife also spent much time in Princeton, Ill., 55 miles east of the Quad Cities, before settling permanently in South Bend, Ind. Richard was the fourth child, following sister Ruth, born in 1899; Luther, who died at age two in 1907; and another sister, Marion, born in 1907.

Unfortunately, Richard became severely ill in early 1912, and doctors recommended a return to America for treatment. His mother, Nellie, determined to take the boy to a specialist in Benton Harbor, Mich., and booked the trip on the *Titanic* with her other two children, leaving her husband behind in India.

The pride of the White Star line, the 883-foot *Titanic* was on its maiden voyage as it

set off from Southampton on April 10. Constructed in Belfast, the ship was widely believed to be unsinkable. Despite the lavish amenities of the ship, its 20 lifeboats could only hold about a third of its passenger capacity.

Contrary to popular belief, the ship was not loaded only with wealthy passengers, as over half were sailing third-class, in steerage. While they existed in decent surroundings, it was certainly nothing like those in first- and second-class above.

The Beckers' accommodations were a little better, as they traveled second-class in Cabin F4, which came at a cost of thirty-nine British pounds, or around \$50 in American dollars of the time.

On the night of the accident, Nellie and her three children moved to the upper decks, waiting in one of the public rooms for rescue. She managed to get Richard and Marion into lifeboat number eleven, but an officer told Nellie there was no room for her to join her children. After she pleaded with the officer, he finally pushed her in to the boat as it was being lowered.

Ruth, meanwhile, was left behind until she made her way into lifeboat number thirteen, where she handed her blanket to another passenger, who was shivering nearby. As the lifeboats plodded away in the frigid seas, the *Titanic* finally went under at 2:20 a.m., on April 15, just over two and a half hours after plowing into the iceberg.

Though figures vary, a total of 1,517 – 832 passengers and 685 crew – lost their lives. Seventy-six percent of those in third class died; by comparison, one writer claims that 97 percent of first-class women survived. In all, eighty percent of male passengers died, while only twenty-five percent of female passengers were victims.

All four of the Beckers were among the many survivors picked up by the 558-foot liner *Carpathia*, which arrived in New York harbor on April 18. The return of the survivors were celebrated by a public that was captivated by the disaster.

Nellie Becker and her husband eventually settled in Benton Harbor, where she died in 1961 at age 84. She is buried in the family plot in Princeton. Nellie outlived her daughter, Marion, by seventeen years, as she had succumbed to tuberculosis in 1944 at age 36 in her new home of Glendale, Calif.

Ruth, the oldest sister, became a schoolteacher and raised three children before her retirement to Santa Barbara, Calif. in 1971. For many years, she barely spoke of that night on the *Titanic*, but in later life, she became one of the most famous survivors of the ship, granting numerous interviews.

She did not take a sea trip again until she embarked on a cruise to Mexico, four months before her death in July 1990. Her ashes were scattered over the water where the *Titanic* now rests.

The U.S. Census of 1940 reported that Richard Becker was living in Jacksonville with his 28-year-old wife, Eve, and a two-year-old son. Eve died in 1942, and the next year, Richard remarried, a union that produced two daughters.

Richard and his family eventually settled in Minnesota, where he was a regional director for the American Red Cross. He sub-

sequently relocated to Peoria and worked as a safety supervisor for Caterpillar Tractor. He died on Sept. 6, 1975 and is buried in Peoria.

The *Titanic* has since become an indelible part of American lore and pop culture, bolstered by the 1997 blockbuster movie and a Tony-winning Broadway musical, and has been romanticized for its luxurious splendor. However, it is not the deadliest shipwreck in American history.

That distinction belongs to the *Sultana*, an overcrowded steamer that included many Civil War veterans returning from service, which met a much more gruesome end. That vessel was sailing near Memphis on the Mississippi River on April 27, 1865 when the boilers exploded, killing at least 1,700 passengers, many from burns.

Other serious maritime disasters included the *Lusitania*, a luxury liner taken out by a German U-boat on May 7, 1915, costing 1,197 lives, and the *General Slocum*, a steamer that burned on a pleasure excursion in the East River in New York City on June 15, 1904, with a loss of 1,021 lives.

Closer to home, the *Eastland*, a steamer loaded with electrical workers bound for a company picnic, capsized from its mooring in the Chicago River on July 24, 1915. The loss of 844 passengers was higher than the passenger casualty total on the *Titanic*, and remains the deadliest ship disaster in Great Lakes history. 🎈



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A NEW DISH FOR ALL THAT ZUCCHINI

BY TARA L. CALE

I've been having to get up quite early these last few weeks with the high afternoon temperatures in order to get the dogs walked and gardening done before it gets too hot. Late evenings work too, but not as well. Mornings are always cooler and the lighting is better. Sometimes it's hard to get up that early but it's nice to take a walk at 6:00-6:30 in the morning too - peaceful. Remember to get some movement in every day. If you don't have an air conditioned gym you can go to, get up early and take a walk!

Summer brings an abundance of fresh produce that makes it easier to eat healthy. And there's nothing like produce straight from your own garden, or a local farmers market!

In May we ran a recipe *What To Do With all That Asparagus*. Now let's do the same for zucchini! If your kids like pizza, this may be a good way to get them to eat more veggies too! Once you've tried this recipe,

you may even decide to grow more zucchini in your own garden next summer.

You can make this recipe a little healthier by using ground turkey instead of hamburger. Or if you prefer Italian sausage - it won't make the recipe healthier - but it substitutes well also. You can even make it vegetarian by eliminating the meat all together and just adding more veggies. I love mushrooms, so I added those. Chopped cauliflower is also a nice addition.

This casserole is great reheated the next day for lunch, and you can freeze it also. To freeze, let the baked casserole cool first. To reheat, partially thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Remove from refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Preheat oven to 350°. Unwrap casserole; reheat on a lower oven rack until heated through and a thermometer inserted in center reads 165°.

This recipe makes 8 servings. 



