Curating Illinois’ African-American History

King exploring all corners of central Illinois for African-American history

For a month in high school in the middle of summer, Douglas King traded life in St. Louis for Paris, Illinois. It was a stark contrast, leaving a bustling, urban environment for a rural one that housed one percent of the population King was used to. But he gained valuable insight to a different lifestyle, one where you didn’t have to lock your door at night. Now, King is taking that approach of exploring new areas when curating the Springfield and Central Illinois African-American History Museum, and it’s paying off in a big way.

In a way where King has more than the museum can house.

“People ask us, ‘How’s the museum doing?’ And I tell them, we’re doing great,” King said. “I tell them, we’re running so fast, we’re about to catch up with ourselves.”

Part of the reason King has plenty to discover is the idea he’s put forward with the museum – a place that can tell the stories from Quincy to Danville, from Peoria to Alton. There’s plenty of history in Springfield thanks to a man called Abraham Lincoln, but King’s looking to provide a museum that showcases all kinds of stories.

Currently renting a building just outside Oak Ridge Cemetery, there’s a spacious room housing original photography taken in Springfield, paintings, quilts, and other items showing African-American history across Illinois.

And while it’s fun to learn about those who were connected with a former president, some of the most incredible stories happened further away from bigger cities. Near the banks of the Mississippi in the heart of Pike County, King heard a story about a city he didn’t even know existed – New Philadelphia.

Back in the 1830s, Frank McWhorter, an enslaved man who purchased his freedom and several members of his family, left Kentucky and traveled to Pike County. He bought several plots of land and became the first once-enslaved African-American, and possibly free, to incorporate a township. That became New Philadelphia. By selling some of the other plots of land within the town, McWhorter was able to save more and free more family members from Kentucky.

“The birth records aren’t complete, but we think over the course of time, 17 families’ freedoms were purchased. Just a fascinating story,” King said.

McWhorter’s story and legacy is just one in the current museum. There’s plenty to look at, but King is thinking bigger. In an effort to help build up funds to purchase their own building, King helped set up an organization fund, the Springfield and Central Illinois African-American History Museum Fund. King, a founding board member when the Community Foundation was established, has seen first-hand the impact the foundation can bring.

“I know personally the impact that’s going to have on us is very, very positive,” King said. “They’ve done a heck of a job of taking your money, investing it wisely and making it grow. And that’s what we’re looking for. This is the money that we could use to purchase our facility. In the meantime, it may allow us to expand where we are now.”

See "museum" on page 10
Always on the Move

For nearly four decades, Judy and Harvey Stephens crafted their Springfield home to the way they wanted. Suddenly, over the course of a weekend an opportunity arose.

“We had a wonderful house we’d been in for 37 years, completely remodeled so we could live on one floor,” Harvey said. “Our daughter-in-law said this property (their current home) is going on the market.

“This was on a Friday. We came to look at it on a Saturday and bought it on Monday. All this careful planning, that’s not how we do things.”

“We never have,” Judy added.

It’s a spirit coursing throughout the Stephens’ lives – embracing the winds of change and seizing opportunity. By all accounts, it’s what lifted the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln off the ground 15 years ago, and that mindset is what culminated in the community foundation creating the Stephens Philanthropy Award in their honor.

It provided Judy a wealth of knowledge about the community when holding the position of board chair. For Harvey, exploring different areas of the law helped provide understanding of a new kind of organization.

“That’s a Junior League philosophy,” Judy said about providing services, then finding the next challenge. “That was part of the training. Nobody’s indispensable. You go and do your thing and do it well and take your talent and move to the next thing. And I really believe that.”

Harvey is a native of Springfield, following in his grandfather’s and father’s footsteps to work for the oldest law firm in Illinois: Brown, Hay & Stephens. Judy grew up on the east coast – the ocean, and pine trees. But in Rocky Mountain National Park – in the heart of Colorado – she met Harvey, and that changed everything. With a year left in law school for Harvey, the two married. Soon thereafter, they moved to Springfield.

