MAPPING

the Future of Your Community

www.IIRA.org

Annual Highlights 2024

MAPPING communities have had a productive 2024. Here are some highlights:

(Please note this is not a comprehensive list)

Argenta, pop. 913 (MAPPING 2016):

- Argenta in Motion organized the Argenta IceFest on February 10th. The event included ice sculptures, ice carving demonstrations, an ice carving competition, live music, vendors, food, a 50/50 drawing, and more.
- Held an Antique Tractor Show on May 11th from 9 am to 4 pm. Event also included tractor games, food trucks, vendors, and more.
- Coordinated a roadside cleanup walk on October 12th.
- Offered an AIM Halloween event on October 31st with hayrides, s'mores, and more.

Assumption, pop. 1,155 (MAPPING 2016, 2022):

- Continued to make progress in the development of the Assumption Community Child Care Center (ACCC) including:
  - The ACCC hired Brianna Horton as the director of the soon-to-open center.
  - Worked with Knotty Pine Bar and Grill on a Queen of Hearts drawing held on Sundays at 5 pm starting in early January. The fundraiser ended in October when the queen card was found. The winner and the ACCC each received $2,306.50.
  - The Assumption Community Child Care Center announced on January 30th that they have completed replacing windows, installing new lights, and painting at the future center.
  - Received a donation from the Christian County Board for the Assumption Community Child Care Center.
  - Held a drive-thru dinner as a fundraiser for the Assumption Community Child Care Center on March 29th.

Playground and fencing at the Assumption Community Childcare Center set to open in 2025.

  - Nelson's catered a dinner to benefit the Assumption Community Child Care Center on April 8th.
  - Organized a Murder Mystery Dinner at Willow Ridge Winery on April 27th to raise funds for the ACCC.
  - The Assumption Community Child Care Center participated in the Assumption Fest parade and had a booth at the festival on May 25th.
  - Work began at the playground for the Assumption Community Childcare Center (ACCC) in early June.
  - A door was installed on between the church and child care center to meet state licensing requirements for the ACCC on August 16th.
  - Held a music bingo fundraiser on August 18th to support the Assumption Community Child Care Center. The event raised $2,444 for the ACCC.
  - Installed fencing around the newly completed playground at the ACCC.
  - Sloan Implement hosted a day of play for area kids on September 7th and offered a food stand with proceeds benefiting the ACCC.
  - The paperwork for the ACCC licensing was official submitted to the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services on October 11th.
  - The ACCC had a booth at both the Taylorville Chilifest October 5th – 6th and the Kemmerer Village Open House on October 19th.

Funding provided in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

- The ACCC hosted a virtual pumpkin carving and painting contest on Facebook, where contestants submitted photos of their pumpkins from October 22nd to 28th. Voting was then conducted online, with the winner announced on October 31st.
- The ACCC announced on October 24th that they were hiring staff for the childcare center.
- ACCC participated in a Trunk or Treat event on October 27th at the Middle School.
- State of Illinois representatives inspected the ACCC location on December 30th. They expect to hear in early 2025 what changes are needed for it to open in 2025.
- The ACPA Childcare Team raised $250,900 by the end of 2024 for the project.

ACPA recognized their first responders at an event in August of 2024.

- ACPA and the Assumption Woman's Club partnered on a four-part gardening seminar held February 20th, March 19th, June 18th, and July 16th.
- Helped organize volunteers to sort bottle caps to be made into benches for the village.
- Organized an Adult Easter Egg Hunt on March 15th. Participants paid $10 to participate, and the grand prize was a four-burner flat-top grill.
- Organized a Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt on March 29th for kids 9 and up.
- Held a French Heritage Day festival on April 27th with local vendors offering French food, a scavenger hunt, a quilt show, an antique show, a history display, live music, and more.
- Presented Yard of the Month awards over the summer months starting in May.
- ACPA participated in the Assumption Fest parade and collected money for St. Jude Memphis to Peoria Runners.
- Organized the Assumption Farmers Market every other Saturday from June 1st through July 27th. The events included live music, children's activities, and local vendors.
- Offered a summer recreation program for kids at the Assumption City Park from June 5th through July 26th.
- Organized a puzzle contest on June 23rd with proceeds benefiting St. Jude Runners.
- Coordinated a welcome event for the St. Jude runners on July 19th.
- Organized a recognition night on August 13th for the first responders from the Assumption Fire Department, Assumption Ambulance Service, and local police and sheriff's department members.
- ACPA sponsored the Culpepper and Merriweather Great Combined Circus to come to town on August 14th.
- Coordinated the annual Assumption Christmas Lighting event. Festivities included visits with Santa, food, shopping, and more.

Brooklyn, pop. 649 (MAPPING 2024):

- Organized a Halloween pumpkin painting event for kids on October 21st.
- Hosted a Movie Night with food provided at the Civic Center with the double feature, Grinch and Home Alone, on December 20th.
- Coordinated a Christmas event and toy giveaway on December 23rd.

Charleston, pop. 17,286 (MAPPING 2023):

- The Beautification Team partnered with Trojan A&M to build flower pots that were placed at local businesses. Five pots were sponsored for $75 each in this initial adopt-a-pot trial for 2024.
- The Arts Team hosted a table at Springfest on April 20th to make butterfly-themed crafts with local youth and raise awareness of butterfly initiatives.
- Manned an information booth and passed out a QR code to linked to a survey at the IHSA girls and boys state track meet - held weekends of May 16th - 28th and May 23rd - 25th.
- Held a meeting with City, EIU, and Charleston CAN representation to brainstorm ways to make participants and families attending sports tournaments more welcome to the community.
- The Charleston Can and partners raised funds for a shuttle bus ($1,100) to run from EIU campus to restaurants on the downtown square during the state track meet.

- One Charleston CAN Team helped set up for the EIU Homecoming Scavenger Hunt on September 30th.
- One Charleston CAN is supporting a collaboration between EIU and the City of Charleston that will culminate in August of 2025 with the installation of the world's largest bow tie to be wrapped around Old Main.
- Charleston's Beautification Team has received approvals from the City and EIU for new entrance signs. The sign maker is submitting the necessary paperwork to IDOT. The first new sign will go up on the western edge of town, coming in on Route 16, and another is planned for the southern edge of town on Route 130. This $250,000 project was funded with a Charleston Area Charitable Foundation grant as well as a grant from Kubota.
- Launched a Property/Yard of the Month award in August to recognize beautification efforts of property owners.
- The Tourism Team worked on landscaping at the Debate Museum.
- The History and Tourism Team organized the inaugural Butterfly Festival on August 3rd. The event started on Thursday before the festival with a talk on butterfly habitats and then a presentation about bats on Friday. Shuttles were provided from parking to activities at the lake on the day of the festival. A professional troupe of kite flyers entertained the crowd, and there were vendors, food, and more. Charleston CAN also had a booth at the event.

Community members enjoy a photo op during the Butterfly Festival.

