

Readers' Choice Awards

Dear Readers,

The votes have been tabulated and the results are final. Now the only thing left to do is announce the winners...

Welcome to The State Journal-Register's 2011 Readers' Choice Awards. Readers' Choice gives our community the perfect opportunity to share personal experiences and show support for local people, services and businesses. During December 25 through January 1 we asked our readers to nominate their favorites in 117 different categories and the response was tremendous.

Beyond the fun of discovering the top picks for 2011, we also uncovered some new places that have caught on in the last year. Readers told us about their favorite locations for fun, entertainment, shopping and dining, and even provided us with their personal pick on the strangest place in Springfield. We hope that you stop in to visit all of our 2011 Readers' Choice winners to see for yourself just why they were selected. Take a moment to recognize their efforts and thank them for being part of our local community.

As an added value, all qualifying ballots received by our deadline were tabulated and entered into a drawing to win \$300 in Gift Cards from Qik-n-EZ in accordance with our published rules. Congratulations to Amy Friesland and Melissa Rhymes as our 2011 Qik-n-EZ winners.

The winners in all categories reflect the choice of our readers. We encourage you to hold on to this valuable section and use it as a resource throughout the year. You can also find the Readers' Choice section online throughout the year at www.sj-r.com/readerschoice.com.

Again, congratulations to all of our winners and thanks to all of our readers who took part in making The State Journal-Register's

Sincerely,



Greg Baumer
Regional Advertising Director
The State Journal-Register

CONGRATULATIONS!



Amy Friesland,
online gas card winner

Q&A with Amy Friesland

Q: What do you like best about Readers' Choice Awards?

A: It was fun to do. I am a native to the area and I thought it was fun to fill out.

Q: Do you have any specific plans for the gas money?

A: Gas prices are high, maybe a summer trip!

Q: Did you make it through every category?

A: More than the required minimum but almost got through the entire form.

Q: Final thoughts?

A: It is nice that the SJ-R does something like this.



Melissa Rhymes,
print gas card winner

Q&A with Melissa Rhymes

Q: What do you like best about Readers' Choice Awards?

A: The Opportunity to pick out your favorite places.

Q: Do you have any specific plans for the gas money?

A: I Drive back and forth to Springfield from Taylorville so it will come in handy.

Q: Did you make it through every category?

A: Just about! I filled it out at work, we are rooting for INB!

Q: Final thoughts?

A: Favorite workplace and best bank for INB. I just started working there and everyone is friendly and works together it is a nice environment.

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Readers' Choice Award
winner for
Best Local Website

SJ-R Media reaches 80% of adults in Sangamon and Menard counties. Source: The Media Audit, fall 2011

FOOD

Best Asian food

READERS' CHOICE: Osaka Japanese Restaurant
 Restaurant
Category: Best Asian Food
Business Name: Osaka Japanese Restaurant
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 726-8037
Hours: 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. M-Th.; 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m.-midnight Fri.; 11 a.m.-midnight Sat.; 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Sun.
Website: osakaspringfield.com
Managers: Chin Cheung and Jennifer Chapman
Number of Employees: 55
Years of Operation: Opened December 2009
Location: 1655 Wabash Ave. Suite A.
SECOND PLACE: Ginger Asian Bistro
THIRD PLACE: Magic Kitchen

Best Barbecue

READERS' CHOICE: Smokey Bones Bar & Grill
SECOND PLACE: Hickory River Smokehouse
THIRD PLACE: McCormick's

Best Breakfast

READERS' CHOICE: Charlie Parker's Diner
Category: Best Breakfast
Business Name: Charlie Parker's Diner
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 241-2104
Hours: 6 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon-Sat, 7 a.m.-2 p.m. Sun.
Website: charlieparkersdiner.net

Managers: Mike & Cindy Murphy
Number of Employees: 15
Years of Operation: Business opened in 1991; the Murphys purchased it in January 2009
Location: 700 North Street

Charlie Parker's Diner might be hard to find, but it's well worth the effort. Located at 700 North Street, just off of Stanford Avenue, the diner is open seven days a week for breakfast and lunch.

This marks the fourth year in a row that Charlie Parker's has been voted the best place for breakfast by our readers. Its popular, diverse all-day breakfast menu includes breakfast horseshoes with a choice of cheese sauce, gravy or both, not to mention pancakes, waffles, omelets and breakfast sandwiches. Sunday's special features a Blueberry Stuffed French Toast Casserole, which has become a diners' favorite. The restaurant also features affordable lunch specials Monday through Friday, which include homemade dessert, as well as specials that rotate throughout the month.

Charlie Parker's Diner was established in 1991. The current owners, Mike and Cindy Murphy, are the fifth owners of the restaurant. Mike and Cindy purchased Charlie Parker's Diner January 1, 2009. It has been featured on Food Network's Diners, Drive-ins and Dives and WGN's Sky Dives as well as mentions in several local and national publications, including the Chicago Tribune, Food Network Magazine and the Wall Street Journal. During the last three years it has attracted guests from all over the United States and 65 foreign countries.

Owners Mike and Cindy Murphy invite you to their unique Quonset hut diner to experience some good old fashioned dining at reasonable prices.

SECOND PLACE: IHOP
THIRD PLACE: D&J's Cafe

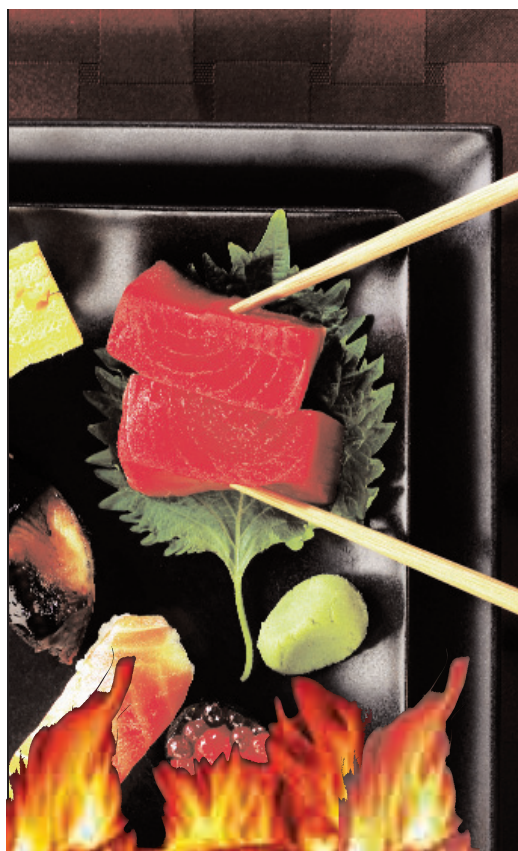


Best Burger

READERS' CHOICE: Steak 'n Shake
SECOND PLACE: Smashburger
THIRD PLACE: Kregel's Custard

Best Café

READERS' CHOICE: Café Moxo
SECOND PLACE: D&J's Café
THIRD PLACE: Sunrise Cafe



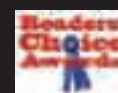
Osaka

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Best Chili

READERS' CHOICE: Joe Rogers' Original Recipe Chili Parlor
SECOND PLACE: Steak & Shake
THIRD PLACE: Wendy's

Best Coffee

READERS' CHOICE: Starbucks Coffee Co.
SECOND PLACE: Grab-A-Java
THIRD PLACE: McDonald's



Coldest Beer

READERS' CHOICE: TheCorner Pub and Grill
Category: Best Bar and Coldest Beer
Business Name: The Corner Pub & Grill

City: Springfield
Business Phone: 546-3600
Hours: 11 a.m.-1 a.m. daily
Website: thecornerpubandgrill.com
Owners: Tim Timoney, Pat Davlin, Bob Gordon, P.J. Giacomini and Pete Giacomini
Number of Employees: 45
Years of Operation: 5 1/2 years
Location: 3271 W. Iles (the corner of Iles and Koke Mill)

The popular Corner Pub & Grill is a consistent finalist for the Coldest Beer category, and this is its fourth year in a row atop the Best Bar category - not bad for a place that opened just five and a half years ago. This popular far west side neighborhood bar and grill features the original horseshoe pizza, with a wide variety of appetizers, soups, salads, sandwiches, horseshoes and pizza on the menu, not to mention import and domestic beers and signature cocktails and martinis. Its seasonal outdoor patio, lots of TVs and space to accommodate large parties seals the deal.

SECOND PLACE: Brickhouse
THIRD PLACE: Brewhaus



Best Cupcakes

READERS' CHOICE: Café Moxo
SECOND PLACE: Incredibly Delicious
THIRD PLACE: Specialty Cakes

Best Dessert

READERS' CHOICE: Incredibly Delicious
SECOND PLACE: Baker's Square
THIRD PLACE: Cold Stone Creamery

Best Downtown Dining

READERS' CHOICE: Maldaner's
SECOND PLACE: Saputo's
THIRD PLACE: Augie's Front Burner

Best Festival

READERS' CHOICE: Blues & BBQ Festival
Category: Best Festival
Name: Old Capitol Blues & BBQ
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 544-1723
Hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Website: downtownspringfield.org
Number of Employees: 2 full time
Years of Operation: formed in 1993
Location: DSI office located at 3 West Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 15. Event location: 5th & Washington, downtown Springfield

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Readers' Choice Awards Thanks to our friends and customers for voting us **Springfield's Best Bar 4 years in a row!**

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Best festival: Old Capitol Blues & BBQ

What could be better than a street festival that combines food and music? The Old Capitol Blues & BBQ features more than 40 barbecue competitors and vendors, locally and nationally known blues talent and free children's entertainment. The IL Central Blues Club also holds their annual Blues Challenge at the festival, with winners advancing to the national competition in Memphis. Admission is \$5 for adults; 12 and under free. The next Old Capitol Blues & BBQ will be Aug. 24 and 25, 2012.

SECOND PLACE: Festival of Trees
THIRD PLACE: Ethnic Festival

Best Fine Dining

READERS' CHOICE: Maldaner's
SECOND PLACE: Bella Milano
THIRD PLACE: Indigo

Best Fish Fry

READERS' CHOICE: Knights of Columbus #4175
SECOND PLACE: Carter's Fish Market
THIRD PLACE: Firefighters Postal Lake Club

Best French Fries

READERS' CHOICE: McDonald's
SECOND PLACE: Steak 'n Shake
THIRD PLACE: The Corner Pub and Grill

Best Horseshoe

READERS' CHOICE: D'Arcy's Pint
Category: Best Horseshoe
Business Name: D'Arcy's Pint
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 492-8800
Hours: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. M-Thur.; 11 a.m.-11 p.m. F-Sat.

Website: darcypintonline.com
Owners: Hallie Pierceall
Number of Employees: 90
Years of Operation: 13 years
Location: 661 W. Stanford Ave.

D'Arcy's Pint is a casual Irish-American pub with a wide variety of specialty beers, ales and imports. Its menu offers many authentic Irish food items like corned beef and cabbage, boxty and shepherd's pie along with the classic American pub fare like pizza, burgers, salads and deli sandwiches.

