

# HOMETOWN PRIDE 2015/6 REPORT



THE FOLLOWING ARE DIRECT UN-MODIFIED REPORTS FROM THE SIX  
INDIVIDUAL HOMETOWN PRIDE PROGRAMS. **STEPS TOWARD  
STRONGER MORE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES /  
NEIGHBORHOODS FOR IOWA.**

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## **General Annual Financial Situation**

Commitment - \$330,000 (\$60,000 / Co. & \$30,000 for the Capitol Program).

Local Revenue - \$110,000 (\$20,000 / Co. & \$10,000 for the Capitol Program).

**Need: \$220,000 Annually**

*Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; show him how to catch fish, and you  
feed him for a lifetime.*

*Although the phrase is supported by and has biblical connotations it dates from the late 19th C. in England and is credited as the creation of Anne Isabella Richie, daughter of writer William Makepeace Thackeray.*

## **POCAHONTAS COUNTY HOMETOWN PRIDE**



Pocahontas County

Hometown Pride Program

Margo Underwood – Community Coach

Annual Report – July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

The Pocahontas County Hometown Pride Program was established on July 1, 2012, and includes nine communities: Fonda, Gilmore City, Havelock, Laurens, Palmer, Plover, Pocahontas, Rolfe and Varina. Margo Underwood serves as the Community Coach.

### Meetings and Projects

During this past year, the nine Hometown Pride Committees met monthly to implement their community plans. In addition to the 104 committee meetings held, work days were scheduled to complete 34 community projects which included: 1. Painting community buildings and a native American mural - 6 communities; 2. New recycled plastic park benches, picnic tables, planters and waste receptacles for city parks– 5 communities; 3. City park and landscaping projects – 4 communities; 4. Tree Planting Projects – 2 communities; 5. New tools for landscaping projects – 4 communities; 6. Community Signage – 2 communities; 7. Park lighting projects – 2 communities; 8. Rain Gardens – 2 communities; 9. New dining tables and chairs for Community Center – 1 community; 10. New Playground Equipment – 1 community; 11. Pollinator Project - 1 community; 12. New Shower House in city park - 1 community; 13. Earth Day Highway Litter Clean-up – 1 community; 14. New Pocahontas County Trails Plan; 15. Monthly Hometown Pride Infomercials in county newspapers.



Gilmore City - Planting a Rain Garden

### Funding Sources

The nine Hometown Pride Committees received 34 grants to partially fund these projects. Grants received included: Paint Iowa Beautiful; Iowa Grocery Industry Association Build with Bags; Pocahontas County Foundation; Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program (REAP CEP); Yo Ho Tools; Alliant Energy Branching Out; MidAmerican Energy Trees Please; Iowa Living Roadways Projects; and Pocahontas County Economic Development Commission. In addition to these grant funds, local and area businesses, organizations and residents contributed funds, equipment and labor to complete the projects. Building strong partnerships has been a key component in the success of this program in all nine communities. Since the Hometown Pride Program began 140 grants have been received totaling \$665,609.75 to complete community projects in the nine communities.

### **Leadership Development**

Two leadership development sessions were held during the year. Sponsored by the Pocahontas County Economic Development Commission, the sessions focused on Student Service Learning and included special projects for Middle School students at the Pocahontas Area Community Schools and the Laurens – Marathon Community Schools. Approximately 90 Middle School students participated in the two leadership development sessions.

### **Community Foundation and Building Endowment**

The Pocahontas Hometown Pride Program and the Pocahontas County Community Foundation have had a strong partnership for the past four years. The Community Foundation Board of Directors identified the Hometown Pride Program as a key focus area for funding annual projects. Each of the nine Hometown Pride Committees applied for grant funds from the Pocahontas County Community Foundation during the past year to fund their community projects. Building the endowment will be the focus for the Foundation and the Hometown Pride Committees in the future.

Sustainability and Exit Strategies

Leadership development, building the community foundation endowment, a county Main Street Iowa Program and a community evaluation assessment have been identified as strategies to implement to sustain the Hometown Pride Program after the five-year program commitment by Keep Iowa Beautiful ends. Action steps to implement these strategies will be identified during the next year.

### **Pride in the Communities**

Hometown Pride Committee members are building pride in their communities, one project at a time. On June 23, the nine Hometown Pride Committees received a Governor's Volunteer Group Award from Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds at a state awards event in Storm Lake. They are wonderful committed volunteers, leading by example with a positive "can do" attitude. Hometown Pride continues to expand across community boundaries and throughout the county. There is a greater vision now, shared by residents throughout Pocahontas County. It has been a very productive and successful year. - *Margo Underwood, Hometown Pride Community Coach*

## **FREMONT COUNTY HOMETOWN PRIDE**

Hometown Pride in Fremont County

Began November 1, 2013  
Annual Report as of June 30, 2016

Doug Friedli, Community Coach for Fremont County  
PO Box 736  
Sidney, IA 51652  
[dougfriedli@gmail.com](mailto:dougfriedli@gmail.com)  
402-873-2215

Fremont County Hometown Pride Steering Committee Chair, Twila Larson (see her contact info below). A six member Steering Committee includes representatives from across the county: economic development, elected County representatives, business people, farmers, community foundation board members, Extension Service, and the DNR.

