



A KEEP IOWA BEAUTIFUL PROGRAM

2017 / 2018 Annual Report



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

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.

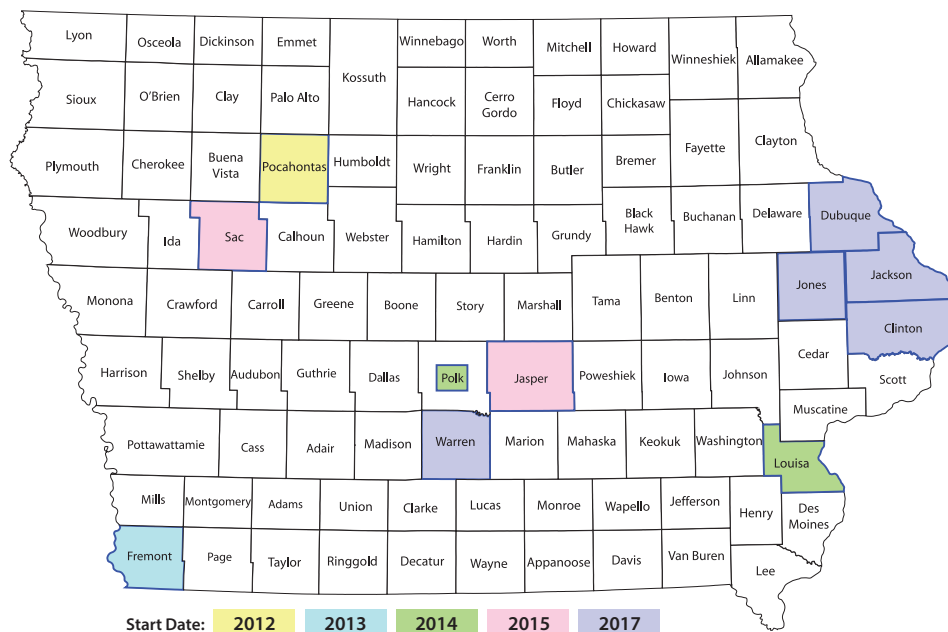
The Hometown Pride program works when everyone involved is committed to furthering the economic and cultural vitality of the county and its communities - it does take a village. This partnership strategy is only successful when it is mutually supported, facilitated, and coordinated. Every decision, even 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, Lynnvile, 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)

(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.

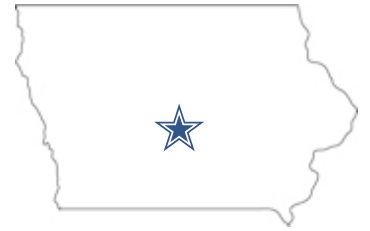
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Capitol Neighborhoods

The Capitol Neighborhoods Hometown Pride program was established on September 2, 2014. This program works with the neighborhood associations, organizational partners, businesses and residents of the Capitol East, Capitol Park and MLK Jr. Park neighborhoods on the east side of Des Moines. All three neighborhoods have submitted extensive neighborhood plans to the City of Des Moines within the last four years and are part of the Viva East Bank! (www.vivaeastbank.org) collaborative initiative, leveraging resources and partnerships in order to implement their plans. Viva East Bank! accomplishes a significant portion of their work through four work group areas, including: Housing; Public Space & Infrastructure; Business Districts; and Community Building/Programming.



Community Coach: Beth Hicks, 515-556-0586, beth@urbandcommunityconcepts.com.

Statistics

For all three neighborhoods:

- Community Building and Programming: \$80,220 invested in 2017
- Housing: \$1,479,163 invested in 2017
- Public Spaces and Infrastructure: \$167,749 invested in 2017



Capitol East (Pop. 2,605)



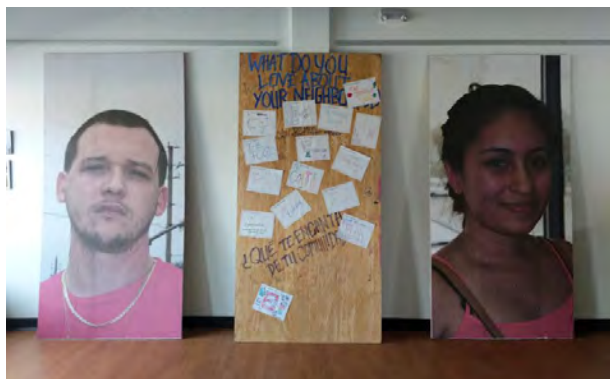
Community Overview

Capitol East neighborhood is primarily low-income and diverse with 32.5% Latino population and 14% African American. There are a high percentage of renters and 50% of the residents are under 30 years of age. The Capitol East Neighborhood Association was formed in 1989 and Capitol East became a “designated” neighborhood in February 1990.

In 2017-2018, Capitol East partners focused on the following priorities: 1) addressing vacant housing; 2) advocating for street and park improvements; 3) supporting youth programming; and 4) strengthening business and economic opportunities through collaboration, including a new monument sign.

2018 Highlights

- As part of the 16th annual Meredith Corporation Rebuilding Together work day, more than 200 employee volunteers from Meredith transformed one of Des Moines’ oldest parks with new playground equipment and landscaping. Located in the Capitol East neighborhood on the busy corner of East 14th and East Grand Avenue, Stewart Square Park received five new playground pieces targeted to two different age groups. One of the pieces, called “Global Motion,” celebrates the diversity of the neighborhood.
- Community Housing Initiatives coordinated the installation of a distinct mural installation at Tienda La Favorita, 1700 East Grand Avenue, in the Capitol East neighborhood. This public art installation reflects the beauty of the diverse residents and cultures that call this neighborhood home.
- In early 2018, Community Housing Initiatives opened “Third Space,” an experimental community resource center, gathering place, and creative space in the heart of Des Moines’ Capitol East neighborhood. Located at 1707 East Grand Avenue, the space is available to local organizations and residents for meetings, workshops, and arts and culture focused events that are reflective of the people, culture and needs of the surrounding communities.



Capitol Park Neighborhood (Pop. 3,187)



Community Overview

Capitol Park neighborhood is a community with a large portion of youth, minority and working-class residents, and contains one of the youngest and most racially diverse populations in Des Moines. In the last twenty years, the overall population has been slowly declining; however, it has become increasingly diverse, with a major rise in the Hispanic population. As of 2010, 41.5% of the population was Hispanic and the total minority population percentage was 45.9%, nearly double what it was in 1990. The Capitol Park Neighborhood Association was formed in 1992 and submitted their first plan to the City in 1995, updating the plan in 2011.

For 2017-2018, Capitol Park partners see the neighborhood's top priorities as: 1) educating residents on homeownership and tenant/landlord relations; 2) initiating more community building with Iowa Lutheran Hospital and the Des Moines Botanical Garden; 3) improving neighborhood aesthetics with infrastructure improvements, public art and increased walkability; and 4) supporting youth programming.

2018 Highlights

- In celebration of Earth Day, UnityPoint partnered with Carver Elementary students to plant 15 apple trees in green space on the south side of University Avenue. Iowa State University Community Design Lab helped in planning and designing this edible landscape project.
- The Step it Up project team identified and prioritized more than ½ mile of sidewalk improvements to be made in the Capitol Park neighborhood. The purpose of the project is to improve walking routes for students at Carver Elementary School, Hiatt Middle School and East High School. The sidewalks will be repaired or reconstructed in Spring 2018. Changes will also be made to improve pedestrian signals at East University Avenue.
- In November, Community Housing Initiatives partnered with nonprofit Current Initiatives to offer a day of free laundry at the Wash-N-Dry Laundry in the Capitol Park neighborhood. As part of their national Laundry Project campaign, Current Initiatives provided quarters and detergent to more than 30 individuals and families for a combined 364 loads of laundry during the three-hour event. Hy-Vee's mobile health van provided free flu shots and biometric screenings to residents; complimentary coffee from Horizon Line Coffee and pastries from local bakery El Cafecito were available. During the event, artists were on site installing a CLEAN mural on the east wall of the laundry building as a symbol of hope and empowerment.