But D'Arcy's is most well known for its large varieties of the Springfield classic Horseshoe sandwich. Its consistent top finish for Readers' Choice Best Horseshoe is no surprise. In addition to all the usual favorites, D'Arcy's offers 'shoes in corned beef, pastrami, Italian sausage and buffalo chicken varieties, as well as specialty combo flavors like chili cheese dog and a featured horseshoe of the week, all with traditional or spicy cheese sauce.

Originally established in 1998 in the Town & Country Shopping Center, D'Arcy's moved to its own building on Stanford Avenue more than 6 years ago. Its outdoor beer garden seats 40, and

its warm and friendly atmosphere is echoed by owner Hallie Pierceall's statement on the restaurant's website: "We want people to feel comfortable here so they'll want to stay awhile, just like a corner pub in Ireland."

SECOND PLACE: Dublin Pub
THIRD PLACE: The Corner Pub and Grill

**Best Ice Cream/
Frozen Yogurt**

READERS' CHOICE: Baskin Robbins
SECOND PLACE: Cold Stone Creamery
THIRD PLACE: Dairy Queen

Best Italian

READERS' CHOICE: Saputo's Restaurant
Category: Best Italian
Business Name: Saputo's Restaurant
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 544-2523
Hours: 10:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m. M-F; 5 p.m.-10:30 p.m. Sat.; 5-10 p.m. Sun.
Website: saputos.com

Thank you, Springfield, for selecting

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the MOST ROMANTIC restaurant and BEST WEST SIDE DINING. Enjoy the Art of Italian soon with your special someone.

As our thank you please visit us and enjoy one free appetizer (your choice of 4 piece toasted ravioli, zucchini sticks or calamari) with purchase of one entree.

Bella Milano
THE ART OF ITALIAN

4525 W. Wabash, Yellowstone Center www.bellamilanos.com 217.547.0011

The Feed Store

Thanks for loving our soup!

Ross, Ann, Daniel & the Staff

722663

Owners: Michael and Sandra Coffey
Number of Employees: 22
Years of Operation: Since 1948
Location: 801 E. Monroe

When it comes to Readers' Choice for Best Italian Restaurant, the only question is which businesses will claim second and third places. Five for five, Saputo's has been family owned and operated for three generations, serving Springfield at the same location for going on 65 years. Their recipes are time-tested, and a family member is on duty each and every day to oversee operations.

SECOND PLACE: Bella Milano
THIRD PLACE: Olive Garden

Best Margarita

READERS' CHOICE: Xochimilco
Category: Best Margarita and Best Mexican
Business Name: Xochimilco
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 546-3116
Hours: 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m. M-Th.; 11 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Fri.; 11:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m. Sat.;

11:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday.
Website: xochimilcorestaurant.com
Number of Employees: 14
Years of Operation: opened in 2002
Location: 2941 W. Iles Ave.; 3210 Northfield Drive; and 6901 Preston Drive in Chatham.

Consistent winner Xochimilco offers authentic Mexican cuisine with daily specials, a full menu and bar. The owners say they work hard to serve the best authentic Mexican food in Springfield and are thankful to their loyal customers.

SECOND PLACE: La Fiesta
THIRD PLACE: Los Rancheros

Best Martini

READERS' CHOICE: Ross Isaac
SECOND PLACE: Osaka
THIRD PLACE: Indigo

Best Mexican

READERS' CHOICE: Xochimilco
SECOND PLACE: La Fiesta
THIRD PLACE: Los Agaves

Best New Restaurant

READERS' CHOICE: Quaker Steak and Lube
Category: Best New Restaurant
Business Name: Quaker Steak & Lube
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 787-5823 (LUBE)
Hours: Sun-Thurs 11am-11pm. Fri/Sat 11am-1am
Website: thelube.com
Owners: Company owned location
Number of Employees: Approximately 150
Years of Operation: Opened Oct. 2011
Location: 1121 W. Lincolnshire Blvd. and 46 nationwide, located in 15 states

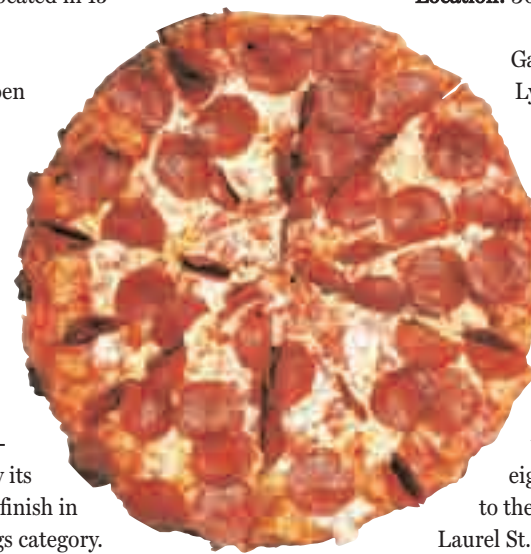
It's been open barely four months, but Quaker Steak & Lube is clearly a force to be reckoned with; its Best New Restaurant win is accompanied by its second-place finish in the Best Wings category.

Founded in 1974 and built in an abandoned gas station in Sharon, Pa., the original Quaker Steak & Lube began as a cook-your-own steak restaurant and home for vintage muscle cars (as part of the décor). Now a family-friendly restaurant with a motor-themed atmosphere and more than 30 locations across the U.S., The Lube serves more than 70 million wings annually and has won more than 100 local, national and international awards for its sauce recipes.

In addition to its award-winning chicken wings and 25 signature wing sauces, The Lube boasts a large selection of menu items including burgers, sandwiches, fresh salads, steaks and ribs. Its loyal following is partly inspired by weekly events and specials like "All-You-Can-Eat Wings and Build-Your-Own-Horseshoe Bar Tuesdays" and "Bike-Night Thursdays."

The restaurant also features the "Atomic Wing Challenge." Their sauces, after all, go from mild all the way up to "triple atomic."

Good luck!



Gabatoni's was founded by Johnny Lynn (1917-1995) and his wife Rosemary Lynn (1918-2000). In 1951, after returning from service in the Marine Corps, Johnny decided to take his love of food and cooking and share it with the community in which he lived. Gabatoni's first opened in downtown Springfield, 300 E. Washington St., and operated there for eight years. In 1959, they moved to the current location at 300 E.

Laurel St., where the business is still family owned and operated seven days a week.

Johnny and Rosemary's daughter, Rosalie, has been involved in the business from its inception in 1951. Since the passing of her parents, Rosalie has carried on the tradition of providing quality meals at a reasonable price, using only the finest ingredients of the highest quality. Rosemary and her team at Gabatoni's would like to thank all of the valued customers and friends over the years for their loyal support. We look forward to serving you for many years to come.

Thank you, everyone!

SECOND PLACE: Pizza Hut
THIRD PLACE: Papa Murphy's

Best Quick Lunch

READERS' CHOICE: Head West Sub Stop
SECOND PLACE: Subway
THIRD PLACE: Panera Bread

Ginger

Asian Bistro

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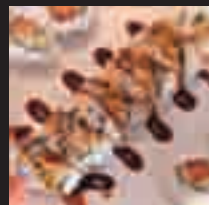
Bring in this ad and receive
 15% off your bill.
 (does not include bar drinks.)
 Ex. 3-28-12



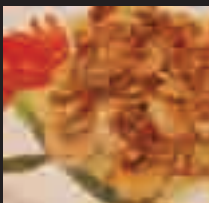
Hong Kong Steak

Ginger Asian Bistro
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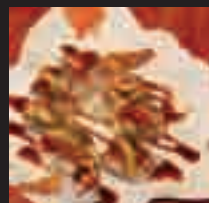
Shrimp Tempura & Alaska Roll



Walnut Shrimp



Dragon Roll



Best Romantic Dinner

READERS' CHOICE: Bella Milano
Category: Best Romantic Dinner and Best West Side Dining
Business Name: Bella Milano
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 547-0011
Hours: Lunch: 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. daily; Dinner, 4:30-9 p.m. Sun-Th; 4:30 to 10 p.m. F-Sat.
Website: bellamilanos.com
Owners: Craig Kalogerou and Sam Guarino
Years of Operation: since November 2005
Location: 4525 W. Wabash Ave.
 Restaurants are located in Edwardsville (Dec 2003), Springfield (Nov 2005), LeClaire Catering Center in Edwardsville (March 2008) and, opening in Spring 2012, O'Fallon IL.

Edwardsville is the host city to the first location of Bella Milano, which opened in 2004.

In 2005 Bella Milano added their second location on West Wabash Avenue. The Springfield location was chosen as a location for a taste of The Hill in St. Louis after the owners visited the city several times and became attracted to the small town, big city feel of Springfield.

The owners' goal was to establish a "fine casual" Italian restaurant with upscale ambiance and menu, a wonderful atmosphere and the value of more casual pricing.

The menu combines made-from-scratch family recipes in addition to those that originated from Italy and from the popular area called The Hill in St. Louis. Bella Milano's chefs prepare authentic Italian from Northern and Southern Italy as well as popular steak, chicken and seafood entrees. The menu also includes several signature items including the famous "Milano Salad," Chicken or Beef Milano and Shrimp

Rosalino.

Both locations offer a full service bar and feature an exposed brick pizza oven where customers watch their hand-tossed pizzas, tasty calzone or Panini sandwiches prepared. The Springfield restaurant can accommodate groups and parties up to 68 in their banquet room, separated from the main dining area by a see-through fireplace. The main dining area offers comfortable, high back booths that provide an intimate setting for diners. And in December of 2010 Bella Springfield added the Tuscan Room, available for additional seating or banquets, meetings and events and equipped with full AV and widescreen capabilities.

Bella Milano catering serves both the Edwardsville and Springfield markets for on-site and off-site events including weddings, corporate events, reunions and a wide variety of other social and business engagements. Bella Milano has established itself as a leader in both markets using the principles that combine academic qualifications and years of practical expertise in the areas of marketing, promotions, service, management, customer relations and training.

Customers can expect consistent, high quality, well-priced food served with fast and friendly service and in a comfortable and inviting ambiance. Bella Milano's combination of mood lighting, music, stone decor and intimate seating, mixing class and elegance with modern simplicity, has made Bella Milano Springfield's top pick for Best Romantic Dinner location for the third year in a row as well as the top spot for West Side Dining. In addition, the restaurant has consistently been a runner-up for Best Italian, Best Fine Dining and Best Place for a First Date.

SECOND PLACE: Maldaner's

THIRD PLACE: Ross Isaac



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722716



Best Soup

READERS' CHOICE: The Feed Store

Category: Best Soup

Business Name: The Feed Store

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 528-3355

Hours: 11 a.m.-3 p.m. M-F.

Owners: Ann Laurence, Ross Richardson and Daniel Laurence-Richardson (the next generation)

Years of Operation: Opened in 1977

Location: 516 E. Adams St.

After more than 34 years holding forth on the Old Capitol Plaza in downtown Springfield, it's still the lure of the soup that brings folks in the door. Each morning, the restaurant sets up the stockpots and creates six or seven different varieties from scratch for the daily lunch crowd.

