Executive Summary

Program History

Keep Iowa Beautiful’s Hometown Pride program was developed in 2012 and offers leadership training, youth service learning and a variety of educational components, tools, and solutions for community development. Qualifying communities receive five years of long-term technical and professional coaching assistance. During that time, our trained coaches work to deliver a sense of stability and empowerment. When implemented, communities are rewarded with sustainable plans and programs.

The Coach provides support and assistance, customizes innovative resources, and uses development tools to the benefit of each local community. Like a sports coach – they don’t play the game! They help build local capacity by making sure that players show up, act as a team, know their roles, have a plan, and finally play the game and implement their plan.

The Hometown Pride program works when everyone involved is committed to furthering the economic and cultural vitality of the county and its communities - it does take a village. This partnership strategy is only successful when it is mutually supported, facilitated, and coordinated. Every decision, even determining which coach the Hometown Pride community will work with, is made locally.

Communities Served

The Hometown Pride program serves Iowa counties and communities through comprehensive coaching. Community coaches work with local leaders to make certain that local community plans and initiatives get developed, funded, implemented, and completed.

Current counties/communities participating in Hometown Pride include:

- Clinton County (Clinton, Camanche, Delmar, Dewitt, Grand Mound, Lost Nation, Low Moor and Wheaton)
- Des Moines Capitol Neighborhoods (Capitol East, Capitol Park and MLK Jr. Park neighborhoods)
- Fremont County (Bartlett, Farragut, Hamburg, Imogene, Percival, Randolph, Riverton, Sidney, Tabor, and Thurman)
- Grant Wood Mississippi River Region (Anamosa, Asbury, Bellevue, Cascade, Dubuque, Dyersville, Farley, Maquoketa, Monticello, Peosta, Preston and Sabula)
- Louisa County (Columbus City, Fredonia, Letts, Morning Sun, Oakville and Wapello)
- Jasper County (Baxter, Colfax, Kellogg, Lynnville, Mingo, Monroe, Newton, Prairie City and Sully)
- Pocahontas County (Fonda, Gilmore City, Havelock, Laurens, Palmer, Plover Pocahontas, Rolfe and Varina)
- Sac County (Auburn, Lake View, Lytton, Odebolt, Sac City, Schaller and Wall Lake)
- Warren County (Carlisle, Cumming, Hartford, Indianola, Milo, New Virginia and Norwalk)
Accomplishments
(July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018)

- Financial support of $280,000 from two anonymous donors;
- Establishing partnership with Iowa Economic Development Authority Downtown Resource Center to conduct community assessments;
- Strengthening relationships with county community foundations;
- Expanding our reach to 70 communities statewide.

Overall Impact

- Annual KIB investment of more than a half-million dollars in nine program areas;
- Local leadership and skill development enhanced;
- Sustainable plans developed and implementation efforts in place;
- Property values increased and tax base enhanced;
- Cultural values and amenities increased.
- Thousands of volunteer hours valued at several hundred thousand dollars.

Looking ahead to 2019

Keep Iowa Beautiful will continue to support the existing Hometown Pride program areas and share the challenges and best practices learned throughout Iowa and the Midwest region. Focused marketing will not take place without secured funding in place. To date, more than a half-dozen counties and communities have expressed interest in the Hometown Pride program.
GWMRR (Dubuque, Jackson & Jones counties)

Keep Iowa Beautiful partnered with East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) and Grant Wood Mississippi River Region (GWMRR) in July 2017 to add GWMRR Hometown Pride to the list of successful Hometown Pride Programs. GWMRR includes Dubuque, Jackson and Jones counties.

GWMRR was initially established in 2014 as the State of Iowa’s pilot project for Parks to People. By partnering with KIB, communities in the region have the opportunity to build upon and grow the energy of Parks to People, which aligns with the goals of Hometown Pride. Last summer, communities began the process of forming Hometown Pride committees in their communities. In its first year, GWMRR has embarked on many planning strategies, projects, and events with plans of continuing the energy in year two and beyond.

