

When Gary Niebur became Executive Director of the Edwardsville YMCA in 1982, the organization had fewer than 2,700 members and a budget of \$150,000 a year. It was a struggling, one-facility operation with few programs and literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in deferred maintenance needs. In a small Midwestern town of 10,000 people, perhaps these conditions are typical for a YMCA. But as you know, this is no typical small town, and Gary Niebur is not your typical YMCA Director. Thanks to his unprecedented dynamic leadership, the Edwardsville YMCA amassed more than \$10 million in donations to renovate and expand the Esic Center multiple times, construct the state-of-the-art Meyer Center, and purchase and renovate the Allison Cassens Early Childhood Center. Gary retired last week after an explosive 36 years. Today the Edwardsville Y boasts more than 19,200 members and an annual budget of \$6 million. Yes, it's a great place to work out, yes there are fantastic recreation, fitness and even cultural programs for kiddos, individuals and seniors, yes it's one of the largest YMCA's in the country, but thanks to Gary, the Edwardsville YMCA is a culture-maker. It is a vital center of life for our city, that values diversity, healthy living, inclusion, and social justice. This year they will give away more than \$200,000 in free memberships and other services to families who wouldn't otherwise have access. Gary's quick to give the credit to his dedicated Boards, his hard-working staff and the generosity of Edwardsville residents. And while all of that is true, this ship needed a captain with a bold vision, a love for this community, and an uncanny ability to make things happen. Gary was that guy. (As most of you know, during this same period he also served on City Council for 8 years and as Edwardsville's Mayor for 20.) A tip of the cap to you, and a note of thanks, Mr. Niebur, for an amazing career and for giving us this wonderful YMCA.

WILDEY WINTER CONCERT SERIES: The "Dueling Pianos" returns to the Wildey Theatre TONIGHT, Friday, March 2 to close out the Edwardsville Parks & Rec 'Winter Concert Series.' The show traditionally sells out, but don't hesitate to contact the Wildey about tickets. Two pianos face to face, and two experienced entertainers taking your requests, play everything from 1940's to Top 40, boy bands to girl bands, country to rock and roll, sock hop to hip hop, Rat Pack to Tupac, and everything in between. Appropriate for all ages, the show is never the same because it's driven by audience requests. For tickets, visit WildeyTheatre.com or call 307-1750.

VALLEY VIEW CLEAN UP: The Friends of Valley View Cemetery (located on IL-157 at Lewis Road) will be assembling tomorrow, Saturday, March 3 for a spring clean up. To participate, meet at 1564 Lewis Road starting at 10 a.m. Trash bags, hot chocolate, coffee and cookies will be provided. Bring your own work gloves. Questions can be e-mailed to friendsofvalleyviewcemetery@gmail.com, or by phone to Jeanne Carter at 618-980-9095.

ST LOUIS STREET UPDATE: The St. Louis Street Water Main Replacement Project continues. Thank you for your patience, and please let me know if you have any questions or encounter any major issues.

BIKE/PED PLANNING: The last two weeks at the Administrative and Community Services Committee Meeting, I have spoken to staff about launching a bicycle/pedestrian planning task force. To get things "rolling" there are a few areas of focus that I'd like for staff, elected officials and community members to consider as it relates to this topic, they are: an Existing Conditions Assessment of trails, sidewalks, accessibility, and connections; a Needs Analysis for Wayfinding, Designating Corridors as Bike/Walk or Both, and Identifying Capital Projects such

as new Separated Trails, connections from existing MCT Trails to neighborhoods, parks, commercial areas, etc., sidewalk improvements, on-Road Bike Lanes, and Improved ADA accessibility. Combined, these topics can serve as a “Scope of Work” for our planning effort. I’d like to assemble a few focus groups, comprised of community members to discuss this effort and would love to have the group chock-full of Ward 4 residents. If you’re interested in providing input or attending a focus group meeting, drop me a line!

FROZEN TREATS ARE BACK: As of yesterday, two local Edwardsville favorites have re-opened for the season, “Annie's Frozen Custard” and “Northside Dairy Haven” are both back! Annie’s (245 S. Buchanan) hours of operation are 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Northside (1902 N. Main) hours of operation are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Saturday and noon to 8 p.m. Sunday. See you there soon!