In the beginning, there were only two choices: mushroom bisque and beef barley. Eventually, customers wanted more, and the owners quickly added new options. The No. 1 seller continues to be the robust, creamy Wisconsin cheese, made with Cheddar and a bit of beer; the venerable mushroom, cream of broccoli and French potato follow closely.

Whether it's five above zero with a wind-chill -10 or 95 in July, the soup still anchors lunch. At Christmas, hundreds and hundreds of quarts fly out the door, ending up on the central Illinois holiday tables. Some of the soups have become the first "real food" parents have fed their babies, and now those babies are bringing in kids of their own.

Recipes for home-sized quantities of the beef barley, mushroom bisque, and cheese are available on request.

SECOND PLACE: Panera Bread

THIRD PLACE: McCormick's

Best Steak

READERS' CHOICE: Longhorn Steakhouse

SECOND PLACE: Alexander's Steakhouse

THIRD PLACE: Texas Roadhouse

Best Sushi

READERS' CHOICE: Osaka

SECOND PLACE: Kiku Japanese Steak & Seafood

THIRD PLACE: Pao



Best West Side Dining

READERS' CHOICE: Bella Milano

SECOND PLACE: Pao

THIRD PLACE: American Harvest

Best Wi-Fi

READERS' CHOICE: Panera Bread

SECOND PLACE: Starbucks

THIRD PLACE: McDonald's

Best Wings

READERS' CHOICE: Buffalo Wild Wings

Category: Best Wings

Business Name: Buffalo Wild Wings Grill & Bar

City: Springfield

Business Phone: Wabash: 546-9453; Dirksen: 670-0048

Hours: 11 a.m.-1 a.m. M-Sat., 11 a.m.-midnight Sundays

Website: buffalowildwings.com

Owners: Doug and Jayme Cekander

Number of Employees: about 75 total

Years of Operation: Wabash, 6; Dirksen, 1½

Location: 4420 Wabash Ave and 2808 N. Dirksen Parkway

One of the fastest-growing restaurant chains in the country, Buffalo Wild Wings' menu features salads, appetizers, burgers, flatbreads, wraps and ribs.

But let's not kid ourselves. It's about the wings.

The restaurant offers 15 signature sauces, 4 dry rubs, more than 20 beers on tap and a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere.

Oh, yes, and they're the five-time winner of the five-year-old Readers' Choice award for best wings. B-Dubs is clearly doing something right.

SECOND PLACE: Quaker Steak and Lube

THIRD PLACE: Westwood's Lodge Pub & Grill

café
Moxo.

Café Moxo appreciates the people of Springfield remembering to eat and shop locally owned independent businesses.

Thank You!



BUSINESS

Best Antique Shop

READERS' CHOICE: Widow at Windsor Antiques

Category: Best Antique Shop
Business Name: Widow at Windsor Antiques
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 744-3735
Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Wed.-Sat.
Website: widowatwindsorantiques.com
Owners: Tom and Marilyn Kushak
Number of Employees: 5
Years of Operation: 6 years
Location: 711 S. 5th St.

The Widow at Windsor owners Tom and Marilyn Kushak are honored and humbled to once again receive the SJR Readers' Choice Award by the vote of confidence from their cherished customers. "Eclectic" is the word for this five-time winner; a visit to Widow at Windsor is an experience in discovering new selections that are unusual, whimsical and serendipitous - complete with beautiful music and candles glowing. When you step over the threshold of



Best antique shop: Widow at Windsor Antiques

Widow at Windsor, you enter a destination, home to antique and vintage treasures unique to anything seen before.

The owners travel the globe in search of distinctive treasures. From the famous French antique markets in Paris to antique warehouses in Belgium to private estates in corners of Europe and even remote provinces of China, their relentless pursuit of antiques results in a shop full of elegant furniture, statement pieces, art work, vintage jewelry, stained glass, sterling, mirrors, chandeliers, designer crystal, old books, accessories and one-of-a-kind surprises await.

The Widow's eclectic inventory is showcased in a charming 1920s Mediterranean Revival building - an architectural treasure in itself. By the end of February, the Widow is receiving yet another container of over 300 treasures Tom & Marilyn have hand-selected from many countries all over Europe.

SECOND PLACE: Flea Market to Fabulous
THIRD PLACE: Recycled Records

Best Auto Repair Shop

READERS' CHOICE: Brahler's Lube Center
SECOND PLACE: Zara's Collision Center
THIRD PLACE: Kim's Auto Body

Best Bank

READERS' CHOICE: United Community Bank
Category: Best Bank
Business Name: United Community Bank
City: Headquartered in Chatham
Business Phone: 483-2491
Hours: Cutoff time is 5 p.m. at all locations, Saturday and Sunday hours at Springfield and Chatham locations



Best bank: United Community Bank

Website: UCBbank.com
Owners: 100 percent employee owned; Robert A. Narmont is chairman and CEO.
Number of Employees: 240
Years of Operation: Established in 1907
Location: Headquartered in Chatham; many locations

United Community Bank has a rich tradition of local history and deep roots in the communities we serve. As a result, we take pride in offering the highest level of customer service. We know that our customers expect the very best, and our goal is to meet or exceed those expectations each and every day.

Our story began in 1973, when a local group invested in Farmer's State Bank in Greenfield, which was established in 1907. The goal was to deliver the ultimate in customer service and to acquire other banks in central and southern Illinois.

Always keeping the original "ultimate customer service" objective in mind, UCB has grown to become the leader of community banking. UCB is currently operating in eight

counties: Sangamon, Greene, Macoupin, Hancock, Brown, Adams, Pike and Scott. There are branches in Auburn, Augusta, Bunker Hill, Carlinville, Carthage, Chatham, Divernon, Gillespie, Golden, Greenfield, Hamilton, Loami, Mount Sterling, Pawnee, Pittsfield, Roodhouse, Springfield and Winchester, with numerous 24-hour ATM locations throughout the area.

Recognized as "The Leader of Community Banking," United Community Bancorp, Inc. is 100% employee owned with an asset size exceeding \$1.2 billion and a very strong history within the communities it serves.

SECOND PLACE: Marine Bank
THIRD PLACE: Illinois National Bank

Best Car Wash

READERS' CHOICE: Sparkling Clean Car Wash
SECOND PLACE: Car Wash City
THIRD PLACE: Drive In Car Wash

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Best Cell Phone Provider



READERS' CHOICE: AT&T Wireless
SECOND PLACE: Verizon Wireless
THIRD PLACE: US Cellular

Best Credit Union

READERS' CHOICE: Heartland Credit Union
Category: Best Credit Union
Business Name: Heartland Credit Union
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 726-8877
Hours: varies by location
Website: hcu.org
Owners: Member owned
Number of Employees: 70
Years of Operation: opened in 1946
Location: 2213 West White Oaks Drive, 720

South Grand Avenue West, 2717 Sangamon Avenue, inside Memorial Medical Center, 701 N. First Street, Room C18

Heartland Credit Union, voted Best Credit Union by SJ-R readers for the fifth year in a row, was founded in 1946 in Springfield, with 27 charter members. Today, Heartland Credit Union is a source for more than just credit; it is a hometown institution offering complete member services for every financial need, large or small. Heartland Credit Union provides service to more than 25,000 members at four Springfield locations, as well as through online and phone access.

A credit union is a not-for-profit financial cooperative owned by the members it serves. These members are individuals that have a common bond with each other, such as living in the same area or working in the same field.

Membership in Heartland Credit Union is available to anyone who lives or works in Cass, Logan, Macoupin, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan or Sangamon counties; any employee of the U.S. government; employees of the Southern Illinois Airport Authority; any member of the Gospel Kingdom Church; any member of any Laborers'

local belonging to any District Council, which is part of the Midwest Region; LIUNA; any employee and immediate family members of employees of the Memorial Health System and its controlled affiliates, including Memorial Medical Center, Memorial Medical Center Foundation, Memorial Child Care, Home Health Ventures, Memorial Home Services, HealthCare Network Associates, Abraham Lincoln Memorial Hospital Foundation, Lincoln Health Service, Taylorville Memorial Hospital & Foundation, Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois and SIU School of Medicine.

Heartland operates according to seven principles founded in the philosophy of cooperation and its central values of equality, equity and mutual self-help. There are no stockholders or investors.

Earnings are returned to the member/owners through lower loan rates, higher dividends and fewer fees.

According to the website statement from president Ed Gvazdinkas, "Our credit union is not profit driven, but member-owner driven. Our mission is "To Improve Members' Lives". Every employee and every volunteer board member of the credit union is committed to focusing their every attention to this mission. This member driven culture is what truly distinguishes Heartland from every other financial institution in our market place."

SECOND PLACE: CEFCU
THIRD PLACE: Sangamon Schools Credit Union



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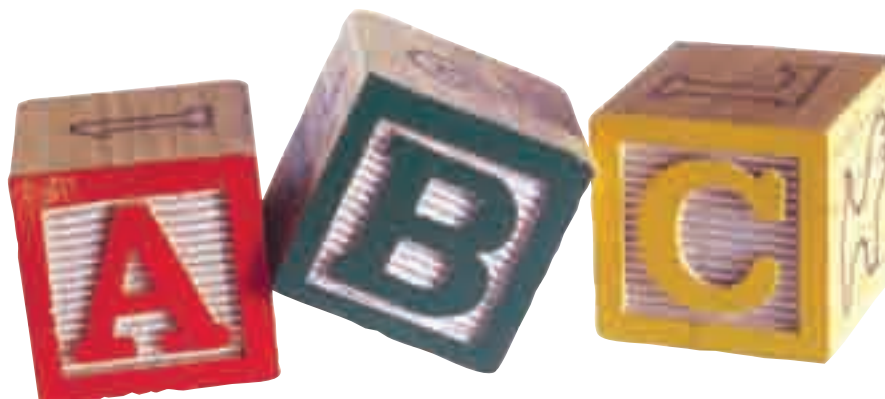


Best Day Care

READERS' CHOICE: Building Blocks Preschool
Category: Best Day Care
Business Name: Building Blocks Preschool
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 698-8877
Hours: 6 a.m.-6 p.m. (south location); 6 a.m.-11:45 p.m. (west location)
Owners: Devi Harper
Number of Employees: 120
Years of Operation: South location opened in April 2000; West location opened in August 1990.

Building Blocks Preschool has been a part of the Springfield community for 22 years, offering two locations (south and west campuses). It emphasizes experiences that promote natural curiosity, socialization, communication, problem solving and positive self-esteem. Learning experiences are cultivated through music, play and exploration with a caring, knowledgeable staff.

Building Blocks' certified preschool curriculum, The Sensory Teaching Readiness Curriculum,



is designed to streamline a child into kindergarten. It blends two schools of thought - sensory-based retention and fundamental readiness - and teaches basic skills such as writing, pre-math, pre-reading and listening. In addition, the school has a computer lab, music, Spanish, listening centers and American Sign Language programs. Building Blocks Preschool is Readers' Choice top pick for the fifth year in a row.