ZUCCHINI PIZZA CASSEROLE

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups shredded unpeeled zucchini
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 cups shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 can (15 ounces) Italian tomato sauce
- 1 medium green or sweet red pepper, chopped

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400°. Place zucchini in colander; sprinkle with salt. Let stand 10 minutes, then squeeze out moisture. Combine zucchini with eggs, Parmesan and half the mozzarella and cheddar cheeses. Press into a greased 13x9-in. or 3-qt. baking dish. Bake 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, cook beef and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink, breaking meat into crumbles; drain. Add tomato sauce; spoon over zucchini mixture. Sprinkle with remaining cheeses; add green pepper. Bake until heated through, about 20 minutes longer.



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Two raft races and a kayak race will highlight a full day of river-focused activities starting at 3 p.m. and ending at midnight. The raft races – featuring two separate classes of homemade rafts – begin at 4 p.m. Entry fees are \$20 per person before July 8 and \$30 the day of the race. Registration is on-going through July 8. Participants should register at illinoisriverrafttrace.com.

The fun includes a bags competition, kayak raffle, basket drop, live music, bounce houses, food, beer garden, vendors and games. Radio station 92.3 will do a live remote broadcast from the Hardin riverfront from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. There will also be a fireworks show taking place at dark. The event is free and open to the public.

“There’s nothing like watching a bunch of homemade rafts try to race down the

Illinois River,” said Cory Jobe, President/CEO of the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau. “Participants build all different kinds of rafts and then use everything from paddles to diving flippers to propel the rafts down the river. This is great family-fun and highlights the Illinois River in Hardin.”

There are two different classes of raft races: one is for homemade rafts with a one to six person team and the second features homemade rafts with teams of two and up. A kayak race on the river precedes the raft races starting at 3 p.m.

Race participants must be 18 years or older and sign a waiver. Rules and regulations will be provided to racers. Winners will receive a cash prize. There are also prizes for rafts in a variety of different categories.

For more information on the race and the event, please contact Patrick Simon at patrick.k.simon13@gmail.com or 618-535-1715. 🐾

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A TRIP OF A LIFETIME

BY ROGER KRATOCHVIL

Sometimes I subscribe to the idea that some things just happen because they are supposed to. Recently my son Tim and I planned a bus tour trip to Washington D.C. Both of us are former high school history teachers. Tim is now the superintendent of the Pawnee Illinois schools, and I am a retired high school principal at Mt. Olive High School. It seemed we needed to visit the center of the free world and get a look at what we had been teaching for so long.

Some people would love to take a trip with their son or daughter, and they sometimes wait too long and age or health upsets their plans. We weren't going to let that happen.

This trip was planned in May, but it was so full of obstacles that we thought it would never happen. The trip was planned with Timi Tours out of Moweaqua, Illinois. Timi Tours is so popular that if you don't schedule early, they are sold out, and you have to go on the waiting list.

First of all, Tim and I had to be able to free up time to go on this 8-day trip. Being retired made my decision easier than Tim with his very busy work and family schedule. Another obstacle appeared as the trip was fully booked and we had to get on the waiting list. We were number two on the waiting list and it never moved as time got near to departure. The trip was scheduled to leave out of Springfield at 6 a.m. on Monday, May 1 with a return date of Monday, May 8.

Since I had gotten on the waiting list, I now had about two weeks of waiting for that important date, hoping that if we could go, that Tim would still be free. Another whammy hit our plans as I developed a bad back with a lot of pain. Now it was day to day. One day it was if they called, I would have to say no. Then another day I would say yes because it was tolerable. Finally, Tim, probably saturated by my indecision said, "Dad, we will be fine, I will help you." That seemed to satisfy my concern, and my back

even started feeling better.

For the next couple of weeks I would call Timi's every few days to see if we moved up on the list. Ken Summer, our very talented tour director and part owner of Timi's, told me that the office girl got to know my voice, and even was asking him if he could make room on the bus for Tim and me. The bus was fully booked, and I jokingly told everybody that he could probably take us on the trip, but we would have to ride with the luggage in the storage compartment.

Finally, on the Saturday before the scheduled Monday departure, the call finally came at 10 a.m. Two people had cancelled and we were ready to be off to Washington D.C. Tim and I were very excited. It would be a special trip.

On Monday May 1st, I picked up Tim in rural Pawnee about 5 a.m. and we traveled to meet not only the bus, but 43 of our new friends. You might remember that was the same day as that fateful dust storm that caused a huge pileup near Divernon and killed eight people. I had come through there much earlier that morning and fortunately there was nothing amiss at that time.

Most of the passengers were from the Springfield and Decatur area, and I swear that over the next eight days, this group turned out to be a collection of the best people that Central Illinois could provide. There were school people, farm people, state workers, businessmen and even a barber from Graham Correctional Center. No, he was not an inmate that had escaped to take a tour on Timi's! There was a mother and her three daughters. One of the daughters was an actress who has been on the television show, *Chicago Fire*. There were some who were physically limited, but everyone seemed to help each other. One lady did a lot of traveling to the sites in a wheelchair, but she had the best sense of humor. She had someone accompanying her to help and was always pleasant. I had to travel with a walking cane. I've never had to



Pictured (L-R) are John Schmidt, bus driver and Ken Summer, Tour Director.

do that before, and it was a challenge to walk with this "third leg." But everybody was in a great mood, and we found out that several of us had common friends. We discovered it really is a small world and it all made for a great experience.

Tim came prepared. He had his pillow for sleeping, his blankets in case he got cold, and his ear buds for listening to music (probably a little George Strait). He definitely is his mother's child, and that's a compliment. Along with my cane, I brought a supply of Bio-freeze that kept me able to partake in almost all of the activities. I also, for a change, knew my own limitations and stayed away from certain activities like the long walk to the Pentagon. That was okay though. Tim was the difference as he was there when needed.

They say that tours are really just a large group of strangers with a bus. Those are important but we were also blessed to have a driver, John Schmidt and a tour director, Ken Summer, who were the two most valuable players on the bus. John was a wonderful driver through a lot of traffic in Washington and Alexandria, Virginia. Alexandria was the city we came back to each night. John even had to navigate through a lot of the infrastructure on the highways practically all the way there, and even snow when we went through the Allegheny Mountains. We stopped every two hours for a short

break or lunch. The restrooms got a lot of business. You could see that John took good care of the bus as any mess was immediately cleaned up as I found out carrying a cane and a cup of coffee down the bus steps. He was like a hawk and noticed it right away and got it cleaned up.