- The Arts CAN Team organized a photobooth with masks, seven-foot tall wooden butterfly wings, and a youth art project for the Butterfly Festival held on August 3rd.
- The Arts CAN Team applied for a grant from the Charleston Area Charitable Foundation as well as a Creative Catalyst grant from the Illinois Arts Council for the butterfly sculpture project.
- The Arts Can Butterfly Sculpture Project is funded and the design competition opened October 15th and closes at the end of January 2025. Arts CAN aims to install three large painted steel butterflies next summer in time for Charleston's 2nd Butterfly Festival. The team received two grants totaling $7,500 for the project.
- One Community has launched a Community and Campus Relations Survey to identify areas that need work and links have gone out across the university and to various community contacts.
- One Community facilitated a meeting between city and campus stakeholders to discuss the building of professional-grade sand volleyball courts as a shared city and campus asset. This project would cost $600,000. The City has pledged $160,000, and EIU has offered $140,000. This would leave $300,000 to be raised for a Division I, 6-court format.
- Organized Christmas in the Heart of Charleston on December 7th. Approximately 2,000 people attended the event. Approximately $7,500 was donated privately, and $4,000 in hotel/motel tax was raised to fund the event.
- Arts CAN also ran an ornament making event for children (about 150 attended) during Christmas in the Heart of Charleston.
- Charleston Arts CAN hosted its 2nd Annual Pop Up Gallery of Miniatures during the Christmas shopping season in Charleston, raising $760. The gallery received submissions from 15 artists and had many visitors at Nola's Naturals.
- Charleston CAN members were judges for the Charleston Spirit of the Holidays Christmas Light Contest on December 26th.

Coal City, pop. 5,705 (MAPPING 2024):

- A Back to School Bash and supply drive was held Saturday, August 10th with over 400 people in attendance. The Village Church collected supplies, and drop boxes were placed at eight businesses/organizations in town. Over $1,000 in donations were collected as well as food. Coaler Drive had 25 volunteers plus Coal City Police Department assist at stations such as bike rodeo, yard games, and concession stand.
- Hosted a booth at the Fall Fest on September 14th to gather information on what the community would like to see offered for youth. The team would like to host an activity for youth each month.
- Hosted Fall Fest on September 13th – 14th. Approximately 145 servings of bagna cauda were provided to attendees and the Events Team provided fireworks on Friday night. A total of 123 cars were entered in the car show on Saturday, with each car bringing in a $10 entry fee. The event was well attended and raised $1,268.
- The Coaler Drive Youth Team launched a survey to get community input on September 20th.

- The Festivals and Events Team decorated the concession stand at Campbell Park like a gingerbread house for the tree lighting ceremony on November 23rd.
- Sold memorial ornaments at the Kris Kindle Market for $5, and a calligrapher was available to personalize the ornaments. Sixty-three ornaments were sold, and the event raised $235.

Dieterich, pop. 890 (MAPPING 1992, 1996, 1998, 2011, 2019):

- Significant progress was made to the Wright Family Center including:
  - The Wright Family Center announced on January 5th that for a $20,000 donation, donors can have their name printed on a gym floor tarp in the gymnasium.
  - The Wright Family Center began promoting dance lessons that would be offered at the soon to open Center on February 26th.
  - The Montessori Kids Universe child care center opened in Dieterich at the Wright Family Center on January 16th.
  - Traci Bruns spoke at the Dieterich Ruritan Club about the Wright Family Center on January 19th.
  - Fitness equipment was installed at the Wright Family Center from January 18th to 20th.
  - The Effingham County Chamber of Commerce hosted a luncheon on February 2nd featuring Director Traci Bruns to talk about the Wright Family Center.
  - The Wright Family Center began selling memberships on February 7th.
  - The Wright Family Center held their grant opening on February 18th from 2 pm to 4 pm.
  - The Wright Family Center began partnership with the Dieterich Park District to offer sports programming such as pickleball and basketball indoors.
  - The Wright Family Center was featured in the "Progress" magazine insert in the Effingham Daily News on February 28th.
  - The Wright Family Center began offering fitness classes for members of the Wright Family Center.
  - The Wright Family Center received two trees from Gardenscape Contractors and the trees were planted by volunteers from the Dieterich Trailblazers 4-H Club on March 6th.
  - Held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 8th for the Wright Family Center.
  - The Wright Family Center hosted an adult spring paint date with Stang Arts on March 22nd.
  - The Wright Family Center coordinated a Dieterich Glow Hunt for older kids on April 7th.
  - The Wright Family Center organized a 3-on-3 basketball tournament on April 13th.
  - Wright Family Center organized a Charcuterie Board Class on April 26th.
  - Wright Family Center organized a game night on June 8th.
  - Wright Family Center partnered with Stang Arts to offer a kids and adults painting class on June 26th.
  - The Wright Family Center hosted the PAVE Effingham County breakfast on September 19th.
  - The Wright Family Center began collecting rolls of wrapping paper for the Effingham County FISH Christmas store, and a total of 170 rolls were donated.
  - The Wright Family Center hosted a meeting of Rural Partners as a community showcase on October 24th.
  - Solar panels were installed at the Wright Family Center on November 1st.

Participants at the ribbon cutting for the Wright Family Center.

- Organized a Party in the Path for the total eclipse on April 7th and April 8th. The event included food trucks, beer garden, live music, inflatables, star lab, and an eclipse panel with area experts on the science of eclipses.
- Dieterich was featured on WEIU TV, a public broadcasting station, on April 25th. The episode was part of the "This is our Story" series and featured 16 local storytellers, including Gisele Hamm, MAPPING the Future of Your Community program director.
- Held village-wide garage sales on June 1st.
- Held a raffle based on Dieterich's zip code with the grand prize being $62,424. The winner was drawn on June 24th, 2024 at 6:24 pm (Dieterich's zip code day). In addition to the grand prize, three prizes of $624.24 were awarded. T-shirts were also designed to celebrate the day and raise funds. On the day of the event, they took a town photo, held a chalk contest, and the post office offered a commemorative postmark for the day.

- Assisted the Village with the 4th of July Celebration held on July 3rd and 4th. The celebration included a variety of entertainment and activities such as a 5K run, food vendors, axe throwing, parade, beer garden, inflatable bounce houses, fireworks, a bags tournament, live music, and more.
- Hosted another village-wide garage sale on October 5th.
- Organized a Halloween Trunk or Treat on Saturday, October 26th at the Civic Center. They awarded 1st and 2nd place awards for best decorated trunk.
- Organized a Turkey Trot 5K and 1 mile Fun Run on November 28th to benefit the Dieterich Community Education Foundation.
- Coordinated the Small Town Christmas on December 8th. The event included raffle baskets donated by area businesses, with proceeds benefiting the Angel Tree program at Dieterich Schools. The event also included visits with Santa, reindeer games, cookie kits, hot chocolate, a golf cart parade, and live music.

One of the winners in the Christmas Golf Cart Parade.

- Each year, the DHS art classes create a giant interactive Christmas card for Small Town Christmas. This year's card featured a train coming into town with a snowy scene. They purchased conductor caps for photo opportunities with the card.
- Organized the Village of Dieterich Christmas Lighting Contest, and judging took place on December 11th.
- Coordinating visits with Santa Claus on December 8th and December 13th.