SECOND PLACE: Pleasant Run
THIRD PLACE: Calvary Temple

Best Doctor's Office

READERS' CHOICE: Springfield Clinic
Category: Best Doctor's Office
Business Name: Springfield Clinic
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 528-7541
Hours: Medical offices, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. All Prompt Care locations in Springfield and Jacksonville, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
Website: SpringfieldClinic.com
Owners: Physician partnership

Number of Employees: 2,000
Years of Operation: Since 1939
Location: Main location, 1025 S. Sixth St.; more than 40 Springfield Clinic offices and specialty outreach locations can be found throughout central Illinois.

Founded in 1939 by five physician partners, Springfield Clinic was one of the first multi-specialty medical clinics to form in downstate Illinois. Through numerous local mergers, ongoing physician recruitment and physician retention, Springfield Clinic became and remains one of Illinois' largest private multi-specialty clinics.

With more than 350 board-certified providers, including physicians, surgeons and mid-levels, Springfield Clinic provides patient care in nearly every field of medicine. From primary care to highly specialized medical treatments, Springfield Clinic offers expertise in nearly 80 medical specialties and sub-specialties.

Patients throughout Central Illinois can access an extensive network of primary care doctors and medical specialists close to home. On a regular basis, Springfield-based specialists travel to more than 40 destinations throughout the region - Springfield Clinic offices, other physician offices or

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Best doctor's office: Springfield Clinic

to local hospitals - providing the same high quality of care they deliver from their primary locations.

Additionally, Springfield Clinic offers a full complement of services that includes Lab, Radiology, Audiology, Behavioral Health, Clinical Research, Optical, Massage Therapy and Physical Therapy. Springfield Clinic also offers

comprehensive health management services for patients with sleep disorders, diabetes, breast cancer and other conditions.

Springfield Clinic is home to the area's first free-standing Ambulatory Surgery and Endoscopy Center, complete with five surgical and four endoscopy suites. Each year, Springfield Clinic

physicians and surgeons perform more than 16,500 procedures in the facility, which offers more privacy, greater convenience and lower costs than surgery performed in a traditional hospital setting.

Deeply committed to quality care, Springfield Clinic is equally dedicated to providing the latest in medical technology. Springfield Clinic was one of the first large, multi-specialty medical groups in the country to implement a fully-integrated electronic health record (EHR) system.

In 2011, Springfield Clinic launched my-Health@SC, a secure and convenient patient portal which enables users to access their electronic medical record online. In addition to managing their personal health records, patients can request appointments and prescription refills, and communicate with their physicians' offices through a message feature. Access to this innovative and free health management tool is available to all Springfield Clinic patients.

And, for those on the go, Springfield Clinic has an app for that. mySpringfieldClinic, the area's first health care app for the iPhone and iPad, is available as a free download from the iTunes store. The app contains useful tools including a physician directory, maps of locations and other useful ways to connect with Springfield Clinic.

While Springfield Clinic has grown in many ways, the same spirit of dedication to patients, commitment to quality and passion for innovation remains present more than 70 years later. Today, Springfield Clinic's mission is to provide the highest quality health care to the people of Central Illinois, and the doctors of Springfield Clinic continue to lead the way toward that goal.

SECOND PLACE: Koke Mill Medical Center

THIRD PLACE: Dr. Scott Morton Springfield Clinic



Our community would like to thank the Springfield community again for this Reader's Choice Award - "Best Retirement Community"



Our Levels of Care

Concordia Village is developing as a Continuing Care Retirement Community offering:

- Independent Living Apartment and Patio Homes
- Licensed Assisted Living
- State-of-the art Care Center

Our Amenities

Some of the wonderful services we offer at Concordia Village...activities, delicious meals, housekeeping, maintenance, transportation, 24-hour staffing on site, and a chaplain for pastoral care.

Our person-centered philosophy is evident in all that we do.



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Best Dry Cleaners

READERS' CHOICE: Starcrest Cleaners
Category: Best Dry Cleaners
Business Name: Starcrest Cleaners
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 726-6564
Hours: 6:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. M-F; 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat.; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sun.
Website: Starcrestcleaners.net
Owners: Todd and Sarah Nelson
Number of Employees: 40
Years of Operation: 16 years
Location: W. White Oaks Dr.; 4349 Conestoga Drive; 1825 W. Jefferson St.

Readers' Choice Best Dry Cleaners for five years running, Starcrest Cleaners is a dry cleaning operation locally owned by Todd and Sarah Nelson. Its three Springfield locations are open seven days a week and offer same-day service Monday through Saturday.

Starcrest's success lies in the progressive nature of its customer service. The company has two full-service dry cleaning facilities, and the third and newest store offers a laundromat with a drop off dry cleaning service as well. All three

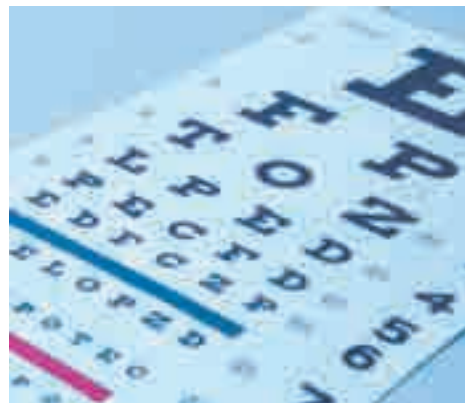
locations feature a drive-through door where staff will put customers' clothes in their car. Most recently, Starcrest will send the customer a text message or e-mail when their order is ready to be picked up.

Starcrest is also committed to an operation that's better for the environment. They have continued to update equipment to lower utility usage and provide for better quality pressing and now reclaim steam for lower utility usage as well. All store lighting has been replaced with high efficiency lights, and they use only 100% biodegradable plastic bags that can be recycled and will degrade in one year if thrown away.

SECOND PLACE: Paris Fabricare Specialists
THIRD PLACE: Village Cleaners

Best Eye Center

READERS' CHOICE: Vision Care Associates
Category: Best Eye Center
Business Name: Vision Care Associates
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 800-272-7393
Hours: 7 a.m.-6 p.m. M-Th; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. F; 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Sat.
Website: vision-care.com
Owners: Partner/doctors owned
Number of Employees: 65



Years of Operation: 39 years
Location: 121 North Grand Ave. W.; 2741 Prairie Crossing Dr.

Vision Care Associates uses state-of-the-art technology and continuous education to ensure that patients receive the best care possible. For nearly four decades, VCA doctors have been meeting the full spectrum of eye health needs for central Illinois while the VCA Eyewear Gallery with over 2,000 frames provides the latest in eyewear fashion. Two Springfield locations offer patients convenience and responsiveness. This is the fifth win in a row for Vision Care Associates.

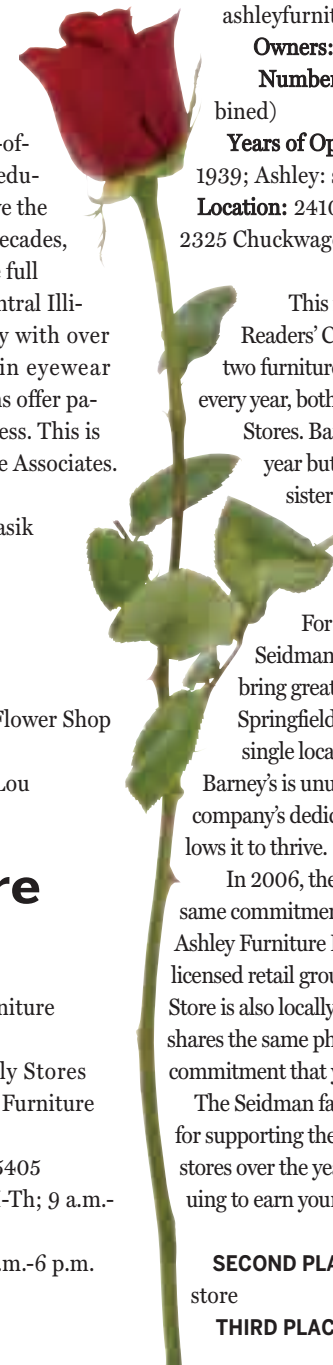
SECOND PLACE: Prairie Eye & Lasik Center
THIRD PLACE: Lens Crafters

Best Florist

READERS' CHOICE: Fifth Street Flower Shop
SECOND PLACE: True Colors
THIRD PLACE: Flowers by Mary Lou
THIRD PLACE (tie): Trendsetters

Best Furniture Store

READERS' CHOICE: Barney's Furniture
Category: Best Furniture Store
Business Name: Seidman Family Stores (Barney's Furniture and the Ashley Furniture Homestore)
Business Phone: 789-1926; 726-5405
Hours: Barney's: 9 a.m.-7 p.m. M-Th; 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. F-Sat.; Closed Sunday.
 Ashley: 10 a.m.-8 p.m. M-F; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat.; Noon-5 p.m. Sunday.
Website: barneysfurniture.com;



ashleyfurniturehomestores.com
Owners: The Seidman Family
Number of Employees: 50 (combined)

Years of Operation: Barney's: since 1939; Ashley: since 2006
Location: 2410 S. Grand Avenue E.; Ashley: 2325 Chuckwagon Dr.

This is the fifth year for the SJ-R's Readers' Choice Awards, and the same two furniture stores have filled the top slots every year, both owned by Seidman Family Stores. Barney's has been on top every year but one, when readers chose its sister store Ashley Furniture HomeStore instead. This marks Barney's third win in a row in this family rivalry.

For three generations Springfield's Seidman family has worked hard to bring great furniture value and service to Springfield and the Central Illinois area. A single location, locally owned store like Barney's is unusual in today's economy, but the company's dedication to service and value allows it to thrive.

In 2006, the Seidman family brought that same commitment to value and service to the Ashley Furniture HomeStore. Although part of a licensed retail group, the Ashley Furniture HomeStore is also locally owned and managed and shares the same philosophy of value, service and commitment that you'll find at Barney's.

The Seidman family wants to thank everyone for supporting the Seidman Family Furniture stores over the years and looks forward to continuing to earn your trust and your business.

SECOND PLACE: Ashley Furniture HomeStore
THIRD PLACE: La-Z-Boy

Thank you readers and sponsors. 4th year as Best Local Blog!



Celebrating Seven Years



722344



Thank you for voting
for Pleasant Run Learning Center and
Preschool in the best daycare category!

Pleasant Run... Where your child is #1!



Gas Station/ Convenience Store

READERS' CHOICE: Qik-N-EZ
SECOND PLACE: Thornton's
THIRD PLACE: Casey's

Best Grocery Store

READERS' CHOICE: County Market
SECOND PLACE: Schnucks
THIRD PLACE: Shop 'n Save

Best Hearing Center

READERS' CHOICE: Memorial Hearing Center
SECOND PLACE: Central IL Hearing and
Speech-Dr. Groesch
THIRD PLACE: Kerr Hearing Aid Center

Home Improvement

READERS' CHOICE: Lowe's
SECOND PLACE: Menard's
THIRD PLACE: Ace Hardware

Best Jewelry Store

READERS' CHOICE: Denney Jewelers
Category: Best Jewelry Store
Business Name: Denney Jewelers
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 787-0500
Hours: 10 a.m.-8 p.m. M-Sat.;
12-5 p.m. Sun.
Website: denneyjewelers.com
Owners: Shane and Cathy Denney
Number of Employees: 16
Years of Operation: Founded in 1954
Location: 2901 West Wabash Ave.