You could tell Ken was a veteran at his job because he always anticipated what the passengers wanted. He and John had formerly been coal miners, but bus tours seemed to be their true calling!

An added treat with the tour was that bottled water was provided at all times on the bus and all passengers were given a gift from Timi's. Each lady got a beautiful backpack with Washington, DC trip printed on it and each guy got a baseball hat with the same thing imprinted. It was really appreciated.

As is in all tours there is an itinerary. Obviously, the Capitol, Pentagon, White House, monuments, congressional cafeteria, etc. were all on the schedule. One day in leaving early to go back to the motel, Ken thought that our group might like to see the sites like the White House, Capitol, Jefferson Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, etc. but see it all lit up at night, so we drove around until dark. What a beautiful sight to see the buildings all lit up, especially the Capitol.

On the way back to Illinois we had to travel through Pennsylvania and Ken thought we would like to stop at the sight of the 9/11

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My son Tim and I at Washington's home in Mt. Vernon, Illinois.

crash of the Flight 93 plane. The plane, taken over by four hijackers, was headed to Washington to crash either into the Capital or the White House. The 40 passengers and crew decided to take back the plane from the hijackers and heroically they succeeded but the plane crashed at this sight. It was a collective act of heroism and it emotionally affected all of us who visited this crash-site. It was a very solemn place and there was hardly a dry eye among us, but we were thankful Ken allowed us to stop and pay tribute to these 40 heroes.

The planning of this trip was special because I don't think any of us felt we had missed much of anything. Arlington National Cemetery was special, and the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was an outstanding event to witness. We usually left by 8:30 in the morning and did not get back until 9 at night. Each evening Ken picked a special place for us to individually go our own way and choose a restaurant to eat at. Old Town in Alexandria and the Washington Harbour were great as well as the others too. Tim and I went our own way and I let him make the choice. I think maybe unwittingly, he chose the most expensive, but it was worth it. Our last night I was able to walk with him to an Irish restaurant where we enjoyed some Irish beer and food. The Kentucky Derby was on at that time and Tim picked the winning horse. Unfortunately, no bet was made.

On the last day the tour took us to Mt. Vernon, the home of George and Martha Washington. It took a whole day to view that

historical place. There were a lot of people visiting from all over the world and reenactments of battles took place between the Continental Army and the British Redcoats. A review of the troops by General Washington took place and it was very interesting. There were several exhibitions of firing of the cannon and mortars. It is amazing that any of the soldiers had any hearing left after that.

Most people probably don't realize that Washington's armies won only a few battles, but they were major ones. You have to remember that from battle to battle, Washington was not sure he had an army, as many of them went home to their farms when one battle was over. Also, the main responsibility of Washington was to keep everything together until Benjamin Franklin could get the French into the war to provide us with money, equipment, soldiers, and ships. He did just that. The final battle of the war at Yorktown involved Washington's army and the French army as well as their ships blockading the harbor keeping the British Commander Lord Cornwallis from escaping with his army. So, he surrendered. Much of this history was very noticeable at Mt. Vernon.

On the back porch of Washington's home were rockers that you could sit on and view the Potomac River that flowed about 50 yards away. I sat there, closed my eyes, and saw an anguished Washington trying to hold everything together and worrying, yet enjoying the serenity of the view and being with Martha. It was an enlightening experience.

In making this trip, my wife Mary told me that in light of your back pain, you need to take a walking cane and some bio-freeze patches that you could stick on your back. I said no and that I did not need that. Macho Roger was speaking, but she insisted, and I could not have made the trip without those things. That together with Tim's watchful eye on me and 43 of our newfound friends, made it a trip to remember for a lifetime. I am also forever grateful to Ken and John, and Timi's Tours for this once in a lifetime tour.

There was one other person I have not mentioned. For three days of our tour in Washington, Ken hired a tour guide by the name of David McGraw who literally guided us through all aspects of the experience. He was straight out of Boston as his accent showed. In his regular lifetime job, he oper-

ated a string of movie theaters. But, for these three days, he was our history expert on everything we looked at. He was very knowledgeable, and I think we could not have done better. He had a sense of humor, but the jokes were about on the level of television's *Hee Haw*. Since I liked *Hee Haw*, I thought they were funny. For long-time history teachers, he proved to Tim and I that we could learn something. For the three days he was with us, he was a huge delight.

For a father and son to take this trip and make it successful, it took everybody to contribute to it. Everybody seemed to have a sense of humor and was devoted to having fun with everybody else. For that, Timi's Tours was successful. I thank son Tim for his wonderful patience and help, Ken and John

for their great leadership and expertise, David, and our 43 new friends for a fun eight days. Let's do it again!

On a final note, my birthday occurred two days after we got back. Tim surprised me with a Christmas tree ornament of Mt. Vernon, and he bought a matching one for himself. On the back of the ornament was written by him a very personal note to me that I will cherish forever. It doesn't get any better than that. 🐼

Roger Kratochvil is a former teacher, high school principal, coach and scout for the St. Louis Cardinals. He now writes about his life experiences. You can contact him at kratz@madisontelco.com.

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LIONEL ELECTRIC TRAINS: Wanting to buy Lionel electric trains from the 1940s, 50s, 60s. Call 618-335-7082 - leave message if no answer.

VENDOR WANTED FOR RESALE PURPOSES: Framed art pictures; 200-300. Prices \$20-\$200 each. Call 618-462-4661.

WANTING TO BUY: Silver plate flatware and holloware. Call or text 618-567-7171.

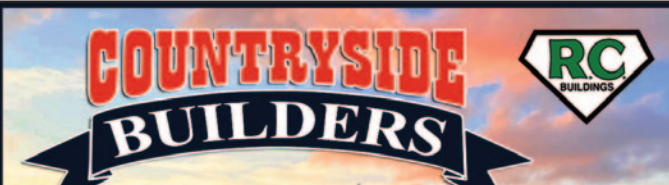
WANTED: OLD INDIAN SILVER and Turquoise Bracelets and Necklaces. Paying Cash. Call or Text Paul 314-283-8325.

