

In the last few months there's been a relatively consistent drum beat coming from Edwardsville residents. I suppose I've actually been hearing it for a lot longer, but it's become more persistent since I was elected to the City Council. At coffee shops, at lunchtables, at local gyms, and dinner parties, residents of all types, young and old, newcomers and longtimers, are voicing concerns about how Edwardsville is growing and changing. Although the particular concerns vary from person to person, the consistent theme is an anxiety that if we grow, (or grow in a certain way,) that we'll lose those qualities which make Edwardsville a great place to live. More specifically, I often hear that we are fundamentally changing as a community, and losing those ever-elusive attributes of "character and charm," often ascribed to Edwardsville and similar small towns. I wanted to take a moment this week and let you know that I share those concerns. In fact, I can tell you with confidence that all of the City officials (both staff and elected) worry about those same items as well. I believe that it's the responsibility of the City Council to serve as both advocates for our residents, and guardians of the City's assets (the infrastructure, public safety, finances, culture, "look and feel" AND "livability" of our community). Livability is one of those buzz words in city planning parlance that refers to those qualities, tangible and intangible, which make for an attractive and desirable place to live. The reality is, when a place is highly livable, (like Edwardsville is) businesses follow, because they want to be where the people are. Herein lies the dilemma: Healthy things grow, and we don't want to be stagnant. But unhealthy things grow too. The challenge is not to stop growing, it's to grow in a healthy way. What does that mean exactly? That's the question with which we wrestle. I do have some thoughts on the topic, and I'll be sharing those with you over the course of the next few months. But in the meantime, let's start the weekend. I've added a new element permanently to the Ward 4 Weekly: a list of the upcoming City meetings. (You'll find it toward the bottom). Edwardsville is a great place, with a committed group of people working for its good. (Not just elected officials and staff, we have thousands of committed residents who volunteer as well.) But don't take my word for it. Come to a City meeting and see for yourself. If you feel so compelled, get involved and let your voice be heard. This is your Edwardsville too. Happy Friday.

**GOSHEN INDOOR MARKET:** Tomorrow, January 20, the Land of Goshen Community Market offers an INDOOR opportunity to shop for local food, pastries and crafts from 8 am – 12 Noon at NewSong Fellowship. Here's the vendor lineup for tomorrow: Baetje Farms, CallieBakes, Cooley Farms Carlyle IL, Coriander Fields, Ernst Family Farms, High Farms and Shady Maple Bakery, J&J Chocolate Chalet, Papa's Pasture, Petaled Pail, Rustic Roots, Ss Backwards Longhorn Meats, The Family Garden-New Douglas IL, The Shepherd's Wife, and 222 Artisan Bakery. I've also recently learned that they're having a seed swap. Hope to see you there!

**SIUE BASKETBALL HOSTS EDWARDSVILLE DAY:** Tomorrow at 1 pm, the SIUE Cougars Men's Basketball team takes on University of Tennessee-Martin and the first 100 Edwardsville residents who bring a water bill or some other proof of residency in the City of Edwardsville will receive free admission! Each ticket will come with a voucher for a free soda and hot dog. After the first 100 tickets are gone, residents can visit the SIUE Ticket Booth and get a ticket for just \$5. (Those tickets will have a voucher too!) I'm proud to be an SIUE Basketball Season Ticket holder since 2005 and although I can't make as many games as I used to, I love D-1 college basketball, and where better than my alma mater, just minutes from my house?! If you're looking for a fun and affordable activity for your family tomorrow, please consider coming out and

supporting Edwardsville Day at the SIUE Basketball game. For more info, call the SIUE ticket booth at 855-SIUNETIX or visit [www.siuecougars.com](http://www.siuecougars.com).

