

Destinations

Heartland Women

January 25, 2010
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Brief

LifeSavers fundraiser

"Foul Play at the Big Game Rally" is the title of the interactive theater production that will take place on Feb. 6 at 6 p.m. at the Murphysboro Event Center. The theme of the production is a rally for the "Big Game," appropriate for the evening before the Superbowl.

Included in the evening is a dinner catered by C-Infinity of Cobden. The menu includes tossed salad, seasoned port loin barbecued chicken breasts, parsley red-skinner potatoes, green beans, glazed carrots and yeast rolls. There will also be an appetizer and desserts.

During the evening you'll be able to bid on many items at the silent auction and purchase tickets for the 50/50 drawing. A live auction will be held at the conclusion of the dinner and entertainment. Auction items include tickets to a concert by the Ol' Fishkins; a sunset pontoon ride on Little Grassy with a campfire supper and original tunes by Curt

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Hold the hearts and flowers!

Grab the girls for a Valentine's celebration that helps the needy, not the greedy!

By Chanda Green
Editor/Publisher

Valentine's Day is almost upon us, girls. For those of us lucky enough to have a truly special someone in our lives, we're set. Yes, yes, you can argue that it's a contrived holiday, created by corporate executives whose only true love is money, whose hearts beat faster knowing that millions of us will be buying heart-shaped boxes of candy and over-priced roses in an attempt to put our money where our feelings are.

According to MSNBC, The Greeting Card Association expects Americans to buy 190 million Valentine's Day cards this year. That figure shoots up to 1 billion once you include cards, generally sold in packages of 25 or more, exchanged among school-children, the trade group says. That's big business, baby!

Can you sense that I'm a bit jaded when it comes to this particular holiday and maybe more than a bit resentful of the attempt at monetary manipulation? Yes, that is all true, but it's also true that I have been one of those love-struck women hoping to receive something special on that heart-shaped holiday.

First, let me admit that I am one of the lucky ones. I have a wonderful sweetie who will, no doubt, buy a card and some small token of his love just for me on Feb. 14. (I hope you're reading this, David.) But I have many friends and several relatives who are, shall I say, between relationships right now. For them and for many of you out there, this can be the most lonely and heart-wrenching day of the year.

I know all about the anti-



Help us buck the trend of turning what was supposed to be a celebration of love into just another way to turn us all into consumers. Choose a cause close to your heart, pick a fundraiser, grab the girls and have a great time!



Valentine movement that was so popular a few years ago. I won't go quite that far, but I will suggest that the way to fight the blues on this oh-so-red holiday might be to gather a group of like-minded girls and plan a night out. There are plenty of interesting alternatives this year and all of them support a cause that you might find close to your heart.

How about buying some tickets to the tenth annual Taste of Chocolate Gala on Feb. 5? The event takes place from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Carbondale Civic Center, includes wonderful dishes from local culinary artists, and all of the proceeds go to The Women's Center. (For more information, see Jan Staab's story on page one.)

If you'd rather just enjoy a good meal, then make reservations at one of the Murphysboro restaurants participating in the annual

Taste of Hope promotion. On Feb. 2, nine eateries are donating 20% of their receipts to the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life in Jackson County. (See the list in the briefs package that begins on this page.)

If theater is your thing, how about you and the girls participating in an interactive mystery dinner theater production? It's called "Foul Play at the Big Game Rally" and it takes place Feb. 6 at the Murphysboro Event Center.

The event includes the play, a silent auction, door prizes and a catered dinner. And all of the proceeds go to the LifeSavers Training Corporation, a peer-support, suicide, and crisis-prevention program that helps teens. (See the item in the briefs package that begins on this page.)

Now, if your idea of a great time involves poodle skirts and saddle shoes and the music of the fabulous '50s, here's an event for you. Southern Illinois Regional Social Services is sponsoring a '50s trivia night on Jan. 30 at 7 p.m. at the Newman Catholic Student Center in Carbondale with prizes, a raffle for a trip to Memphis, and popcorn and soft drinks.



Support a good cause – community radio – and have a great time at the 14th annual Valentine's Day Ball, a benefit for WDBX Radio Station in Carbondale.

If you just want to enjoy some great music (and support a good cause), plan on attending the Zambian HIV/AIDS Partnership Benefit Concert & Silent Auction featuring emma's revolution. It's happening on Feb. 13 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship. (For more information, see Jan Staab's story on page 10.)

And if you're picking your event for the cause it supports, consider one close to this journalist's heart, community radio. The House of Blooze, the 14th annual

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Calling all Heartland women: Tell me your heritage tourism story!



Nicole and her daughter, Phoebe, on Christmas Day.

With a new year upon us, I've done a little thinking about my life. Although my family has always been the most important part of my life, with a 3-year old running around my house, I've realize just how precious family and home really is.

Every moment I spend with my daughter, Phoebe, reminds me of a moment with my own mother or grandmother. I've been thinking a lot about the women in my family, their connection to this region we all call home, and how important their lives were in shaping our own. I guess you could call me the eternal genealogy and heritage buff!

Many of you know that my ancestors arrived in Southern Illinois in 1815, settling near what is now Pomona. My Southern Illinois roots are one of the many things that have kept me here, and my personal interests in my ancestors



Nicole L. Davis



and their lives is partly why I fell in love with heritage tourism.

My family is connected to tourism in this region, having been one of the first families to lay eyes on the Pomona Natural Bridge upon arriving in Union County so many generations ago ... a popular site for the adventure and heritage niche tourist today. It just seems natural for me to be in this industry.

I'm sure there are many others like me out there, I'm sure of it because I know several of you! There are many Heartland women whose families arrived generations ago, adding to this

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