NEW ROOF AT WATERSHED: The Welcome Center at Watershed Nature Center will be closed this Tuesday, March 6 for construction. The Center is getting a much-needed new roof! All trails at Watershed will be open and unaffected.

EAC WATER COLOR CLASS: The Edwardsville Arts Center will be hosting a second session of March's ‘First Friday’ Watercolor class on a Wednesday next week. On Wednesday, March 7 from 6:30 – 9:30 p.m., the group will be working on "Pansy" with watercolor artist Marty Spears. Participants will learn all about the art of painting with watercolors, and go home with a completed painting. The class, which is for ages 14 and up and costs \$25 per person, takes place at the Edwardsville Arts Center located at Edwardsville High School. Bring an extra \$5 to class to purchase a mat to frame your painting with!

WHAT’S UP AT THE WILDEY: The \$2 Tuesday movie next week is the 1997 film, “Austin Powers: May of Mystery” starring Mike Myers. Can you believe it’s been more than 20 years since it was released? On Friday, March 9, the Wildey will be “shaking all night long” with the local debut of “Thunderstruck” an AC/DC tribute band which takes the stage at 8 p.m. For details on these and other shows at the Wildey, visit WildeyTheatre.com or call 307-1750.

PARKS MASTER PLAN UPDATE: The City of Edwardsville held a meeting on Wednesday to gather feedback from Edwardsville residents for their Parks Master Plan. Several Ward 4 residents attended, thank you for doing so! Residents indicated that they want a more diverse array of park types, and park programming, as well as more land preserved for the sake of greens space, wilderness and conservation. More park amenities, and options for active outdoor recreation were also requested. Consultants have been hired to meet with a variety of stakeholders this week. The feedback from these various groups and individuals will be an online survey that will be pushed out via social media, press releases and the City’s website. The culmination of all these efforts will be a Parks Master Plan which will help guide the City’s park and recreation planning and programming for the next several years.

THANK YOU FROM THE GOSHEN MARKET: The Goshen Market Foundation wanted to extend a heartfelt thanks to all of you who came out to Dewey’s on Tuesday night in support of the Goshen Market and its programs. Thanks to your efforts, the Market is very close to its goal

for the Mobile Market on Wheels Program, but it will also plant its first vegetable garden at a local school this year, at Ward 4's very own Lincoln Middle School. With the help of Market volunteers and faculty sponsors, the students will cultivate their own veggies this year. The Market will also be announcing the launch of a regular week night Goshen Market on the SIUE campus this Spring. If you would like to donate to these efforts, click on the link below:
https://app.donorview.com/FundRaiser/CampaignInfo?prm=FUC8uVnh5L7pw1TVP-396cxoQUI1P8ITEhcu4QOnxBCUJg33X_H7Gxakgg5j-Rpq9PI3_B-mX0DAriW5Yqq2lW3dV8_CHdpZPiue7LKLKlrtM5kmcR0_JqS_R5pKlil8ebIRJnABWXYs8vSUANpIQN2ZJQ3pitkGnVfXwyME7EOAXnja-YSzgnOK_O8eZ6Ff2qvP2aeco2qsNo8QNKQPBT1Q4DeJMTFDtj6kXzuZmMkCsgnVtrzgi_cbm2D5wVHy0

EAC ART ALIVE: If you like local art and want to support both the artists and the Edwardsville Arts Center, check out the upcoming "Art Alive" event at the Wildey Theatre on March 10 from 6 – 9 p.m. "Art Alive" is EAC's one-of-a-kind fundraising event at which guests can mix and mingle with several professional artists, and learn about their process as they finish their artwork LIVE. Throughout the night guests will have a chance to bid on their favorite pieces, (including paintings, drawings, ceramics and more). An assortment of appetizers and one drink are included with your ticket. Live music and a caricature artist will add to the evening's festivities. At the end of the night, the highest bidder for each piece of artwork will take home a new addition for their art collection. Tickets are \$50 each and space is limited, so buy your tickets now! <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0a4aacae28a4fa7-artalive>