MLK Jr. Park Neighborhood (Pop. 2,584)



Community Overview

MLK Jr. Park neighborhood is racially and ethnically diverse with 41% African American, 31% White, 26% Latino and 11% Asian populations. Currently 43.5% of the residents speak a language other than English. Thirty-three percent of the residents are under 20 years of age and 13.1% are over the age of 65. There is a high proportion of family households with children under the age of 18. The MLK Neighborhood Association was formed in 1996 and applied for “designated” status in February 2011.

For 2017-2018, MLK Jr. Park partners identified the following priorities: 1) adding neighborhood signage; 2) improving the appearance of East University and East 14th Street; 3) expanding neighborhood association membership; 4) addressing need for affordable housing; 5) improving pedestrian safety and 5) supporting youth programming

2018 Highlights

- An average of 23 elementary-age kids attended year four of a summer day program for six weeks in June and July. Students were offered a variety of reading and enrichment activities at Philadelphia Seventh Day Adventist Church and MLK Jr. Park. Each week, students had the opportunity to participate in martial arts, STEM programming, community enhancement, gardening, art and reading activities. Funding from United Way and partnerships with local organizations gave young people in the neighborhoods the opportunity to continue learning while school was out.
- Enhancements to Martin Luther King Jr. Park continue to expand the park’s usability. A new shade structure was added adjacent to the wading pool, providing a cool place for park users to relax. In August, AARP introduced a Walking Club at the park. More than a dozen residents participated in group fitness walks around the park’s perimeter walking path. Wellness programming also included presentations, demonstrations of the park’s fitness equipment, and healthy snacks. As a capstone, the Club walked in the Multicultural Fall Festival parade in September.
- The fourth Hiatt Service Day was held in May. This event allows each of the 500 students at Hiatt Middle School opportunities to participate in community service activities. Students created public art, planted the school garden and refreshed their outdoor classroom space. The fifth annual Holiday Party continued to be a popular event this year at Hiatt Middle School. More than 300 students and family members enjoyed getting a photo with Santa & Mrs. Claus, creating arts and crafts and enjoying a free pasta dinner. More than 2,000 warm winter clothing items were distributed as well.



Clinton County

Clinton County is a micropolitan county in east central Iowa. The County is composed of fourteen incorporated communities and their surrounding rural areas. From 2000 to 2010, Clinton County's population decreased by 2.06 percent while the state's population increased by 4.10 percent.



The Clinton County Hometown Pride Program was established on August 1, 2017, and includes the following eight communities: Clinton, Camanche, Delmar, Dewitt, Grand Mound, Lost Nation, Low Moor and Wheatland. At the present time Calamus is contemplating joining.

The goal for each community for the first year was to establish community Hometown Pride Committees for each community and a county steering committee for the county. The community committees meet monthly, except for Delmar, which meets twice monthly. Welton has yet to establish a committee but talks are still ongoing to initiate a committee in that locale. The steering committee meets monthly in rotating communities, in conjunction with the local bi-monthly county mayors meeting.

Community Coach: Francis O. Boggus, 515-822-1434, francis@francisboggus.com

Camanche (Pop. 4,348)



Community Overview

The Camanche HTP committee meets monthly at city hall. It has six members appointed by the mayor and serves as an advisory group to the city administration. The committee's short-term goals include: constructing an entrance sign on state highway 67, as well as bike rental stations connecting Camanche to Clinton, a new logo and tag line for the city for branding purposes and improvements to the city parks. The committee's medium-range goals include: restructuring the pier next to the city library for a meeting place, and expansion of the library that has a scenic view of the Mississippi River. Their long-range goal is to build a new fine arts facility for the high school.

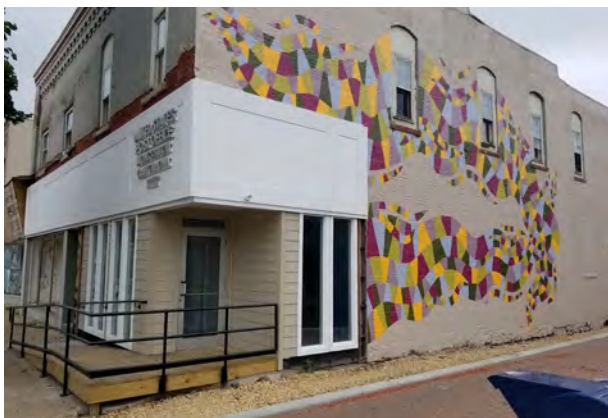
2018 Highlights

- In June, 2018 the first bikes were purchased for the bike share program "My Bike," by a local credit union.
- The city survey was created and will be sent to all residents of the city.
- The Camanche High School National Honor Society will partner with HTP to build ball field improvements for Platt Park. This is a sustaining program that each class will perform.

2018 Statistics

- Received funding from a local credit union for two bikes for the bike sharing program.- \$2,500.

Clinton (Pop. 26,246)



Community Overview

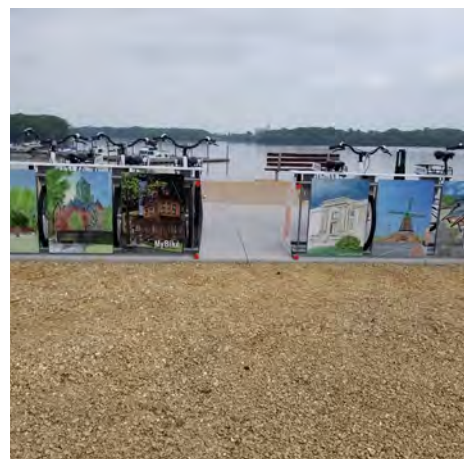
The city of Clinton has established a five-person committee appointed by the mayor. The committee meets monthly at the city council chambers and made the decision to establish the HTP committee as an advisory group to the city administration. The committee will focus on revitalizing downtown, encouraging local shopping, re-purposing derelict downtown and Lyons neighborhood buildings, beautifying two business districts, re-purposing the Ashford- Mt St. Clare University into an international secondary boarding school and involving students in development, implementation and prioritization of projects.

2018 Highlights

- Applied for and received funding from Paint Iowa Beautiful and the Clinton Downtown Alliance to paint a community mural by high school students from a design by the art school of the University of Iowa. The mural was completed on June 9, 2018 and is on the side of the re-opened U.S. Post Office in the Lyons neighborhood.
- Established a committee to work in collaboration with the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce to initiate a punch card for promotion of and purchasing at participating local shops.
- Established a welcoming committee to assist with the adjustment of boarding students, Clinton students and residents at the new international boarding school on the old Ashford-Mt. St. Clare University campus. The boarding school will open in August 2018 and was established by the Confucius International Educational Group of China.

2018 Statistics

- Held monthly meetings for the past 12 months.
- Applied for and received funding from Paint Iowa Beautiful and other local agencies for a public mural.



Delmar (Pop. 505)



Community Overview

The Delmar Hometown Pride committee grew out of an economic development committee started several years ago. It meets twice monthly and is formed as a 501 (c) (3) organization. It meets in the city fire station and has a solid organization of 8- 10 members who participate regularly. The committee plans to work to three projects for the future: a basketball court and splash pad for the town park; re-purposing of the old city hall into a bar/restaurant/ brew pub; and development of the historic train depot into a community center. The committee has held several successful fundraisers to support these efforts. The University of Iowa Planning and Development program also conducted a study and survey of students and adult residents in 2017 and 2018 that support the community needs for the planned projects. This survey canvassed both students and adult residents.

2018 Highlights

- The committee had outdoor concerts at the train depot in October 2017 and June 2018 that attracted several hundred concert goers and raised money for the projects.
- The HTP committee sponsored a bus trip in July 2017 to a Cubs baseball game in Milwaukee and will offer another bus trip to Wrigley Field on August 5, 2018.
- The committee managed a holiday letter solicitation in December 2017 that netted over \$4,500 in funds for the basketball court/splash pad.
- Received \$80,000 in grant funding from the Clinton County Development Association for the basketball court and splash pad for the city park.

DeWitt (Pop. 5,253)



Community Overview

This Hometown Pride programs works with existing organizations in the town and serves as a resource for any existing committees and organizations. The mayor and the city administrator wanted the community coach to work with the city Library Board on the planning of the expansion of the Frances Banta Waggoner Community Library. The DeWitt Library board has planned an expansion of the 7,000 square foot library to 21,000 square feet by 2019 at a total project cost of \$5.75 million. The city is planning a \$3.5 million bond issue for voter approval in August 2018 and also a capital campaign to raise \$2.25 million.