Since its founding in 1954, Denney Jewelers has focused on the principles of service and

quality in craftsmanship. The family-owned and -operated business for three generations is entering its seventh year in Springfield.

Denney Jewelers' staff is highly trained and includes gemologists, diamond experts, knowledgeable salespeople and skilled jewelry craftsman and designers. They are at the cutting edge of the jewelry industry in design and manufacturing, with all work performed on-site in Springfield. Denney Jewelers can take an idea from sketch, to computer model, to wax prototype, to precious metal casting, and finally into a finely crafted work of jewelry art.

The company's impressive 10,000-square foot showroom allows it to offer the widest selection of fine jewelry, diamonds and colored gemstones in the region.

Denney Jewelers prides itself on its skilled staff, its quality products, its personal customer service and its community involvement.

According to the owners, "We care about our



Readers' Choice Awards

Thank you!

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Best Resale Shop

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product, we care about our customer and we care about our community; we think this is a winning combination for Springfield and so do our customers. All of us at Denney Jewelers are extremely thankful to everyone who voted us Best Jewelry Store in Springfield and we look forward to serving you for many years to come."

SECOND PLACE: Giganti & Giganti Jewelers
THIRD PLACE: Kay Jewelers

Best Kitchen/ Bath Remodeling

READERS' CHOICE: Lowe's
SECOND PLACE: Menard's
THIRD PLACE: Distinctive Design



Best law firm: Delano Law Offices LLC

Best Law Firm

READERS' CHOICE: Delano Law Offices LLC
SECOND PLACE: Brown, Hay & Stephens
THIRD PLACE: Sorling Law Office

Best Lawn Care

READERS' CHOICE: Jack Robertson Lawn Care

Category: Best Lawn Care
Business Name: Robertson Lawn Care Inc.
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 787-5877
Hours: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F
Website: robertsonlawncare.com
Owners: Jack Robertson
Number of Employees: 12
Years of Operation: 35 years
Location: 3441 Constitution Drive

Robertson Lawn Care, Inc., is a locally owned and operated professional lawn care service providing fertilizer, seeding, aeration and lawn pest control services to the Springfield area since 1977. Serving thousands of customers over the years in a very personal "one customer at a



time" method, Jack Robertson and the experienced staff at Robertson Lawn Care, with over 100 years combined experience, have always maintained their commitment to family, employees, customer satisfaction and the community. Over the years this company has received various awards and national recognition for customer service, leadership and dedication to the industry.

They have also given back to the community by participating in the Springfield Green program and supporting various other local charities and school programs throughout the year.

SECOND PLACE: Lawn Doctor
THIRD PLACE: TruGreen

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Carp Dinner	\$8 ⁰⁰	Carp Sandwich	\$6 ⁵⁰
Walleye Dinner	\$8 ⁵⁰	Walleye Sandwich	\$7 ⁰⁰
Hot Dogs	\$1 ⁵⁰	Chicken Fingers & Fries	\$6 ⁰⁰

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North Council



Best liquor store: Friar Tuck

Best Liquor Store

READERS' CHOICE: Friar Tuck Beverage

SECOND PLACE: 709 Liquors

THIRD PLACE: The Northender

Best Pet Boarder

READERS' CHOICE: Howliday Inn-Sangamon Veterinary Clinic

Category: Best Pet Boarder

Business Name: Inn & Suites at Sangamon Avenue Veterinary Clinic

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 789-0011

Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m. M-F; 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Sat.

Website: savc.vetsuite.com

Owners: Franklin Coble, DVM.

Other veterinarians are Cathy Best, DVM; Sarah Smith, DVM; Melissa O'Brien, DVM; and Staci Slager, DVM

Number of Employees: 20

Years of Operation: Opened in 1985

Location: Sangamon Avenue Veterinary Clinic, 2525 Sangamon Avenue; also Coble Animal Hospital, 2828 South MacArthur Boulevard, phone 789-4200, www.cobleah.vetsuite.com, opened 1941.

After growing up at Coble Animal Hospital and working with his father in high school and his early college years, Franklin A. Coble, DVM graduated from the U of I in 1970 and joined the practice.

In 1985 Dr. Coble opened this new hospital on Sangamon Avenue. It quickly grew and now has

4 doctors on staff. Now in its 27th year, the Howliday Inn & Suites at Sangamon Avenue Veterinary Clinic isn't just a place for your pets to stay, it's a place where a veterinarian will keep a watchful eye on them. Luxury boarding suites are themed, such as the Illini Room, the SIU Room, the Nascar Room, the Cowboy Room and the Princess Room. The suites offer privacy so that your pet can feel at home. Regular pampered cage boarding and Day Care are also available.

The Sangamon Avenue Veterinary Clinic seeks to provide the best possible medical care, surgical care and dental care for their highly-valued patients.

SECOND PLACE: Dal Acres

THIRD PLACE: Laketown Animal Hospital

Best Pet Groomer

READERS' CHOICE: Petsmart

SECOND PLACE: Dal Acres

THIRD PLACE: The Dog House



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Best Pharmacy

READERS' CHOICE: Walgreens
SECOND PLACE: CVS Pharmacy
THIRD PLACE: Wal-Mart

Best Place to Buy a New Car

READERS' CHOICE: Green Hyundai
Category: Best Place to Buy a New Car and Best Place to Buy a Used Car
Business Name: Green Hyundai
Business Phone: 525-1370
Website: greenhyundai.com
Owners: Todd Green
Number of Employees: 91
Years of Operation: 26 (since 1986)
Location: 1200 S. Dirksen Parkway and Green Hyundai Certified West at White Oaks Mall

Readers' Choice winners were asked to provide some insight about their business and describe what makes it unique and keeps customers coming back. Green Hyundai's reply



came from General Manager Mike Quimby: "That's simple! It's not about cars, it's about people!"

SECOND PLACE: Friendly Chevrolet
THIRD PLACE: Landmark Ford

Best Place to Buy a Used Car

READERS' CHOICE: Green Hyundai
SECOND PLACE: Friendly Chevrolet
THIRD PLACE: Landmark Automotive

Best Place to Work

READERS' CHOICE: State of Illinois
SECOND PLACE: United Community Bank
THIRD PLACE: Illinois National Bank

Best Retirement Home

READERS CHOICE: Concordia Village
Category: Best Retirement Home
Business Name: Concordia Village



Best retirement home: Concordia Village

City: Springfield
Business Phone: 793-9429
Website: lssliving.org
Owners: Lutheran Senior Services, St. Louis, MO
Number of Employees: 75
Years of Operation: Opened in 1995, with major expansion in 2009
Location: 4104 West Iles

Concordia Village was originally started by 30 local Lutheran churches and consisted of 33 Independent Living apartments. In 2005, it affiliated with Lutheran Senior Services (LSS) of St. Louis, which viewed the Springfield market as a natural growth of its services. LSS expanded

Concordia Village by 78 apartments, 14 patio homes and 48 assisted living units, all of which opened in 2009. 65 new jobs were added to the Springfield area with the development.

Lutheran Senior Services has roots dating back more than 150 years, and currently has nine retirement communities in Missouri and Illinois similar to Concordia Village. LSS is a non-for-profit organization with a mission to "help older adults live life to its fullest," based on the Bible's John 10:10. People from all beliefs and faith traditions are welcome at LSS communities, including Concordia Village.

Concordia Village offers lovely homes, excellent dining services, housekeeping, transportation

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Winners

FIRST PLACE
 Best Radio Personality
Sam Madonia

FIRST PLACE
 Best Morning Radio Station
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and activities, accentuating "life" in senior living. In summer of 2010, the facility broke ground for an additional 9 patio homes and a skilled nursing care center, which recently began to accept residents. The care center offers residents a smaller, more homelike environment, with life centered on the kitchen and living room. Care is person-centered, with consistent caregivers and services.

SECOND PLACE: Bickford House

THIRD PLACE: St. Joseph's Home

Best Salon/Barber

READERS CHOICE: BJ Grand Salon & Spa

Category: Best Salon/Barber and Best Day Spa

Business Name: BJ Grand Salon & Spa

Hours: 8 a.m.-8 p.m. M-F; 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat., 12-5 p.m. Sun.

Website: bjgrandsalon.com

Owners: Gail and John Lorenzini, Lynne Lowder and Nick Lorenzini

Years of Operation: 36 years

Location: 3055 Professional Dr., phone 753-



8880; 3300 Robbins Road, phone 787-7770; 3006 Crossing Court, Champaign, phone 355-0505.

BJ Grand Salon & Spa continues to lead by offering the most advanced services in hair design, esthetics, nail care, massage and body therapies available in the industry today.

With three full-service locations, two in Springfield and one in Champaign, BJ Grand Salon & Spa has earned its well-respected reputation and staying power by literally remaining on the cutting edge. Continuing education for the hundreds of employees has kept BJ Grand Salon & Spa at the forefront of beauty industry trends. Clients know they don't have to travel to Chicago or St. Louis for the latest hair cut or body treat-

ment; instead their beautiful journey can begin at any luxurious BJ Grand Salon & Spa location.

SECOND PLACE: Appearances

THIRD PLACE: Reflecting A.R.T. Hair Studio

Best Specialty Food Store

READERS CHOICE: Food Fantasies

SECOND PLACE: Country Market

THIRD PLACE: Food Mart

Best Veterinarian

READERS CHOICE: Coble Animal Hospital

Category: Best Veterinarian

Business Name: Coble Animal Hospital

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 789-4200

Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m. M-F; 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Sat.

Website: cobleah.vetsuite.com

Owners: Franklin A Coble, DVM; other veterinarians, Joan Saner Reeder, DVM; Jennifer Miller Jones, DVM; Sandra Gilmore, DVM; Michelle Bader, DVM.

Number of Employees: 20

Years of Operation: Business opened in 1941

Location: 2828 South MacArthur Boulevard; also, Sangamon Avenue Veterinary Clinic, 2525 Sangamon Ave., phone 789-0011, opened 1985, www.savc.vetsuite.com.

Coble Animal Hospital was started 70 years ago by J. Porter Coble, DVM, who worked out of his home for six years before building the South MacArthur hospital in 1946-47. After growing up at the hospital and working with his father in high school and his early college years, Franklin A. Coble, DVM, graduated from the University of Illinois in 1970 and joined the practice. The hospital has grown to have 5 veterinarians on staff.

In 1985 the younger Dr. Coble opened a new hospital on Sangamon Avenue. It quickly grew and now has 4 doctors on staff. The business continues to expand and embrace new technologies to benefit their animal patients.

SECOND PLACE: Sangamon Avenue Vet Clinic

THIRD PLACE: Capitol Illini Vet Clinic

Best Wine Selection

READERS' CHOICE: Friar Tuck

SECOND PLACE: Corkscrew Wine Emporium Ltd

THIRD PLACE: It's All About Wine



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PEOPLE



Best auctioneer: Luke Lee Gaule

Best Auctioneer

READERS' CHOICE: Luke Lee Gaule Auction Center

Category: Best Auctioneer

Business Name: Luke Lee Gaule Auction Center

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 523-7272

Website: lukeleegaule.com

Owners: Luke Lee Gaule

Number of Employees: 20

Years of Operation: Business opened in 1879

Location: 5033 Gaule Rd.