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Classifieds for individuals are free. Businesses pay 50¢ per word, 10 word minimum and must be paid in advance if an account is not already established. EXCEPTION: HELP WANTED ads are always free. Display ads placed in the classified section are at the same rate as placement anywhere else in the magazine. All free classifieds expire in 6 months and The Buzz must be notified if they are to be continued after that time period. Email ads to: thebuzzmonthly@yahoo.com.



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JULY

EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

OLD SIX MILE MUSEUM 2023

Come and see what your Six Mile Museum has to offer this year - we're more than just a pretty face!
Aug 27 • Beekeepers Meeting
Sept 16 • Fall Festival
Oct 7 • Mrs. O'Leary and the Chicago Fire, burgers and chips for sale
Nov 25 • Christmas Decorating
Dec 16 • Christmas Open House
Additionally we will be hosting some life skill events over the summer for youth in our area. The Old Six Mile Museum is located at 3279 Maryville Road in Granite City. Follow us on FB at Old Six Mile Historical Society or call us at 618-975-1836.

MONDAY, JULY 3

Story time, every Monday @10 am @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2145 Johnson Road, Granite City. Enjoy stories, music and crafts, www.smrlld.org.

Alton Fireworks Spectacular at the Liberty Bank Alton Amphitheater. Begins at approximately 9:30 PM. Live entertainment on the Liberty Bank Amphitheater stage, 1 Riverfront Dr. before the real show begins in the Alton night sky, altonriverfrontamphitheater.com.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5

Toddler/Preschool Story Time, every Wednesday @ 10:30 am, Greenville Public Library, 414 W. Main Street, www.greenvillepubliclibrary.org.

Story Time, every Wednesday at 6 pm, Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City. Enjoy stories, music and crafts, www.smrlld.org.

Granite City Civic Park Concert Series, 1301 Niedringhaus Ave. Jeremy Drake Duo – country & classic rock will be performing. Live shows every Wednesday evening from 6:30 - 8:30 PM with a mixed genre lineup of fantastic local and regional artists, granitecity.illinois.gov.

THURSDAY, JULY 6

LEGO BIONICLE Night -Let's Brick! For Tweens, Grades 5-8 every 1st Thursday, 5 - 7 PM Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave Questions? Email ys@smrlld.org or call the Youth Services department at 618-452-6238 ext 720, www.smrlld.org.

Grafton Music in the Park, corner of Market and Main St, downtown Grafton from 7-9 pm. Bring your lawn chair or picnic blanket and listen to live bands and performers from The Grove Memorial Park gazebo. Tragg Band will be performing, riversandroutess.com.

Thursday Night Live at the Downtown Square, 948 Main St. in Highland, from 7-9 pm. Rogers & Nienhaus will be performing, highlandillinois.com.

FRIDAY, JULY 7

Peanut Butter and Jam Festival at Highland Downtown Square, 948 Main St, from 11:30am-1pm, highlandillinois.com.

TAYLORVILLE CRUISE IN, the first Friday of every month, 4:30-8 pm, April through Oct 13 on the downtown square. All wheels welcome! Dash plaque to first 50 cares! Open to the public.

KARAOKE every Friday, 7-11 pm, DeCamp Station 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com.

Highland Muny Ban Concert Series on the square, 948 Main St., from 8-10 pm. Free admission, highlandillinois.com.

SATURDAY, JULY 8

STREET MARKET @ ALTON EXCHANGE 2990 Homer Adams Parkway, the 2nd Saturday each month through Oct 14, 9am-2pm, altonexchangemall.com.

Tour De Donut in Staunton from 9am - Noon. The "Tour de Donut" is a spoof on the "Tour de France." From the mass start, the approximately 32-mile route follows lightly traveled roads over rolling terrain. Riders must stop at two checkpoint stations (donut stops). While donut consumption is not mandatory, the rider is awarded a five (5) minute time credit for EACH donut eaten. There is also a Tour De Donut Hole option, which consists of 12 miles and one donut stop. The ride brings out the best riders and competitive eaters! Bring your riding legs and your appetite for sweet fried dough, tourdedonut.org.

Restoration Day, 9-noon, Watershed Nature Center, 1591 Tower Ave in Edwardsville. To establish, maintain, and invest in the health of the Watershed's three unique habitats. Volunteers help remove invasive species, establish native biodiversity, tend to wooden structures, and help maintain the trails. Call 618-692-7578 for more info.

Hummingbird Festival, 9am-noon, L&C State Historical Site, #1 Lewis & Clark Trail, Hartford. Catching and banding hummingbirds, experts will discuss hummingbirdss, the banding process and how to encourage these gorgeous birds to visit your yard.

Outdoor vendor market @The Pink Elephant Antique Mall, 908 Veterans Memorial Drive, Livingston (Exit 37 off Interstate 55) from 9:30-3 pm. Spend the day shopping the mall and our additional outdoor vendors, and dine or snack at the Twistee Treat Diner. The mall is open until 5 pm. Then hang around (or come back) for the twice monthly car cruise in from 5-9 pm (held every other Saturday, through September). Drawing for giveaways will also take place - drivers need to register at the on-site table to enter. Antique Mall closes a 5pm, candy shop open til 8 pm.

Emily Ehley with Trees Forever will be back with another Woodland Wildflower Identification class, this time focusing on summertime blooms! Whether you're a seasoned outdoor enthusiast or just starting to explore an interest in nature, this is a great opportunity to get the know the wildflowers of our area and how to recognize them. The class will take place from 11am-1pm in the Performance Room at Alton Square Mall, 123 Alton Square Dr. No registration is required, riversandroutess.com.

Bring your family and friends to downtown Collinsville, 115 East Clay St, from 11 AM to 9pm for the World's Largest Catsup Bottle Festival! Celebrate the Brooks Route 66 icon in all its tangy red glory with food and drinks, live music, tater-tot and hot dog eating contests, Brooks Ketchup Tasting, a Mascot-Madness dance off, a Little Princess Tomato and Sir Catsup contest, hula hooping competition, and lots of old-fashioned birthday party games! See their Facebook page for more info.

LIVE MUSIC 6-9 pm @ DeCamp Station, 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com.