But Judy, true to her ability to change and adapt, found time to call both places home. While embracing and serving central Illinois, she and Harvey frequently traveled to New Hampshire to visit her parents.

“I got my New England fix,” she said.

No matter the location, both felt compelled to serve and strengthen their community thanks to guidance from both sets of parents. Both of their mothers were active in their church communities – Judy’s father served as the volunteer fire department chief, and Harvey’s father spent 25 years with the Boy Scouts. All that helped set an innate desire to give back.

“We always were interested in supporting – we supported the church and other organizations,” Harvey said. “Our support was not just to give money to organizations, our support was to those we thought were doing a good job. What we were really talking about is that we would achieve something for the betterment of the community.”

The Stephens will point out there are two parts to philanthropy: money and service. The first part, the Stephens would issue when they could, sitting down at year’s end and figuring out what was possible.

“We weren’t the ones who were going to be the big givers or anything,” Harvey said. “We were not able to do that,” Judy said.

“It was more supporting with time and energy,” Harvey added.

Like their parents, Judy and Harvey dove in armed with energy and time they made. Judy was a part of numerous organizations, including board president of United Way; Harvey was president of the Kiwanis Club and served on the board of Lincoln Library.

“We just know – well, I’ll speak for myself – I know how I want to live my life and how I want to carry on things in five-year plans,” Judy said. “I know when something can be good and I know when something will work, and I think I know how to make it work. That’s the way I go.”

“And you’re very good at it,” replied Harvey.

While on the board for the symphony, Judy ventured to Akron, Ohio for a conference. She soon would be setting foot near where the first community foundation started, and little did she know, the kind of organization that would take up nearly two decades of her life as a volunteer.

From board member to board chair, Judy set in motion the late 1990s and early 2000s to reshape what was then the Sangamon County Foundation. It was a change to broaden the base of contributors to help charitable organizations, and turn the board into a self-nominating entity rather than having the banks and government appoint members.

Thanks to serendipity, it just so happened she knew someone to help navigate the legal waters to accomplish that.

“It seems to have worked,” Judy said. “It wasn’t
Locascios Expand Giving with Donor-Advised Fund

Jane and Phil Locascio are both quick to say how blessed they’ve been in life.

So when Jane held her 60th birthday party, they asked those attending to not bring any gifts. If they wanted, they could donate to their recently established Locascio Family Fund. Almost immediately after her birthday, Hurricane Harvey swept across Texas. The Locascios sprang into action.

“I love Rockport, which was ground zero for Harvey, so we sent money to the Disaster Group Recovery Fund, which is part of the Coastal Bend Community Foundation,” Jane said. “I felt really good about that because I love that area and have a real affinity for it. We have friends down there, and my brother’s in Houston – so we felt a personal connection to the area.”

And so, days after setting up the donor-advised fund, the Locascios found a cause of immediate need. Initially, they thought about setting up a scholarship fund. Instead, after learning from Community Foundation President John Stremsterfer about donor-advised funds, that seemed more in line with what they wanted to do. The freedom to reach out to multiple charities – even as far away as Texas – paid off right away.

“We thought maybe a scholarship – but after talking to John, he said you don’t have to lock yourself into one avenue,” Phil said. “I think that’s better – the ability to pick and choose.”

Phil grew up in Chicago and earned a degree in psychology before moving to Springfield to work as a policy writer for the State of Illinois. Now retired after 37 years with the state, he’s painting, writing novels, and still sings in the choir at St. Agnes. Before jumping into the real estate business, Jane was an auditor for 25 years. She’s also involved in the St. Agnes Young at Heart group, the King’s Daughters Organization, and the Capital Area Realtors. They have both committed much time to the Springfield Art Association.

As well-rounded as their backgrounds are, so is their mission of helping organizations. While they had the thought of starting a scholarship, their faith is also important to them, as are the unforeseen needs resulting from natural disasters like Hurricane Harvey.