The community coach acts as a consultant and facilitator for the library trustees, and will develop fundraising tactics and sources for the project. The city also envisions building a community fitness center after successful completion of the library project.

2018 Highlights

- Formation of the capital campaign committee of 15 members with a campaign chair.
- Hiring of a fundraising consultant for the library project, and development of the bond issue and fundraising strategy.

Grand Mound (Pop. 623)



Community Overview

The Grand Mound Hometown Pride committee meets monthly at the city hall. The committee consists of 7-8 active members. A committee chair has been selected and the committee has selected several projects it wants to focus on: development of the city park to include a sports complex with baseball diamonds, volleyball sand court, refurbished concession stand, a two-mile walking track and landscaping of the entire area; moving a small railroad depot into town next to the historic fire station and adding a model train exhibit; and re-purposing several buildings in town as a catalyst for improvements.

2018 Highlights

- Established 501(c)(3) accounts with the Lincolnway Community Foundation for grant and endowment purposes.
- Held a summer clean-up day on June 9, 2018 at the city park.
- Increased Hometown Pride account for park improvements to \$2,500.

Lost Nation (Pop. 429)



Community Overview

The Lost Nation Hometown Pride Committee meets once a month at the city hall/library. It consists of 10-11 active members and has established its own 501 (c) (3) status. The committee wants to establish a camping ground with at least 8-9 camping sites at Rustic Park. Improvements and demolition of derelict buildings in town is another priority. It is also planning a festival for the Fall 2018 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the filming of the movie "Children of the Corn" in town.

2018 Highlights

- The HTP committee has a national Main Street America contest for a \$25,000 prize money in 2018 and finished as a quarter finalist. It will apply again next year.
- Designed and sold tee-shirts with town logo and raised \$600.
- Scheduled a town clean up day on June 19, 2018 and will use the award from the Paint Iowa grant for painting.
- Was awarded \$24,001.13 from the Clinton County Development Association for the Rustic Park campgrounds.

Low Moor (Pop. 281)



Community Overview

The Low Moor Hometown Pride committee has been formed as a 501(c)(3) organization with five members appointed by the mayor. It meets once a month in city hall. The committee's mission is to improve the city parks and overall appearance of the town.

2018 Highlights

- Established nonprofit 501(c)(3) status with the IRS.
- Received three grants for improvements to Christmas lights and park ball fields.

Wheatland (Pop. 740)



Community Overview

The Wheatland Hometown Pride committee has five members and was appointed by the mayor. It meets once a month in the town library. The committee has established the following goals: enhancing the city park to make it more attractive for youth; restoring the local old gas station and using it as an electric car re-charging station; re-purposing several derelict buildings in town through the State of Iowa Catalyst Program; and establish a two-mile walking and hiking trail between Wheatland and Calamus over the three historic Lincoln Highway bridges in collaboration with the Historic Lincoln Highway Association.

2018 Highlights

- Met with the Historic Lincoln Highway Association of Iowa to plan on development of a two-mile walking/hiking trail between the towns of Calamus and Wheatland.

Fremont County

Fremont County is completing year five of the Hometown Pride program. Significant progress has been made on goals established in 2013, including: improving first impressions, enhancing the quality of life; eliminating nuisance and derelict properties; engaging youth; developing leadership capacity and capturing some transfer of wealth. Four towns established community foundation endowments. In year six, the goal is to grow the population base and reverse the trend of out-migration.



Community Coach: Doug Friedli, 402-873-2215, dougfriedli@gmail.com.

Bartlett (Pop. 22)

Community Overview

The buildings, houses and trees that were damaged or destroyed in the Flood of 2011 have been cleaned up and are now being maintained. New trees have been planted. Community pride has been restored.

2018 Highlights

- New welcome sign was installed;
- Abandoned properties have been cleared off and are ready for development;
- The drainage ditches that had filled with silt have been cleaned out so there is no longer standing, stagnate water in town.

2018 Statistics

The committee only met twice. All but one of the goals they set five years ago have been achieved...their ultimate goal is to sell lots and have people build new homes.

Farragut (Pop. 463)



Community Overview

In the past five years this community lost their K-12 school and two grain elevators, the café closed, and the bank moved its headquarters to a nearby town. It was a “call to action” for the citizens. Progress in other Hometown Pride communities provided inspiration for community betterment projects. The former school building is now being converted into apartments. The abandoned railroad line is being converted into a bicycle/walking trail. A new owner has renovated the café into a restaurant. Main Street has been renovated. Pride is shining throughout town.

2018 Highlights

- Community-wide picnic to greet new residents and renew old friendships;
- Downtown storefronts have been painted and new benches, flowerpots, banners and bike racks have been added to Main Street;
- New playground equipment is being installed in the city park.

2018 Statistics

- 7 gallons of paint received from Paint Iowa Beautiful;
- \$9,000 in grants for new playground equipment;
- \$1,238 raised;
- 161 volunteer hours.

Photos: Painting Crew on Main Street

Hamburg (Pop. 1,137)



Community Overview

The Hamburg Hometown Pride committee has great turnouts for their monthly work parties. The volunteers, young and old, enjoy working together on community betterment projects. They distribute welcome packets to new residents. Monthly meetings are well attended with new volunteers showing up nearly every month. It is refreshing to see the strong camaraderie as they work together and enjoy good food together.

2018 Highlights

- Completed the new welcome sign at the west entrance to town;
- Cleaned up and landscaped library, City Hall, Main Street;
- Improvements at City Park and Veterans Park.

2018 Statistics

- 8 gallons of paint from Paint Iowa Beautiful;
- \$5,000 grant for park improvements - city park and Veterans Park;
- 475 volunteer hours.



Imogene (Pop. 69)

Community Overview

A proud community of Irish heritage. The citizens have a can-do spirit. Everyone knows and cares for each other. The Wabash Trace bicycle path brings interesting visitors from the metro area who love to relax and socialize with the locals at the Emerald Isle bar.

2018 Highlights

- Painted city hall with volunteer help from high school students;
- Designed a barn quilt with a Celtic pattern to be mounted on City Hall.

2018 Statistics

- 75 volunteer hours.

Percival (Pop. 78)



2018 Highlights

- New playground equipment at the city park;
- Ball field improvements;
- Banners on street light poles downtown.

Community Overview

The friends and neighbors of this unincorporated community endured so much pain and suffering while displaced from their homes, businesses and farms while they were under water for five months during the flood of 2011. Several families never moved back. But those who did have rebuilt and cleaned up the abandoned nuisance and derelict properties. After helping each other clean up their own properties, the citizens turned their attention on building a better future for the next generation. In the past year, the Hometown Pride volunteers have been promoting a dream of creating a trail of barn quilts throughout the county to beautify properties and attract tourists to the county.

2018 Highlights

- Met and exceeded their initial goal and raised over \$14,000 to start the Percival Community Endowment Fund. They are the smallest community in Iowa to have their own endowment to sustain their future;
- Continued to make improvements to the city park, completing a walking trail and raising funds to expand the park shelter;
- Hosted four barn quilt workshops for 71 individuals from across the county.

2018 Statistics

- 5 gallons of paint from Paint Iowa Beautiful;
- \$10,000 grant for park shelter addition;
- \$13,000 in donations to the community endowment;
- \$987 from the annual pancake fundraiser;
- 325 volunteer hours.

Randolph (Pop. 161)

Community Overview

After decades of population decline, Randolph is beginning to grow. In the past two years, new families have been moving into nearly every vacant house in town. The library staff have opened their doors to students after school and are providing educational and entertainment opportunities. The Hometown Pride community has recently focused fundraising efforts on adding playground equipment and improving the baseball field at the park. They have also continued to improve the first impression of downtown.

2018 Statistics

- \$12,000 grant for playground equipment for city park;
- \$634 raised;
- 244 volunteer hours.

Riverton (Pop. 287)



Community Overview

The Hometown Pride housing study showed that homes are selling for less than their appraised value and at below cost. This creates an affordable opportunity for new buyers.

2018 Highlights

- A new welcome sign was installed.

2018 Statistics

The Riverton Hometown Pride and Betterment Club disbanded and quit meeting in June 2017 due to lack of interested volunteers.