Community Coaches: David Heiar, 563-599-1223, heiar@thejcea.org; Nicolas Hockenberry, 563-652-4549, hockenberry@thejcea.org; and Dan Fox, 563-556-4166 ext. 267, dfox@ecia.org.

Anamosa (Pop. 5,533)

Community Overview

Anamosa Hometown Pride is in the planning stages. Early projects included improving the appearance of the flower nodes in downtown and securing financing to bring the 25-foot tall American Gothic couple sculpture to the community. The sculpture will be in downtown Anamosa from June 2018 to April 2019. Central Park Lake restoration is in process and will be completed by the end of this year.

2018 Highlights

- Central Park Lake restoration;
- American Gothic sculpture visit.

Central Park Lake restoration - Jones County
Asbury (Pop. 4,170)

Community Overview
The Asbury Hometown Pride Committee has been working to develop a plan for future trails and including a community-wide future trail map. The community has also been working on several parks projects including: adding new pavilions and opening a splash pad at Cloie Creek Park, and making parking and playground equipment improvements to Asbury Park.

2018 Highlights
- Cloie Creek Park pavilions – will be installed summer 2018;
- The city officially opened its new splash pad in May 2018;
- Cloie Creek Mountain bike park.

New mountain bike trail at Cloie Creek Park.

New splash pad at Cloie Creek Park.
Bellevue (Pop. 2,191)

Community Overview
Located in Jackson County, this Hometown Pride group began as Bellevue Heart & Soul. They conducted community surveys, which included a separate survey for students; hosted community meetings, focus groups; and compiled results into a summary to help direct future projects.

2018 Highlights
• Felderman Park trail bridge;
• Cole Park playground project.

Cascade (Pop. 2,159)

Community Overview
A RISE grant for a new road into the Industrial Park accommodating two businesses was applied for through Hometown Pride partner, ECIA. The city entered into an agreement with Heart & Soul, a community visioning program, to uncover potential projects for the group to implement. The community is working to combine the resources of Hometown Pride and Heart and Soul. The group is also looking into applying for a local gaming grant to fund highway sign listing community amenities.

2018 Highlights
• Safety crossing lights for school - complete;
• Received a catalyst grant for restoration of a former bank building into business space and apartments.
Community Overview

In Dubuque, Hometown Pride has developed a partnership with the Dubuque Trees Forever chapter. The committee conducted a tree planting project in April 2018, planning over 30 trees across the city. The group is also working in partnership with ECIA and the city of Dubuque to develop a city-wide strategy for replacing trees that are being wiped out by the emerald ash borer. The project will include developing a mapping system to track tree replacement. In addition, the group, in partnership with Clarke University students, is developing a downtown Dubuque mural app to explain the meaning of the murals to visitors.

2018 Highlights

• Planted trees along Chavenelle Dr., the main artery through Dubuque Industrial Center West and connector to west-end businesses;
• The Miracle League of Dubuque broke ground on their all-inclusive baseball field and playground project, located at Veterans Memorial Park;
• Received $65,000 Wellmark grant for construction of skatepark;
• Completed another phase of the Bee-Branch - lineal park/drainage improvement program.
Dyersville (Pop. 4,058)

Community Overview
The Hometown Pride committee is looking into constructing a trail running from 3rd Ave SW along north fork of the Maquoketa River to Bear Creek. Over the past year, Dyersville has been working on a city comprehensive plan and a downtown plan. Both plans are nearly complete and should be adopted by the city council in the next few months.

2018 Highlights
- Boy Scout Troop 60, Dyersville Commercial Club, Trees Forever, and Black Hills Energy planted 12 trees in Dyersville Commercial Park;
- Applied for a $250,000 grant for a bike/pedestrian bridge to connect to a trail.