The Locascios have one daughter, Lucy, and as important as it was to be able to give in perpetuity, so was leaving a legacy behind for their daughter.

“To me, it’s part of raising her correctly so she’ll be involved in giving,” Phil said.

“I think it’s making her more mindful,” Jane added.

A little more than a decade ago, both Phil and Jane had health scares including Jane battling breast cancer. Both are in good health now and enjoy traveling, whether it’s to Europe to visit former foreign exchange students, vacation along the Danube River, or visiting places they haven’t seen right here in the United States – especially state capitals since Jane has visiting all 50 on her bucket list!

“I think turning 60 gives you a different outlook,” Phil said. “You’re always reading about someone getting their hip replaced or a knee replaced.”

And whether it’s hurricane disaster relief, the Central Illinois Foodbank, or some other worthy cause, they’re looking forward to exploring what’s out there to lend a helping hand as well.

“We’re anxious to see what choices are out there,” Phil said.

For more information on establishing a donor-advised fund, contact the Community Foundation at 217.789.4431 or visit CFL.L.org

Casper Family Establishes Scholarship

If you’re familiar with Springfield sports history or politics, there’s a good chance you’ve heard of Don W. Casper – known to his friends as “Cas.”

Soon, a new generation will start to learn his name as well.

After Casper, 83, passed away in the summer of 2017, his family set up the Don W. Casper Memorial Scholarship in his name to benefit high school students of his alma mater – Springfield High. Casper was a standout in baseball, basketball, and especially football as he gave the Senators 1,776 yards of offense in his senior year (1951). That translated into a year at University of Illinois and then eventually quarterbacking a Fort Hood (Texas) team ranked second nationally among all army teams. He was inducted in the Springfield Sports Hall of Fame’s second class in 1992.

Add in 40 years of public service as supervisor of Woodside Township, and Casper’s roots run deep in Springfield. But his nature wasn’t to brag. So much so, that even his son-in-law, George Merriman, found out new facts about his life this summer.

“Cas was a great person. He never, despite some of his accomplishments, spoke about himself,” Merriman said. “One of my best friends read his obituary that talked about how he was such a great athlete and had done so much in local politics in Springfield. The friend said ‘I knew Cas for over 20 years and he never said anything about it.”

His youngest son, Mike, echoed that sentiment.

“What a great father and husband,” Mike Casper said. “Really just an All-American man. Everybody loved him. He didn’t have a mean bone in his body.”

Setting up a scholarship for Springfield High students who excelled in academia and sports isn’t a foreign concept – Casper set up scholarships in life as well. In fact, in lieu of flowers at the funeral, the Casper family...
asked donations be put into a scholarship Casper had maintained for a long time.

“There was one that he started with George – the Sand Hills Golf Scholarship in Nebraska,” Mike Casper said. “That’s become a pretty large scholarship and people donated $10,000 when he died. It’s given out every year to students who work at the golf course.”

Don W. Casper was a great person. He never, despite some of his accomplishments, spoke about himself.

Mike said his dad showed his generosity in many different ways. “He was always just trying to help kids get summer jobs within the state or county,” he said.

Knowing a scholarship was in memory to him? That would have been a little different for “Cas” to think about.

“My gosh, he would be a little embarrassed,” Mike Casper said. “But he would have been truly honored and I think teared up a little bit.”

For more information on creating a scholarship, please contact the Community Foundation at 217.789.4431 or visit CFLL.org

Monastery of Mary the Queen Fund

It was a brand new journey for the sisters of the Dominican Order.

After living in a monastery in Elmira, New York for 70 years, more than a dozen cloistered nuns were looking to grow closer to the rest of the Dominican family. They planned a move to Illinois and settled on the Diocese of Springfield, residing in Siena Hall. But the Dominican Nuns are contemplative, and while their home on Sacred Heart-Griffin’s campus brings them closer to other friars and nuns, living in the middle of Springfield doesn’t exactly mesh with a life of silence and contemplative prayer. The Dominican Nuns found a plot of land near Girard, Illinois, an oasis in the middle of flat farmland that covers the Midwest. It’s a 36-acre site with rolling hills and massive trees that overlook a spacious lake.