Sidney (Pop. 1,087)



Community Overview

The past few years, the city and Hometown Pride committee have been focused on improving the first impressions of the town square around the Courthouse. As a result, several business owners are now planning to fix their storefront facades. The city council is taking action to address the issues that were shown in the housing study that was sponsored by Fremont County Hometown Pride. Several properties have been purchased. Some homes will be rehabbed and others will be demolished and cleared to make in-fill lots available for new homes.

2018 Highlights

- Phase 2 of the cowboy boots public art project;
- Approval to proceed on the Safe Route to School project;
- Hosted ribbon cuttings for several businesses.

2018 Statistics

- \$6,460 grants for boots project, recycling bin project;
- \$5,142 raised;
- 263 volunteer hours.



Tabor (Pop. 993)



Community Overview

This community is showing growth in a county that has been losing population for over 100 years. Currently there are not enough houses available for everyone who wants to move into town. The Hometown Pride committee is improving first impressions by hosting youth clean-up days, purchasing new street lights and banners and flower baskets, tearing down nuisance buildings, installing murals, etc. Downtown activity has increased with the reopening of the grocery store, weekly farmers markets and new businesses. The city council is actively addressing the housing shortage issue.

2018 Highlights

- A long abandoned nuisance building on Main Street was removed, and plans made for a new library;
- Veterans Memorial was restored and improved;
- A mural of a historic painting was installed downtown.

2018 Statistics

- 6 gallons of paint from Paint Iowa Beautiful;
- \$10,000 grant for phase 4 of the street light project;
- 178 volunteer hours.

Thurman (Pop. 222)



Community Overview

On April 14, 2012, a half-mile wide tornado struck Thurman, damaging and destroying about one-third of the homes. Eighteen months later, volunteers organized the Thurman Hometown Pride committee with goals to rebuild the community and attract new residents. The city applied for and received grants for a new water system which is now operational.

2018 Highlights

- New sidewalks along Main Street;
- Welcome/Information sign installed;
- 4th annual clean-up day.

2018 Statistics

- \$2,500 grant for new banners along Main Street;
- 89 volunteer hours.

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





The new water tower goes up.

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)



Plans for Cole Park playground.

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.



Ribbon cutting at Felderman Park bridge

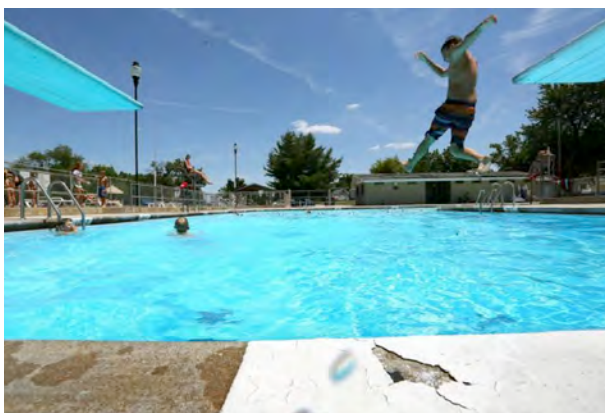


Felderman Park bridge



Felderman Park bridge and trail

Cascade (Pop. 2,159)



Looking to add a new swimming pool

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.

Dubuque (Pop. 57,637)



Voices Mural project brings internationally known artists



Opening of Bee Branch



Miracle League of Dubuque



Sidewalk art

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.



More sidewalk art

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 been 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 grant to rebrand the City of Farley with a new logo.

Maquoketa (Pop. 6,141)



Pedestrian bridge over the Maquoketa River.



Prairie Creek Pavillion.



Spring Clean-Up Day.

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.

Preston (Pop. 1,012)



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.



Downtown Clean-Up.

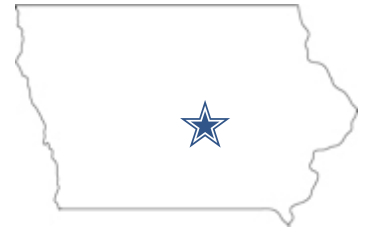


Two Good Park Playground.



Jasper County

In 2018 we increased the participating communities by two, as Kellogg and Mingo completed their first full year. Each town successfully formed their committee, elected officers, and completed their Vision Plan for moving their community forward. Implementation strategies, including a fundraising plan will be the focus in the final two years of Hometown Pride in Jasper County.



Community Coach: Jeff Davidson, 319-541-7048, jeff.davidson2013@gmail.com

Colfax (Pop. 2,100)



Community Overview

Colfax Hometown Pride efforts continue to focus on the development of Quarry Springs Park. This 480-acre park, with 240 acres of lakes, was added to Colfax in 2015. A \$63,000 REAP grant, obtained in 2016, was closed out in 2018, after it was used for shoreline improvements to enable water access. Hometown Pride efforts at Quarry Springs Park have centered on grant work, with two Paint Iowa Beautiful grants obtained for rehabbing a block building left by the former quarry operators. This building will be used for quarry park events and available for use by the public. A canoe/kayak operator will begin operations in 2018, and the park is already a hub for fishing. Hometown Pride assisted with development of a park Master Plan that will make approximately 25 acres adjacent to the park available for private development. This will enable accelerated development of park facilities.

Other Hometown Pride efforts in 2018 include completing a city council strategic plan and meeting with property owners in an effort to get more residential subdivision ground opened up. Colfax Hometown Pride coordinates closely with the Colfax Parks Auxiliary Board as well as Colfax Mainstreet. A State Tourism Grant was obtained to develop marketing materials for Colfax parks (featuring Quarry Springs Park), as well as a joint City of Colfax, City of Mingo, Colfax-Mingo School District brochure. This fall a University of Iowa civil engineering senior capstone group will undertake a study to design features for the relocation of Red Bridge to Quarry Springs Park. Red Bridge is the last 19th century iron truss bridge remaining in Jasper County, and plans will move it from its current location near Reasoner to Quarry Springs Park for use as a pedestrian bridge.

2018 Highlights

- Completed Trees Forever Community Vision Plan;
- Closed out REAP grant for shoreline improvements at Quarry Springs Park;
- Completed city council strategic plan.

Baxter (Pop. 1,100)



Community Overview

Baxter's Hometown Pride committee is an integral part of the Baxter Summit, an organization including the City of Baxter, the Baxter Community School District, the Baxter Economic Development Corporation. A Chamber of Commerce subcommittee was formed from the Baxter Hometown Pride committee and now exists as a stand-alone organization. Baxter Hometown Pride is focused on generating economic development opportunities from the Chichaqua Valley Trail, a regional rail trail with Baxter as the current terminus. With the trail now extending into the Des Moines metro, there are opportunities to bring people from the metro up the trail to spend money in Baxter. Baxter has completed renovations to the trailhead caboose and will be participating in many trail activities this summer and fall. Baxter Hometown Pride has begun renovation of Geise Park, with construction of primitive campsites commencing as well as early activities related to building a walking trail around the stormwater detention basin. A major fundraising campaign is commencing as well as early building activities for a walking trail, with full implementation of the Geise Park Master Plan expected to take five to seven years.

2018 Highlights

- Finalized Geise Park Master Plan;
- Established Chamber of Commerce subcommittee;
- Held Baxter Summit annual community celebration.

Lynnvile (Pop. 380)

Community Overview

Lynnvile's Hometown Pride committee is operated jointly with their Chamber of Commerce. Since the Chamber was already performing many of the community development functions typically under the purview of Hometown Pride, the primary function of Hometown Pride has been grants management for the joint committee and other non-profit groups. Annual grant applications were made to Paint Iowa Beautiful, Prairie Meadows Community Betterment and the Jasper Community Foundation. The Hometown Pride committee took on operation of the existing Lynnvile United Fund, an annual effort that awards grants to area nonprofit groups. Grants totaling \$7,500 were distributed last fall, and this year's fundraising campaign is underway with a goal of \$10,000.

2018 Highlights

- Distributed first Lynnvile Hometown Pride United Fund grants totaling \$7500;
- Completed school bell memorial restoration in Lynnvile Community Park (started in previous year);
- Submitted four 2018 grant applications to area foundations for playground equipment, fire department radio equipment, and Smoke on the Water Benefit expenses.