Economic Development Director, Twila Larson  
Fremont County Economic Development Corp, FREDCO  
PO Box 736  
Sidney, IA 51652  
[fredco@iowatelecom.net](mailto:fredco@iowatelecom.net)  
712-374-3266

Ten communities in Fremont County have Hometown Pride committees. They each meet monthly: Bartlett, pop 22; Farragut, pop 463; Hamburg, pop 1137; Imogene, pop 69; Percival, pop 77; Randolph, pop 161; Riverton, pop 267; Sidney, pop 1087; Tabor, pop 993; Thurman, pop 222. The number of rural residents is 2,866, for a total population in the county of 7,445.

Population has declined each census since peaking at 18,546 in 1900. It was recently announced that Fremont County lost 7% of its population from 2010 to 2015 (due to the 2011 flood, 2012 tornado, out-migration and deaths)...the largest loss of any of the 99 counties in Iowa. Community leaders agree that "being #1" is not a good thing in this case. The news has created a call to action with responses such as "We need to change. If we keep doing things the same old way we will continue get the same results."

248 Hometown Pride community meetings have been held to date. There have been 9 county-wide planning sessions. In addition, the coach has had 55 meetings with 11 different support organizations who provide resources for Fremont County Hometown Pride projects.

Attendance at each monthly community meeting varies from 4 to 20 volunteers. A total of 239 residents have been involved so far in the planning and implementation of numerous community and county-wide betterment projects and events.

In the past two and a half years, fifty-seven grants have been received for community betterment projects totaling \$266,960.

Tangible outcomes in the past year (as shown on several of the community's Hometown Pride Facebook pages) include tree and flower plantings, purchase and installation of new playground equipment in city parks, erection of new welcome signs, painting public properties for beautification, community clean up days, public art projects, addressing derelict and nuisance properties, growth of unrestricted endowments in three communities, and a grant writing workshop.

Hometown Pride has initiated some first time ever projects in Fremont County: a county-wide show and tell bus tour conducted by community volunteers, development of a county-wide logo and marketing theme, county-wide study of derelict and nuisance properties by Technical Assistance for Brownfields, planning and implementing an annual Trail of Treasures county-wide yard-sale, promoting a county-wide Neighborhood Watch. In April, May and June of 2016, joint meetings were

held to strategize methods of recruiting new residents to move to Fremont County. The meetings were facilitated by the Hometown Pride coach. Attendees included community volunteers, elected officials, economic development board members and resource providers.

Key projects:

- Bartlett. Cleaned up flood damaged and abandoned properties. Planting new trees. Design and erection of a new welcome sign. 352 volunteer hours.
- Farragut. Painted bleachers in the ball park. Planted trees. Planning a new bicycle / hiking trail. 56 volunteer hours.
- Hamburg. Park improvements, landscaping, painting at ball park, hosted Friday Nite on Main Street events, improving appearance of downtown facades, developed historic murals, repaired welcome signs, participated in a First Impressions community exchange program with Odebolt, initiated Trail of Treasures county-wide flea market. 1,860 volunteer hours.
- Imogene. New welcome sign and landscaping, ball park improvements, installation of playground equipment, Wabash Trace Trailhead improvements, new picnic tables, clean-up day. 323 hours.
- Percival. Installation of new playground equipment, planting trees to replace those lost in the flood of 2011, cleaned up the cemetery, new basketball court, electricity in the park. 652 volunteer hrs.
- Randolph. Demolished and recycled waste of a vacant and unsafe building, park improvements, welcome sign repairs, fundraisers, banners. 558 volunteer hours.
- Riverton. Park improvements, fundraisers. 136 volunteer hours.
- Sidney. Painted and landscaped around welcome signs, cowboy boot public art project, fundraisers for new swimming pool. 1,047 volunteer hours.
- Tabor. Weekly farmers market events, public art projects, welcome sign repairs, youth clean-up day, new street lights. 653 volunteer hours.
- Thurman. Tree planting, painting, student clean-up day. Helped raise funds allowing the fire department to purchase a used ambulance. 255 volunteer hours.

Community plan / vision / priorities.

**Bartlett** (un-incorporated). Improve appearance for this entrance into Fremont County's northwest corner on Interstate 29. Develop building lots for new homes (25 minute commute to Council Bluffs/Omaha). Find elected officials who are willing to address the storm water drainage issues.

**Farragut.** Develop the abandoned rail road property through town into a bicycle and walking trail to Shenandoah (they have received \$485,000 in grants so far for this project). Create and enhance amenities for the trail users. Find financial resources to rehabilitate downtown buildings. Grow their new community endowment fund from \$17,000 to \$25,000.

**Hamburg.** Improve appearance and attractiveness in this gateway into Iowa's southwest corner along exit #1 on Interstate 29. Continue to grow their population by welcoming new families, supporting existing industries and downtown businesses. Grow their new community endowment fund from \$27,000 to \$50,000.

**Imogene.** Continue to engage young residents and network with alumni and families of former residents through the Sons and Daughters of Imogene organization. Enhance recreational amenities along the Wabash Trace Trail, baseball field and new playground area. Rehab vacant buildings for new businesses.

**Percival** (un-incorporated). Support the efforts of the survivors of the Flood of 2011 who are working together to rebuild and restore their personal properties. Continue to enhance the City Park with amenities that all age groups can enjoy. Clean up nuisance properties. Find officials who are willing to enforce legal action against unresponsive property owners. Start a community endowment to honor the legacy of present and former residents.



