



Press Release

For Immediate Release
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50 Men Who Cook - First Place Gold Winners

The recent 5th annual 50 Men Who Cook event provided the public an opportunity to support two local service agencies in a very comfortable, enjoyable atmosphere. The evening was filled with conversation, music, very warm weather and, most importantly great food!

Over 50 chefs, with ties to DeKalb County, took over Barsema Alumni and Visitors Center on NIU campus Saturday night, August 8th.

Chefs offered samples of their homemade dishes in one of four categories: Appetizers, Side Dishes, Entrees and Desserts.

For the first time, there were a number of professional chefs in a separate category, which was judged by a local food critic. Criteria for the judging in this category included: creativity, appearance and taste.

The attendees voted the following as First Place favorite dishes from "Celebrity Chefs" in each category:

Appetizer – Scott Starkweather – Blackened Shrimp with Lemon Sauce

Side Dish – Justin Coop – Sweet Potato Casserole

Entrée - Steve Elsik – Italian Beef

Dessert – Cary Singer – Praline Peach Cobbler

Among the winners are two five-year veteran chefs – Starkweather and Coop. These two chefs have participated in the event each of the years. Obviously, their culinary skills served them well in capturing the public's delight again this year!

In the Professional category – Brian Dennison and Bill Frankenberg, chefs at Kishwaukee Community Hospital, won first place honors from the food critic for their Andouille Sausage – Seafood Cajun Gumbo.

“We are pleased to see the public support of two fine agencies in the community through this event. Thank you one and all for the tremendous support,” said Sue Plote, Executive Director of Family Service Agency of DeKalb County. “We are thankful for continuing help from chefs, sponsors and volunteers to host a community gathering for everyone’s enjoyment.”

The event’s presenting sponsor was Kishwaukee Health System (KHS). KHS has been in this sponsor role for each of the five (5) years of the annual event.

Other sponsors include: Midwest Orthopaedic Institute, National Bank & Trust, Resource Bank, Upstaging Lighting and Transport, Zea Mays Holdings, Laing Management, American National Bank, Bethany Animal Hospital, Brown’s County market, Castle Bank, Crum Halsted Agency, Curran Contracting, Elburn Cooperative, Ideal Industries, Mason Properties, Midwest Groundcover/Trading, Attorney Richard L. Turner, Traffic Guard Direct, Victor Barresi, DDS. Other sponsors include: Anderson Funeral Home, Blumen Gardens, Employees of National Bank & Trust, Lehan Drugs, Nat’s on Maple, Neighborhood Bakery, Stephen Alan Salon, Suter Company, Swedberg Electric, Sweet Dreams Desserts and Catering, Tom Sparks. Among firms providing in-kind donations are: B95 and Daily Chronicle.

“The staff at Barsema serves our event in a grand style,” said Jill Olson, Executive Director of CASA DeKalb. She added, “The staff gives extraordinary attention to our needs for a successful event. Everyone in attendance appreciates the work they provide for our enjoyment.”

Family Service Agency of DeKalb County is a premier social service agency, providing support to individuals and families throughout the lifecycle. 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.

CASA DeKalb County, Inc. (Court Appointed Special Advocate) is a non-profit organization which trains local citizens as volunteer child advocates. These advocates are appointed by the DeKalb County Juvenile Court in cases involving children who have been abused or neglected by their parent or guardian. The CASA volunteers are responsible for gathering information about a child’s case and advocating in court for the best interest of these children. CASA DeKalb County, Inc. currently has 65 advocates who are representing 121 DeKalb County children. For more information about CASA DeKalb County services call 815-895-2052 or visit their website at www.casadekalb.org.

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