SIUE FRIENDS OF ART AUCTION: The Friends of Art along with the SIUE Department of Art and Design will host their 41st annual Art Auction at 7 p.m. Friday, March 16. The auction will be held in the Art West Gallery located in the Art and Design West building on the SIUE campus. The 2018 auction will offer original artworks donated by faculty, visiting artists, alumni, friends and advanced students. Additional work will be available to the highest bidder in a silent auction. Doors open at 6 p.m., and bidding starts at 7 p.m. To view images of the artwork to be auctioned, visit the Friends of Art SIUE on Facebook or attend a preview in the gallery Thursday afternoon, March 15. Since 1977, the Friends of Art has assisted the the Art & Design department in staging this fundraiser. Last year's auction allowed the department to invite 16 local, national and international artists and scholars to the SIUE campus in addition to providing funds for 35 students to attend a national conference. Auction funding also paid for jurors and awards for student exhibits and refreshments for art exhibitions. Tickets are \$7 for the general public, and can be purchased at the door. Admission is free to all students, auction donors and members of the Friends of Art. Complimentary food will be provided, and a cash bar will also be available. Complimentary parking will be provided in Lot B (SIUE's Visitor's Lot). A drop off area is available next to the back entrance of the Art and Design West building. For more information on Friends of Art, visit siue.edu/artsandsciences/art or the Friends of Art SIUE Facebook. E-mails may be directed to friendsofart.siue@yahoo.com.

WHISKEY FOR THE WATERSHED: On Friday, March 16, the Nature Preserve Foundation is hosting a new signature event called “Whiskey for the Watershed” at 6:30 pm at the LeClaire Room of Lewis & Clark Community College. Food and drinks will be provided by local favorites: Cleveland Heath, Wang Gang, 1818 Chop House and Bella Milano. Silent Auction items from area artists and local shops will also be available. Tickets are \$80 for full tasting access including whiskey, specialty cocktails and wine, and \$40 for a Designated Driver Ticket. Proceeds will benefit the “Access Nature” project to enhance the Watershed Nature Center. To buy your tickets, visit the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whiskey-for-the-watershed-tickets-42687019023>

GROW THE GARDENS: The Gardens at SIUE are one of our community’s many treasures. Be a part of helping to raise funds for the Gardens by attending “An Evening with Dueling Pianos,” at the Wildey Theatre on Friday, April 13. The \$50 ticket covers admission and a 2018 Friends of the Gardens membership. Ticket link: siue.edu/gardens/grow. Appetizers will be provided by Wang Gang, a cash bar will be available, and music by the rocking Dueling Pianos. If you have questions, e-mail thegardens@siue.edu.

TASTE OF EDWARDSVILLE: The 10th Annual Taste of Edwardsville, one of our community’s most exciting signature events will take place on April 7 at the LeClaire Room this year, and tickets go on sale Wednesday, March 7. As most of you know, proceeds from the “Taste” go to “Edwardsville Neighbors” a local non-profit that provides financial support and other services for families and individuals in the Edwardsville School District who are struggling due to injury or illness. To donate, buy tickets or learn more about their efforts in our community, visit: <https://edwardsvilleneighborsinneed.org/>

UPCOMING CITY MEETINGS:

--Tues., March 6 at 5 pm: (Recreation, Arts & Special Events Board): Regular monthly meeting of the RASE Board in the Gov. Coles Conference Room, second floor of City Hall.

--Tues., March 6 at 5 pm: (Board of Fire & Police Commissioners): Regular monthly meeting of the RASE Board in the Gov. Ford Conference Room, second floor of City Hall.

--Tues., March 6 at 7 pm: (City Council): Regular bi-monthly meeting of the Edwardsville City Council in the City Hall Chambers.

--Tues., March 8 at 5:30 pm: (Edwardsville Technology Enhancement Committee): Regular monthly meeting of the ETEC in the Gov. Coles Conference Room, second floor of City Hall.

---Mon., March 12 at 5 pm: (Public Safety Committee): Regular bi-monthly meeting of the City’s Public Safety Committee in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

--- Mon., March 12 at 6 pm: (Ordinance Committee): Regular bi-monthly meeting of the City’s Ordinance Committee of the Plan Commission in the Gov. Edwards Conference Room of City Hall.

---Tues., March 13 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., March 13 at 5:30 pm: (Finance Committee): Regular bi-monthly meeting of the City's Finance Committee in the Gov. Edwards Conference Room of City Hall.

---Wed., March 14 at 7 pm: (Historic Preservation Commission): Regular monthly meeting of the City's Historic Preservation Commission in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

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

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.

Enjoy this beautiful weekend!

SJ Morrison
Ward 4 Alderman
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