Kellogg (Pop. 600)



Community Overview

Kellogg is one of the two Jasper County communities that joined Hometown Pride late, so 2018 was their first complete year participating. They have wasted no time getting up to speed. Their focus is Holmdahl Park, a lovely riverfront park in south Kellogg along the North Skunk River. A new playground was constructed by Hometown Pride volunteers at the end of 2017, and in 2018 the canoe/kayak launch that was completely destroyed in the flood of 2010 has been reconstructed. Hometown Pride was able to secure a \$5,000 grant from the Jasper Community Foundation to reconstruct the launch better than the original that washed away. Stain from Paint Iowa Beautiful has been secured to maintain the decks of the Holmdahl Park community building, known locally as the “Monkey House.” A paint grant from Paint Iowa Beautiful has also been secured for maintaining the ball diamond at Holmdahl Park, and grant funding has been requested for new dugouts for the baseball field. A Lion’s Club pancake breakfast in April raised nearly \$500 for Hometown Pride projects.

2018 Highlights

- Reconstruction of canoe/kayak launch in Holmdahl Park using \$5,000 Jasper Community Foundation grant;
- Paint Iowa Beautiful grants for ball diamond concession stand and community building decks;
- Applications to Prairie Meadows Community Betterment and Jasper Community Foundation for baseball field dugouts.

Mingo (Pop. 300)

Community Overview

Mingo has done a phenomenal job of getting up to speed after starting the Hometown Pride program late this past year. Mingo has a large committee of eight to 12 who regularly attend with a focus on the Community Center Park and the Chichaqua Valley Trail. Several grants have been received already that have enabled enhancements to the park playground. The city has been a great partner as well, recognizing the good work being done by Hometown Pride and assisting with project funding. A Paint Iowa Beautiful grant will provide paint for a downtown mural by Baxter High School art students. A water fountain/bottle fill station will be installed this summer at Community Center Park. Mingo Hometown Pride works closely with the Friends of the Chichaqua Valley Trail in promoting events on the trail.

2018 Highlights

- Awarded \$7,500 award from Jasper Community Foundation for new park playground;
- Received seven gallons of paint through Paint Iowa Beautiful for downtown mural to be installed by students;
- Raised \$5,000 for community organizations from the Pedaler’s Jamboree in August.

Monroe (Pop. 1,850)

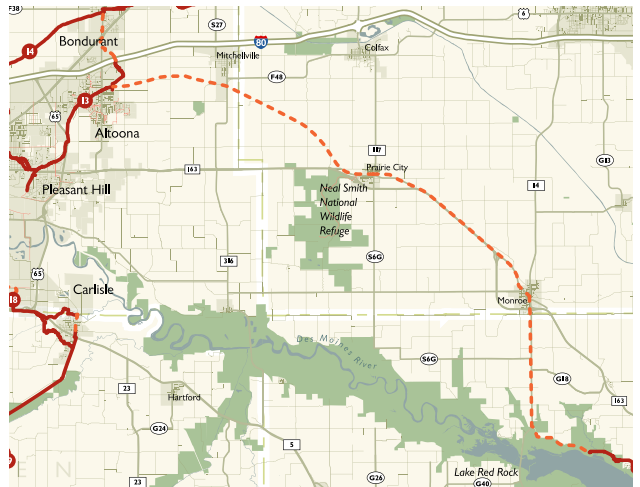
Community Overview

After completing the tennis court renovation in Tools Point Park in 2017, Monroe Hometown Pride has been focused on getting the first phase of the Red Rock Prairie Trail completed between Monroe and Prairie City. Additional funds were needed beyond the \$900,000 in hand, so a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant was applied for in the amount of \$240,000. This grant required a \$60,000 local match, so the City of Monroe, City of Prairie City and Jasper County Conservation Commission agreed to split it three ways. The TAP grant was successful, with total available funding now at \$1.2 million. Monroe Hometown Pride was also able to secure funding from the city council to hire an architectural firm to design a trailhead pavilion and restroom for the Monroe Trailhead located in Red Rock Park. The design is almost complete and fundraising will be coordinated by Monroe Hometown Pride. Trail construction is anticipated to begin in late 2018 or early 2019.

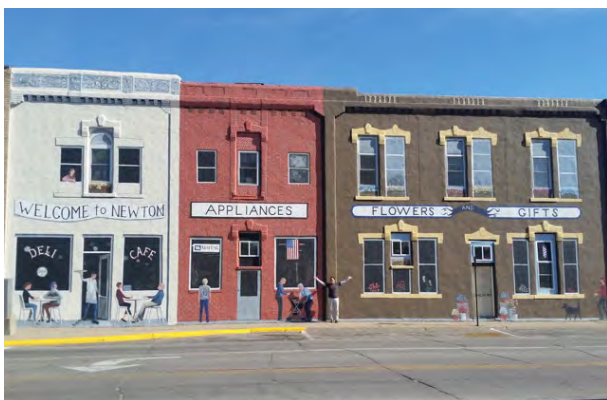
Monroe Hometown Pride has also designed a parking lot for the trailhead adjacent to the trailhead site. Grants have been applied for from Prairie Meadows Community Betterment and the Jasper Community Foundation.

2018 Highlights

- Transportation Alternatives grant acquired for \$240,000;
- Local match pledge from Monroe of \$20,000;
- Trailhead pavilion design completed to allow fundraising to begin.



Newton (Pop. 15,500)



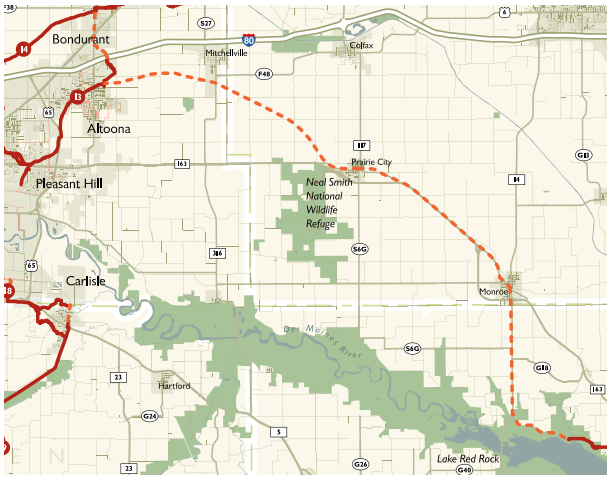
Community Overview

Newton Hometown Pride has five primary projects it has devoted resources to this year. Four large-scale iconic murals in downtown have been restored to their original beauty, extending their life to 15 to 20 years. A city sign project has been handed off to the Hometown Pride committee, and wayfinding signs have been installed on local street routes and will be completed this summer on state highway routes. In partnership with Des Moines Area Community College Newton campus, the former site of Maytag Plant 1 will be converted to a campus green and public event space. The DMACC Greenspace project can be a catalyst for additional residential development adjacent to downtown. Installation of a 180'-long wind turbine blade donated by TPI Composites is part of this public art project. Hometown Pride is also looking to establish a multi-use co-working/art gallery/brewpub/live music space on the DMACC Legacy Campus (former Maytag Corporate Campus) in response to a creative placemaking project.

2018 Highlights

- Completed a \$16,000 mural restoration project coordinated by Hometown Pride;
- Completed DMACC Greenspace design plan;
- Managed wayfinding sign project.

Prairie City (Pop. 1,712)



Community Overview

Like Monroe, Prairie City Hometown Pride has focused most of its attention on the construction of the first phase of the Red Rock Prairie Trail between Monroe and Prairie City. Fundraising is nearly complete and construction on the 8.5-mile trail segment should begin late this year or early 2019. Hometown Pride appealed to the Prairie City City Council and was able to secure \$20,000 to match the \$240,000 TAP grant that was received in April 2018. The committee has raised \$2,000 from the city toward a \$15,000 goal to restore the historic Garden Square Park community bandstand. Hometown Pride helped secure grants from Prairie Meadows Community Betterment for automatic door openers on the Prairie City Public Library and for safety equipment for the Police Department. Restoration of the public mural on the south side of Garden Square Park is also in the works, with assistance from the University of Iowa School of Art and Art History.

2018 Highlights

- Secured grants for library door openers and police department safety equipment;
- Received \$240,000 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant for Red Rock Prairie Trail;
- Developed restoration plan for Garden Square Park bandstand.