SECOND PLACE: Patricia Doyle

THIRD PLACE: Cory Craig

Best Butcher

READERS' CHOICE: Humphrey's Market

SECOND PLACE: Country Market

THIRD PLACE: Turasky's Meats

Best Car Salesperson

READERS' CHOICE: Nicholas Powell, Landmark Cadillac

SECOND PLACE: Walt Skube-Landmark Ford

THIRD PLACE: Mike Quimby, Green Hyundai

Best Chiropractor

READERS' CHOICE: Reid Chiropractic & Nutrition Center

Category: Best Chiropractor

Business Name: Reid Chiropractic & Nutrition Center

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 698-5800

Hours: 8a.m.-5:30p.m. M&W; 9a.m.-Noon Tu; 9a.m.-5:30p.m. Th; 8a.m.-1p.m. F

Website: reidfamlywellness.com

Owners: Christopher J. Reid, DC DACBN, CCSP

Number of Employees: 4

Years of Operation: 15 Years

Location: 2920 Chatham Road, Suite A

We are a family-based business with an emphasis on service, education, and results! I think that my patients can sense that I love what I do, and that my primary focus is on helping them with their health needs.

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The bottom line is, why wait.....until it is too late!?

SECOND PLACE: Advanced Center for Pain & Rehab, Dr. Paul Venturini

THIRD PLACE: Dr. Jared Kennedy

Best DJ

READERS' CHOICE: Brad Schroder

Category: Best DJ

Business Name: Schroeder's DJ Service

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 546-7408

Hours: Available anytime

Website:

schroedersdjservice.com

Owners: Brad Schroeder

Number of Employees:

10

Years of Operation:

28 Years

Location: Springfield

and serving all central Illinois

SECOND PLACE: Mike Greer

THIRD PLACE: Justin Ford

Best Financial Planner

READERS' CHOICE: Tate Jones, UCB Financial Services

Category: Best Financial Planner

City: Chatham

Business Phone: 483-2491

Hours: 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. M-F; Saturday by appointment

Owners: Bob and Marsha Narmont

Location: 301 N. Main St., Chatham

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SECOND PLACE: Steven Koch, Ameriprise Financial

THIRD PLACE: Gary Seitz, Merrill Lynch

Best Golf Pro

READERS' CHOICE:

David Impastato, Piper Glen Golf Course

Category: Best Golf Pro

Business Name: Springfield Piper Glen Golf Club

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 483-6537

Hours: 7:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.

Website: piperglen.com

Owners: David Impastato

Number of Employees: 34

Years of Operation: 16 Years

Location: 7112 Piper Glen Drive

In 2006 Taylorville native David Impastato purchased Piper Glen after serving as Director of Golf at St. Charles Country Club in Chicago for 8 years. David has been a PGA Professional 17 years and has been named PGA Merchandiser



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Readers' Choice Awards

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of the Year twice (2002 & 2003). He was a member of the Illinois PGA of America Board in 2011. David is an avid teacher with more than 15 years' experience. He is involved with growing the game of golf not only with junior players but throughout the Springfield community. He would like to invite you to come and see all that piper Glen Golf Club has to offer.

SECOND PLACE: Lance Flury, Pasfield Golf Course

THIRD PLACE: Jim Sutzer, Lincoln Greens Golf Course



Best Home Builder

READERS' CHOICE: Buraski Builders, Inc.

Category: Best Home Builder

Business Name: Buraski Builders, Inc.

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 529-5172

Hours: 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F

Website: buraski.com

Owners: Frank Buraski, Barbara Buraski, Jason Buraski, Heather Sobieski

Number of Employees: 33

Years of Operation: Since 1981

Buraski Builders has grown from an office in Frank and Barb's bedroom to an award-winning, full-service construction company offering a wide range of services to the central Illinois community.

What hasn't changed since 1981 is the family aspect of the business. Today all four Buraskis are involved in the family-owned and -operated company. Recently, both son Jason and daughter Heather (Sobieski) assumed partnership in the business.



Best home builder: Buraski Builders, Inc.

With Jason and Heather as part owners, Buraski Builders will continue for many years to come. It is important that clients and the community are assured of their dependability and longevity.

Buraski Builders encompasses all aspects of the construction business, including new home and

light commercial construction; remodeling and room additions; maintenance and repairs; and home inspection services for buyers and sellers.

The company's computerized design-build service is particularly helpful to homeowners interested in building new or remodeling. Service and dependability are the foundations



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upon which Buraski Builders was built. They believe in service before, during and long after the sale.

Buraski Builders employees more than 30 full-time, highly qualified carpenters and office staff year round to control the high quality of work they expect for their clients. Buraski has been the winner of the Readers' Choice award for best builder for five years in a row.

SECOND PLACE: Moughan Builders, Inc.

THIRD PLACE: Michael Von Behren Builders

Best Insurance Agent



READERS' CHOICE:

Kevin Timoney, R.W. Troxell & Co

Category: Best Insurance Agent

Business Name: R.W. Troxell and Co.

City: Springfield

Business Phone:

528-7533

Hours: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F

Website: rwtroxell.com

Number of Employees: 100+

Years of Operation: 125 years

Location: Springfield, Chicago, Washington and St. Louis

In 1977, Timoney led the city in field goal

percentage; he was a "sure shot" when he got the ball. Today, that same intense focus on excellence and skill is evident in his dedication to his clients and their risk protection.

Since 2009, Timoney has been a member of the Society of Certified Insurance Counselors. The Society's goal is a commitment to leadership and professional excellence in the insurance industry. His participation expresses his devotion to delivering the highest level of professional competence in insurance risk management for his clients.

Kevin joined R. W. Troxell & Company in 1998 after spending fifteen years in the food wholesale industry. He has an associate degree from Springfield College and is a graduate of the University of Illinois. Timoney is a current board member for the United States Insurance Company and is involved in many community organizations.

SECOND PLACE: Mike Sauer, State Farm Insurance

THIRD PLACE: Ron Mays, State Farm Insurance

Best Philanthropist

READERS' CHOICE: Charles Hoogland

SECOND PLACE: Carolyn Oxtoby

THIRD PLACE: Butch Elzea

Best Photographer

READERS' CHOICE: Terry Farmer Photography

Category: Best Photographer

Business Name: Terry Farmer Photography

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 698-6000

Hours: Monday-Friday

8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

Website:

terryfarmer.com

Owner: Terry Farmer

Number of Employees: 6

Years of Operation: 21 years

Location: 4133 Old Jacksonville Road



Terry Farmer Photography first opened its doors in 1990. In 21 years, the studio has grown out of a small downtown office with only one employee to a brand new, environmentally-friendly 9000-square-foot photography studio with five additional employees.

Terry Farmer specializes in family, children, high school senior, business, commercial and aerial photography; custom graphic design services; and restoration of faded, discolored or damaged heirloom prints. Their goal is to provide personable and professional service with high-quality portrait results. Each client receives a personalized experience that is

tailored to their own specific needs and desires.

Terry is very active in the community and has won awards for his service. He has recently been involved with the Springfield Art Association, Red Cross, Catholic Charities and the Animal Protective League.

Terry Farmer Photography is proud to have been voted Best Photographer five years in a row. They want to thank all of their clients who have continued to support them throughout the years.

SECOND PLACE: Ed Clark Photography

THIRD PLACE: Kimberly Smoot Photography

Best Politician

READERS' CHOICE: State Sen. Larry Bomke

Category: Best Politician

State Senator Larry K. Bomke
50th District

Phone: 782-0228

Website: bomke.senategop.org

Years of service: 17 years

Office location: Rm 307 State Capitol Springfield, IL 62706

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- Taste of Downtown - July 6 & 7
- Old Capitol Blues & BBQ - August 24 & 25
- Old Capitol Holiday Walks - Dec. 5, 6, 12, & 19

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On behalf of the students, faculty, staff, and the entire Sacred Heart-Griffin Community, we would like to thank the State Journal-Register and its readership for recognizing us with this Readers' Choice Award:

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722659

For the fourth year in a row, Sen. Larry Bomke is our readers' pick for Best Politician. After 17 years as state Senator, Bomke said that he wanted to thank everyone who has shown their support of his efforts to be a presence in the communities he serves.

"It has truly been an honor to represent the people of the 50th District," Sen. Bomke said. "Dedication to my district has been one of my objectives and I sincerely hope this is one of the impressions I leave behind. In the course of several hundred parades, countless pancake and sausage breakfasts, chicken dinners, homecomings and numerous community events, I made many friends who became much more than political allies. My success is largely attributed to the people who stood behind me over the years. This group includes, first and foremost, my family, as well as my legislative staff, Cathy Scaife and Lori Bottrell and without a doubt, the most dedicated and hardworking volunteers I have ever known. It is very humbling to be recognized as the best, but I believe it happened because I had the best of the best behind me all the way."

SECOND PLACE: State Rep. Raymond Poe
THIRD PLACE: Mayor J. Michael Houston

Best Radio Personality

READERS' CHOICE: Sam Madonia, 1450 AM
SECOND PLACE: Jim Leach, WMAZ
THIRD PLACE: Ray Lytle

Best Real Estate Agent

READERS' CHOICE: Kyle Killebrew, The Real Estate Group
Category: Best Real Estate Agent
Business Name: Kyle Killebrew Real Estate Team - The Real Estate Group
Business Phone: 787-7000
Hours: Flexible
Website: kylesells.com
Owner: Kyle Killebrew
Number of Employees: 3 team members
Years of Operation: 7 years
Location: 3701 W. Wabash

In business since 2003, Kyle Killebrew Real Estate Team has helped over 800 families with the sale or purchase of a home. It is one of the fastest growing real estate teams in the Capital

Area Association of Realtors in sales volume, having finished in the top 2% of all area agents in 2007.

Killebrew was in the top 3% of 900 agents in the Capital Area Association of Realtors in 2005, and in 2007 was the first local Realtor to ever receive the Capital Area Association of Realtors Rising Star Award. This award is voted on by the association Board of Directors for accomplishments in the real estate business as well as enthusiasm and participation with the Capital Area Association.

With Kyle Killebrew as the leader, Sarah Grussenmeyer as buyers' agent/Realtor, Laura Menke as listing coordinator/Realtor and Thao Le as office administrator, this driven team works together to provide exceptional service to their clients. By treating each client as an individual with unique needs, they build genuine relationships that last beyond every transaction.

SECOND PLACE: Fritz Pfister, Remax
THIRD PLACE: Cindi Kruse, The Real Estate Group

Best SJ-R Columnist



READERS' CHOICE: Dave Bakke
SECOND PLACE: Bernie Schoenburg
THIRD PLACE: Tim Landis

Best Sports Reporter



READERS' CHOICE: Jim Ruppert
SECOND PLACE: John Supine
THIRD PLACE: Dave Kane

Best Teacher

READERS' CHOICE: Stephanie Young, Chatham Elementary

The Readers' Choice award for Best Teacher goes to Lincoln Land and UIS graduate Stephanie Young, a third-year second grade teacher at Chatham Elementary School. In her

own words: "I'm very lucky to be able to work in such a wonderful district that gives teachers, parents, and students the opportunity to grow in many positive ways. My goal as a teacher is for all of my students to always try to do their best and for them to be positive; always thinking that they can do whatever task is in front of them."