EDWARDSVILLE NAMED “RUNNER FRIENDLY:” Lace up your running shoes! The Road Runners Club of America designated Edwardsville and two other cities as “Runner Friendly Communities” this past week. What does that mean? Well, according to their press release, “These communities have shown that they meet the program’s criteria, which includes community infrastructure, community support and local government support for running. Each community has shown they have an infrastructure that can foster physical activity in a safe environment. They have a proven track record that organizations and businesses work together to promote running as a healthy exercise and sport. With the most important criteria being, there are positive relationships between the running community and local government.” Nice little honor for us. See the link below for the full press release: <http://www.rrca.org/news-articles/news-archives/2018/01/12/rrca-welcomes-winter-2017-runner-friendly-communities>

1820 PAINTING PARTY: Ever wonder what painting was like in the nineteenth century? Tomorrow, Saturday, January 20 from 1 – 3 p.m., guests to the Benjamin Stephenson House can participate in an 1820s Painting Party – which will include the creation of a 9” x 12” floral with a break to enjoy treats and drinks. Supplies will be provided. Space is limited to 10 adults (age 18 and up). Admission is free. RSVP by calling 692-1818.

WHAT’S UP AT THE WILDEY: Critically-acclaimed singer/songwriter Keith Anderson takes the Wildey Stage tomorrow night (Saturday, Jan. 20). If you love country music, you don’t want to miss this award-winning artist in your favorite local venue. The show starts at 8 pm. “Ask yourself one question: ‘Do I feel lucky?’ Well do ya, punk?” Be one of the lucky ones to see the 1971 Clint Eastwood classic “Dirty Harry” on the Wildey’s big screen this Tuesday, Jan. 23 for the weekly \$2 Tuesday film. Next Friday and Saturday, see the legendary classic rock band “Head East” right here in Edwardsville on the Wildey’s stage. The show will sell out so get your tickets now. For details on these and other shows at the Wildey, visit [WildeyTheatre.com](http://WildeyTheatre.com) or call 307-1750.

RESTORE DÉCOR COMMUNITY CELEBRATION: Join the hard working men and women from Edwardsville’s own “Restore Décor” next Saturday, January 27 from 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm at the Wildey Theatre for their first community event and private sale, “Celebrating Community: A Window to the Future.” Volunteers will be creating custom furniture pieces that will only be offered at this event. Food, drinks & music are included. Tickets can be purchased at Restore Decor and at the Wildey box office. All proceeds from the event will help meet Restore Decor's operating costs for 2018. Restore Décor is a non-profit resale shop for furniture and home accessories with locations on Main Street and on Second Street in Downtown Edwardsville. They accept donations of gently used furniture and home accessories and solicit volunteer help from the community to rescue, repurpose and resell the items. All net proceeds go directly to help families and organizations in the Edwardsville community.

STEPHENSON HOUSE ANNUAL DINNER: It's fitting that the Friends of the Colonel Benjamin Stephenson House are celebrating Illinois' bi-centennial at their Annual Dinner and Auction, since their namesake, Col. Stephenson was a delegate to the 1818 Illinois Constitutional Convention. And his home is the only house still standing of all the delegates at the Convention. Join the Friends and kick-off a year of celebration for the 200th Birthday of Illinois with their Annual Dinner and Auction on Saturday, February 17 at the LeClaire Room of Lewis and Clark Community College, Edwardsville Campus. Entertainment for the evening will include performances by the Jazz Band, AcaFellaz and Bel Canto all from Edwardsville High School. Present and former board members of the friends will be recognized. Tickets are only \$40 per person or \$400 for a table of ten. For tickets or questions, contact the Friends of the Benjamin Stephenson House at 618-692-1818, [stephensonhouse@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stephensonhouse@sbcglobal.net) or [stephensonhouse.org](http://stephensonhouse.org).

