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Breaking schmooze: Event will try to sign up 700 mentors

By [Deb Peterson](#)

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
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Deb Peterson
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(P-D)

BE A MENTOR: Susan L. Taylor, the editorial director of Essence magazine, will be in town Thursday to help Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri kick off Mentor 700, an effort to sign up 700 new mentors this year for the organization's Urban Expansion Project. The group is hoping that at least a fourth of the new mentors will be African-American. **Johnny Furr**, a vice-president of Anheuser-Busch Companies Inc, is chairing the mentor effort. The campaign is in response to United Way and Vision for Children at Risk figures that say about 80,000 children in the St. Louis urban area are in need of mentors; Big Brothers Big Sisters says that 90 percent of the waiting list is African-American youth. Taylor will be the featured guest at a cocktail party beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Dolce, 200 North Broadway in downtown St. Louis. The event is free and open to the public.

Deb's Sunday column:

LIVIN' LARGE: Attorney **Gentry Sayad** and his wife, **Lysa**, recently visited with Academy Award-winning actress **Olivia de Havilland**, 90, at her home in Paris. De Havilland, who is the sole surviving star from "Gone With the Wind," has lived in Paris for more than 50 years and has a home in the wealthy 16th arrondissement. Her next door neighbor is former French President **Valéry Giscard d'Estaing**. The Sayads were in Paris staying at developer **Steve** and **Melinda Stogel's** apartment; the Sayads bought a stay there as an auction item two years ago. Gentry Sayad says his family has known de Havilland for years and they call on her "any time we are in France." He says she visited the Sayads' house here when she was on a mission for the Episcopal Church. Gentry said this was his and Lysa's last trip before they move to Shanghai in June. He will head up Armstrong Teasdale's practice in Asia for the next few years.

M'MMM GOOD: Clayton High product **Peter Abrams**, pastry chef and owner of Cafe Glace, is slated to appear in a segment of the Food Network show "Unwrapped," on April 23. Abrams, 31, specializes in making gourmet ice creams and sorbets and cakes made from both ingredients. After Clayton, Abrams attended Oberlin College and the French Pastry School in Chicago. He has worked at NoMi in the Park Hyatt Hotel in the Windy City, and at the renowned French Laundry restaurant in California's Napa Valley. He teaches in the culinary school at Forest Park Community College and sells his goodies online at www.cafeglace.com and at the Green Market in the Central West End. His proud mom, **Jan Abrams** — former president of the Clayton School Board — says his breakfast pastries and ice cream sandwiches are not to be missed.

FILM COMMENT: St. Louisan **Ryan Eslinger's** latest film, "When a Man Falls in the Forest," has been chosen for the 12th Annual Gen Art Film Festival in New York City. Eslinger directed, wrote and edited the film, which is set to be screened Monday. The film stars **Timothy Hutton**, **Sharon Stone**, **Dylan Baker** and **Pruitt Taylor Vince**.

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RIDE 'EM: Therapeutic Horsemanship is having its 29th annual Mane Event Dinner and Auction beginning at 6 p.m. at Old Warson Country Club on April 28. Event chairs are **Donna Eisenberg, Janet McGehee** and **Teri Weber**. Therapeutic Horsemanship has been facilitating award-winning equestrian therapy programs for people with disabilities in the St. Louis and St. Charles areas since 1975. The theme of this year's event is "Denim and Diamonds" and auction items range from a five-night stay at Canyon Ranch to the Calgary Stampede with a golf package. **Thom Sehnert**, owner of the Smokehouse Market and Annie Gunn's, will receive the group's Rafferty Award; **Randi Naughton** from KTVI (Channel 2) will emcee.

A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND: **Dana Welsh Connon** got bling, bling and more bling for her 50th birthday. Connon's mother, **Sherris Welsh**, and friends and family surprised her with a \$5,000 custom jewelry sculpture by St. Louis artist **James Cleland**. The piece is yellow gold and sterling flora and fauna. It is actually wearable jewelry because the sculpture deconstructs when Connon removes a piece to put on some razzle dazzle. Connon is from the prominent Welsh Baby Carriage family.

NOTICE: Riverfront Times reporter and DJ around town **Randall Roberts** is headed for the West Coast. After more than nine years at the RFT, Roberts is leaving for Los Angeles in June. He plans to live with a friend, former St. Louisan **Matthew Amato**, who heads a production company called the Masses. Roberts says he will be freelancing and contributing whatever he can to Amato's company.

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