

QUINTESSENTIAL PEOPLE®

Honoring SUZANNE LUBY

BY LIZ LUBY CHEPELL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDA M. BARRETT



Coming Home

I FIRST MET SUZANNE LUBY, my mom, back in July of 1973. “The Sting” won the Oscar for best picture that year, the last U.S. soldiers left South Vietnam, and Billy Joel just released “Piano Man”—all while Suzanne was adjusting to her new role. I was her first born, with my three siblings to follow. Little did she know how much our family would be on the move over the next decade.

“We moved nine times the first 15 years we were married,” Suzanne explains to those inquiring about her real estate experience. When you move a family of six every other year over a short period, you get used to the process of buying, selling, packing, unpacking, and recreating home. You get used to diving right into a new community of schools, systems, and strangers. You learn what it feels like to constantly search for friends and gain new appreciation for what it means to belong.

That’s why, when Suzanne was ready to get back to work, the world of real estate was the path that felt most familiar. With degrees from Saint Joseph’s Academy and Maryville University in Saint Louis, where she and my dad grew up, Suzanne spent several years as a high school English teacher before I was born. Her background as an educator and her personal experience with relocation uniquely qualified her to help others navigate their own life moves.


One of the first things Suzanne did when she began her career in real estate was join the Barrington Area Chamber of Commerce where she has served in various leadership roles over time. After several terms on the BACC Board of Directors, she moved on to lead the Chamber’s Women’s Biz Net networking group for years, facilitating face-to-face connections and life-long relationships between women in business.

In a world consumed with social networking online, Suzanne has remained a stickler for showing up... to the early morning networking meetings, to the ribbon cuttings, and to the office at 8 a.m. sharp. “If you’re not early, you’re late,” one of her clients once said to her. She’d pulled up to his home one minute after the scheduled appointment time, a mistake she won’t repeat.

I’ll never forget the client who called my mom a “velvet hammer” not long after I joined The Luby Group back in 2004. Have you ever met one of those people who can share bad news but somehow make you feel good about it? Suzanne has that one mastered. “You’ve got to get busy living or get busy dying,” she once told a seller whose property needed a price adjustment. I gasped when she told me she’d been quoting that from the movie “The Shawshank Redemption” while advising clients. But it did the trick, and that seller thanked her for her candor.

Recently, one of Suzanne’s clients called looking for her. “She’s helped us buy and sell multiple homes over the years. She’s our personal real estate advisor for life and we’d never make a move without her.” Suzanne goes above and beyond to keep in touch and treat clients like she’d treat her own family.

From Suzanne, I’ve learned that courage, confidence, and kindness become second nature when you’re used to being transferred. You develop a knack for warm welcomes when you’ve walked so many miles in the newcomer’s shoes. And, when it comes to establishing roots, a community that

emphasizes belonging is a place that speaks Suzanne’s language—a place she is happy to call home. 

HERE ARE SOME WORDS THAT OTHERS
SHARED ABOUT SUZANNE LUBY

Suzanne Corr, BACC PRESIDENT/CEO

Suzanne Luby’s humor, wisdom, and incredible wit have benefited hundreds of local women who have gathered through the years to support one another’s success. As a long-time leader of the Barrington Area Chamber of Commerce Women’s Biz Net Council, Suzanne has made us laugh, cry, and think twice about how we live our lives. WBN offers programming and activities to network, collaborate, and grow your business, and Suzanne Luby has been at the center of it speaking to our audience, challenging us to see different perspectives, and most importantly, motivating us to action.

Suzanne’s background as a teacher, highly successful realtor, and matriarch of a large family has filled her with stories and experiences that she has shared with so many local women during our WBN events. Suzanne always has a message behind her words: kindness, compassion, tolerance, hard work, common sense, family, and community.

Her dedication to giving back to the community is deep-rooted. She helped us develop our Outstanding Women Leaders (OWL) awards programming and she herself sets the example for the kinds of women leaders we seek to recognize, those who make a difference in the lives of so many but never pursue any reward or recognition. That is Suzanne.

Suzanne is so much fun. When she approaches the podium, the audience just sits wide-eyed waiting to see what she will say. We just love her and are so fortunate she chose the chamber and local women as one of her most important interactions. Cheers to Suzanne Luby. She is so deserving of this recognition.