HELPING WITH SCHOOL LUNCH DEBT: Whether you realize it or not, there are many families in the Edwardsville School District who struggle to pay the lunch bills for their children. As a result, District 7 "quietly pays the bill" for those in our community who are not able to do so. The District 7 schools and cafeteria workers make every effort not to shame the student or deny any student a lunch – a humane practice that is less common in other (even nearby) districts, where students sometimes humiliated or just denied lunch. "After noticing that groups in various school districts around the country were crowd-funding to pay down 'lunch debt,' I wondered if we had debt in D7," Ward 4 resident Trish Oberweis said in a recent Ed-Glen Today article. Oberweis, an SIUE professor reached out to District 7 Superintendent Dr. Lynda Andre and learned that the cost of lunch debt locally is approximately \$5,000 per quarter, or \$20,000 annually. Yes, the District works with families to get them approved for the "free or reduced lunch" program but according to school officials, there's a gap in time before enrollment takes place. Instead of waiting, the school has taken a compassionate approach and provides the lunch quietly, so as not to embarrass anyone. As a result, Oberweis and a group of friends decided to start their own crowd-funding effort locally to help defray the costs. The group is called "School Lunch Debt Solutions," comprised of District 7 parents who are trying to help. So far, \$3,440 has already been raised toward their goal of \$7,500. To learn more about their efforts, "Like" their Facebook page at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/schoollunchdebtsolutions/> or to contribute: <https://www.youcaring.com/ecusd7lunchdebt-1031703>. According to Oberweis, who has a knack for making things happen, and is no stranger to culture-making, the group is planning on hosting some engaging community events in the near future. Kudos to both District 7, and to Trish and her group for their work to make this a place where all students, regardless of their socio-economic situation, feel welcome and supported in our community.

ST ANDREWS BOOK FAIR: Love reading or love someone who does? Don't miss the Winter Book Fair at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on Friday, Feb. 2 (5 pm – 8 pm) and Saturday, Feb. 3 (9 am – 3 pm). The book sale offers over 20,000 used books of all kinds including children's, current fiction, mysteries, history, literature, art, cookbooks, gardening, sports, philosophy, religion, biography and much more, including regional titles. The books are sorted by category and priced to sell. Also available for sale are CDs, DVDs and vinyl albums.

Sales are held quarterly on the first weekend in February, May, August and November. For additional information or to donate books, call 618-656-1294.

**WINTER CONCERT SERIES:** The City of Edwardsville's Winter Concert Series continues on February 9, French-speaking Creole fiddler and accordionist Dennis Stroughmatt, and "Creole Stomp" promises a rollicking mix of contemporary blues, swamp pop, and traditional Cajun and zydeco dance tunes. For tickets, <http://www.wildeytheatre.com/?nav=eventsDetails&num=1398>

**BUSINESS FORECAST BREAKFAST:** On Tuesday, February 6 from 7:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., the City of Edwardsville will host our annual "Business Forecast Breakfast." This year's breakfast will take place at the LeClaire Room of Lewis & Clark Community College. The event looks back on the successes of the previous year and looks ahead to the business opportunities in the coming year for Edwardsville. A free breakfast is provided for all attendees. SIUE School of Business Professor Dr. Timothy Sullivan will provide some economic forecast indicators and Peter Sheehan, Principal at NAI DESCO will serve as this year's keynote speaker. The event is free but seating is limited, and guests must RSVP in advance to attend. To register, please visit the following link:

[https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2018-city-of-edwardsville-business-forecast-breakfast-tickets-41708081996?ref=enivtefor001&utm\\_source=eb\\_email&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=inviteformalv2&utm\\_term=attend](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2018-city-of-edwardsville-business-forecast-breakfast-tickets-41708081996?ref=enivtefor001&utm_source=eb_email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=inviteformalv2&utm_term=attend)

#### UPCOMING CITY MEETINGS:

---Thu., Jan. 25 at 7 pm: (Special City Council meeting): The City Council is convening a "Meeting of the Whole" at the City Hall Council Chambers for a planning and zoning workshop.

---Mon., Jan. 29 at 5 pm: (Public Safety Committee): Regular bi-monthly meeting of the City's Public Safety Committee in the City Hall Council Chambers.

---Tues., Jan. 30 at 4:30 pm: (Public Services Committee): Regular bi-monthly meeting of the City's Public Services Committee in the Gov. Edwards Conference Room of City Hall.

---Tues., Jan. 30 at 5:30 pm: (Finance Committee): Regular bi-monthly meeting of the City's Finance Committee in the City Hall Council Chambers.