Celebrate Independence Day and watch fireworks at the Tri County Rod & Gun Club in Brighton, 20593 Oak Rest Rd from 8:30-10 pm, riversandroutess.com.

SUNDAY, JULY 9

LITCHFIELD PICKERS MARKET held in downtown Litchfield the 2nd Sunday each month May-October from 9am-3pm. Vintage items, antiques and collectibles plus live music, food vendors and more, visitlitchfield.com.

VENDOR MARKET the 2nd Sunday each month through October, 10-5:30, @ Lighthouse Too, 18395 W. Frontage Road, Litchfield (I-55 to Carlinville Exit 60).

SUNDAY FUNDAY, 2-6 pm featuring live entertainment the first Sunday monthly @ DeCamp Station, 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com.

Jam to the Mojo Universe band with live R&B and Blues at Concordia Hall, 709 S. Union St. in Staunton starting at 3pm!

SUNDAY, JULY 9-SUNDAY, JULY 16

Jersey County Fair, 300 Veterans Memorial Parkway, Jerseyville. Ring in the week-long festivities of the Jersey County Fair with the Jersey County Fair Parade. The over 100-year-old fair offers rare glimpses of prize-winning livestock, a talent show, fair rides, prize games, rodeos, and nightly live entertainment. Visit their website for a list of events and times, jerseycountyfair.com.

MONDAY, JULY 10

Story time, every Monday @10 am @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2145 Johnson Road, Granite City. Enjoy stories, music and crafts, smrlld.org.

TUESDAY, JULY 11

Legos, 5-7 pm, every Tuesday @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City, smrlld.org.

Join The Nature Institute from 5:30-7pm at Heartland Prairie at Gordon Moore Park, 4550 College Ave in Alton, for bimonthly hikes, held on every second and fourth Tuesday, April through October. Free and open to the public. Walks will focus on identifying native plants and birds. We will discuss the plants in our newer sections at the observation deck until approximately 6:00 p.m. so if you are running late, you can still meet us in the front section of the prairie. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes and bring water, binoculars and a plant identification book. FREE, thenatureinstitute.org.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12

Toddler/Preschool Story Time, every Wednesday @ 10:30 am, Greenville Public Library, 414 W. Main Street, www.greenvillepubliclibrary.org.

Story Time, every Wednesday at 6 pm, Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City. Enjoy stories, music and crafts, www.smrlld.org.

Granite City Civic Park Concert Series featuring Pik'n Lik'n – bluegrass & classic rock, at 1301 Niedringhaus Ave. Live show every Wednesday evening from 6:30 - 8:30 PM with a mixed genre lineup of fantastic local and regional artists, granitecity.illinois.gov.

THURSDAY, JULY 13

Branching Out Class - Vital Records: From the Church to the Courthouse, 10-11 am, Hayner



Vendor space still available. Can accommodate trucks/trailers too!

CARLINVILLE MARKET DAYS

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Library, 401 State St, Alton. Join our class on the importance of vital records, who created them, where they can be found, and how they can help your genealogy research!, riversandrout.com.

Grafton Music in the Park at The Grove Memorial Park, corner of Market & Main St, 7 - 9 pm. Bring your lawn chair or picnic blanket and listen to live bands and performers from The Grove Memorial Park gazebo in downtown Grafton which overlooks the beautiful Mississippi River! Admission is free and Outlaw Opry will be performing, riversandrout.com.

Thursday Night Live at the Downtown Square, 948 Main St. in Highland, from 7-9pm. Corey Evitts will be performing, highlandillinois.com.

FRIDAY, JULY 14

Peanut Butter and Jam Festival at Highland Downtown Square, 948 Main St, from 11:30am-1pm. Babaloo will be performing, highlandillinois.com.

Nintendo Switch every Saturday 1-4pm @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City, www.smrlid.org.

RetroRockit at Walton Park, 10207 Niemanville-Traill in Litchfield, from 6:30-9:30pm. Check out this good time, party rock band that covers music of the 70s through tunes of today. An evening of live music and food that is part of the Litchfield Park District's Summer Concert Series, visitlitchfield.com.

KARAOKE every Friday, 7-11 pm, DeCamp Station 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com.

Summer Concerts at Rotary Park, 101 E.3rd St.in Alton from 7-9pm. Funky Butt Brass Band will be performing, downtownalton.com.

Community Science Series: Insects at The Nature Institute, 2213 S. Levis Ln. in Godfrey from 8dd-9:30p. Join us for a short talk and insect survey with entomologist Dr. Jake Williams. We will begin the night learning about insects that are attracted to light and discuss some of the insect sounds that we hear at night. After the short talk we will head outside to see what insects we can see and hear. Bring a water bottle, and a flashlight for a night of fun and learning, thenatureinstitute.org.

Highland Munny Band Concert Series on the square, 948 Main St., from 8-10p. This is a free summer concert, highlandillinois.com.

FRIDAY, JULY 14-SUNDAY, JULY 16

JOURNEY IN JULY, annual self-guided shopping tour includes 30+ retail shops plus 25+ unique vendors at various locations. Follow JourneyinJuly on FB for details.

SATURDAY, JULY 15

CHRISTMAS IN JULY 9am-1pm @ Black Crow Designs, 2521 State St, Alton. The studio will be open and the parking lot will be filled with amazing vendors. Details on Facebook.

Archeology Day, Center for American Archeology, Kampsville, 10am-3pm. Free event celebrating 70 years of archeology! Spend a day exploring the fascinating 12,000 year history of west central Illinois through fun, hands on activities, informational exhibits and presentations about the current research being done.

(continued next page)



Come Get Fresh With Us!

ALTON

Farmer's & Artisan Market held every Saturday from 8-noon. thru October 21 @ the coner of Landmarks Blvd and Henry St. downtownalton.com.

ALTON NIGHT MARKET

Inside Jacoby Arts Center, 627 E. Broadway and outdoors in the neighboring pocket park every Thursday from 7-10 pm through July 27. Live bands each week.

BETHALTO

Every Sunday, May-October from 9am-1pm @ Central Park, 213 N. Prairie Street. Live entertainment weekly. bethaltomarketinthepark.org.