Farley (Pop. 1,537)

Community Overview
The Farley Hometown Pride committee is busy with several community activities. The community has been working on improving the on road shoulder trail to Heritage Trail. The existing trail needs signage and safety improvements, that could be funded through TAP and DRA grants. Members of the Hometown Pride committee have be working to develop an outreach and welcome package to give new residents. The committee has also been working with a graphic designer to create a new city logo. Farley is in the process of completing a community housing needs assessment. The city will also be constructing a new city hall in the near future. The city hopes to build a new combined facility with the Farley Historical Society and the Farley branch of the Dubuque County Library.

2018 Highlights
- Applied for a $200,000 RISE grant to extend the road into the industrial park;
- Received a $2,000 grand to rebrand the City of Farley with a new logo.
Maquoketa (Pop. 6,141)

Community Overview
Formed in 2017, this Hometown Pride committee has strong community representation at meetings. Their first project, a spring clean-up day in April, was a success. They use social media to recruit volunteers, share information and promote events. A FaceBook poll was created to allow community members to weigh in on identifying top future community projects. Several planning subcommittees have been developed, including: summer concert series, dog park, skate park and Maqtober Fest.

2018 Highlights
- Inaugural spring clean-up day;

2018 Statistics
- Received $2,000 Wal-Mart community grant for summer concert series;
- Raised $5,800 in sponsorships and donations for spring clean-up day.
Monticello (Pop. 3,796)

Community Overview
Monticello Hometown Pride also completed the Heart & Soul process to identify goals. The Monticello Heart & Soul team was able to identify common values that make the community special. Based on this process, the following five goals rose to community priorities:

- Promote community celebrations;
- Improve school facilities;
- Welcome newcomers;
- Establish recreational trails;
- Support business ventures.

2018 Highlights
- Monticello Pocket Park.

Peosta (Pop. 1,377)

Community Overview
The Peosta Hometown Pride committee is mainly focusing their efforts at this time on the Kelly Oaks Park. The park is not currently open to the public because of safety issues related to dead trees. Hometown Pride committee members and other community volunteers have worked hard to make the park clean and safe. The committee has also been working to develop future plans for the park including recreational trails, restrooms, playground equipment, and a disk golf course.

2018 Highlights
- Safety crossing lights for school – complete;
- Community Days of Caring cleanup with Western Dubuque High School Students – complete;
- Plans for Kelly Oaks Park improvement project, which includes constructing a disc golf course to be finished by August 2018.
Community Overview

With a strong commitment to community from its citizens, Preston Growth & Development has become the local Hometown Pride committee. The city of Preston is applying for designation as an Iowa Great Place, a consideration initiated by Preston Growth & Development representatives.

2018 Highlights

- Preston downtown clean-up day;
- Two Good Park playground;
- Westside Park walking path.
From The Executive Director

Keep Iowa Beautiful is proud and honored to submit this 2017/18 report about Iowans helping to support their community, county and Iowa. We have an immense level of respect for the "can do" attitude of these volunteers that are making it happen. Our motto of "Building Stronger Communities – Developing Sustainable Futures" is clearly taking place in the Hometown Pride areas. They are in fact securing their communities future in both economic and cultural vitality.

What all of us have discussed over this year and the previous five years is how critical it is to keep track and communicate with all of our citizens – those still living in the community and those who have moved away (but in their hearts, they are still residents). Sharing the achievements, improvements and successes with everyone is essential. Maintaining and developing an alumni and contact list is important for the future of your community – they still care.

The challenge is to “reconnect” these friends back to the community. Some will care and some will have a passing interest – but, you won’t know if you don’t keep in touch with them. Sharing the hometown “good news” is appreciated. Another tip – check with your local newspaper to see if they will share the “non-resident” subscriber list. High school alumni lists are another great resource. That list of people really do care!

This list along with your current residents are your “treasure chest”. They are the source of talent, time and in some cases treasure (dollars to the community). Take the extra effort to keep connected with them.

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