SECOND PLACE: Mary Bennett, Glenwood Elementary

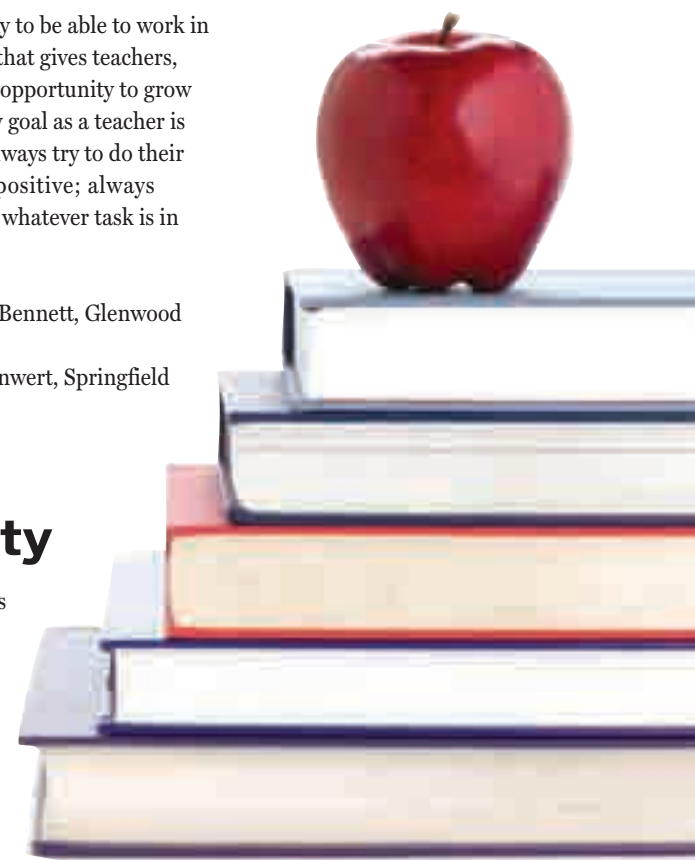
THIRD PLACE: Jim Steinwert, Springfield High School

Best TV Personality

READERS' CHOICE: Gus Gordon, Channel 20

SECOND PLACE: Jerry Lambert, Channel 20

THIRD PLACE: Joe Crain, Channel 20



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Best Bar

READERS' CHOICE: The Corner Pub and Grill
SECOND PLACE: Floyds Thirst Parlor
THIRD PLACE: Brickhouse

Best Bed and Breakfast

READERS' CHOICE: Inn at 835
SECOND PLACE: Pasfield House
FOURTH PLACE: Branson House

Best Child-Friendly Place

READERS' CHOICE: Chuck E. Cheese's
SECOND PLACE: Washington Park
THIRD PLACE: Southwind Park



Best Bingo

READERS' CHOICE: Caritas Hall
SECOND PLACE: Victory Hall
THIRD PLACE: VFW

Best Casino

READERS' CHOICE: Par-A-Dice Hotel & Casino
SECOND PLACE: Alton Belle
THIRD PLACE: Lumiere Place

Best Community Event

READERS' CHOICE: First Night
SECOND PLACE: Old Capitol Art Fair
THIRD PLACE: Old Capitol Blues and BBQ

Best Event Facility

READERS' CHOICE: Prairie Capital Convention Center



Best bar: The Corner Pub & Grill

Category: Best Event Facility
Business Name: Prairie Capital Convention Center
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 788-8800
Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. M-F
Website: springfieldpecc.com
Number of Employees: 36
Years of Operation: Opened in 1979
Location: 1 Convention Center Plaza



Best bed and Breakfast: The Inn at 835



Kevin "Sure Shot" Timoney

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The Prairie Capital Convention Center opened in 1979 and over the years has hosted some of the biggest names in the entertainment industry. Former acts include Elton John, Cher, Aerosmith, Kenny Chesney, George Strait, KISS, WWE, Disney, Blue Collar Comedy Tour, Metallica, Jeff Dunham, Blue Man Group, Ringling Brothers, Harlem Globetrotters and many more.

In addition, the PCCC hosts a variety of conventions, trade shows and meetings totaling approximately 230-250 event days per year.

SECOND PLACE: Hoogland Center for the Arts

THIRD PLACE: Inn at 835

Favorite Weekend Activity

READERS' CHOICE: Movies
SECOND PLACE: Boating
THIRD PLACE: Golf

Best Golf Course

READERS' CHOICE: Piper Glen Golf Course
Category: Best Golf Course
Business Name: Springfield Piper Glen Golf Club
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 483-6537
Hours: 7:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
Website: piperglen.com
Owner: David Impastato
Number of Employees: 34
Years of Operation: 16 years
Location: 7112 Piper Glen Drive

Reasonable greens fees and a layout with

dramatic elevation changes, eye-catching prairie grass plantings and large, undulating greens have won Piper Glen golf course accolade after accolade since its opening - including this, its fifth Readers' Choice top finish in a row.

Designed by Chicago native architect Bob Lohmann, who received the Board Room Magazine's 2002 Golf Course Architect of the Year award, Piper Glen was named the top course in central Illinois by Illinois Magazine and cited as a 4-1/2 star facility by Golf Digest, which also named it to its Top 50 under \$50. Though several hours away, the course draws a considerable clientele from the Chicagoland area.

SECOND PLACE: Long Bridge Golf Course
THIRD PLACE: Bunn Park

Best Live Entertainment

READERS' CHOICE: Donnie B's Comedy Club
Category: Best Live Entertainment
Business Name: Donnie B's Comedy Club
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 391-5653
Hours: Shows at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday
Website: funnybonecomedyclub.com
Number of Employees: 16
Years of Operation: 12½ years
Location: 2937 West White Oaks Drive

A local fixture for 13 years, Donnie B's brings in top acts from all over the country, including Kevin Pollock, Jamie Kennedy, Tom Arnold, Pauly Shore, Louie Anderson, Carlos Mencia, David Koechner and Norm McDonald.

SECOND PLACE: Illinois State Fair
THIRD PLACE: Hoogland Center for the Arts



Best local team to watch: Sacred Heart-Griffin High School

Best Place for Live Music

READERS' CHOICE: Marly's Pub
SECOND PLACE: The Curve Inn
THIRD PLACE: Lime Street Cafe

Best Local Band/Musician

READERS' CHOICE: Still Kick'n
SECOND PLACE: Hipbone Sam
THIRD PLACE: Kung Fu Dynamite

Best Local Team to Watch

READERS' CHOICE: Sacred Heart-Griffin High School
Category: Best Local Team to Watch
Business Name: Sacred Heart-Griffin High School
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 787-1595
Website: shg.org
Owners: Sponsored by the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, IL.
Number of Employees: 100
Years of Operation: Since 1895

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In 1873 a group of Dominican Sisters from Kentucky, who had first settled in Jacksonville, moved their Motherhouse to Springfield. In 1895, they established Sacred Heart Academy.

In 1930, Bishop James A. Griffin announced the opening of Cathedral Boys High School, administered by the Clerics of St. Viator. With the leadership of Bishop William A. O'Connor, in 1959, a new high school for boys, known as Griffin High School, was constructed.

It was GHS that began the tradition of the Mostaccioli Dinner. On Sunday, March 4, the 53rd annual Mostaccioli Dinner will be celebrated at SHG's newly renovated West Campus.

In the fall of 1988, SHA and GHS combined their spiritual, academic and financial resources to form one institution under the sponsorship of the Dominican Sisters of Springfield: Sacred Heart-Griffin High School. These changes have continued to strengthen our core message, which is "Academic Excellence in a Community of Faith."

Today the enrollment stands at 773 young

men and women. Each year, a large number of these students are successful in competition as National Merit Scholars, Illinois State Scholars, state-bound individual athletes and athletic teams as well as recipients of numerous awards in such disciplines as mathematics, science, language and the arts.

SHG continues to look ahead and plan for the future to ensure that a quality, secondary Catholic education is available to those who wish to be a part of the tradition that is SHG.

SECOND PLACE: Chatham Glenwood
THIRD PLACE: Springfield Sliders Baseball

Best Local Website

READERS' CHOICE: SJ-R.com
SECOND PLACE: springfieldmoms.org
THIRD PLACE: freecycle.org

SJ-R.COM

Best Morning Radio Station

READERS' CHOICE: WFMB, 104.5 FM
SECOND PLACE: Sports Radio, 1450AM
THIRD PLACE: WDBR, 103.7 FM

Best Place for a First Date

READERS' CHOICE: AMC Theatres
SECOND PLACE: Washington Park
THIRD PLACE: Bella Milano

Best Place Karaoke

READERS' CHOICE: Sluggo's
SECOND PLACE: Billy's Bar
THIRD PLACE: Blue Grouch

Best Place to People Watch

READERS' CHOICE: White Oaks Mall
SECOND PLACE: Illinois State Fair
THIRD PLACE: Washington Park

Best Pool Hall

READERS' CHOICE: Mowie's Cue
SECOND PLACE: Starship Billiards
SECOND PLACE: The Doghouse

Best Resale Shop

READERS' CHOICE: Land of Lincoln Goodwill Industries
Category: Best Resale Shop
Business Name: Land of Lincoln Goodwill Industries

■ Continued on page 28



Congratulations

Readers' Choice Awards



Dave Bakke
Best SJ-R Columnist



Jim Ruppert
Best Sports Reporter

SJ-R Media reaches 80% of adults in Sangamon and Menard counties. Source: The Media Audit, fall 2011

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Sarah Delano Pavlik • Patrick James Smith
David A. Stjern • Jason Vincent • Robert T. Lawley



■ From page 26

City: Springfield
Business Phone: 789-0400
Hours: 2001 W. Wabash and 2531 N. Dirksen: 9 a.m.-7 p.m. M-S; Noon-6 p.m. Sun.
 815 N. 11th: 8 a.m.-4:20 p.m. M-S; Noon-5 p.m. Sun.
Website: llgi.org
President & CEO: Sharon Durbin
Number of Employees: 311
Years of Operation: 74 years

Land of Lincoln Goodwill Industries, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that serves a wide array of persons with special needs in the community. The organization was founded in 1938 in a storefront building on East Washington Street and moved to its present location of 800 North 10th Street in 1965. Its service area consists of 37 counties in Central Illinois and 4 counties in Indiana. The Administrative Office and several of the organization's programs are housed at 1220 Outer Park Drive, Springfield. In addition, it has programs at 800 North 10th Street and retail stores/warehouses on 11th Street, Wabash Avenue and Dirksen Parkway in Springfield, as well as stores in Bloomington, Champaign, Chatham, Danville, Effingham, Jacksonville and Lincoln. Attended donation services are located in Springfield and Savoy.

