



## Press Release

**For Immediate Release**  
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**Contact: John Rey**  
**(815) 758-8616**

### **50 Men Who Cook Event Celebrates Five-Year Veteran Chefs**

On Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, Family Service Agency of DeKalb County and CASA DeKalb will host the fifth annual 50 Men Who Cook event at Barsema Alumni and Visitors Center on NIU campus. This is a major fundraising event for these two local non-profit agencies.

The 50 Men Who Cook event has become one of the most popular evenings on the social calendar for many miles around. People enjoy an evening of entertainment with friends, while the centerpiece is the food.

Three chefs are celebrating their fifth anniversary participating in this event. These chefs are: Justin Coop, Scott Starkweather and Mike Verbic. There will be special recognition for these chefs who have shared their culinary skills for the benefit to these local agencies.

The event serves as proof that men – some of them, anyway – really can cook. This year's cooks include bankers, lawyers, and business executives, among others.

The field of chefs also includes Steve Slack, now a writer for Midwest Living magazine. Steve lives in Sycamore and is still cooking and writing about food and restaurants.

Steve's mother was a teacher and his father was a carpenter. Nobody ever described them as gourmet chefs. "My mom hated being in the kitchen," Slack said with a chuckle. "And everything my dad made was battered or fried. It was like an extended camping trip," he added.

Slack found the menus a lot more interesting at the home of a pal down the street. Eventually, the friend's Mom taught young Steve, then a boy of eight or nine years old, to cook for himself. Steve's creations will be among those tempting palates at the 50 Men Who Cook event on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 6 – 9 PM. He has participated as a chef in three past events.

The 50 Men Who Cook event raises funds for two organizations. CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) serves children who have often been victims of abuse or neglect. Family Service Agency of DeKalb County offers a wide range of services to people of every age.

For years, Slack has done most of the cooking for his family - his wife, Nina, and children, Laurel, who now teaches for the Northern Illinois University Lab School, and Tyler, now a senior at the University of Illinois.

“Nina and I have two entirely different cooking styles,” Slack said. “She’s very methodical, following recipes carefully. I’m more slapdash. I’ll try different things just to see how it works.”

Steve is hoping this year’s creation will land a prize. Judging by popular voting, at the “50 Men” event, awards recognition to cooks in several categories.

“You get that many men in a room,” said Slack, “and you’re going to have some competition.”

Tickets are \$40 per person and may be purchased at Family Service Agency, CASA, Resource Bank, and NB & T locations.

Family Service Agency of DeKalb County is a premier social service agency, protecting and developing our children and older adults through exceptional service. Family Service Agency is comprised of five distinct departments – Big Brothers Big Sisters, Center for Counseling, Child Life & Family Education, Children’s Advocacy Center and Senior Services Center. A host of programs are available through these departments, and all services are provided by experienced professionals.

Family Service Agency of DeKalb County accepts insurance, and scholarship and reduced fees are available for those who qualify. In some instances, services can be provided at no cost to the client. Family Service Agency’s main office is located at 14 Health Services Drive, and satellite offices are located in DeKalb and Sandwich. Family Service Agency is a Kishwaukee United Way Agency. For more information about the services at Family Service Agency call 815-758-8616, 815-786-7079 in Sandwich, or visit their website at [www.realsolutionstoday.org](http://www.realsolutionstoday.org).

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