Sully (Pop. 810)



Community Overview

Following completion of renovations to Central Park in Sully, the Hometown Pride committee has shifted its focus to Ballfield Park. A University of Iowa civil engineering college senior capstone class helped produce a renovation plan for Ballfield Park addressing comments from a Sully community survey. The survey was a joint project of the committee and the local economic development group, Sully Betterment. The survey showed that residents also desire a splash pad, renovations to the tennis courts, a walking path, and a more convenient entrance to the Ballfield Park from 7th Street. These improvements have been assembled into a plan which will be implemented as funding and grants allow. Sully Hometown Pride was also able to secure a \$5,000 grant from the Prairie Meadows Community Betterment program to obtain a thermal imaging camera for the Sully Fire and Rescue Service, and a \$2,000 grant from the Build with Bags program for benches for Central Park.

2018 Highlights

- Completed Ballfield Park renovation plan;
- Completed Sully community survey;
- Received \$7,000 in grants from Prairie Meadows Community Betterment and Build with Bags programs for community improvements.

Louisa County

Louisa County is located in southeast Iowa with a population of about 11,000. The county is located along the Mississippi River between Muscatine and Burlington with the county seat in Wapello. There is a Tyson Food processing plant in the northern portion of the county and some light industry in Wapello, with the remainder of the county devoted to agriculture. The Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge is also located in the county.



On June 30th Coach Doug Elam will be leaving the program after nearly four years and will be turning over the reins to the newly formed Hometown Pride Louisa County, Inc (formerly the steering committee) a 501(c)(3) to carry on. Five of the nine Hometown Pride committees have indicated that they will continue on with Hometown Pride.

Community Contact: Sherry Humphreys, 319-728-7131, humphreys.sp@gmail.com

Columbus City (Pop. 390)



Community Overview

Columbus City sits adjacent to the second largest community in Louisa County, Columbus Junction. This community is provided with water/sewer, police, EMS and fire services from Columbus Junction. There is no downtown or any industry in the community; however, the local dentist and medical clinic are situated in Columbus City.

2018 Highlights

- New 'welcome' signs with landscaping to follow;
- Electronic message board on city hall;
- Paint Iowa Beautiful grant for the city park.

2018 Statistics

- At this time the Hometown Pride Committee consists of the mayor, a city councilman and the city clerk.



Fredonia (Pop. 240)



Community Overview

Fredonia was incorporated in 1836 and is located on the Iowa River just east of Columbus Junction. The town is strictly a 'bedroom community' as there are no businesses within the city. The city hall was repainted as a Hometown Pride project three years ago and other upgrades are in process.

2018 Highlights

- New 'welcome' signs for the city;
- New street intersection signs in the same format as Columbus Junction;
- Upgrades to city hall - ramp, air conditioning, running water and new windows.

2018 Statistics

- Fredonia received \$2,260 in grants this year, the first time they have ever reached out for outside funding.



Oakville (Pop. 170)

Community Overview

Oakville was all but wiped out 10 years ago with the flooding of the Iowa and Mississippi River. The Hometown Pride committee meets at 3:00 in the afternoon which makes it very difficult to expand their circle.

2018 Highlights

- Continued improvements to the city park;
- New directional signs to the cemetery as it is located well out of town.





Community Overview

Letts is a small community on the Muscatine County border. It has a very active Hometown Pride cCommittee and is supported by the mayor and city council.

2018 Highlights

- Removal of the bank and school - these abandoned buildings have been an eyesore for many years. Last year Letts received a grant to take down the bank and clean-up the old school site. A memorial park with a two story gazebo will be built at the bank location and there is hope that some starter homes will be built where the school once stood.
- Honoring Civil War veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Lt William H H Reddick - Reddick and five survivors of the 1862 Andrew's Raid/The Great Locomotive Chase (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Locomotive_Chase) were the first soldiers ever to receive the Medal of Honor, he is buried in the Letts Cemetery. Now a bronze plaque and Medal of Honor flag help identify his grave. There are also IDOT signs on Highways 61 and 92 directing traffic to Letts.

2018 Statistics

- Thirteen years by councilmen/Hometown Pride chair to get the bank taken down.



Morning Sun (Pop. 830)



Community Overview

Morning Sun is the third largest community in the county and is located along Highway 78. The center of Morning Sun is the K-6 school that the community strongly supports. There is also an effort to keep what is left of the downtown as, with many other towns of their size, much has been lost.

2018 Highlights

- Annual Pulled Pork Dinner - this fourth annual event raised \$1,800;
- The community/school garden - in their second year with this project the Hometown Pride group partners with the city, the school and a private land owner to help youth understand where their food comes from;
- Sidewalk & bio-swale at the school - the committee is partnering with the school and city to build safer sidewalks near the school. This is their first project to come out of the community visioning process.

2018 Statistics

- Morning Sun Hometown Pride has an excellent Facebook Page that highlights the new sidewalk and students planting the garden - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/739885669452209/about/>

Rural Louisa County (Pop. 4,000)



Community Overview

Louisa County Hometown Pride is unique in having a rural committee to engage those citizens outside of the incorporated communities. This group has become a venue to empower residents to step up and make a difference through project-focused efforts that serve all of the county.

2018 Highlights

- County-wide litter collections;
- Highlighting the Convict Road outside of Fredonia with signage and educational materials. The project has been in the local newspapers and on Fran's Feature (WKQC) <http://www.kwqc.com/content/misc/Concrete-and-Convicts-442464773.html>.

2018 Statistics

- The Convict Road group has a fundraising goal of \$15,000 for the project.

Wapello (Pop. 2,000)



Community Overview

Wapello is the county seat and has a very active Hometown Pride committee that is strongly supported by the city. The greatest challenge for the community is the realignment of Highway 61 around Wapello.

2018 Highlights

- North Park Master Plan implementation - 10 years ago the city hired an engineering firm to create a master plan for the park. When this plan was presented the council went into 'sticker shock' and shelved the upgrades. The Hometown Pride committee has dusted off the plan and is in the process of implementing it one piece at a time. A walking track has been completed and a basketball court is planned;
- Downtown planters - the city installed new streets, sidewalks and lights a few years ago and Hometown Pride has taken up the challenge to beautify the downtown with planters and banners. They partnered with the community club and have been busy ever since;
- Community visioning - with a grant from IDOT/ISU/Trees Forever the Hometown Pride group is leading the way for a new vision for Wapello, particularly with the Hwy 61 bypass.

2018 Statistics

- Over \$100,000 in grants, donations and in-kind services;
- Over 500 hours of volunteer service



Pocahontas County

The Pocahontas County Hometown Pride program was established on July 1, 2012. Located in nine communities in northwest Iowa, Pocahontas County is a progressive hub of educational excellence, advanced manufacturing and agriculture with a strong business base, outstanding health care and multiple recreational opportunities in which to work, live and play. The nine Hometown Pride Committees met monthly to plan and coordinate community projects.



2018 County-Wide Statistics:

- Received 25 grants, totaling \$248,765.80 to help fund 24 community and county projects;
- Tracked several thousand volunteer hours by more than 325 volunteers;
- Held two leadership development classes; one targeted at high school freshmen and one at adult community and business leaders;
- Partnered with IEDA Downtown Resources to conduct downtown assessments in five communities;
- Partnered with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation to purchase 2.2 miles of discontinued railroad property for the Pocahontas County Trail – Phase One.

Community Coach: Margo Underwood, 641-420-3896, mlunderwood@cltel.net.

Fonda (Pop. 631)



Straight Park engraved boulder welcoming residents and visitors to this popular city park in Fonda. Many HTP projects have been completed in this park including the engraved boulder pictured. In addition, the new disc-golf course is being installed this summer in this park.

Community Overview

The Fonda Hometown Pride committee and community volunteers have completed many of the projects identified in their community plan during the past six years. From additional camping sites and cabins in Straight Park to a new community mural painted by high school art students, Fonda Hometown Pride encourages all ages to get involved in community betterment projects.

2018 Highlights

- Installed a new disc-golf course in Straight Park;
- Helped with another successful Labor Day weekend of community activities and hosted a successful Hometown Pride pancake breakfast;
- Assisted with a Breakfast with Santa and a children's Easter egg hunt this year.

Gilmore City (Pop. 504)



Community Overview

The Gilmore City Hometown Pride committee has completed many enhancements in their community. One of their major accomplishments was the completion of the community visioning program. A new mural on Main Street was painted; new landscaping was installed at city hall; trees were planted along Main Street; and a master plan was completed for a new city park, Sunset Park, located at the west entrance to Gilmore City.