Goodwill's mission is to empower people with special needs to become self-sufficient through the power of work. The purpose of the organization is to provide vocational rehabilitation and community employment to persons with mental, emotional and physical disabilities, as well as other barriers to employment in the LLGI service area. Through the development of adequate personal, social and vocational skills at LLGI, persons with barriers to employment are given the opportunity to live in the least restrictive



the Illinois State Fair

residential setting possible, and to reach their highest level of vocational potential in the community. These programs are funded through retail store sales. More than 85 % of retail store sales are used to support our mission.

SECOND PLACE: Remarkable Resale
SECOND PLACE: Cedar Chest

Best Shopping

READERS' CHOICE: White Oaks Mall
Category: Best Shopping
Business Name: White Oaks Mall
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 787-0110
Website: simon.com/whiteoaks
Owner: Simon Property Group
Number of Employees: 25
Years of Operation: 33 years

Like us on Facebook at shopwhiteoaks to keep up on the renovation from old to bold.

SECOND PLACE: Kohl's
THIRD PLACE: Wal-Mart

Thing to do at the State Fair

READERS' CHOICE: Eat
SECOND PLACE: People Watch
THIRD PLACE: Concerts

Best TV Show

READERS' CHOICE: "NCIS"
SECOND PLACE: "Modern Family"
THIRD PLACE: "Revenge"

Best Place for a Wedding Reception

READERS' CHOICE: Erin's Pavillion
Category: Best Place for a Wedding Reception
Business Name: Erin's Pavilion at Southwind Park
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 753-0702

Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. M-F or by rental
Website: springfieldparks.org or www.southwindpark.org
Owners: Springfield Park District
Number of Employees: 8
Years of Operation: 2 (1 year 9 months)
Location: 4965 S. 2nd St.

Erin's Pavilion is a premiere 5,000-square-foot rental facility located inside gorgeous, 80-acre state-of-the-art Southwind Park. Erin's Pavilion's facility is both beautiful and functional, exceeding full compliance with the accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It can accommodate up to 350 guests and offers friendly, personal service.

SECOND PLACE: Inn at 835
THIRD PLACE: Northfield Inn Suites & Conference Center



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Best Weekend Trip

READERS' CHOICE: St. Louis, Mo.
SECOND PLACE: Chicago, Ill.
THIRD PLACE: Galena, Ill.

LIFESTYLE

Best Local Blog

READERS' CHOICE: SpringfieldMoms.org
Category: Best Local Blog
Business Name: Springfield Moms
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 622-6966
Website: www.springfieldmoms.org
Owners: Kim Leistner
Number of Employees: 4
Years of Operation: 7 years
Location: 2915 Cronin Drive

It's no surprise that Springfield Moms is a

repeat champion in the Best Local Blogs category. From an original e-mail newsletter and website link to 30 area mothers, the site has grown to include a staff of four and is the go-to website for local families for area events, coupons and parenting information. In addition to a website averaging 11,000 unique monthly visitors, Springfield Moms has more than 2,200 Facebook fans (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Springfieldmomsorg/109470650630?ref=ts>), more than 700 followers of @springfieldmoms on Twitter and e-mail newsletters reaching more than 4,000 readers.

The site includes popular subsections, including an events calendar, summer camp directory, and "Kids Eat Free Dining Guide". Content provided by local volunteer writers and site sponsors are findable under the A-Z index on a variety of topics ranging from "Baby Corner" to indoor water parks to "In the Kitchen" recipe recommendations to teens going off to college. Springfield Moms' free bi-weekly e-Updates highlight what's new on the website, showcasing articles, updated directories, coupon links and event reminders. Founder and President Kim M. Leistner still runs the show and looks forward to continuing to serve the area.

SECOND PLACE: Blessed by Brenna
THIRD PLACE: Capitol Fax

Best Church

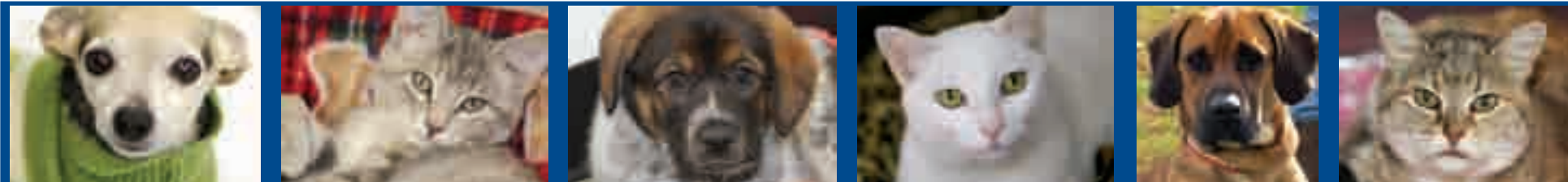
READERS' CHOICE: West Side Christian Church
SECOND PLACE: Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
THIRD PLACE: Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Best Country Club

READERS' CHOICE: Illini Country Club
SECOND PLACE: Panther Creek Country Club
THIRD PLACE: Island Bay Yacht Club

Best Day Spa

READERS CHOICE: BJ Grand Salon & Spa
SECOND PLACE: Appearances
SECOND PLACE: KM Hair Works & Spa



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- Adopt over 1,500 animals yearly
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- Save taxpayers money by caring for animals at our private facility
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Best Deals

READERS CHOICE: SJ-R Daily Deals

Category: Best Deals

Business Name: The State Journal-Register

City: Springfield

Website: greater.springfielddailydeals.com



Dining, dancing, golf, performances, shopping and more ... all at 50% off! You can find great discounted deals from local merchants online in the State Journal-Register's Daily Deals program. Try new places or visit your favorites without breaking the bank. Daily Deals started in August of 2011 and since then we have become the center for showcasing local businesses and their great products and services.

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to receive e-mail notifications of our available deals. Also find out about Daily Deals on our Facebook page: Greater Springfield Daily Deals. To purchase a deal, you buy it directly online with a credit or debit card in just a few simple steps. Print your certificate and redeem it with the merchant. It is that simple! Daily Deals are only available online from Daily Deals and cannot be purchased through the merchant. Right now, earn a free deal for yourself when you refer three of your friends who buy the same deal. Thank you to all the merchants who have partnered with us. We look forward to bringing central Illinois more deals and saving a few bucks! Thanks for voting us #1!!!

SECOND PLACE: Land of Lincoln Goodwill Industries

THIRD PLACE: Dollar Tree

Best Fitness Center

READERS' CHOICE: Fit Club

SECOND PLACE: YMCA

THIRD PLACE: Snap Fitness

Best Local Historic Site

READERS' CHOICE: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

Category: Best Historic Site

Business Name: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 558-8934

Website: www.presidentlincoln.org

Owners: State of Illinois

Number of Employees: 80

Years of Operation: 7 years

Location: 112-212 N. Sixth Street, Springfield

Opened in 2005, the ALPLM presents an immersive experience that takes visitors back to Lincoln's world and time. Its combination of scholarship and showmanship makes it the nation's most popular presidential center. Journeying from a rustic cabin to the Executive Mansion, visitors experience the joys and sorrows of the country and the Lincoln family.

The Museum's more than 40,000 square feet of exhibit space include the goose-bump-inducing Treasures Gallery and lifelike figures and scenes. The multi-screen, multi-stage, special-effects-laden Union Theater presentation "Lincoln's

Eyes" tells Lincoln's story through the eyes of an artist painting his portrait, and The Holavision® Theater's "Ghosts of the Library" presentation explains the importance of historic scholarship and preservation in a dynamic event that includes holograms, live actors, strobe lighting and exciting effects.

The Library side of the institution contains more than 12 million items pertaining to all aspects of Illinois history, including the world's largest collection of original Lincoln materials.

SECOND PLACE: Abraham Lincoln's Home

THIRD PLACE: Lincoln's New Salem



Best Lake Club

READERS' CHOICE: Firefighters/Postal Lake Club

Category: Best Lake Club

Business Name: Firefighters/Postal Lake Club

City: Springfield

Business Phone: 529-0755

Website: firefighterspostal.weebly.com

Years of Operation: opened in 2003

Location: 940 West Lake Shore Drive

Replacing the 62-year-old postal club, Firefighters and Postal members formed the new club in 2003. Our members pride themselves on having the most beautiful club on Lake Springfield. Restored to the look of an old firehouse, the club faces Lake Shore Drive. With ample parking, our spacious hall is available for renting for any of your corporate or family events.

We have a beautiful and spacious bar overlooking Lake Springfield, a large patio, bandstand and pavilion, which enhance the appearance of our club for our members and guests to enjoy. We look forward to seeing all of you at our fish fries, chicken fries and other events.

SECOND PLACE: Island Bay Yacht Club

THIRD PLACE: Springfield Motor Boat Club

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Best Local Charity

READERS' CHOICE: Salvation Army
Category: Best Local Charity
Business Name: The Salvation Army
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 525-2196
Website: tsaspringfield.org; tsarestoration.org
Number of Employees: 14
Years of Operation: 126 years
Location: 530 N. 6th St.

According to their website, in 2010, the latest year for which numbers were available, the Salvation Army in Sangamon County provided 16,670 people with groceries for everyone in their household, 14,600 meals for the hungry, overnight shelter for 40 people every day of the year, and hundreds of clothing vouchers and people served by rehabilitation and recovery programs.

The Salvation Army started in 1865 in London and continues in more than 120 countries. In Springfield, The Salvation Army has been serving Sangamon County for more than 125 years with programs including a food pantry, free health clinics, 24/7 emergency shelter for both men and women, an adult rehabilitation center, weekly youth programs for children of all ages, an emergency canteen for local purposes, senior programs, Bible studies, Sunday school, weekly worship services, nursing home programs, and Christmas assistance to those in need. They are looking ahead to a new building project at 100 N. 9th Street, with plans

to expand to a 120-bed shelter that includes rooms for families, expanded health care, a larger food pantry, a youth center (including tutoring and various educational programs), a new chapel and room to grow.

A consistent top finisher in our Readers' Choice Awards, The Salvation Army strives to help the homeless, hungry and addicted by helping change lives.

SECOND PLACE: Animal Protective League
THIRD PLACE: Catholic Charities

Strangest Place in Springfield

READERS' CHOICE: Penny Lane
Category: Strangest Place in Springfield
Business Name: Penny Lane
City: Springfield
Business Phone: 787-2996
Hours: 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Mon-Sat; 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday
Website: Pennylanegifts.com
Owners: Joe Utterback
Number of Employees: 14
Years of Operation: since 1971
Location: 2091 S. MacArthur

It's hard to say whether Penny Lane is more famous for its tie dye, its black lights, its posters or its T-shirts. A Springfield mainstay for more than 40 years, the store has relocated, expanded, and updated its well-known outside murals while growing to include online shopping and to reflect more recent trends like body jewelry.

They continue to be the go-to place for clothes, decals and stickers, posters and tapestries, incense and perfume, jewelry of all kinds, purses and bags, hats, blankets, door beads, drip candles, crystals, figurines and home décor, coaster sets

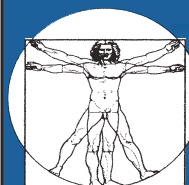
and light switch covers, and nearly anything else that comes to mind.

SECOND PLACE: The Capitol Building
THIRD PLACE: J. Parson's

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