**Randolph.** Enhance recreational amenities in the City Park. Support the efforts of local groups who restoring and maintaining a historical home and the old depot. Create murals downtown.

**Riverton.** Combined forces with Hometown Pride and the Riverton Betterment Club volunteers. Improve attractiveness with new welcome signs. Continue to make improvements at the historic Chautauqua Pavilion Park. Celebrate community spirit with local events throughout the year. Assist impoverished local residents with housing repairs.

**Sidney.** Start phase two of the cowboy boot public art project. Grow the endowment to sustain a new public swimming pool. Continue efforts to raise funds for a safe routes to school/walking trail.



**Tabor.** Implement phase one of the Safe Routes to School / Walking Trail plan (a grant of \$48,000 has been received). Start phase two of the new street light poles and banners. Paint building facades.

**Thurman.** Provide infrastructure and amenities to attract more residents to move into town now that the damage of the 2012 tornado has been cleaned up. Complete the new water system (grants of \$750,000 have been secured). Enhance the amenities at the City Park.



ndation relationship. The Fremont County Community Foundation has awarded grants to nine of the ten Hometown Pride committees for community betterment projects. FCCF is managing endowed accounts for three Hometown Pride communities.

#### **Hometown Pride sustainability and exit strategy.**

- Endowments. Farragut, Hamburg and Sidney are building community endowments.
- Tax-free status. Imogene, Sidney and Tabor Hometown Pride committees applied for and received 501(c)(3) charitable status from IRS. Hamburg is exploring it.
- Two grant writing workshops have been sponsored by Fremont County Hometown Pride.

- Leadership succession. Farragut, Imogene, Riverton, Sidney and Tabor have already successfully transitioned the chair position from the initial leader to the next.
- Leadership expansion. New volunteers are attending meetings in nearly every community. Many are people who have not been involved in community leadership previously.

### **Overall changes.**

- Communication, understanding and cooperation between communities has improved considerably. The bus tour initiated conversations and friendships. A shared calendar of community events helps with coordination. The annual Trail of Treasures event and Community Vitality meetings are building trust and deepening relationships.
- Appearance improvement projects are contagious. Improvements to one property have inspired the neighbors to clean up their properties.
- Working together builds trust, friendships and confidence to take on bigger projects.

### **Special needs.**

- A formal leadership training program needs to be established.
- Volunteers need to gain more confidence in writing grants.
- Outside assistance and legal enforcement is needed to address nuisance property abatements.
- Need affordable housing programs in each of the communities.

### **In the News:**

- Bartlett. Was featured in a two-page article in the Omaha World Herald showing the situation five years after the 2011 flood.
- Farragut Hometown Pride Facebook page. New trees including a living Christmas Tree.
- Hamburg Hometown Pride Facebook page. Volunteers at work all over town.
- Imogene Sons and Daughters website and Facebook page. Improvements at the ballfield.
- Percival Hometown Pride Facebook page. Omaha World Herald articles on the installation of the playground equipment and the follow up story on the flood.
- Sidney Hometown Pride Facebook page. Cowboy boots art project received 8,500 views!
- Tabor Hometown Pride Facebook page. Snowmen art project, weekly Farmers Market, street lights, RAGBRAI preparations.
- Hometown Pride and Trail of Treasures interviews on B103 and KMA radio and stories on their websites.
- Monthly meeting minutes published in the Hamburg Reporter.
- There is not a county-wide newspaper in Fremont County.

Good news. On July 26, 2016 the Fremont County Board of Supervisors voted to support Fremont County Hometown Pride with a \$20,000 payment in October 2016 (prior to the November 1 due date of the payment to KIB). And they agreed to support up to \$20,000 in October 2017.

## **LOUISA COUNTY HOMETOWN PRIDE**

Louisa County – FY 2016 Year-end Report  
 Douglas C. Elam, Coach  
 July 11, 2016

This was the first full fiscal year for Louisa County Hometown Pride as the anniversary date for the program is October 13th.

**Coach** – Doug Elam, 319-366-0705, [dcelam@yahoo.com](mailto:dcelam@yahoo.com)

**Steering Committee Chair** – Sherry Humphreys, 563-260-4022, [Humphreys.sp@gmail.com](mailto:Humphreys.sp@gmail.com)

Louisa County Hometown Pride is comprised of nine communities: Cotter, Columbus City, Columbus Junction, Fredonia, Grandview, Letts, Morning Sun, Oakville and Wapello, plus a Rural committee. The attendance ranges from one or two in the less-engaged communities like Fredonia to six or seven in communities like Letts, Oakville, Morning Sun and Wapello which have embraced the program.

Attendance level usually ranges around 20% - 30%; the above-mentioned groups approaching 100%.

**Special events** – Independence Day Parades in Grandview and Morning Sun with a Hometown Pride Float (see attached photo). Hometown Pride also co-hosted classes/public meetings in grant writing, running effective meetings and addressing abandoned buildings (presented by the League of Cities).