Durand, pop. 1,390 (MAPPING 2013, 2023):

- The Spark! Places of Innovation Smithsonian exhibition in Durand closed on January 6th. The exhibit received over 800 visitors between December 2, 2023 and January 6, 2024.
- Continued sponsoring the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program in Winnebago County to provide books for children.
- Durand Mayor Sheila Hoffman and Durand Charm Executive Director, Kelly Giovanine presented at the 35th Annual Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs Conference on February 28th.
- Organized Durand Garage Sale Days on April 26th .
- Coordinated a Market in the Park Craft Show on May 4th.
- Held the spring plant sale on May 4th which included a plant swap.
- WREX featured Durand in a video segment entitled "Destination Downtown: Durand."
- Planned Zip Code Day on June 10, 2024 or 6.10.24. Offered apparel for sales for the day. The event was featured on WREX. The event included a community photo, free ice cream, a scavenger hunt, live music, corn hole games, and sidewalk chalk art.
- Durand Charm began selling duck race fundraiser tickets during the Durand Home Show on April 27th.
- Conducted a housing needs survey from May 1st through May 17th. The survey was online and accessible via a QR code.
- Durand Charm coordinated a summer reading program from June 4th through July 2nd.
- Durand Charm launched the 2024 Citizen of the Year nominations on March 28th, and the winner, Jody Steinke, was the Parade Marshall for the 4th of July parade.
- Organized a Touch a Truck event as part of their summer reading program on June 4th.
- Held the 3rd Annual Duck Race fundraiser on the 4th of July. The event raised $2,000 and was attended by approximately 100. The event was featured on WIFR TV.
- Durand Charm assisted community members to apply for DCEO grant funds to renovate three buildings downtown. The request for $350,000 was submitted in July.
- Continued to encourage people to volunteer at the local library that is ran exclusively by volunteers.

Community members participated in a group photo for Durand's Zip Code Day festivities.

- Durand Charm took part in the Back to School Open House on August 15th with free books for children. The event was supposed to have an outdoor read-a-long as well as sidewalk chalk, but outdoors activities were rained out.
- Organized a fall plant sale on September 14th at Saelens Park. The event raised approximately $600 and 120 people attended.
- Held Halloween on the Square on October 26th with costume parade, costume contest, and trunk-or-treat.
- The Beautification Team planted fall flowers around the Saelens Park entrance sign on September 26th.
- The Housing Team completed both the land use and community survey. Durand Charm held an update on the housing study to inform the public on October 21st.
- Organized a Scarecrow Contest with local business owners.
- Held the annual Candy Cane Lane Craft Show on November 24th.
- Partnered with DARTS to host Durand's Jingle and Mingle on December 8th.

Effingham County, pop. 34,668 (MAPPING 2022):

- PAVE Childcare Action Team organized some informational sessions on starting a child care business with Courtney Hatcher from Project Child on March 27th, April 3rd, and April 10th.
- Courtney Yockey and Lucinda Hart promoted the community breakfast in Altamont on the air at 979 XFM Radio on April 2nd and April 9th.
- Held a community breakfast in Altamont with main speaker Kurt Becker, an Altamont native and horse racing announcer on April 16th. The event was very well attended, with approximately 200 in attendance.
- PAVE organized the summer Build It Camp with Benchworx at the Teutopolis Park District on June 21st and 24th. The Teutopolis Civic Club sponsored the event.
- PAVE organized a Build It Camp with the Effingham Park District from July 8th to 12th.
- Organized a community breakfast in Dieterich at the Wright Family Center on September 19th. Meteorologist Seth Bohnhoff was a featured speaker. Approximately 200 people attended.

Youth participating Effingham's Build It Camp.

Elizabeth, pop. 694 (MAPPING 2013, 2021):

- Greater Elizabeth Arts and Recreation (GEAR) sold popcorn until January 19th as a fundraiser.
- GEAR organized girls and boys basketball for pre-K through 3rd grade for six weeks starting on January 18th.
- GEAR held their annual Chili Cook-off at Cajun Jacks on February 25th.
- Organized a spring fling festival and vendor fair on May 4th. Event included sidewalk sales, ice cream social, petting zoo, bounce houses, cornhole tournament, kids games, goat snuggles, scavenger hunt, vintage bicycle museum, Elizabeth Historical Museum, Chicago Great Western Railroad Depot Museum, and a kids flower potting workshop.
- GEAR organized a golf outing fundraiser on June 29th at Woodbine Bend Golf Course.
- Organized the Elizabeth Freedom Festival on July 1st with food trucks, military vehicles, live music, axe throwing, dunk tank, bounce houses, jumbo yard games, the US Army Golden Knights Parachute Jump, and more.
- Coordinated the Harvest Fest held on August 17th with a farmers market, food and drink vendors, live music, and kids activities.
- The Elizabeth Chamber hosted a Queen of Hearts drawing that started on September 10th at OJ's Main Street Tap.
- Organized a downtown scarecrow contest by business owners.
- Sponsored a Veterans Day program at the River Ridge School District on November 11th.
- Organized Christmas in the Village on December 6th and 7th. The event included living windows, luminaries along Main Street, holiday fire pit with smores, visits by the Grinch and Santa Claus, kids activities, and the Galena trolley.

Erie, pop. 1,518 (MAPPING 2018):

- Revitalize Erie hosted a family movie night featuring "Night at the Museum" on January 20th sponsored by Erie Foods International.
- Revitalize Erie decorated the downtown planters with winter decor on February 22nd.

- Promoted shopping locally and highlighted some of their locally-owned businesses on Facebook throughout the year. Began utilizing the hashtag #expERIEnce to promote the community.
- Partnered with the Harvest Bakery and More to donate $1 of every Lucky Charm drink sold during the month of March to Revitalize Erie.
- Revitalize Erie worked with a local lumbermill to create six benches from trees that were removed from Margaret Park.
- Collected cans to recycle to raise money for the annual Street Fest.
- Hosted an Easter Scavenger Hunt with a chance to win a bike and other giveaways on Saturday, March 16th. The Village of Erie also hosted a table at the event to share the plans for the Heritage Park revitalization project with the public. A total of 156 children attended the event with their parents and grandparents.
- On March 23rd, Revitalize Erie thanked the Village of Erie for allowing them to use some storage space at Village Hall.
- Revitalize Erie worked with the high school students and class sponsors on a May 3rd work day, including applying a new coat of stain to the planters for spring/summer.
- Revealed the 2024 t-shirt design on May 14th and began taking pre-orders. The t-shirts are a fundraiser to support Revitalize Erie.
- Filled downtown planters with flowers on May 17th in time for Memorial Day. Patriotic decor was also added to the planters for the Memorial Day parade. They also recruited volunteers to water the flowers throughout the summer months. The group raised $4,625 in sponsorships for the project.

Participants enjoying music bingo in Erie.