BRIGHTON

Located in Schneider Park every Sunday from 9am-1pm thru Oct 15.

BUNKER HILL

Farmers Market/Flea Market every Saturday fro 9am-1pm through Oct 14 in the parking lot of Country Vibes Vendors and More, 511 North Washington.

DECATUR

Richland Farmers Market @ Richland Community College, One College Park. Held Tuesday evenings 5-7:30 pm, June- Sept.

EAST ALTON

April-October, every Tuesday from 3-7 pm @ Eastgate Plaza. Call 618-530-1880 for more information.

EDWARDSVILLE

Land of Goshen Community Market Held every Saturday through mid-October, rain or shine, from 8 am til noon @ North 2nd Street, www.goshenmarket.org.

HILLSBORO

May - September the 1st and 3rd Saturday each month: 8am-noon. Lincoln Plaza across from courthouse.

GRANITE CITY

Melting Pot Market Artisan's Market, Granite City Civic Park , 10am-2pm 1301 Niedringhaus Ave the first Saturday each month, June -Nov. No market in July.

JERSEYVILLE

Farmers & Artisan Market starts Jun 20 then every Tuesday 4-7 pm (no market July 4) until Sept 26 @ Jerseyville Center Plaza, 403 N. State Street.

MARYVILLE

Vine Street Market, 8-noon Saturdays, May-October @ 212 East 1st Street.

Maryville Farmers Market, 5-7 pm every Thursday through Sept 7 @ 300 N. Donk Ave

NEW BADEN

Held the last Saturday monthly, 8am-noon through Sept 30 at Veterans Memorial Park. Kids events at each market.

O'FALLON

May - September, from 8-11 am on the 1st - 3rd - 5th Thursday each month. Located at 300 N. Donk St.

ROCHESTER

Rochester Library Farmers Market, 1 Community Drive. Sundays noon-3 pm, June-September.

RIVERTON

Knights of Columbus Marian Hall Parking Lot, 335 S 4th Street. Food trucks, crafts/flea market and farmers market. Designated Sundays 10am-2pm. June 25 - July 2, 16, 30, Aug 6, 20 - Sept 3, 17. (217-494-3366)

SPRINGFIELD

Old Capitol Farmers Market held every Wednesday and Saturday from 8am-noon, May 20-Oct 28 @ the corner of 4th & Adams Street. downtownspringfield.org.

STAUNTON

May - October, every Saturday 8-noon @ Vintage Station, 900 N. Edwardsville (Route 4 North) Farmers & Flea Market.

If you have information on local farmers markets not listed please email the details to thebuzzmonthly@yahoo.com. No phone calls/texts please.

Join us as author Mark Pierce discusses his new book, *When the Stars Came Out: Stories of the Mississippi River Festival*. This event will be held at the Genealogy & Local History Library, 401 State St. in Alton, from 10am-11am. Seating is limited. Register at 1-800-613-3163.

Writers Circle: Erasure Poetry at Hayner Library in the Alton Square Mall, 123 Alton Square Dr. from 10am-1pm. For the novice and the experienced: join us for a writing prompt to get creativity flowing and receive constructive feedback from your peers. Bring a project you're currently working on or use your prompt in guided group discussion. To register, please call 1-800-613-3163. Registration will be limited to 10 people.

Join the Jacoby Kid's Art Club, 627 E. Broadway in Alton, from 10:30 AM - 12 PM. Young artists will be exposed to different media like drawing, painting, clay, fibers, and more. This program is designed to help young artists experiment with many art mediums, creating a more well-rounded maker. Learn a new skill, experiment with art, and hang out with other creatives. Ages 5 - 15 - all skill levels welcome! Art club is a private donor-funded program providing free art activities weekly. Cost of instruction and supplies are provided by Jacoby Arts Center through a generous private donation to provide youth arts programming for the Riverbend community, jacobyartscenter.org.

LIVE MUSIC 6-9 pm @ DeCamp Station, 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com

SAT, JULY 15-SUNDAY, JULY 16
BELLEVILLE FLEA MARKET, held the 3rd Sat/Sun each month year 'round features over 400 vendors with over 600 tables selling a large variety of antiques, collectibles and other merchandise.

Belle-Clair Fairgrounds and Expo Center, 200 S. Belt West, Belleville. Open Saturday, 9-4, Sunday 9-3, www.bcfairgrounds.net

SUNDAY, JULY 16
Bethalto Knights of Columbus Chicken Dinner, 11:30 A.M. - 2:00 P.M., BETHALTO K of C, OLQP Parish, 132 Butcher St. Bethalto. Dine In, All-You-Care-to-Eat: \$12 Adults, \$6 Children (ages 5-10). Drive Thru or Carry Out: \$12 for half chicken or five (5) chicken strips, and choice of three (3) sides. No custom orders available for drive thru. Side Options: Mac & Cheese, Green Beans, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy. Public Welcome. FOR CARRY OUT OR DRIVE THRU: PLEASE ENTER FROM PRAIRIE STREET INTO THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT FOR PICKUP. Proceeds go to Bethalto K of C Charities and OLQP Parish.

MONDAY, JULY 17
Story time, every Monday @10 am @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2145 Johnson Road, Granite City. Enjoy stories, music and crafts, smrld.org.

Telescope Night at The Nature Institute, 2213 S. Levis Lane in Godfrey, from 8:45-10:45pm. Have an old telescope laying around, but never use it? Always wanted to look at the universe through a telescope, but don't own one? You are in luck! Come on out to the Talahi Lodge on the night after a full moon and we will have some set up. You can also bring your own and we can help you use it. We will talk about how telescopes work and look at the moon and other night sky objects. Space is limited, registration required, thenatureinstitute.org.

TUESDAY, JULY 18
Legos - Come Build with Us! Every Tuesday 5-7 PM. Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City. Questions? Email ys@smrld.org or call the Youth Services department at 618-452-6238 ext 720, smrld.org.

Community Science Series: Birds at Hayner Library at the Alton Square Mall, 132 Alton Square from 6-7pm. Birds are up early feeding in the cool of the morning, that's true, but they also become active in the late afternoon. Let's learn about some community science projects that focus on birds. These projects look at migration patterns, species abundance, and nesting behavior. You will leave knowing some birding basics for identifying birds, a better understanding of how to choose binoculars, and a few community science projects to check out for your own use, thenatureinstitute.org.