**Number of and type of grants obtained:**

Louisa Community Foundation Fund (10)*	39,250
Wellmark/Blue (1)	10,000
Paint Iowa Beautiful (3)	655
Yo-Ho Tools (4)	800
Trees Forever (1)	500
United Fund (1)	500
Riverside Casino (1)	500
Fundraising (7)	2,191
Donations	18,538
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$72,944</b>

\* Includes support to the Louisa Development Group and RAGBRAI coming to Columbus Junction, Fredonia and Letts in Louisa County on July 30, 2016

**Projects completed for the period:**

- Governor's Volunteer Service Award
- "Welcome" signs – Letts
- Columbus City Park
- Monkey Run Park – Columbus Junction
- Keeping the community pool open by partnering with The Y – Columbus Junction
- Perk-up the Park – Oakville
- Downtown Wapello Planters
- Mill Race Park – Wapello
- Community Orchard – Wapello
- Planting Monarch Waystations across the County – Rural
- Initial planning for a new community building/city hall - Grandview
- Paint Iowa Beautiful projects around the County
- Elmwood Cemetery improvements – Morning Sun
- Morning Sun Hog Roast to fund improvements to Elmwood Cemetery
- Preparation for RAGBRAI – Columbus Junction and Letts
- Facebook pages
  - <https://www.facebook.com/HometownPrideLouisa/?fref=ts>
  - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/739885669452209/>



- <https://www.facebook.com/GarnerHouse?fref=photo>

**Volunteer hours** – 1,250 (there were probably more; not everyone is good about keeping track of their hours)

**Community plan / vision status** – Morning Sun is actively pursuing a Trees Forever/DOT ‘Visioning’ grant due September 30, 2016. The rest of the communities’ vision/goals are aligned to the comprehensive plan or in the case of Oakville, “Just to stay solvent.”

**Community foundation / endowment relationships** – There is a very positive relationship between Hometown Pride and the Louisa Community Foundation Fund. The Foundation’s funding of nearly \$40,000 in Hometown Pride projects proves their support for the program. A total of 10 grants were awarded to the Hometown Pride committees, the Louisa Development Group and RAGBRAI support this past year. A present and a former Hometown Pride chair now sit on the Foundation board—another sign of supporting one another’s mission. In addition, the executive director of the Foundation (County Supervisor Paula Beckman) sits on the Hometown Pride Steering Committee.

**Leadership and skills training activities** – Hometown Pride will be working with the County Extension office and the Louisa Development Group to offer leadership training this fall.

**Sustainability and exit strategy issues** – Several of the communities, Morning Sun most notably, have become very adept at fundraising or grant writing to sustain their programs. All of the communities (excluding Cotter) in Louisa County Hometown Pride have renewed their pledge this past year to support the program with city funds if need be. No exit strategy has been discussed as the program is only in its second year, but at the Year-Two Celebration on October 18<sup>th</sup> the theme will be “The Long Game” – celebrating the successes and looking towards the future.

**Overall change in community behavior and appearance and other changes being initiated by others as a result of the PRIDE concept** – For the early adaptors in Hometown Pride one can see a physical change in the community. The flowers and banners in downtown Wapello are probably the best example of a very visual change in the appearance of a Hometown Pride town. Wapello is also actively trying to save two abandoned buildings from ruin after the League of Cities presentation on that subject. In Columbus Junction and in Rural Louisa County several abandoned (eyesore) buildings have come down. A great boost to the program was the anticipation of having RAGBRAI come through northern Louisa County. Many of the enhancement projects that were set in the unspecified future now came forward and are being completed by July 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Special needs or issues** – It is still difficult to find the right players for the team. There are many people who just don’t care or have given up, BUT there are many who haven’t. Showing those who want to make a difference that their time and resources will have a positive change in their community is an ongoing struggle, but one worth fighting on behalf of rural Iowa.

**At least one major news item in electronic form** –

[http://muscatinejournal.com/news/local/muscatine/progress-edition-wapello-officials-see-bright-future-for-downtown/article\\_76e0e606-f678-5d6b-8828-946bcd826fa2.html](http://muscatinejournal.com/news/local/muscatine/progress-edition-wapello-officials-see-bright-future-for-downtown/article_76e0e606-f678-5d6b-8828-946bcd826fa2.html)

**Photos** – (see attached)

**Quotes from key people** –

- “We’re going to save these buildings in Wapello, the last thing we need is another vacant lot.”  
Brad Quigley, chair of Wapello Hometown Pride

- “Helping the Best Little Town Under the Sun Shine Brighter” Morning Sun Hometown Pride t-shirt logo
- “Hands-on projects like planting this outdoor classroom/butterfly garden [Rural Hometown Pride project] are key to getting the kids engaged.” Adam Crews, Louisa/Muscatine FFA

#### *Governor’s Volunteer Award*



*Grandview Independence Day Parade*



*Countywide Litter Clean-up*



*Pollinator Habitat in Oakville*



*Planting the Community Orchard*



## **2016 Jasper County Hometown Pride Annual Report**

**Jeff Davidson, Jasper County Hometown Pride Community Coach**  
**July 13, 2016**

The period July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016 was the first full fiscal year of the Hometown Pride program in Jasper County, which began on April 9, 2016. The program steering committee met on March 23, 2016 at the Newton Arboretum to discuss how the program was progressing. It was agreed at the

meeting that good progress was being made, and it was agreed to extend the contract of the community coach.