- A volunteer planted perennials in Margaret and Heritage Parks.
- Organized a Memorial Day parade, ceremony, and breakfast on Monday, May 27th. The New Gator that Revitalize Erie purchased was used to carry the Little Miss and Mister in the parade. Revitalize Erie provided golf carts and volunteers to shuttle people unable to walk to the Memorial Day ceremony.
- Organized the Erie All Town Garage Sale on May 31st and June 1st.
- Hosted the Big River Gravel Burning Quad Bike Race on July 13th. The race ended in front of the Erie Police Department. The event organizers, Big River Gravel, donated the proceeds of a raffle of Roka sunglasses to Revitalize Erie.
- Revitalize Erie participated in the Village of Erie's National Night Out event on August 6th.
- Organized the Car Show and Streetfest held September 14th. The Streetfest included a scavenger hunt, corn hole tournament, live music, mum sale, box car parade, face painting, petting zoo, and more.
- Revitalize Erie sold water bottles and other merchandise during the Streetfest.
- Revitalize Erie had an ATV in the high school homecoming parade on September 27th.
- Organized a work day on October 5th to change the planters for fall adding artificial boxwoods.
- Held All-Town Garage Sales on October 18th and 19th.
- Coordinated a Pumpkin Bash for October 19th with kids games, a parade, and more. Sold merchandise during the event and raised $100.
- Revitallize Erie organized a Music Bingo Night on November 1st.
- Revitalize Erie kicked off a punch card promotion on November 1st to encourage residents to shop local during the holidays.
- Began selling bell ornaments with "It's a Wonderful Life" engraved on each for a holiday fundraiser on November 1st.
- Organized a work day on November 23rd to change planters from fall decorations to Christmas adding wreaths, ribbons, and lights.
- Revitalize Erie decorated Margaret Park for Christmas by decorating lampposts and a community Christmas tree.
- Held a holiday gift wrapping fundraiser on December 6th.
- Revitalize Erie organized the "It's a Wonderful Life Hometown Holiday 2024" on December 7th. Event included a lighted parade, soup supper, Nativity, Christmas carols, tree lighting, children's activities, and more.
- Revitalize Erie sold merchandise at the Hometown Holiday event as a fundraiser.
- Assisted with laying wreaths at the cemetery to remember and honor veterans on December 14th.

Greenup, pop. 1,365 (MAPPING 2024):

- Launched the Growing with Greenup Facebook page on April 22nd.
- Growing with Greenup members cleaned up a public flower bed and added new mulch and flowers on May 1st.
- Launched the Homesteaders Market the first Saturday of the month from June through October.
- On May 9th, Growing with Greenup volunteers washed the windows of the Squire Holt building and added flowers outside.
- Growing with Greenup launched a Facebook Group for the Youth Team.
- Growing with Greenup joined the National Road Yard Sale and encouraged community members to hold yard sales from May 29th through June 2nd.
- Growing with Greenup held a bake sale on June 1st during the National Road Yard Sale as a fundraiser.
- Growing with Greenup volunteers added flags to the flower pots downtown in early June and added seasonal decor throughout the rest of the year.
- Growing with Greenup hosted an informational meeting for those interested in becoming a childcare professional or being an in-home childcare provider.
- Hosted Quinn Adamowski from Landmarks Illinois to learn about Downtown Historic District preservation on June 20th.
- Growing with Greenup launched a community youth interest survey including specific childcare needs to determine community needs.
- Growing with Greenup held a bakesale as a fundraiser during the September 7th Homestead Market.
- Growing with Greenup launched a task force to build a memorial Greenup Bandstand in memory of Bob Scott. The taskforce held several meetings and submitted a proposal to T-Mobile for a Hometown Grant.

A Greenup volunteer adds flags to the downtown flowerpots.

Hillsboro, pop. 5,902 (MAPPING 2015, 2019):

- Held the annual Imagine Hillsboro Princess Ball on March 9th.
- The Imagine Hillsboro volunteer committee assisted the Junior Board's Spring Cleanup on April 20th.
- The volunteer committee hosted a work day and painted steps and flower pots on June 3rd.
- Held the 2nd Annual Mother-Son Battlefest Palooza on June 8th. The event included a water gun battlefield, inflatable obstacle course, and bounce houses.
- The 2025 Hillsboro Farmers Market launched in on May 4th and continued until the third week of September.
- In May, the Imagine Hillsboro board voted to send a letter to community and community alumni to request donations for the Central Park pool project.
- Volunteers planted flowers downtown for the summer.
- Received a donation of $3,000 from IGA for the pool project.
- Organized the 7th Annual Imagine Hillsboro Cardboard Boat Regatta on July 13th.
- Hosted the 2024 Back to School Store to provide free clothing and school supplies to students in August. Also offered vaccines and dental exams this year. The Education Team donated $500 to the Events Team for the event.
- Organized the Imagine Hillsboro's 2024 Harvest Market and Street Festival on October 5th. Event included a photo op display, free kids activities, Chalk of the Town art contest, vendors, and more.
- Coordinated the 4th Annual Bed Races on October 5th as a part of the Shop Hillsboro Pajama Party.
- Coordinated the 3rd Annual Shake the Lakes 5K Fun Run and Walk on October 12th. The event raised $714.
- The Education Team held annual Spooktacular Golf Scramble on October 26th.
- Held the annual Rake & Run on November 9th collaborating with the HAH Junior Board. In addition, several organizations took part including the HHS National Honor Society, the Hillsboro Free Methodist Church, and Life Community Church. Close to 100 volunteers participated.
- Coordinated the annual Imagine Hillsboro Snow Royalty Pageant on November 23rd.
- Imagine Hillsboro hosted a Small Town Christmas on Saturday, November 30th. The event included donuts and pictures with Santa, free magic show, gingerbread house contests, petting zoo, carriage rides, free movie, vendor fair, and a Cindy Lou Who look-a-like contest.

Lanark, pop. 1,504 (MAPPING 2014):

Participants getting ready for the Shake the Lakes 5K Fun Run and Walk.

- Celebrate Lanark hosted the Lanark Easter Egg Hunt on March 23rd.
- Celebrate Lanark sponsored the Lighted Christmas Parade on November 29th.
- Organized the Jingle Fest on November 30th. The event included visits with Santa, youth activities, and vendor fair.
- The annual Letters to Santa was a hit with a special friends picking up the letters to Santa each day—special friends included Mickey Mouse, Olaf, Elsa, Spiderman, and others. Letters were collected from December 1st – December 15th.
- Coordinated the Light up Lanark contest to recognize the best holiday decorations. Winners received lighted awards that were distributed on December 18th.

Lewistown, pop. 2,041 (MAPPING 2012, 2024)

- Worked with IHDA to train volunteers and conducted a housing stock survey.
- Added a gingerbread decorating activity before the parage and town Christmas celebration. Sixty children participated.
- Working with an engineering group to survey five downtown buildings to assess their structural integrity before pursuing improvements. They requested TIF funds to cover the engineering fees.
- Applied for a grant from Landmarks Illinois for two buildings with Mesker sheet metal facades from the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Litchfield, pop. 6,605 (MAPPING 2024):

- Together Litchfield Can (TLC) launched a Facebook page on April 15th.
- Approximately 50 volunteers participated in a community cleanup organized by the Beautification Team on April 13th.
- The Business Team held a walkabout on April 23rd to hand out surveys to businesses and to inform businesses about the facade program through the City of Litchfield.
- The Beautification Team organized volunteers to scrape and paint flower pots downtown on May 20th.
- The Beautification Team held a second work day on June 1st to scrape and paint flowerpots on State and Union Streets.
- Organized a work day on June 8th to assist senior citizens and disabled residents in moving flood-damaged items to the curb for the City to pick up.
- Together Litchfield Can offered youth activities during the Pickers Market on June 9th.
- The Youth Team launched a survey to get input from parents on June 10th.
- On June 17th, the Housing Team met with Amy Bashiti from the Illinois Housing Development Authority to discuss housing in Litchfield.
- Together Litchfield Can participated in the Back to School Bash on July 27th with a booth at the community center.
- The Youth Team hosted a kids corner at the Pickers Market on August 11th with kids games and a guest appearance by Professor Longhair.
- The Housing Team met with Becky Darling from the Illinois Housing Development Authority on August 20th to finalize plans for a housing inventory survey.
- The Beautification Team launched a new Yard of the Month program in September.
- Together Litchfield Can organized a kickball tournament on September 15th. The event was successful with five middle school teams and eight adult/high school teams participating.