It’s an ideal place to build a monastery – specifically the Monastery of Mary the Queen.

Not only are the nuns looking to build their future permanent home there, they are wanting to build a hospitality center for those in the outside community. It would be a place to unwind and unplug from an often hectic world, offering a chance to connect with God in a quiet setting.

But in finding how to raise the funding needed to make that happen, the nuns took an unconventional approach toward making that happen. After speaking with John (Stremsterfer), they decided to open the Monastery of Mary the Queen Fund after a person willed them a sizable donation.

“When we started speaking with some of the business people who wanted to help the sisters build their future home a place to donate, and it gave the sisters a chance to help meet that goal faster than keeping donations on hand. And while those helping would be furthering the Dominican Nuns’ cause, the sisters plan on offering a slice of life of what it’s like to live a life of monastic study and contemplation.

“It know it’s a monastery for the nuns – but it’s what we can offer the community outside. We want to have this hospitality center, too,” sister Anna Marie said. “That’s the place where we are encouraging people can come and participate in the life for a period of time.”

Reaching that goal of building the monastery has an added benefit as well – it gives potential new members a clear vision of a life available to them. Since coming to central Illinois, Sister Anna Marie said there has also been growth in another crucial area – new sisters.

“We want to pass on our traditions to the young people,” she said. “Since we are here, we have started getting a renewed interest in the contemplative life. We have two new people – we had others who were inquiring. They spent time with us, but they want the dream fulfilled. They want to live in a monastery.”

For more information on establishing an organization fund, contact the Community Foundation at 217.789.4431 or visit CFLL.org

Phase 2 - Permanent Monastery
RECENT GRANTS | CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE RECENT GRANT RECIPIENTS!

Access to Recreation Fund Awards $6,000

The following projects received funding to support recreational programs that better serve people of all abilities in engaging in recreation.

**Fishing Has No Boundaries – Capital City Chapter - $1,500**
To purchase adaptive equipment to allow better accessibility to the water.

**Hoogland Center for the Arts – $500**
To hire a sign language interpreter for up to 10 shows.

**Individual Advocacy Group – $2,000**
To offset costs of transportation, gas, and other expenses in attending community events.

**Springfield Art Association – $2,000**
Repair underlying concrete in studio to allow for easier access.

The grant program was originally established at the Community Foundation through a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Access to Recreation Fund has awarded a total of $41,000 in grants since it was launched seven years ago.

Junior League Awards
First-Ever Round of Grants

The Junior League of Springfield awarded its first-ever round of grants through its newly-named Junior League of Springfield Capacity Building program. Nonprofit board and staff members will be using the funds to attend programs targeted at improving the management, governance and leadership of their organizations.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Illinois Capital Region - $1,400**
Attending the 2018 national conference and pursuing requirements for national certifications.

**Compass for Kids - $1,500**
Working with an expert facilitator to develop a three-year strategic plan for the organization.

**Elizabeth Ann Seton Program - $1,400**
Attending the 2017 Addressing the Challenges of Poverty conference to learn best practices for building the resources of individuals and promoting community sustainability.

**Mini O’Beirne Crisis Nursery - $1,500**
Working with a seasoned facilitator to help establish short- and long-term goals for the organization.

2018 APPLICATION DEADLINES

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CFLL Historic Preservation Fund Awards Its Sixth Annual Grant

Congratulations to the Vachel Lindsay Association as the 2017 recipient of the sixth annual CFLL Historic Preservation Fund. The $7,500 award will help the preservation efforts for the Vachel Lindsay Home at 603 South 5th Street.

Past recipients of the fund, which was established in 2008, include the Springfield Art Association, Downtown Springfield, Inc., The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the Elijah Iles House, and the Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association.