There are 7 participating communities in the Jasper County Hometown Pride program:

- Baxter
- Colfax
- Lynnville
- Monroe
- Newton
- Prairie City
- Sully

The towns range in population from Lynnville at 380 to Newton at 15,500. The entire County population is approximately 36,000. Each town has formed a Hometown Pride committee, elected officers, and conducts monthly meetings where minutes are recorded. In Lynnville and Newton existing community committees were absorbed as the Hometown Pride committees.

The Jasper County communities of Kellogg and Mingo have expressed interest in joining the Hometown Pride program in Year 2.

The committee dynamics in each town were interesting. In some towns the committees were up and running full speed immediately. Others required a longer gestation period to find their way. Monroe's committee was going nowhere until the decision was made to shift from an evening to a noon meeting. This resulted in an excellent working group in Monroe.

Lynnville's Hometown Pride committee prospered when it was combined with the Chamber of Commerce committee. Newton's Hometown Pride committee is the former Implementing Newton's Future committee. Volunteer burnout was being sensed in Colfax so we have combined meeting nights with other committees. Partnerships with existing community organizations are critically important, including civic organizations, service clubs, municipal organizations, historic preservation groups, Friends groups, garden clubs, and faith organizations.

Each community and each Hometown Pride committee has its own identity and personality. The charge of each committee has been to develop community beautification, community development and economic development activities that will lead to the town becoming a stronger, more prosperous place. A principle responsibility of the community coach has been to develop committee member leadership skills. It has been stressed that there are few limitations to their creative spirit. If an idea fits the above stated criteria, then we will pursue it.

Each Hometown Pride committee has an affiliate relationship with the Jasper Community Foundation, with the exception of Sully Hometown Pride which affiliated with the Sully Community Foundation. This allows tax-deductible charitable donations to be made to the Hometown Pride Committees.



Sully Bandstand Remodeling

### Community Visioning

The first order of business for each Hometown Pride committee was conduct a community visioning process. It was stressed to each town that it was not the intention of Keep Iowa Beautiful to impose its will on the community. We want each town to determine its community priorities and the develop the appropriate strategies for making the town a stronger, more appealing, more prosperous place.

Community vision plans have been completed for each town and provide the basis for project work, grant work and fund raising.

### Project work

Once the community vision plans identified the priorities for each Hometown Pride Community, it became a matter of how to move projects forward. In some instances it was necessary to bring in professional expertise. Since none of the new committees had funds available for hiring consultants, we set about developing relationships with the University of Iowa and Iowa State University, and student research teams that could help us.

We were able to have 7 student research teams working in Jasper County between January and May 2016. It was a great experience, with the students getting real world work experience, and the towns getting research completed by senior-level students.

- **Baxter Geise Park and Chichaqua Valley Trail trailhead design.** ISU College of Design students developed options for the upgrade and enhancement of Geise Park and the CVT trailhead.





U. of Ia. Student Presentation of Project - Baxter

- **Colfax Lewis Park stormwater management evaluation.** UI senior civil engineering students developed a series of recommended improvements for erosion issues in Lewis Park and stabilization of the disk golf course.



Colfax Quarry Lake Improvements

- **Lynnville-Sully recreation trail.** UI senior civil engineering students developed a recommended alignment and cost estimate for a recreation trail between Lynnville and Sully.
- **Monroe trails and sidewalk network master plan.** UI civil engineering students developed a master plan for a comprehensive trails and sidewalk network in Monroe. They also engineered a Monroe trailhead design for the regional rail trail between Monroe and Des Moines.
- **Monroe-Prairie City-Mitchellville rail trail development.** UI senior civil engineering students developed a plan for the conversion of the existing abandoned rail line into a recreation trail that will connect into Des Moines.
- **Newton 30 Acre Park redevelopment plan.** UI senior civil engineering students designed a plan for the development of 30 Acre Park in south Newton, including off road bike trails, a jib park, restrooms, and parking.
- **Newton downtown mural assessment.** Masters of Fine Arts students from the UI Department of Art and Art History are assessing the condition of 16 murals in downtown Newton.



- **Prairie City stormwater management plan.** UI senior civil engineering students developed a series of strategies to mitigate stormwater flooding in east Prairie City.

Estimated value of the student research projects: \$150,000-\$200,000.

### **Grant work and fundraising**

A goal of the Hometown Pride program is to train committee members on best practices for obtaining grants that address the high priority projects in each town. This includes evaluating grant opportunities, completing grant applications, administering grant awards, and determining why applications were not funded. Jasper County Hometown Pride committees have made an excellent start in obtaining grants.

A total of 25 grant awards were made to all 7 Hometown Pride communities in Jasper County in the program's first year. Programs accessed include Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP), Trees Forever, Iowa's Living Roadways, Diamond Vogel Paint Iowa Beautiful, Yo-Ho Tools, Prairie Meadows Community Betterment, and the Jasper Community Foundation.

Total value of grants received: \$236,000.

A focus of years 2-5 of the Hometown Pride program will be developing fundraising skills to address high priority projects.

### **Economic development**

An area that we are trying to grow specifically in the Hometown Pride program is rural and small town economic development. Small communities do not have the economic development opportunities that larger communities have. They cannot compete in terms of workforce, incentive programs, and utility infrastructure.