Volunteers at a community cleanup in Litchfield.

- Held the TLC MAPPING Town Meeting on October 6th. Approximately 100 community members attended the unveiling of the new TLC Action Plan.

- The Youth Team organized another Kids Corner at the Pickers Market on October 13th again featuring kids games and Professor Longhair.
- TLC organized a work day to assist community members in need with their fall yard work on November 3rd.
- Volunteers were trained on completing a housing survey on November 6th.
- Launched the SMART Buddy Program for elementary students. This program will pair a student in grades 2nd to 5th with a dedicated mentor. The program kicked off with a Buddy Breakfast on December 18th when the mentors got to know their buddies.
- Together Litchfield Can walked in the Christmas Parade on December 21st.

Martinsville, pop. 1,118 (MAPPING 1996, 2012, 2017):

- On February 29th, the Changing Hands resale shop, which benefits Martinsville on the Move, reopened after a 22-month closure.
- Launched Wednesday Workdays at the Woodlands for park cleanup and upkeep in March.
- Several 7th and 8th grade students participated in a work day at the Woodlands and the Bike Park on April 11th.
- The Golden Star 4-H group from Casey had a workday at the Woodlands on May 4th. Beeman and Sons donated and delivered wood chips that the 4-H group spread in the flower beds.
- Premier Lawn and Tree Care built a retaining wall at the Woodlands that added some needed parking in July.
- Martinsville on the Move sponsors hosted six concerts at the Linn Park Amphitheater in June, July, and August of 2024.
- Organized a fall workday at the Woodlands on September 14th.
- Organized a free Community Christmas Lunch at the Martinsville Community Center on December 25th.

Mattoon, pop. 16,870 (MAPPING 1994, 2017, 2022):

- Elevate announced they hired a new Executive Assistant on January 8th.
- Coles County 4-H had a Harvest and Activity Day for youth with the FarmBot at Elevate in the Cross County Mall on January 11th.
- Elevate continued to host the ClassE youth entrepreneurship program for Coles County.
- Elevate hosted an event for female business owners called “Connecting HER with Illinois Business Resources” on March 6th. The event included lunch, presentations, and conversations with multiple agencies assisting women business owners.
- Mattoon In Motion, along with the City of Mattoon and the Illinois Housing Development Authority held a town hall to discuss the results of the community housing survey on March 14th at Elevate. Over 80 residents attended the event. After the event, community members were able to view the presentation and send in feedback to be included if they could not attend the event.
- Elevate announced a search for a Program Coordinator on March 18th.
- Elevate hosted a networking event for members on March 29th.
- Elevate and ClassE announced the "20 under 40" for Coles County Class of 2024 on April 3rd. Awardees were recognized at the Community Leaders Breakfast on April 18th.
- Elevate hosted a business after hours with the Charleston Area Chamber of Commerce on April 25th.
- Elevate hosted the ClassE trade show on May 1st.
- WCIA 3 News visited Elevate on May 20th to highlight the new Small Business Development Center office at Elevate.
- Announced on May 26th that Evan Kubicek was hired as an interim Executive Director.
- Elevate hosted a quarterly members social on July 6th.
- Elevate hosted a data analytics bootcamp on July 26th.
- Elevate announced on July 28th that they now offer Google Certifications in areas such as cybersecurity, data analytics, e-commerce, and more.
- Elevate hosted a workshop sponsored by U of I Extension and Mattoon in Motion entitled “Developing a Creative Economy” On July 31st.
- Elevate announced on September 10th a new partnership with Eastern Illinois University to host a Digital Trades program.
- Elevate hosted a third quarter member event on September 13th.

- Elevate announced on September 19th that three area students were awarded scholarships to take the Google Certificate courses. Two were EIU students and one was a recent Charleston High school graduate.
- Elevate unveiled the Wonder Wall digital sign at the Cross County Mall.
- Elevate announced a partnership with LIFT Central Illinois on October 5th to bring digital trades to the region. Students will be able to learn a variety of digital skills such as digital marketing, business intelligence, and UX/App design through the Google Certificates program.
- Elevate hosted a workshop on Mastering Sales Networking Strategies on October 23rd.
- Elevate organized the Fall Fashion Show at EIU on October 25th. The event featured fall looks from area businesses as well as food trucks.
- Elevate hosted Data Analytics Bootcamp #2 on November 8th.
- Elevate board president spoke at the grant opening of Emerald Acres. Elevate provided interim office space for the staff prior to their opening.
- Elevate hosted the workshop, "AI Advantage: Transforming HR, Marketing, and Operations" on December 13th.

McLean, pop. 743 (MAPPING 2010, 2023):

- Progress on the purchase and rehabilitation of the historic water tower continued:
  - CORE of McLean submitted a proposal to the Village to take possession of the water tower as well as any liability for the tower. The Village board voted on January 8th to move forward on working with CORE of McLean.
  - Launched a GoFundMe campaign to cover costs associated with taking ownership of the historic water tower.
  - On February 2nd, CORE announced that in the unlikely event CORE of McLean dissolves, the Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway will take ownership of the water tower.
  - On February 5th, the Village Board voted 4-3 to sell the historic water town to CORE of McLean for $1.
  - The Village Board voted 4-2 to sign the purchase agreement with CORE of McLean on July 1st.
  - CORE announced on July 28th that it had received a $1,000 donation from the Route 66 Association of Illinois for the work on the historic water tower.
  - On September 10th, CORE of McLean became the official owners of the historic water tower.
  - CORE of McLean announced on December 20th they were recipients of the Landmarks Illinois 2024 Preservation Heritage Fund Grant and were awarded $5000 to help restore the historic water tower.
- On February 16th, the new Core of Mclean's website was announced.
- CORE of Mclean installed signs at Water Tower Park as part of the Monarch Flyway.
- Organized and held the first May Day Party on April 28th. The event included music, games, bicycle registration and safety course, May Day basket making, and flower pot painting activity.
- CORE planted 79 trees at the Funks Grove Park District.
- Core of McLean held a work day at Water Tower Park on April 13th.
- CORE launched this year's Adopt-a-Pot program on April 22nd with a plea for sponsors.
- Organized the Spring Townwide Garage Sales with participation fees donated to CORE of McLean on Friday May 3rd and Saturday May 4th.
- CORE held the 2nd Annual Community Cleanup Day on May 11th.
- On July 1st, the Village Board granted a request for $3,095 to support the annual Get Your 6.6 on Route 66 running event.
- CORE of McLean planted flowers in the bell planter on the square.
- On July 13th, CORE members weeded at Water Tower Park and placed cages on the trees planted by the new water tower.
- CORE members participated in Family Fun Night at the Mt. Hope Township on August 3rd, offering a free photo booth and souvenirs for purchase.
- Installed new directional signs that were made from donated native oak and painted by a local artist. The signs were installed the first week of August, and they plan to add more around the community.

New directional signs help visitors navigate in McLean.

- Held the CORE of McLean's 11th Annual Get Your 6.6 on Route 66 Run/Walk on August 27th. One hundred and sixty-eight people registered for the race. The event included a post-race party with food and drinks, music, adoptable dogs, face painting and henna tattoos, classic car cruise in, lawn games, and more.