The CFLL Historic Preservation Fund is an endowment fund established to assist nonprofit organizations in funding historic preservation projects in Springfield, Illinois. The fund may also be used for the benefit of historic preservation projects undertaken by private individuals, businesses, and other entities that meet certain charitable criteria.

Community Grants Fund 32 Organizations

Community Grants is a special annual program that speaks to a wide variety of needs in the community. Through this program, the Community Foundation invites requests from charities for up to $2,500 for any charitable focus. Donor-advised funds are then invited to participate in reviewing and selecting the charities that they wish to fund.

The program offers a unique dynamic to the grantmaking process as the participating funds have the opportunity to potentially partner with one another in funding requests. This collaboration among donors allows numerous charities in Sangamon County and the surrounding area to fund commendable projects that meet the needs of the community.

In 2017, 13 donor-advised funds participated in the Community Grants Program. A total of $51,350 was awarded to 32 different local charities. This program is directly “connecting people who care with causes that matter.”

This year’s recipients include:

- Another Chance Services
- Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Illinois Capital Region
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Illinois
- Central Illinois Foodbank, Inc.
- Compass for Kids
- Contact Ministries
- Elizabeth Ann Seton Program
- Family Service Center
- First Baptist Church of Jacksonville
- Friends of Sangamon County Animal Control
- Girls on the Run of Central Illinois
- Historic Grace Lutheran Food Pantry
- Historic Marbold Farmstead Association
- Illinois State Dental Society Foundation
- Illinois Symphony Orchestra
- Kidzeum of Health and Science
- Kumler Outreach Ministries
- Loami Area Community Pantry
- Mini O’Beirne Crisis Nursery
- One Hope United
- Puzzle Solvers of Central Illinois Inc.
- Raymond Park District
- Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Illinois
- Sangamon Valley Youth Symphony
- Shifting Into New Gear
- Springfield Art Association
- Springfield YMCA
- St. Patrick Catholic School
- The James Project
- The Parent Place
- The Scholastic Art Awards, Mid-Central Illinois Region
King’s Daughters Organization Expands its Giving

J. Paul Getty used to say the formula for success is to “rise early, work hard and strike oil.” The King’s Daughters Organization (KDO) would probably agree with this philosophy.

In 2017, the group was able to mobilize its team of volunteers and rapidly escalate its giving thanks to ongoing revenue from mineral rights recently gifted to the organization.

KDO – an organization that has served our community’s elderly since 1893 – directed the revenue to its endowment fund at the Community Foundation and collaborated with staff to identify evidence-based programs that address unmet needs in the Springfield area.

After much research of local programs and opportunities, the KDO Blackstock Grant Committee granted a total of $50,000 to two organizations: Alzheimer’s Association – Greater Illinois Chapter and SIU School of Medicine – Center for Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders, bringing total grantmaking by the group to $190,000 this year.

“With help from hundreds of our Circle members and supporters, we have awarded over $1 million in just ten years, and we’ve solidified a permanent resource to enhance the quality of life of older residents in Sangamon County,” said Cindy Denby, KDO president. “Through our newest grant program – the KDO Blackstock program – we intend to solicit applications from programs rooted in evidence that adhere to rigorous outcome measurements and address some of the most urgent needs facing seniors.”

SIU’s Center for Alzheimer’s Disease is using grant funds to launch two new programs: Minds in Motion and Opening Minds Through Art:

- Minds in Motion – With a focus on cognitive, physical and emotional health, this program uses brain games, interaction and other tactics to engage seniors with dementia or early stage Alzheimer’s disease. It is modeled after the original program established in Champaign, IL that has shown numerous benefits, including improved brain function, increased core strength and improved mood. The class meets twice each month and runs through June. To learn more, contact Susan Helm at 217.502.3992 or susan.helm@comcast.net. The program is also seeking volunteers.
- Opening Minds Through Art – SIU School of Medicine and the Springfield Art Association partnered to launch this award-winning, evidence-based, intergenerational art-making program that ran for ten weeks between September and November. It provided opportunities for creative self-expression and social engagement for people with dementia.