Linda Gump, OWNER OF JOVIE OF BARRINGTON

I met Suzanne in 2016 when we bought our house in Inverness. She was the realtor selling the house that I bought. Shortly after I opened my business in Barrington, I joined the Chamber. Suzanne was one of the first people I met, and she was so welcoming and helpful, giving me suggestions on how to become active in the Barrington community. When I had my Chamber ribbon cutting, she arrived to support my new business and she asked me to attend her networking group. Suzanne was a dedicated active member of group with me for about five years (I believe she was in this networking group for close to 20 years). She made each meeting fun and educational and kept us on track. At every meeting she would mention a profound

phrase or two that we would always remark about. Tim, one of our members, kept a book of “Suzanne-isms” so if we were ever looking for a way to express ourselves, we could reference one of her phrases.

She always came to the meetings on time with such positive energy and if we ever needed encouragement, she would be the one to provide that for us. She truly has a knack for connecting people of all generations. My daughter came to one of the Chamber meetings and truly delighted in the conversation that she had with Suzanne. Her background as an educator came up often and she was always so willing to share her time and knowledge with all of us. I do believe a big reason that my business has grown and thrived as much as it has is due to my relationship with Suzanne. She has been a wonderful friend and mentor for me, and I am so happy she is being honored in this fashion.

**Todd Hayden, OWNER OF
SANFILIPPO LANDSCAPE CO.**

I met Suzanne in the spring of 2011 as a new member to a professional networking group run by the Barrington Area Chamber of Commerce. I had purchased SanFilippo Landscape and was informed that I was a member of this group that meets every Wednesday at 7:30 a.m. So, I showed up to the meeting at 7:30 a.m. and I must confess that I was impressed and a little intimidated by her personality the first few times I interacted with her in our networking group. The group, mostly men, would get distracted with unrelated tangential conversations and Suzanne, being a former schoolteacher and fully aware of just how to regain order, would quickly re-focus the group with just a few carefully chosen words that let us all know that we needed to get back on task. The funny thing is we all know she was right. I liked her right away. I realized that she was a warm and inviting person that truly cared about you on a personal level. Suzanne has a sharp wit and has a laugh that can fill a room.

The best way I can describe Suzanne Luby is to say she is a force of nature. She has such a unique personality that combines kindness, curiosity, compassion, humor, and directness all into one. She has been able to balance her personal and professional life in a way that is genuine and true. Not many people can do that.



Mark Hornok, FINANCIAL ADVISOR AT EDWARD JONES

I changed offices in the fall of 2010, from Wauconda to downtown Barrington. Suzanne Luby was one of the first people I met. She was friendly and kind from the beginning.

I met her as part of a Barrington Area Chamber of Commerce Networking group. I was instantly impressed. It was always so entertaining when she spoke. She has lots of stories about tough negotiations or how to structure a deal. Those were good, but she also had countless tales about funny things that happened when showing houses. I don't just mean strange paint colors or decorations. People sleeping in the house with a showing scheduled. Animals running free. Embarrassing personal items left out around the house. She always had a new one and is an entertaining storyteller.

At the same time, it was clear that she knew the real estate market. She knows all the ins and outs. She knew how to make a deal and move a property. She helped my family both sell and buy a home in 2016. We had a tough negotiation. The house we wanted already had an offer and it seemed like we might be too late. I believe we live in that house today because of Suzanne. She knows how to talk to people. She understands how to get information that is important to a buyer or a seller. She knows how to negotiate with the agent on the other side of the deal as well. She is always a pro. I wish her well in all of her endeavors.

Susan A McConnell, DSW(C), MBA FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LET IT BE US

When I met Suzanne Luby for the first time, I was intimidated, but that feeling came from inside of me because of her accomplishments, not from her, and she quickly put me to ease and to rest. Suzanne's way of making me, as she does everyone, feel welcomed, appreciated, and included was warm and inviting. She immediately became one of my favorite people in all of Barrington. Having lived in Barrington for 35 years gives me a perspective that provides clarity. It's not that Suzanne is better than anyone else, it's that she embodies everyone else. She stands for us, and she stands by us. She is the finest example of what leadership is. I simply love her.

After many moves with her family, Liz Luby Chepell grew up in Inverness since the age of 12. She is raising her three children in Barrington. Liz is a Realtor with The Luby Group of @Properties Christie's International Real Estate and the founder of 365Barrington.com, a website about the community. She may be reached at liz@365barrington.com.