- On August 31st, CORE announced that a Bloomington Walmart donated more than a truckload of gardening supplies to support the new community garden.
- Held a Community Garden kick-off meeting on September 3rd. The event was well attended.
- CORE volunteers refreshed the adopt-a-pots for fall on September 17th.
- Organized a Chili Cook-Off competition on October 20th.
- CORE of McLean partnered with four other organizations to hold the 4th Annual "Have Yourself a Funky Little Weekend" Holiday Art Market on November 23rd.

Montrose, pop. 210 (MAPPING 2024):

- More for Montrose organized a pork loin and pork burger sale as a fundraiser. They sold 130 pork loins and 400 pork burgers and hamburgers and raised $3,163.
- Volunteers decorated town hall for fall with hay bales, pumpkins, and other seasonal decor.
- Coordinated a trunk or treat event at Village Hall on October 26th.
- More for Montrose decorated the village for Christmas with vintage decorations, a Christmas tree downtown, and lighted snowflakes donated by the Montrose Sesquicenntenial Committee.
- Organized a Cookies with Santa event with refreshments, cookie decorating, and a reindeer food station on December 1st.
- Coordinated a Christmas Decorating Contest with cash prizes for the top three winners. The winners were announed on December 21st.

Morrison, pop. 4,085 (MAPPING 2007, 2019):

- On the Move with Parks and Recreation continued raising money for the purchase of playground equipment.
- The Department of Fun organized a St. Patrick's Day Pub Crawl on March 16th. They designed and sold t-shirts for the event as a fundraiser.
- The Department of Fun offered a Boogie Woogie Bingo on April 6th as a fundraiser for the post-prom event.
- The Department of Fun coordinated the Ken Taco Wars Block Party on May the 4th in downtown Morrison. The event marked the Kentucky Derby, Cinco de Mayo, and Star Wars. Event included drinks, a craft, live music from The Bomb. Com Band, and more.
- Department of Fun provided games for the Family Fun Ride to Rockwood organized by the Friends of the Parks Foundation and the City of Morrison.
- On the Move with Parks and Recreation started a new Queen of Hearts Fundraiser on May 2nd. A drawing was held every Thursday night at 7 pm at the Brick Block Pub in Morrison until the queen was drawn.
- The Department of Fun organized Swinging Sunday with the Josh Duffee Big Band playing on May 19th. People were encouraged to dance, and concessions were sold as a fundraiser during the event.
- Received a donation of $1,000 from Morrison Community Foundation to support the Swinging Sunday Event. Thanks to donors, the event was free to the public.
- The Department of Fun organized the Winesday Walk on June 19th. This event was a combination of shopping and wine tasting in downtown Morrison.
- On the Move with Parks and Recreation received a Jumper Pillow on June 11th for the sports complex.
- On the Move with Parks with Recreation encouraged the sponsorship of benches for the dog park. The benches are $1,000 each.
- On the Move with Parks and Recreation offered a Booze Wagon Liquor Pull on June 27th at the Pop Up Market. For a donation of $5, people were able to select a liquor of their choice.
- Organized Rock the Raft on July 20th. This event included a float down the Rock Creek. The float was in two groups—one a family float and the other a "Sip and Splash" for adults.
- On the Move with Parks and Recreation launched a new Lotta Lucky Loot raffle fundraiser to support the pickleball courts.
- Coordinated the Glow Bangers Ball on Saturday September 7th with an 80s hair band and a glow parade. A prize was awarded to the best mullet of the evening.

Participants enjoying the Boobie Bus fundraiser in Morrison.

- Held a casual bike ride on September 24th.
- Department of Fun hosted Back to the Arcade night on October 11th as a fundraiser.
- Held the Boobie Bus bar crawl as a fundraiser for breast cancer research on October 13th.
- Coordinated a pink toilet fundraiser in October with proceeds benefiting a Department of Fun member going through breast cancer treatment. Residents who receive a pink toilet in their yard have the option to pay to remove it or send it to someone else's yard. Residents can also purchase insurance to ensure it doesn't come to their yard.
- Department of Fun provided judges for the Nightmare on High Street 3K run walk and disc golf tournament on October 19th.

Jumper Pillow installation begins in Morrison.

- The Department of Fun created a fortune teller 'trunk' for the Morrison Chamber of Commerce's Halloween Parade.
- On the Move with Parks and Recreation launched a new raffle fundraiser on December 18th. The raffle offered three prize packages for lucky winners, with proceeds benefiting the restoration of the tennis courts and addition of pickleball courts.
- The On the Move with Parks and Recreation Queen of Hearts Raffle wasn't completed in 2024, but at the end of December, the jackpot was over $16,000.

Nauvoo, pop. 950 (MAPPING 2009, 2024)

- Worked with the park district to apply for an received Tree City USA certification and hosted an Arbor Day celebration.
- Launched a Made in Nauvoo program to highlight locally-made items for sale.
- Drafted articles of incorporation and bylaws in preparation of applying for 501C3 federal nonprofit status for Grow Nauvoo.
- Organized a community cleanup on October 12th and approximately 25 community volunteers assisted.
- Launched the Grow Nauvoo Facebook Page on November 19th.

Neoga, pop. 1,398 (MAPPING 2013):

- In February, Neoga Partnership for Progress's (NPP) board members worked the concession stand and donated the funds to Neoga PTO grants.
- Announced the installation of a new Little Free Library in Neoga at the community center.
- In May, Neoga Partnership for Progress awarded a scholarship at the Senior Awards Night.
- NPP promoted Sooeyfest, which was scheduled for September 28th. Planned activities included a bags tournament, live music, a vendor fair, and a smokeoff. Unfortunately, due to the weather, 2024 Sooeyfest was canceled.
- Organized a Halloween Costume Contest on October 31st.
- The Bucks Club partnered with Neoga Partnership for Progress to host the 6th Annual Hometown Christmas Festival with children's activities, a turkey bowl, lighted parade, etc.

Some of the participants in the Neoga Partnership for Progress Costume Contest.

- Began selling Hometown Christmas t-shirts/sweatshirts on November 8th to support Neoga Partnership for Progress.
- Organized a Gingerbread House Contest for local businesses, families, and organizations to decorate the town as part of the Neoga Hometown Christmas. NPP provided the basic kit for the company or organization to embellish.
- Neoga Partnership for Progress sold memorial yard signs for display as part of the Hometown Christmas in Neoga.
- WEIU aired a segment on Neoga Hometown Christmas on December 18th.

Nokomis, pop. 2,142 (MAPPING 2024):

- Held a meet and greet to encourage involvement in fall MAPPING program on October 14th. Approximately 75 residents attended the event.

- Newkomis held two showings of Hocus Pocus at the Fred B. Johnson Park on October 26th.
- Newkomis organized the 2024 Snowkomis on December 13th and 14th with two parades including an evening lighted parade.

Oakwood, pop. 1,325 (MAPPING 2023):

- Launched the Oakwood On The Move (OOTM) Facebook Page on April 3rd.
- Organized an Oakwood On The Move fundraiser at Danville Gardens on April 23rd, with 20% of sales donated to Oakwood on the Move.
- Hosted OOTM Bingo Night on June 29th at Sleepy Creek Vineyards' Dragonfly. The event was very well attended.
- Sponsored the Oakwood Pickleball Tournament on Thursday July 4th during the community 4th of July celebration.
- The Parks and Recreation Team put together a survey to get input on what amenities people would like to see along the Kickapoo Rail Trail.
- The Housing Team is working with the City to purchase and redevelop a dilapidated property.
- Hosted a second pickleball tournament on October 4th in conjunction with the Comet Comeback homecoming event.