2018 Highlights

- A master plan was completed for Sunset Park, which will guide the development of this new city park;
- A new limestone sign was designed and purchased for Sunset Park with funds provided by the Pocahontas County Foundation.

Havelock (Pop. 138)



Community Overview

The Havelock Hometown Pride committee has worked hard to make several improvements and enhancements in their city park. New playground equipment has been installed and new recycled plastic waste containers were purchased for the parks and library. In addition, the Pocahontas Area High School art class students designed and painted a mural on one of the main street buildings.

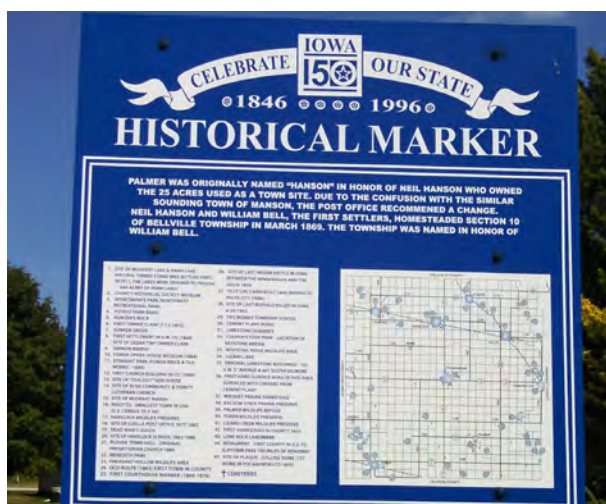
2018 Highlights

- The Hometown Pride committee hosted a "Day of Service" in their city park for youth in the community. Following the park clean-up activities, a scavenger hunt was held and refreshments were provided for all participants. A fun day for all!
- New recycled plastic waste containers were purchased and installed in city and Veteran's Parks and at the city library;
- A new bicycle rack, flag poles and a new Havelock Fire Department sign are being purchased and installed with partial funding provided by the Pocahontas County Foundation.

Laurens (Pop. 1,258)



Palmer (Pop. 165)



Community Overview

The Laurens Hometown Pride committee has purchased and installed new playground equipment in two city parks and has completed the Prairie Park Trail, a 1.9 mile trail located in southeast Laurens.

2018 Highlights

- A new tornado slide was purchased and installed in Sportsman's Park. The Laurens Hometown Pride committee secured the funding for this project and worked with an Eagle Scout candidate who managed and completed the project;
- The 1.9 mile Prairie Park Trail was completed and a public ribbon-cutting was held;
- New trail signage was purchased and installed along the Prairie Park Trail.

Community Overview

The Palmer Hometown Pride committee's vision for their community has focused on enhancing entryway signage and landscaping and improvements in their Panther and Ball Parks. They have completed several significant projects in their community during the past six years.

2018 Highlights

- New playground equipment was added to Panther Park for younger children, under age 5;
- Two new benches and a flower planter made from recycled plastic were purchased and installed in the Ball Park. These items were dedicated in memory of former Mayor Terry Wessels who also served on the Hometown Pride committee;
- The Palmer historical marker was restored and installed at the east entryway to Palmer, welcoming travelers to the community. New landscaping and perennial grasses were planted at the AmVets Park rest area near the new Palmer sign along Highway 4.

Plover (Pop. 77)



Community Overview

The Plover Hometown Pride committee has been actively involved in providing many city park enhancements including: new playground equipment, picnic tables, benches and a new barn quilt design painted on their park shelter house. In addition, the Committee has purchased and installed new community signage, initiated an annual county-wide bike ride and hosted RAGBRAI riders in 2017.

2018 Highlights

- Designed and installed a new Plover community sign and landscaping featuring perennial grasses. The new sign is located along county road C-15;
- Secured a Paint Iowa Beautiful Diamond Vogel paint grant to assist in the painting of the Plover City Hall and library building;
- Planned and coordinated another successful annual Pocahontas County Bike Ride in July, 2017, starting in Plover City Park and stopping in Rolfe and Laurens for their summer city celebrations.

Pocahontas (Pop. 1,789)



Community Overview

The Pocahontas Hometown Pride committee has completed many community projects. One of the significant projects underway is the development and enhancement of Princess Park located along Iowa Highway 3.



2018 Highlights

- A master plan for Princess Park was completed and is being used to guide development and enhancement phases of the park;
- A log cabin was moved from the city's golf course to Princess Park; and a porch was constructed for the log cabin and stained to match it;
- A public restroom was constructed by the Pocahontas Area High School's building trades class and is being installed near the log cabin.

Rolfe (Pop. 584)



Community Overview

The Rolfe Hometown Pride committee has focused on tree planting and park enhancement projects. The goal of the tree planting projects is to increase diversity of tree species in the community. Amenities added to the city parks are recycled plastic park benches and picnic tables, a fire pit with curved benches, decorative concrete lamp posts with solar lighting and new perennial plants and grasses.

2018 Highlights

- New recycled plastic park benches were installed at Sunset Ridge Park;
- A new restroom is being constructed at Three Rivers Trailhead in Rolfe. Water and sewer hook-ups and a new septic tank were also installed this spring;
- Ten new trees were planted in the community.

Varina (Pop. 71)



Community Overview

The Varina Hometown Pride committee has transformed their city park into a popular community gathering place for all ages. New playground equipment has been installed, trees have been planted, the shelter house has been renovated with electricity added and the basketball court has been resurfaced. A fire pit with benches was recently installed.

2018 Highlights

- Varina completed the Community Visioning Program and established five new community goals;
- The park shelter house renovations and painting were completed;
- Varina received the 2018 Robert D. Ray Community Award of Excellence from KIB and Governor Kim Reynolds.



Sac County

The Sac County Hometown Pride program began in 2014. The county-wide program includes nine communities, the county and the county-wide economic development and tourism organization. The communities are: Auburn, Early, Lake View, Lytton, Nemaha, Odebolt, Sac City, Schaller, and Wall Lake.



From the moment you enter Sac County, you are greeted with a bright array of Sac County Barn Quilts. Known for its rich farmland, livestock industry, and strong Midwestern work ethic, Sac County is home to a variety of business and industry. Tourism abounds around Black Hawk Lake in Lake View where more than a quarter million visitors a year enjoy water activities, campgrounds and the 33-mile Sauk Rail Trail.

Community Coach: Kathy Evert, 712-260-8746, kjesolutions@gmail.com.

Auburn (Pop. 322)



Community Overview

Auburn takes pride in the many organizations, churches, and city businesses it has to offer. It is a family-based community known for charming downtown shops and beautiful city parks. Auburn is located in the southeastern part of Sac City, at the intersection of US Highway 71 and Highway 175. Grant Park is less than 2 miles.

2018 Highlights

- Themed community dinners held each month in fall, winter and spring;
- First annual “Good to be an Auburn kid” fun day held with treats, bounce houses, water slide and obstacle course;
- Second annual spay and neuter clinic for cats and dogs held;
- Weekly bingo nights being planned.

2018 Statistics

- Meetings held - 20.



Lake View (Pop. 1,142)

Community Overview

Lake View is located on Iowa Highway 175 in Sac County and home to Black Hawk Lake and Black Hawk Lake State Park. A natural spring-fed lake surrounded by rock boulders, this 957-acre recreational area is maintained and treasured by the community. Lake View welcomes approximately 350,000 tourists each year.

Lake View is also home to the Sauk Rail Trail, a 33-mile long multi-use hard surface trail in Sac and Carroll Counties. It is the state of Iowa's first trail connecting two State Parks. In the summer months, walkers and bikers take to the trail for enjoyment. Many local bicycling events are held in conjunction with the trail each year, including "Ride the Rail," the annual Sauk Rail Trail ride. In the winter, the trail is home to snowmobiling, snowshoeing and cross country skiing.



2018 Highlights

- Hosted annual shoreline clean-up of Black Hawk Lake;
- Raised \$150,000 for new splash pad that opened Memorial Day weekend;
- Raised funds to purchase heart monitor for local EMTs;
- Restored local bike arch landmark.

2018 Statistics

- Volunteer Hours - 412;
- # of Projects - 11;
- # of meetings - 14 (12 monthly, 2 subcommittee);
- Grants awarded - \$81,150.