Alzheimer’s Association has used its grant funds to expand the Springfield Alzheimer’s Support & Resources Initiative Project, which includes three components: lunch and learns, veterans programs and a family retreat. Free lunch & learn seminars were held between August and November to educate guests on topics including early detection, understanding risk factors, disease stages and treatment options, and how to communicate and connect with an Alzheimer’s patient. Currently in development is a “Your Service, Your Health, Our Focus” community program for veterans as well as a Family Caregiver Retreat that has been set for Saturday, April 14, 2018 at Scheels in Springfield.

To learn more about the King’s Daughters Organization, visit kdospringfield.org.

2017 Partners in Philanthropy Announced

Congratulations to this year’s Partners in Philanthropy, who were recognized at the Community Foundation’s 14th annual professional advisors holiday party on November 8.

The Community Foundation created the Partners in Philanthropy – Professional Advisor Recognition Society to acknowledge professional advisors for their work to advance philanthropy band encourage charitable giving by playing a significant role in the establishment of a fund at the Community Foundation.

2017 RECIPIENTS:
- Ronald Aggertt
- Scott Norris
- Mike O’Brien
- Michael Pence

PAST RECIPIENTS:
- R. Lee Allen
- Thomas Bayer
- Steve Bochenek
- Creighton Castle
- Michael Connelly
- Emily Cour
- Kevin W. Crumly
- Edward Cunningham
- Jane Denes
- Hugh Drake
- Albert O. Eck, Jr.
- John P. Eck
- David O. Edwards
- Emmet Fairfield
- Carolyn Grosboll
- Thomas Hamill
- Larry Hardy
- Tim Healy
- Bridget Johnson
- Larry Johnson
- Michael Landsen
- James Lestikow
- Kevin Linder
- Gary Lowery
- Chad Lucas
- Richard R. Lynch
- Walter Lynn, Jr.
- Annette Piper McClure
- Joe McMenamin
- Saul Morse
- Darin Muller
- Michael Noonan
- Cathy Overstreet
- Amy Perrin
- David R. Reid
- Roger Rutherford
- Paul Schafer
- Patrick J. Sheehan
- Doug Skinner
- Heather Stahlberg Smith
- Harvey B. Stephens
- Robert A. Stuart, Jr.
- John Swartz
- Randy Taylor
- Bruce Thompson
- Don Tracy
- Stan Welch
- Andrew White
- Tom White
Fall at the Farm

Young Philanthropists members gathered for their annual fall family event at Pumpkin Creek Farms in Sherman on September 16. The group enjoyed the wide variety of activities at the farm, including a corn maze, duck races, a petting zoo, and more. Special thanks goes to Pumpkin Creek Farms’ Kurt Fleck for hosting the event, Kendra Boesdorfer for taking photos, and Hy-Vee for providing food!

HOW TO JOIN

There is still time to join Women for Women or Young Philanthropists in 2017!

Call 217.789.4431 or visit CFLL.org for more details.

Grant Program Reports

Women for Women members gathered at the Sangamo Club for their 10th annual fall luncheon on October 26. Special guests included the giving circle’s 2017 grant recipients who shared stories and data highlighting the impact that their programs are having on women and their families:

Compass for Kids
Added a class of 20 low-income, at-risk students to its summer tutoring and mentoring program Camp Compass. 100% of participants improved their math scores and 97.4% improved in reading.

The Parent Place
Launched Nurturing Mothers Education and Support Program – a 16-week intensive program improving parent-child relationships for mothers who are incarcerated or recently incarcerated.

Girls on the Run of Central Illinois
New curriculum purchased for program that boasts improved confidence among 85% of participants and an increase in physical activity by more than 40%.