Bingo participants in Oakwood.

- Oakwood On The Move sponsored the Glowing Oakwood lighted community celebration. Community members purchased a light package that included a pole, topper, lights, yard stakes, and a storage container for $50 per tree. For an additional donation, the OHS athletic teams assembled the trees. Forty new trees were added in 2024 (in addition to those sold in 2023).

Ogden, pop. 729 (MAPPING 2022):

- Onward Ogden hosted a Euchre monthly game night.
- Held an Earth Day cleanup event for the Kickapoo Rail Trail on April 27th with 17 volunteers participating.
- The Parks and Recreation Team organized a spring plant sale fundraiser with Country Arbors Nursery in April. The flowers were available to pick up on May 3rd.
- Held an open-air market every Thursday, 4-7 pm, from May 30th through August 29th. They arranged a food truck at the markets for shoppers to enjoy dinner.
- The Onward Ogden Parks and Recreation Team held work days in June to weed and mulch the parks and welcome signs.
- The Parks and Recreation Group participated in the community-wide garage sale. Over $1,000 was raised from donated items sold.
- The Parks and Recreation Team built a fence along the rail trail on July 20th.
- Held the Ogden Street Fest and Car Show August 23rd – 24th. The Festival and Events Team ran the Escape Room, 50/50 raffle, and children's bike parade. Approximately 1200 people attended and they raised $350.
- Onward Ogden held a Fall Garden Mum Fundraiser in August and September which raised approximately $165.
- Held a park cleanup on September 7th. Volunteers cleaned, weed-eated, and mulched the three main parks in town.
- Parks and Recreation Team and local businesses held a cleanup for downtown and the rail trail on October 19th.
- Onward Ogden installed a new doggy waste station along the Kickapoo Rail Trail. Volunteers restocked and emptyed the station throughout the year.
- Organized a cleanup of the Old Depot area and set up displays showing the Big Four railroads and signage on November 19th.
- Volunteers decorated all three parks with Christmas light displays. Approximately 450 people participated to view the lights.
- Organized the 3rd Annual Tree Lighting and Caroling on December 1st at the Interurban Park.
- Onward Ogden organized a breakfast with the Grinch, Santa, and

Participants in the bike parade during Ogden's Street Fest.

Mrs. Claus on December 14th. The event featured eight different Christmas-themed project stations. Approximately 70 people attended, and the event raised $350.

- Coordinated the Ogden Holiday Market on December 15th which featured 20 vendors. Approximately 150 people attended and the event raised $400.
- Partnered with the Village of Ogden and the Ogden Rose Public Library to organize the Christmas Decorating Contest. The winners were announced on December 23rd, with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place each receiving a cash award.

Pana, pop. 5,199 (MAPPING 2016, 2021):

- Pana Pride held a work day on January 6th to take down the Christmas decorations.
- Pana Pride continued the I Spy program to recognize properties around town that were improved.
- Held a Father-Daughter Dance on February 3rd with proceeds going towards the demolition fund.
- Hosted the annual Pana Pride meeting on February 8th. At the event, they awarded Volunteer of the Year, as well as Personal Wrecking Ball Award to a volunteer who has worked tirelessly on the demolition projects.
- Held a puzzle contest as a fundraiser on March 10th, with a custom puzzle featuring a prominent Pana location. Leftover puzzles were available for sale after the event.
- Organized the Pana Spring Market on April 27th. The event featured over 20 vendors and a plant sale that benefited the 4th of July fireworks display.
- Organized work days on April 25th, May 2nd, May 13th, and May 18th to tend to downtown trees, place mulch, plant and hang flower baskets, and paint curbs.
- Continued awarding the Business of the Month to spotlight local businesses.
- Continued awarding the Yard of the Month to homeowners.
- Planted flowers at City Hall on May 1st.
- Held a meet and greet at the Pana Christian Church for those interested in getting involved in Pana Pride on May 9th. During the meeting, they presented Ethan Cloe with a certificate of appreciation for his hard work.

Kid's enjoying the Captain Kitchell's Never Never Land Day event in Pana.

- Organized volunteers to weed and water the trees and flowers downtown for the entire summer.
- Organized pick-ups for Dumpster Days on June 7th. Volunteers contributed over 100 hours of labor to make pickups around town.
- Volunteers helped erect a pergola at the Pana Pool to add shade on May 23rd.
- Pana Pride erected a new 'Welcome to Pana' sign. Pana Pride recognized their devoted volunteer on Facebook on June 9th for making the project happen.
- Pana Pride held the Captain Kitchell's Never Never Land Day with pirate-themed games for kids on July 27th. Proceeds went to fixing and improving the electricity at Kitchell Park.
- Pana Pride began soliciting submissions of photos on August 4th for the next jigsaw puzzle competition to be held on November 17th.
- On August 20th, Pana Pride announced that the Pana Market has donated $6,783.97 to local organizations through its semiannual markets, which are now in their third year.
- Offered Pana Pride t-shirts for sale on August 26th.
- In October, Pana Pride encouraged members interested in purchasing a display for the Kitchell Park's light display to take advantage of a 10% discount at Christmas Done Bright.
- Pana Pride volunteers set up Christmas light displays in November for A December to Remember.
- Organized the winter Pana Market on November 9th and raised $2,017 for the Pana Pride Demo Fund.
- A December to Remember was kicked off on November 30th.
- Pana Pride organized sleigh rides at Kitchell Park in December.

Paxton, pop. 4,450 (MAPPING 2023):

- Launched the Pitch In Paxton Facebook Group on February 21st to promote keeping parks and public spaces clean and deterring vandalism. Volunteers updated the Facebook page "Pitch in Paxton" weekly with posts highlighting the parks in Paxton. The posts included updates on the park conditions as well as other beautification projects going on in Paxton. Pitch In Paxton also hung posters at town parks to encourage good stewardship of the parks.

- Pitch in Paxton organized a roadside cleanup event on March 15th. Volunteers collected four 50 gallon bags of trash as well as several smaller bags.
- The Business Development Team, in addition to other interested parties, took a tour of manufacturer Colmac Coil on March 20th. The challenges in hiring, training, and retaining employees were discussed. The business employs approximately 150 people in Paxton. Ten people attended the tour.
- Organized a remote worker meet up on March 22nd. During the networking event, they also discussed resources available for remote workers such as businesses/organizations that welcome them, the downtown wi-fi network, and the possibility of a co-working space being created. Five remote workers attended.

Pittsfield, pop. 4,206 (MAPPING 2018):

- Offered Fall Pickin Days on the square in Pittsfield during the October 19th and 20th Pike County Fall Pickin Days.
- Picture Pittsfield organized the 6th annual Deer Santa Festival on December 8th on the courthouse lawn. The event included pony rides, sugar cookie decorating, a live nativity scene, visits with Santa, Christmas tree lighting, and more.

Rushville, pop. 3,005 (MAPPING 1991, 2001, 2013, 2020):

- The Rushville Fitness and Community Center (RFCC), a MAPPING project, continued providing value to the community:
  - Offering a wide variety of fitness classes and personal training.
  - Hosted an 8-week program on healthy living.
  - Organized youth and adult sports leagues.
  - Created member spotlights to honor supporters of RFCC.
  - Offered sports camps and clinics.
  - Offered a dive-in movie at the pool on February 16th.
  - Partnered with Culbertson Senior Life Solutions to offer a Valentines Day Bingo on February 13th.
  - Organized an afterschool program for kids from K–5th grade for $38 a week. The program includes transportation to the RFCC, snacks, homework help, and play.