Sit, Stay, Read with Got Your Six Therapy Dogs. For children, grades K-8, come practice reading or just talk with a trained therapy dog! Every 3rd Tuesday from 6:30-7:30 PM. Six Mile Regional Library, 2145 Johnson Rd, Granite City. Questions? Call 618-452-6238 ext. 785, smrld.org.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19
Join Bremer Sanctuary, 194 Bremer Lane in Hillsboro, from 9:30am-11am for an educational program for children on the world of mammals. Program created in partnership with the University of Illinois Extension, bremer-sanctuary.com.

Toddler/Preschool Story Time, every Wednesday @ 10:30 am, Greenville Public Library, 414 W. Main Street, www.greenvillepubliclibrary.org.

Story Time, 6 pm, Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City. Enjoy stories, music and crafts, www.smrld.org.

Granite City Civic Park Concert Series at 1301 Niedringhaus Ave. See a live show every Wednesday evening from 6:30 - 8:30 PM with a mixed genre lineup of fantastic local and regional artists! Rewind - classic rock will be performing, granitecity.illinois.gov.

THURSDAY, JULY 20
Branching Out Class - Vital Records: From the Church to the Courthouse at Hayner Library, 401 State St. in Alton from 10am-11am. Join our class on the importance of vital records, who created them, where they can be found, and how they can help your genealogy research, riversandroutes.com

MONTHLY CRUISE IN @ DOCS JUST OFF 66, 133 S. 2nd Street Girard - held the 3rd Thursday each month from 6-8 pm. For details follow Docs on Facebook!

Rockabilly Revival @ Grafton Music in the Park 2023 at The Grove Memorial Park, corner of Market & Main St, 7-9 pm. Bring your lawn chair or picnic blanket and listen to live bands and performers from The Grove Memorial Park gazebo in downtown Grafton which overlooks the beautiful Mississippi River! Admission is free, riversandroutes.com.

Grafton Music in the Park 2023 at The Grove Memorial Park, corner of Market & Main St, 7 - 9pm. Bring your lawn chair or picnic blanket and listen to live bands and performers from The Grove Memorial Park gazebo in downtown Grafton which overlooks the beautiful Mississippi



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River! Admission is free and Trilogy will be performing, riversandrout.es.com.

Thursday Night Live at the Downtown Square, 948 Main St. in Highland, from 7-9pm. Blue Suede Crew will be performing, highlandillinois.com.

FRIDAY, JULY 21

Play & Learn For Babies & Toddlers, 10 AM at Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City. Questions? Email ys@smrld.org or call the Youth Services department at 618-452-6238 ext 720, smrld.org.

Peanut Butter and Jam Festival at Highland Downtown Square, 948 Main St, from 11:30am-1pm. Kevin Heim will be performing, highlandillinois.com.

KARAOKE every Friday, 7-11 pm, DeCamp Station 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com.

FLOCK Food Truck Park, 210 Ridge St. in Alton, is hosting free movie nights every third Friday starting at 7:30 PM! Bring your blankets and lawn chairs and set up in the FLOCK lot for an evening of fun, riversandrout.es.com.

Highland Myny Band Concert Series on the square, 948 Main St., from 8-10pm. This is a free summer concert, highlandillinois.com.

SATURDAY, JULY 22

CHRISTMAS IN JULY, 9am-2pm at Briar Rose, 216 N. State Street, Litchfield. Specials pop-ups include Elite Bling Boss, Little City Print Shop and Well Did & Co Permanent Jewelry.

Nintendo Switch every Saturday 1-4pm @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City, www.smrld.org.

Bremer Sanctuary, 194 Bremer Ln. in Hillsboro, is hosting a Prairie Walk & Potluck from 4-6pm with a wiener roast afterwards. Take a walk in the summer grasslands, watch for birds and wildlife, and enjoy good food on a pleasant evening, bremer-sanctuary.com.

Car Cruise-in @ Twistee Treat Diner, next to The Pink Elephant Antique Mall, 908 Veterans Memorial Drive, Livingston (Exit 37 off Interstate 55) from 9:30-3 pm. Drawing for giveaways will also take place - drivers need to register at the on-site table to enter. Antique Mall closes a 5pm, candy shop open til 8 pm.

LIVE MUSIC 6-9 pm @ DeCamp Station, 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com.

Equestrian enthusiasts can enjoy Illinois Boots & Saddle Club fun, 3043 Harris in Alton, watching a Team Cow Sorting Competition. Watch horses, riders, and cows as they take tight turns and riders compete for the top time of the night. Events are free to the public and the arena has a refreshment and snack stand for guests. Bring the whole family and watch a competitive equestrian event. Only LEASHED dogs are welcome in the spectator area! This event is from 7 - 11:45pm. See their Facebook page for more info.

(continued next page)

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MONDAY, JULY 24

Story time, every Monday @10 am @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2145 Johnson Road, Granite City. Enjoy stories, music and crafts, www.smrlld.org.

TUESDAY, JULY 25

Legos, 5-7 pm, every Tuesday @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City, www.smrlld.org.

Join The Nature Institute from 5:30-7pm at Heartland Prairie at Gordon Moore Park, 4550 College Ave in Alton, for bimonthly hikes, held on every second and fourth Tuesday, April through October. Free and open to the public. Walks will focus on identifying native plants and birds. We will discuss the plants in our newer sections at the observation deck until approximately 6:00 p.m. so if you are running late, you can still meet us in the front section of the prairie. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes and bring water, binoculars and a plant identification book. FREE, thenatureinstitute.org.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 26

Toddler/Preschool Story Time, every Wednesday @ 10:30 am, Greenville Public Library, 414 W. Main Street, www.greenvillepubliclibrary.org.

Story Time, every Wednesday at 6 pm, Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City. Enjoy stories, music and crafts, www.smrlld.org.

Granite City Civic Park Concert Series at 1301 Niedringhaus Ave. Live show every Wednesday evening from 6:30 - 8:30 PM with a mixed genre lineup of fantastic local and regional artists! Melissa Joan Heartless – contemporary rock will be performing, granitecity.illinois.gov.