Women for Women’s 2018 grant program opens on January 2, and up to $50,000 will be available for nonprofits that serve women and children in Sangamon and surrounding counties. Visit CFLL.org to learn more.
**Citizen of the Year**

Lisa Stone, a founding board member of the Community Foundation and a founding Steering Committee member for Women for Women, was named the First Citizen at a breakfast ceremony at Erin’s Pavilion on October 26. Stone was the 55th recipient of the award, given out by The State Journal-Register.

“It’s an extraordinary honor for someone who Springfield is her adopted city,” Stone told the S/J-R. “None of the work I ever did was meant to be award-winning. I just helped.”

Congratulations on your well-deserved award, Lisa – and thank you for your commitment to the community!

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**Welcome Aren Dow**

Aren joined the Community Foundation in September after five years in journalism. He is responsible for coordinating grant programs and special initiatives and overseeing marketing and community outreach activities.

Prior to joining the Community Foundation, Aren worked as a reporter, copy editor and page designer for the Herald & Review in Decatur. He earned his BA degree in mass communications from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Aren is a Springfield native and came back to his hometown with his wife Julie and two children, Clara and Maggie. Welcome, Aren!

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**King’s seen visitors come in from Australia, Italy, South Africa, and other places around the world. While at the beginning, King didn’t know how big the African-American History Museum could be. Now with the number of exhibits and visitors, there’s a clearer and bigger vision of what can be accomplished.**

“We’re not even scratching the surface, we’re just rubbing it,” King said.

For more information on establishing an organization fund, please contact the Community Foundation at 217.789.4431 or visit CFFL.org.

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intentional, but I knew (Harvey) was a good lawyer.”

Harvey, who provided and continues to provide legal counsel pro bono, didn’t mind in the least.

“This whole thing, it’s wonderful because it’s something that I love doing,” he said.

In December 2002, the switch was made to turn the foundation into a community foundation. Immediately, Judy accelerated the change toward hiring full-time staff.

“When Judy was the board chair of the Sangamon County Foundation, she knew this is what we needed, and she got some people together who could make it happen,” then board member Larry Johnson said.

“Judy, and I’ve said this since the beginning, she’s probably the only person in town who I know could have pulled this off.”

But one year in, the newly-hired John Stremsterfer had a bit of a shock when Judy announced she was stepping away from the board after 17 years.

“I was thinking, ‘Whoa, why? You can’t do that,’” Stremsterfer said. “She said, ‘We’ve got a good board, you’ll figure it out.’ It was kind of Washington-esque, ‘I shall only serve two terms.’”

Harvey continued to provide legal support after Judy stepped down, but Stremsterfer said their presence is still felt, whether in spirit with board term limits, a forward vision or through himself.

“Judy’s tone still exists here, and a lot of that is probably because of me seeing the way that she envisioned it. I learned a lot from them both,” he said. “They set the right tone.

“I think that’s where they kept their volunteer interests separate, except for this where Harvey’s strong legal work in the community foundation makes it a real joint venture. It’s a unique thing, and we’re lucky it converged at the right place at the right time.”

While Judy admitted she broke her own rules about staying with an organization too long – “It does not become one’s personal possession” – it helped result in the Community Foundation today accruing more than $30 million in assets thanks to nearly 200 charitable funds, of which Harvey has reviewed every one.

“My career has not mostly been with paid jobs,” she said. “I’ve had some self-employment and done some consulting, but my real career was being a volunteer. Each challenge that’s come along, I’ve had fabulous opportunities and each one of them, I learned so darn much. I learned a lot about the community and its needs.”

So in the spirit of finding a cause, giving it your all, then moving on to the next one – what is the next one?

“Oh, I’m not going to do anything more,” Judy quickly said.

“Well, if something wonderful came along...”
Innovate Springfield Social Innovation Program Uses Research in Service of the Community

Founded in 2016, Innovate Springfield (iSPI) is a social innovation and business incubator in downtown Springfield. A supporting organization of the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln, iSPI serves as a catalyst for building innovation and entrepreneurial capacities in the Springfield-area’s business and non-profit sectors.