What small communities can do, and what we are doing in Jasper County, is taking advantage of unique economic development opportunities. For the Hometown Pride communities in Jasper County these include:

1. Regional rail trails (Baxter, Monroe, Prairie City) that connect to the Des Moines metro.
2. Large regional park development site (Colfax).
3. NASCAR-owned speedway (Newton)
4. I-80 interchange access (Newton, Colfax)
5. Appealing small towns with excellent school districts within easy commuting distance of the Des Moines metro (all).
6. Active local economic development corporations (Baxter, Newton, Lynnville, Sully, Prairie City).

Ongoing project work is focused on these opportunities. A strategy is being developed to undertake a housing market study in the next 6 months that will address housing opportunities and deficiencies in each Hometown Pride community.

Feel free to contact me if there are any questions.

## **SAC COUNTY HOMETOWN PRIDE**

### **Sac County Hometown Pride First Annual Report – July 2016**

Submitted by:

Kathy Evert, Sac County Community Coach (as of April 1, 2016.)

[kjesolutions@gmail.com](mailto:kjesolutions@gmail.com); 712.260.8746

The Sac County Hometown Pride Initiative completed its first year May 31, 2016. The county-wide program includes nine (9) communities; they are:

- Auburn
- Early
- Lake View
- Lytton
- Nemaha
- Odebolt
- Sac City
- Schaller
- Wall Lake

There is an eleven (11) member county-wide steering committee in place with representatives from each of the nine (9) communities along with a representative of the county supervisors and the county-wide economic development and tourism organization. The steering committee meets quarterly and is chaired by Bruce Perry of Sac City.

Eight of the nine communities have a committee and have been meeting on a regular basis. These eight have a chair person and set an agenda for each of the meetings. Not all are publishing minutes but are keeping handwritten record of their progress. These communities have also posted their Keep Iowa Beautiful Hometown Pride Community signs. The community of Nemaha is the smallest community in the county, population of 80, and has not yet formed a committee of volunteers. There is some interest by a local citizen in a historical building project and may help generate some more interest in forming a committee.

The county steering committee will discuss in their second year the possibility of forming a committee for the unincorporated areas of the county.

The Steering Committee established an early goal of offering a leadership series and has completed two of the three sessions planned. The topics were volunteer recruitment/retention and grant writing. The first session was held February 25<sup>th</sup> and covered volunteer recruitment and retention strategies for your HP committee or organization and developing and implementing your community plan. There were 14 attendees. The grant-writing session was held March 31<sup>st</sup> and had 22 attendees. The evaluations received were very positive. It was a good program for the county and was done in collaboration with the Sac County Extension and Iowa State University Extension. The third in the series was postponed from April to September 2016, will focus on working with different personalities, and will include personality profiles for all attendees.

The steering committee also held a reception for the new Hometown Pride Coach and the outgoing interim coach in Wall Lake on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Chairperson Bruce Perry provided an update for everyone attending, include Keep Iowa Beautiful director Gerry Schnepf and Board member Doug Shull.

Each community has undertaken several projects during their first year. Below are the highlights by community.

\* Auburn received a Paint Iowa Beautiful grant and has painted the gazebo in their park and the city well house. They held their first Memorial Day breakfast; over 100 attended and the committee raised over \$660 for their HP projects. Auburn also received one of the Yo-Ho Tools grants this year. Their long-term planning projects are currently focused on an overall upgrade of the community center building, a recreational trail connecting the community to Grant Park, and improving the Internet services in the community.

\* Early received a county endowment grant for new street signs. They have been installed, are red and white, look great and are easy to read. The committee is interested in pursuing a Build with Bags grant and a Yo-Ho Tools grant next year and considering plans for the community parks.

\* Lake View completed a 5-year strategic plan in September 2015. They have completed the landscaping around the communities entrance signs, brought back and updated a former "welcome wagon-like" program, providing community information packets to all new residents and businesses. They completed a lakeshore clean-up this spring. Their long-range plans are focused on an event center (the draft feasibility study was completed in June), tourism promotion and historical kiosks.

\* Lytton held a car show over the Memorial Day weekend, painted benches, added a butterfly garden this year on an empty lot, and has a great community garden project again this year. The Hometown Pride Committee had an entry in Gala Days parade Memorial Day weekend, too.



\* Odebolt Hometown Pride is also the community's long-standing Odebolt Betterment Committee. It is a very active group. They have completed a First Impressions Exchange with Hamburg; both communities received good feedback and built some new friendships and connections from the visits and exchanges. The group is focused on finding funds to replace filters and improve their community swimming pool and finding additional retail operation to help fill the void of not having a grocery store.

\* Sac City has been an active committee and held several events during their first year – silent movie nights, Trunk or Treat, Blue Light, and Christmas decorating contest/events. Sac City Hometown pride received a Paint Iowa Beautiful Grant and painted markets and the Chautauqua building in the city park. They also received a Yo-Ho Tool grant. And on June 18<sup>th</sup> became the title holder of the world’s largest popcorn ball in the Guinness Book of World Records. The community received significant publicity and social media attention from the event and record! The committee also painted Early Mansion. Their long-term plans are to establish a recreational trail (will meet jointly with Lake View to plan a connection of trails), canoe access to the Racoon River and improving the entrances to the community.