THURSDAY, JULY 27

Thursday Night Live at the Downtown Square, 948 Main St. in Highland, from 7-9pm. Jordan Vickery will be performing, highlandillinois.com.

Enjoy the annual Grafton concert series Music in the Park. Bring your lawn chair or picnic blanket and listen to live bands and performers from The Grove Memorial Park gazebo, located at the corner of Market and Main St, in downtown Grafton which overlooks the beautiful Mississippi River! The Owlz will be performing from 7 - 9pm, riversandroutess.com.

FRIDAY, JULY 28

Nintendo Switch every Saturday 1-4pm @ Six Mile Regional Library, 2001 Delmar Ave, Granite City, www.smrlld.org.

Film Flashback Fridays 6-8:30pm. What were we watching 50 years ago at the Starlight Drive-In, Grand, and Alton Ciné? A new film series at the Genealogy & Local History Library, 401 State St. in Alton, will answer that question as we come together to watch some of the best movies of 1973. A short introduction will precede each film. This month's film will feature Roger Moore as James Bond in the classic "Live and Let Die." Seating is limited. Register at 1-800-613-3163.

KARAOKE every Friday, 7-11 pm, DeCamp Station 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com.

Highland Munny Band Concert Series on the square, 948 Main St., from 8-10p. This is a free summer concert, highlandillinois.com.

Classic Flicks for Conservation: *A Bug's Life* at The Nature Institute, 2213 S. Levis Ln in Godfrey, starting at 8:30pm. Cozy up with a blanket for

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a movie on the lawn! This free event takes place monthly from April through October. Watch a classic movie on our giant inflatable screen. Bring your own seating (lawn chairs or blankets), as well as your own snacks. No alcohol is permitted. No pre-registration required. While this event is FREE, donations are welcome! Limited parking is available, so arrive early to grab your seat. Sponsored by Hayner Library, thenatureinstitute.org.

FRIDAY, JULY 28-SATURDAY, JULY 29 ANNUAL SIDEWALK SALES DAY in downtown Carlinville at participating businesses. Don't miss it!

SATURDAY, JULY 29
Discovery Day at Watershed Nature Center, 1591 Tower Ave in Edwardsville, 10am-noon. A family-friendly, free monthly event where young explorers, ages 5 – 12, learn about a unique nature topic through creative and experiential learning. Children and guardians are invited to go on a self-guided nature scavenger hunt using our monthly-themed check list or simply enjoy the trails. Indoor activities include stations dedicated to creative activities, like coloring or science-crafts, and experiential activities, like microscopes, demonstrations, games, models, and more. No registration is required; unless you are interested in signing up to be a volunteer - or are bringing a large group. See their Facebook page for more info.

Join the Jacoby Kid's Art Club, 627 E. Broadway in Alton, from 10:30 AM - 12 PM. Young artists will be exposed to different media like drawing, painting, clay, fibers, and more. This program is designed to help young artists experiment with many art mediums, creating a more well-rounded maker. Learn a new skill, experiment with art, and hang out with other creatives. Ages 5 - 15 - all skill levels welcome! Art club is a private donor-funded program providing free art activities weekly. Cost

of instruction and supplies are provided by Jacoby Arts Center through a generous private donation to provide youth arts programming for the Riverbend community, jacobyartscenter.org.

The TreeHouse Wildlife Center, 23956 Green Acres Road in Dow, is hosting Christmas in July from 11am-4pm. They will have crafts and activities, door prizes, information about helping wildlife through the winter season, fall and winter holiday shopping with artisan vendors, 1st ever inventory clearance sale in the Gift Shop, and much more. This is a free to attend event filled with fun and shopping for everyone. For more information, call 618-466-2990.

Bring the family to an Illinois Boots and Saddle Club horse show! The Open Fun show programs show off horses, the skill of IBSC members, and are often themed! Have a snack or drink from the refreshment stand and bring your lawn chair or seat yourself on the bleachers. Kids will love watching the horses and enthusiasts of all ages can appreciate the IBSC's horsemanship on a beautiful evening in Alton! All shows are free to the public! This show is at 3043 Harris Lane in Alton from 5pm-11:45pm. See their Facebook page for more info.

LIVE MUSIC 6-9 pm @ DeCamp Station, 8767 State Route 4, Staunton, decampstationil.com.

SUNDAY, JULY 30
Join the Edwardsville Symphony and regional musicians during their annual Summer Symphony Concert series from 6:30-9pm. Enjoy musical performances by the SIUE Symphony, Edwardsville High School, and area artists performing with a variety of instruments- all held in City Park, 118 Hillsboro Ave, Edwardsville. Bring your comfiest

lawn chair or blanket and listen to free classical tunes on a pleasant afternoon. See their Facebook page for more info.

MONDAY, JULY 31
Color Connection from 5-7pm, adult coloring event @ Hayner Library at Alton Square Mall, 123 Alton Square Dr, Multipurpose Room. Come color with us and enjoy the company of other coloring enthusiasts! Registration is not required. Feel free to stay the whole time, or just a little while. We will provide coloring pages, coloring bookmarks, and colored pencils. Feel free to bring your own supplies, as well, riversandrout.com.

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5
CARLINVILLE MARKET DAYS, 8am-3pm the first Saturday every month, rain or shine, April thru November. Amazing product and food ven-

dors and more. Facebook.com/carlinville market days, www.carlinvillemarketdays.com.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26
Quilt Bingo, 1 pm @ Granite City Township Hall, 2060 Delmar, Granite City. Fundraiser by Church Women United. Doors open at noon. \$10 for 4 cards (advance purchase) \$12 for 4 cards (at door). 10 special games with 1 quilt winner per game and consolation prizes for other winners. 3 games of 50/50 overall: \$5 for 4 cards, additional cards \$1 each. Winners will receive (or split if multiple winners) 50% of cash sales from 50/50 game. Attendance prizes, bake sale and refreshments for sale. No outside food or drink. This event is a fundraiser for Soup-n-Share Outreach (www.soupshare.org), sponsored by Church Women United. For tickets or more information call 618-444-6771. 🐾

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