The field of social innovation focuses on creating new or disruptive ways to use high-quality data and research to enact social change. To that end, iSPI has adopted the “Sangamon Success” report as the initial road map for its Social Innovation Program. The report consists of 25 recommendations for supporting youth who are less-advantaged in Sangamon County from cradle to career through evidence-based programs.

Over the last year, iSPI has worked alongside its Sangamon County Continuum of Learning (CoL) partners – the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln, the United Way of Central Illinois, the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, UIS Center for State Policy and Leadership, Lincoln Land Community College, and Springfield Public Schools – to advance the “Sangamon Success” recommendations by generating support for evidence-based youth programs. CoL’s 2016 Sangamon County Youth Mentoring Summit gathered over 50 attendees from 30 youth mentoring organizations to learn about evidence-informed best practices. Through other partnerships, over 60 community leaders have learned about early childhood development through the Brain Architecture Game. As it tackles new challenges – including using our community’s kindergarten readiness data and increasing advanced placement opportunities for students who are low-income – iSPI continues to work with its partners to promote the use of data and research in service of the Sangamon County community.

For more information about Innovate Springfield, visit innovatespringfield.org and contact Nadia Gronkowski at nadia@innovatespringfield.org.

Nurse-Family Partnership Program Underway

In July 2017, nurses from SIU School of Medicine’s Department of Family and Community Medicine began seeing clients enrolled in the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), an evidence-based nurse home-visiting program for first-time, low-income mothers. Made possible through support from the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln, Memorial Health Systems, St. John’s Hospital, and the SIU School of Medicine Foundation, SIU’s NFP program has enrolled more than eight clients and hired four nurse home-visitors, who are working to build relationships throughout the community to ensure that they can enroll and serve 100 mothers over the next three years.

Forefront is excited to announce a new slate of skill-building workshops for nonprofits for 2017-2018. We’re thrilled to add programming in communities throughout Central Illinois, including: Springfield, Champaign, Quincy, Effingham, Galesburg, and Decatur! Many courses are also offered as webinars.

Forefront offers affordable, accessible, comprehensive trainings that move us toward our vision: social impact organizations working at their fullest capacities and creating positive change in communities throughout Illinois. Topics include: advocacy; strategic communications; digital fundraising; finance; board engagement, volunteer management and more.

Forefront has developed classes and educational workshops that prepare you and your team for the joys and challenges of doing good. And what you learn from our expert faculty (and your peers!) will help you do it better.

Classes taking place in Springfield include:

- Planned Giving
  Date: February 22, 2018
  Where: Forefront, 15 S. Old Capitol Plz, Second Floor
  Cost: $25/$15 for Forefront Members

- Financial Management
  Date: April 5, 2018
  Where: Forefront, 15 S. Old Capitol Plz, Second Floor
  Cost: $25/$15 for Forefront Members

- Financial Leadership
  Date: May 23, 2018
  Where: Forefront, 15 S. Old Capitol Plz, Second Floor
  Cost: $25/$15 for Forefront Members

For a complete listing of all programs and to register, visit myforefront.org/events.
Imagine the **FUTURE**
of our community
if we invest in it **TODAY**

Your hometown community foundation is a unique resource dedicated to supporting local philanthropy now and into the future. We invite you to become a member of the 2017 Friends of the Foundation, a generous group of community members whose support enables the Community Foundation to excel as a local charitable leader.

With support from donors like you, we can continue to improve lives, preserve history, cherish the arts, save animals, and invest in our local talent for a bright future. Your tax-deductible donation is one of the most important ways you can invest in the future of our community. Please consider giving today! Donations can be made online at CFLL.org, or checks can be made payable to CFLL and mailed to 205 S. Fifth St., Ste. 930 -- Springfield, IL 62701. Thank you for your support!