Lytton (Pop. 315)

Community Overview

Lytton is located at the far northeastern edge of Sac County and into Calhoun County. It is about two miles south of the new US Highway 20. The community includes a museum, public library, post office and a major employer, Essentia. Lytton is part of the combined South Central Calhoun School District with schools located in Rockwell City and Lake City.

2018 Highlights

- Greeted riders of Bike Around Sac County and provided them free bottled water and cookies;
- Planted community gardens on two vacant lots in the community;
- Raised funds for the Em. St. John Lutheran Church signs; six (6) were purchased.

2018 Statistics

- Meetings - 5;
- Projects - 8.



Odebolt (Pop. 1,013)



Community Overview

Nestled along tree-lined streets and amid rolling soybean and corn fields, Odebolt is located in southwest Sac County on Highway 175 and Highway 39. Now home to just over 1,000 residents, the town was once known as the "Popcorn Center of the World." Three historical museums are open during the summer or by appointment.

2018 Highlights

- Initiated museum passport program where visitors get passports stamped at museums in Sac county for prizes;
- Hosted the Pancake Breakfast for the annual Creek Days. Proceeds from this event were given to the city of Odebolt for the pool project (pump);
- Updated the banners on light poles at Heritage Square.

2018 Statistics

- Meetings held - 11.

Sac City (Pop. 2,220)



Community Overview

Located at the intersection of US Highways 71 and 20 in the rolling hills along the North Raccoon River valley, Sac City is the county seat. It is a Main Street Iowa community and home to the "World's Largest Popcorn Ball" as certified by the Guinness Book of World Records, not once, but three times.

2018 Highlights

- Managed first annual Bike Around Sac County (BASC);
- Hosted Trunk or Treat event with photo booth;
- Installed benches by canoe access at Raccoon River with Build with Bags grant funding;
- Plan to hold series of Friday night social events at local venues for residents to socialize and plan for future projects.

2018 Statistics

- Volunteer Hours - 362;
- Projects - 9;
- Meetings - 12;
- Grants Received - \$8,292 + Paint Iowa Beautiful Grant.

Schaller (Pop. 772)



Community Overview

The town of Schaller grew in size and reputation in the mid 20th century, when Bango and Jolly Time Popcorn began operations here. These two organizations gave rise to Schaller being the "Popcorn Capital of the World". While Jolly Time still operates a warehouse here, both organizations moved the headquarter operations to a nearby city. Popcorn however, is still a major local crop for many farmers. The major industry today is still farming, along with a strong transportation industry backbone.

2018 Highlights

- Installed new planters on Main Street and new street signs;
- Decorated downtown for Christmas and created Christmas village in the Park;
- Entered Popcorn Day parade to promote Hometown Pride.

2018 Statistics

- Projects - 7;
- Volunteer Hours - 83;
- # of Meetings - 10;
- Grants Received - \$8,490.

Wall Lake (Pop. 819)



Community Overview

Wall Lake is located in south central Sac County and is the birth place of singer Andy Williams; his former home is a museum in Wall Lake. The community has a beautiful community center, city park and shelter, swimming pool, public library, Spring Lake Golf Club, two banks, two restaurants and a grocery store. Employers include: Western Iowa Energy, Cookies Food Products, Crop Production Services, Hallett Materials, Wall Lake Lumber and Wall Lake Popcorn as well as professional service offices and more.

2018 Highlights

- Three movie nights;
- Painting of the depot;
- Hanging flower baskets in business district;
- New entrance and way-finding signs.

2018 Statistics

- Meetings - 9;
- Projects - 7;
- Volunteer Hours - 133;
- Grants Received - \$41,300.



Warren County

Warren County, located just south of the Des Moines metro, is the newest county to join the Hometown Pride program. The county is home to nearly 50,000 people, and is one of Iowa's top five fastest growing counties. Warren County provides an interesting mix of rural, small town, suburban, and urban environments.



Warren County Hometown Pride kicked off during the winter of 2017/2018, as a partnership of Warren County, the Warren County Economic Development Corporation and seven communities.

With only about six months under its belt, Warren County Hometown Pride is still in the planning stages on many of its projects.

2018 Warren County Highlights:

- 120 volunteers recruited across seven different communities;
- \$34,000 in grants, sponsorships and contributions for Hometown Pride affiliated projects;
- A dozen projects already underway and/or funded.

Community Coach: Lorin Ditzler, 515-442-0723, lorin@warrencountyhometown.com.

Carlisle (Pop. 4,120)



Community Overview

Carlisle provides its residents with all the benefits of small-town living, located just a few minutes south of urban Des Moines. Carlisle Hometown Pride is hard at work making sure residents get all those classic small-town perks, such as providing fun ways to get to know neighbors and improving the local parks.

2018 Highlights

- Received \$4,200 grant to purchase first piece of equipment for new playground;
- Hosted downtown block party (scheduled July 2018);
- Designed and sold Carlisle pride t-shirts to raise money for playground equipment;

Cumming (Pop. 435)



Community Overview

Cumming is a popular spot with cyclists across the region due to its location on the Great Western Trail and its popular “Taco Tuesday” nights in the summer. As the town stands at the brink of doubling its population with a new housing development, Cumming Hometown Pride is working to promote social connections between neighbors, encourage a strong sense of community, and capitalize on their status as a biking destination.

2018 Highlights

- Began fundraising effort to create trail connection between Great Western Trail and Downtown;
- Created social media presence for City of Cumming and started online forum for residents to share community news;
- Beginning work on establishing a consistent town brand and identity.

Hartford (Pop. 763)



Community Overview

Hartford is a small, quiet town where you know your neighbors, yet it's just minutes from big city amenities in nearby Des Moines. The Hartford Betterment committee has spearheaded community improvements for decades and has joined up with the Hometown Pride program as they continue their great work.

2018 Highlights

- Received \$5,000 for new town Christmas lights;
- Held free outdoor summer concerts (scheduled for summer 2018);
- Coordinated community-wide garage sale.

Indianola (Pop. 15,165)



Community Overview

Indianola, known throughout the region for both opera and hot air balloons, is one of the largest towns in the Hometown Pride program. As the Indianola committee gets started, they are thoughtfully identifying their niche among the many active community organizations in town, and setting a mission “to enhance our community, foster pride, and encourage growth.”

2018 Highlights

- Completed community organization inventory;
- Coordinating organization/volunteer fair for local non-profits;
- Building “Beautification Box” to distribute materials that help individuals beautify their town, such as flower seeds or litter pick-up bags.

Milo (Pop. 829)



Community Overview

Milo is a civic-minded community with a variety of strong organizations, from the library to service clubs to special event committees. Milo Hometown Pride is starting off their work with a focus on recognizing and making better use of the great assets they already have right in their back yard.

2018 Highlights

- Created community guidebook and distributed to all 300+ households;
- Hosted community vision session to discuss future goals for Milo;
- Organized “Community Exchange” assessment with fellow Hometown Pride community, Odebolt.



New Virginia (Pop. 485)



Community Overview

Spend more than a few minutes in New Virginia and you're almost guaranteed to get to know the people there. New Virginia has a great sense of community, and its Hometown Pride committee is working to make sure that the physical appearance of the town lives up to that inner sense of pride.

2018 Highlights

- Received \$2,800 grant to install street signs for all streets in town;
- Planned community clean-up day (scheduled for July 2018);
- Hosted community vision session to identify goals for New Virginia.

Norwalk (Pop. 9,671)



Community Overview

Norwalk is a fast-growing city immediately south of Des Moines. As this small town quickly becomes a small city, the Hometown Pride committee is working on celebrating Norwalk's evolving identity and expanding its social and cultural offerings.

2018 Highlights

- Received \$5,000 grant and an additional \$5,000 from other sources for re-landscaping the town cemetery;
- Planned first ever Norwalk Music Fest (scheduled for Sept 2018), with nine hours of music booked, more than 1,000 RSVPs from attendees on Facebook, and nearly \$5,000 in financial support raised to-date;
- Started *Front Porch Norwalk* summer series, in partnership with the Norwalk police department, to encourage residents to meet their neighbors and promote safe neighborhoods.

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.

Gerry Schnepf
Executive Director

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Keep Iowa Beautiful is a 501c3.