---Tues., Jan. 30 at 6:30 pm: (Edwardsville Beautification & Tree Commission): Regular monthly meeting of the EBTC, composed of Edwardsville citizens. Meets in the Gov. Edwards Conference Room of City Hall.

---Wed., Jan. 31 at 7 pm: (Public Library Board): Regular monthly meeting of the Edwardsville Library Board in the Committee Room of the Edwardsville Public Library.

---Thurs., Feb. 1 at 5:30 pm: (Administrative & Community Services Committee): Regular bi-monthly meeting of the City's Administrative & Community Services Committee in the Gov. Edwards Conference Room of City Hall.

CITY COMMITTEES?: I know what you're thinking what do each of these "committees" do? Here's how it works: The Edwardsville City Council is divided into four standing committees: 1). Administrative & Community Services (ACS) Committee; 2). the Finance Committee; 3). the Public Safety Committee; and, 4). the Public Services Committee. Each committee consists of three aldermen (two members and a chair) who are appointed at the discretion of the mayor. I serve on Public Safety and ACS. For a full description of each of these committees and which aldermen serve on each, visit the following link:

<https://www.cityofedwardsville.com/442/Aldermanic-Committee-Appointments>

...And don't forget about...

**WATERSHED DISCOVERY DAY:** What do our feathered friends in the winter? I thought they all flew south... Learn more at the next Watershed Discovery Day on Saturday January 27, from 10 am – Noon at the Watershed Nature Center. Come enjoy special activities designed for young explorers, ages 5-12, as we learn about busy winter birds. The focus of this month's event will be how birds interact with their winter habitats. Discovery Day is free and open to the public. Groups of 5-10 participants are welcome if registered in advance.

**DADDY / DAUGHTER DANCE:** Fathers and daughters are invited to put on their dancing shoes and step out together for a fun Valentine's event at this year's Daddy Daughter Valentine Dance at the Wildey Theatre. This year, participants will have two dates to choose from, Friday, February 16 or Saturday, February 17. Both nights, the dance will take place in the Events Rooms at the Wildey and will run from 6 pm - 8:30 pm. The evening's festivities will also include dinner, crafts and a photo booth. The Online Registration will be opening after the first of the year.

**NEW CITY WEBSITE:** The City of Edwardsville has launched a new and more user-friendly website. Check it out at: <http://www.cityofedwardsville.com/>

**WINTER POOL MEMBERSHIP SALE:** The Edwardsville Parks and Recreation Department is having a Winter Membership sale beginning today and running through February 28. While Family memberships for Edwardsville and Glen Carbon residents normally start at \$300, the Winter membership price is \$260. Memberships for senior citizen residents are normally \$125, but the Winter membership price is \$112. The pool, which sits adjacent to beautiful Cougar Lake, includes lockers, restrooms and a concession area as well as a small splash pad for the youngest visitors. It is accessible from N. University Drive with parking available at Lot 10 which sits just southwest of The Gardens and Cougar Lake Drive. Parking at this lot during the summer is free to anyone visiting the pool. Daily passes will also be available for \$5 per day or \$4 per day for seniors and children 4-15, kids three and under swim free. Private rentals will also be available for birthday parties, reunions and more. For more information contact the Edwardsville Parks Department at 692-7538 or visit [www.cityofedwardsville.com](http://www.cityofedwardsville.com).

**YOGA AT THE WILDEY:** Come experience the Wildey and be refreshed in body, mind, & soul on the third Tuesday of each month (Nov – May) from 7pm-8pm with Free yoga on the second floor of the Wildey. All levels are invited to join the group, led by certified yoga instructor

Donna Bartley. Guests must bring a yoga mat and water and are encouraged to arrive 15 minutes early. Space is limited and small donations are welcomed.

After a wicked cold spell (it is January, after all) the weekend promises to be a little warmer and more pleasant. Get out there and enjoy Edwardsville!

SJ Morrison  
Ward 4 Alderman  
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