\* Schaller is giving its Old Opera House a face-lift with new paint, siding, roof., with help from a Paint Iowa Beautiful grant. They are pursuing grant funds to replace and add new street signs in their community and improving or replacing the flagpole in front of city hall. They participated in the Trees Forever Community Visioning and completed a First Impressions with Fonda. Following the street signs and flagpole, the group wants to work on entrance signs and directional signs.



Opera House Remodeling

\* Wall Lake completed a community-wide survey shortly after the committee was formed. It helped identify priority projects for the community as a whole and the committee has been serving as a resource and coordinator for projects. The municipal pool was a top priority and the committee is working with the city of Wall Lake to develop a long-range plan for the pool and surrounding area. The committee also completed a First Impressions exchange with the community of Ackley. They will soon be hanging beautiful flower baskets along their Main Street thanks to funding they've received.



## **CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS HOMETOWN PRIDE**

Hometown Pride Capitol Neighborhoods  
2015-2016 Annual Report

### **Overview**

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 in Des Moines. All three neighborhoods have submitted extensive neighborhood plans to the City of Des Moines within the last year and are part of the Viva East Bank ([www.vivaeastbank.com](http://www.vivaeastbank.com)) collaborative initiative leveraging resources and partnerships in order to implement their plans.

### **Meeting Attendance**

Community Coach, Beth Hicks, regularly attends the following meetings:

- Hometown Pride Steering Committee meeting, the last Wednesday of the month from 4:30-6 pm at MLK Jr. Park Shelter/Community Center; average attendance nine (9).



- Viva East Bank project management meeting, biweekly at the City of Des Moines Armory or Community Housing Initiatives office; average attendance seven (7).
- Capitol East monthly neighborhood association meeting, the second Wednesday of the month from 6:30 -8 pm (dinner served at 6:30 pm) at Capitol View Elementary School; average attendance 15-20.
- Capitol Park monthly neighborhood association meeting, the second Thursday of the month from 7-9 pm at Wesley United Methodist Church; average attendance 20-25.
- MLK Jr. Park monthly neighborhood association meeting, the third Tuesday of the month from 6:30-8 pm at MLK Jr. Park Shelter/Community Center; average attendance six (6).
- Viva East Bank public space and infrastructure meeting; quarterly at the City of Des Moines Parks & Rec office.
- City of Des Moines Police Department “Fuel Up First” meeting; monthly at Salvation Army office or Police Department.
- Iowa Lutheran Edible Landscaping Project meeting; quarterly at Iowa Lutheran Hospital.
- Viva East Bank! Youth Meeting; monthly at MLK Jr. Park shelter.

### **Steering Committee Members**

- Beth Hicks, Community Coach, Hometown Pride
- Amber Lynch, Planner, City of Des Moines,
- Emily Boyd, Resident Engagement Director, Community Housing Initiatives
- Curt Wagner, Board Chair, MLK Jr. Park Neighborhood Association
- Odell Jenkins, Board Vice Chair, MLK Jr. Park Neighborhood Association
- Chelsea Lepley, Board Chair, Capitol Park Neighborhood Association
- Marge Ramsey, resident/former Board Secretary, Capitol Park Neighborhood Association
- Jack Leachman, Board Chair, Capitol East Neighborhood Association
- Stacey Robles, Capitol View Elementary School, Capitol East Neighborhood
- Pastor Keith Hackle, Philadelphia Seventh Day Adventist Church, MLK Jr. Park Neighborhood

### **Special Events**

- ✓ July 3, 2015: Jazz in July at La Placita business district in Capitol East.
- ✓ July 8, 2015: Ice Cream Social at Redhead Park, Capitol East neighborhood.
- ✓ August 4, 2015: National Night Out events in all three neighborhoods.
- ✓ August 14, 2015: Viva East Bank! Annual Event.
- ✓ August 29, 2015: Youth Baseball Clinic in MLK Jr. Park in partnership with Iowa Cubs baseball team.
- ✓ August 29, 2015: Neighborhood Finance Corp. and Capitol Park Block Party.
- ✓ September 7, 2015: 3-on-3 basketball tournament in MLK Jr. Park hosted by Philadelphia Seventh Day Adventist Church.
- ✓ October 1, 2015: Meredith Corp./Rebuilding Together Day in Capitol Park (five homes and Burke Park).
- ✓ October 10, 2015: 3-on-3 soccer tournament in MLK Jr. Park hosted by Philadelphia Seventh Day Adventist Church.

- ✓ October 23, 2015: Fun-O-Ween; safe trick-or-treating alternative hosted at MLK Jr. Park shelter/community center.
- ✓ October 31, 2015: Capitol Park Halloween block party at The Fremont.
- ✓ November 1, 2015: Capitol East memorial bench dedication ceremony.
- ✓ December 2015: Holiday Potlucks at Capitol East and Capitol Park monthly neighborhood association meetings.
- ✓ December 17, 2015: Holiday Party at Hiatt Middle School in MLK Jr. Park neighborhood.
- ✓ April 19, 2016: Breakfast pizza served to all East High School juniors taking ACT.
- ✓ April 21, 2016: Mickie Rodine Neighborhood Award Ceremony at World Food Prize.
- ✓ May 13: Hiatt Middle School Youth Service Day in MLK Jr. Park neighborhood.
- ✓ June 11: Capitol Park Block Party and Bike Rodeo at Triangle Park.
- ✓ June 23: Dinner and Movie in the Park at MLK Jr. Park.
- ✓ Grant Summary (funding obtained through KIB HP and VEB partner efforts)
- ✓ \$4,500 from Neighborhood Investment Corp. for KIB community coach position (half used for 2015-2016 year).
- ✓ \$3,000 from Polk County Betterment for KIB community coach position.
- ✓ \$4,500 from City of Des Moines for KIB community coach position.
- ✓ \$2,000 from NeighborWorks for CLI project – marketing brochure for real estate and development agencies.
- ✓ \$10,000 from NeighborWorks for East High Cares programming.
- ✓ \$30,000 from NeighborWorks for business development work.
- ✓ \$15,000 from United Way for youth summer enrichment programming.
- ✓ \$3,000 from Polk County Betterment for MLK Jr. Park neighborhood association event sponsorship, and resident outreach.
- ✓ \$3,000 from Polk County Betterment for Capitol Park neighborhood association resident outreach and programming.
- ✓ \$950 from Metro Waste Authority for Hiatt Service Day.
- ✓ \$1,500 each from United Way for Boys & Girls Club garden and Philadelphia Seventh Day Adventist garden.

### **Leadership and Skill Training Activities**

- NeighborWorks Community Leadership Institute training in Louisville, KY – representatives from all three neighborhoods, the city, CHI and the KIB community coach attended.
- Parent University was held the first Tuesday of each month during the school year at East High School, Carver Elementary, Capitol View and Hiatt to educate/inform parents on the east side of Des Moines on topics ranging from budgeting and meal planning to helping kids with homework.

### **Accomplishments**

- The Viva East Bank! 2015 annual report can be viewed here:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9HXR3UpTg6BTE5xUUlwYnVRbXc/view?pref=2&pli=1>.

- Housing: \$2.08 million total investment; 13 new homes constructed and sold; nine existing homes rehabbed and sold; 81 homes receiving critical repairs and/or weatherization; 11 blighted and public nuisance properties demolished.
- Community Programming: \$79,238 total investment; 150+ volunteers; 566 total hours given - representing an \$18,000 contribution.
- Community Building: \$10,000+ total investment; 15 different events in three neighborhoods; hundreds of residents and volunteers throughout metro attending and volunteering.
- Public Spaces & Infrastructure: \$1,052,306 invested; Capitol East received \$900,000 in improved sidewalks and streets; more than \$56,000 was invested in Burke Park improvements (Capitol Park neighborhood) through Meredith Corporation's annual Rebuilding Together work day; and two new DART bus stops in Capitol East have been completed.
- Business Development: \$95,642 total investment; quarterly business owner meetings for E. Grand Avenue business district; reduced crime through partnership with Des Moines Police Department; hiring of business consultant through ISU Extension.

### **Media/Partner Coverage**

- <http://www.pchtf.org/about-us/recent-news/viva-east-bank/>
- <http://www.chihousing.com/news/central-iowa-news/61-viva-east-bank-launches-to-strength.html>
- <http://www.pchtf.org/about-us/recent-news/fall-bus-tour-highlights-viva-east-bank/>
- <http://www.vivaeastbank.com/blog/2016/5/16/better-together-award-recipients>

# APPENDIX

## Progress Report of Hometown Pride Committees in Fremont County

As of June 30, 2016

	Population in 2010	Number of Meetings	Last Meeting	Officers Elected	Number Involved	Volunteer Hours	Grant Apps Submitted	Clean up Day	City Park	Ball Field	Trail Develop	Other	Improve Nuisance Properties
Anderson	50	0											
Bartlett	22	22	6/7/2016	May-14	22	352	2	x				X	x
Farragut	463	19	6/28/2016	Mar-14	16	144	3	x	x	x	x	x	x
Hamburg	1137	31	6/16/2016	Feb-14	30	1,860	11	x	x				
Imogene	69	25	4/4/2016	Dec-13	42	323	11	x	x	x	x	x	x
McPaul	10	0											
Percival	78	29	6/15/2016	Feb-14	22	652	10		x		x	x	x
Randolph	161	27	6/14/2016	Mar-14	14	558	8	x	x	x	x		x
Riverton	287	22	6/15/2016	Feb-14	25	136	8	x	x	x		x	x
Sidney	1087	31	6/21/2016	Apr-14	37	660	8	x			x	x	x
Tabor	993	28	6/20/2016	Nov-14	27	462	8	x			x	x	x
Thurman	222	15	5/2/2016	Jan-14	7	240	7	x	x			x	
Rural households	2866						3						
total	7445	249			242	5387	79						

County-wide joint meetings 4 6/30/2016

Trail of Treasures

5 3/15/201

FC Co Supervisors		6	2/12/201
			6
City Councils		2	5/8/2014
FC CF		5	4/12/201
			6
FC Extension		2	2/19/201
			4
FREDCO		8	5/12/201
			6
Golden Hills RCD		3	4/6/2015
Iowa Architects		7	1/28/201
			5
IaNatureHert		1	2/19/201
			4
HP Steering Committee		9	10/25/20
			15
SWIPCO		3	9/18/201
			4
TAB		1	11/19/20
			15
Trees Forever		9	10/7/201
			4

Doug Friedli, Community Coach

***Hometown Pride –Fremont County****PO Box 736, Sidney, IA 51652****402-873-2215 dougfriedli@gmail.com***