Rushville Chamber of Commerce presenting the Business of the Year Award.

  - Partnered with Culbertson Memorial Hospital to host a guest speaker to talk about kidney disease and hypertension on March 26th.
  - Hosted Red Cross blood drives in March, May, and July.
  - Hosted a training by the National Weather Service on storm spotting.
  - Offered a summer camp for kids from K–5th grade from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm throughout the summer. They requested donations of supplies from the community.
  - Organized a community potluck luncheon and free plant potting workshop on May 23rd.
  - Coordinated volunteers to man the gates at the Schuyler County Fair June 28th – 30th as a fundraiser.
  - Organized a pickleball tournament on August 10th.
  - Partnered with AirMedCare to offer a discount to RFCC members.
  - Coordinated a fundraiser on September 11th to benefit the Rushville Fire Department.
  - Partnered with the Schuyler County Public Health Department to offer a lunch and presentation about challenging ageism and they offered some free health assessments on October 1st.
  - Hosted a guest speaker to talk about active aging and also offered participants a hand dip from the Green House Spa on October 10th.
  - RFCC offered a Halloween Bingo event on October 28th in partnership with Culbertson Senior Life Solutions.
  - Organized a vendor show on November 2nd with over 50 vendors. Attendees could donate a can of food or $3 – donations benefited the Help Center.
  - Organized a Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot Walk/Run 5 K. Participants were asked to pay $5 or donate canned food to enter the race.
  - Partnered with Toy for Tots of West Central Illinois to collect toys for kids for the holidays.

- The Rushville Area Chamber of Commerce (RACC), a MAPPING project, continued to provide services to the area including:
  - o Presented the Business of the Month awards throughout the year.
  - o Held voting for the 2023 Nonprofit and Business of the Year. Winners were announced on March 5th.
  - o Held a ribbon cutting for the Green House Spa.
  - o RACC organized a St. Patrick's Day Scavenger Hunt on March 16th.
  - o Organized a "Hop into Shops Kid's Business to Business Egg Scavenger Hunt" from March 25th to April 1st to promote shopping local.

Participants listen to a speaker on active aging at the RFCC.

  - o Hosted Sip, Snack, and Shop from April 19th to April 21st.
  - o Rushville Area Chamber of Commerce organized the 2024 Farmers Market every Friday from May to October. This year, they also added Saturday markets on the 3rd Saturdays of the month.
  - o Organized City-Wide Yard Sales the weekend of May 31st to June 2nd.
  - o RACC awarded Volunteer of the Quarter each quarter to a dedicated community volunteer.
  - o Organized a Yoga and Yogurt event on September 21st in partnership with the RFCC.
  - o Held a ribbon cutting on October 10th for the addition of kayak rentals at Schuy-Rush Lake.
  - o RACC coordinated a Zombie Crawl to promote shopping local. Shoppers who took a picture at a local business and tagged the Chamber were entered into a raffle for prizes.
  - o Organized a Merchant Halloween Walk on October 31st.
  - o Coordinated the Merry Time Festival vendor event November 29th – 30th on the Rushville City Square.
  - o Organized a Christmas Punch Card promotion from November 29th to December 20th.
  - o Coordinated the Merry Time Festival on November 29th with a vendor fair, Little Miss Christmas pageant, trolley rides, visits with Santa, and more.
  - o Organized a competition for businesses to decorate their windows for the holidays. The winner was announced on December 12th.

Stewardson, pop. 721 (MAPPING 2010):

- After eight years of planning and fundraising, the new playground equipment arrived in Stewardson on January 29th.
- WEIU visited Stewardson on March 1st to do a story about the playground project. The story aired on March 4th.
- Held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new playground with a farm theme on June 27th.
- Stewardson COWS hosted a plated lunch on June 30th as part of the Stewardson Sesquicentennial celebration.
- Rocking animals were added to the new play equipment at the park in mid-September.
- Stewardson COWS organized the 3rd Annual Christmas in a One Cow Town on December 7th. Event included a lighted parade, vendor fair, snowball launch, crafts, cookie walk, hot cocoa bar, live nativity, and more.

Stewardson's new barn-themed playground equpment. Photo courtesy of Ed Baumgarten.

Strasburg, pop. 531 (MAPPING 2007, 2017):

- Held a Seasoned Citizens meeting for those 55+ at the Strasburg Community Center with lunch on March 27th.
- Organized a Town-Wide Yard Sale and Flea Market at the Farm on May 25th.
- Strasburg Community Action Network (SCAN) sold strawberry shortcake at the Lions Club Annual Chicken Fry event on June 1st.

- SCAN sponsored an exotic petting zoo as part of the Strasburg Sesquicentennial Celebration on June 14th – 16th.
- In July, SCAN organized a dance camp for Little Hatchets Sports Club.
- On August 19th, SCAN presented a $5,000 check to the Village Board president as part of the match needed for the OSLAD Park Improvement Grant.
- On September 7th, SCAN held a bake sale fundraiser during the town-wide rummage sale and raised $1,692 for park renovations.
- SCAN coordinated town-wide rummage sales on September 7th.
- Hosted a Seasoned Citizens meeting on September 24th for community members over the age of 55.
- Partnered with the Village and the Lions Club to offer the Original CASS' Burrito fundraiser to raise funds to match a grant for park improvements on September 27th.
- Held a Seasoned Citizens meeting on August 28th with a potluck for people 55 and older.
- SCAN sponsored the Little Hatchets soccer team and flag football in the fall of 2024.
- Held a Seasoned Citizens potluck meal for community members over 55 on October 30th and November 20th.
- Organized the 17th annual Santa Brigade Breakfast and Market on November 9th.

Little Hatchets flag football practice in Strasburg.

Teutopolis, pop. 1,618 (MAPPING 2020):

- January 25th, Teutopolis for Tomorrow and the Teutopolis Civic Club both made donations to the Montrose and Teutopolis Fire Protection District for equipment. The money was from a raffle that raised $28,840.
- The Infrastructure Team identified sidewalks in need of replacement and submitted their recommendations to the Village Board. Once the work is completed, they will initiate an updated sidewalk survey.
- Hosted the 2nd Annual Pitch (card game) Tournament on February 4th.
- The Teutopolis Education and Childcare Team recognized outstanding teachers or district staff each month with a post on Facebook.
- Teutopolis for Tomorrow held their annual No Trash Bash April 7th – April 27th encouraging the community to pick up trash around town. Residents who posted a picture picking up trash were entered in a raffle to win Teutopolis merchandise.
- Assisted the Village with a grant for $600,000 that will be used to resurface Pearl Street from the CSX railroad to State Street.
- Assisted the Village to receive a grant for $1,000,000 to replace 10,000 linear feed of cast iron water mains in the community.
- To increase the Village's chance of receiving an IDOT Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program grant (ITEP) in the next grant cycle, the Village has purchased easements and is undergoing preliminary engineering work.
- The Village anticipates starting work on the IDOT Safe Routes to School grant project that will connect the grade school to Prairie View subdivision along Oak Street with sidewalks.
- The Village also approved an allocation of $50,000 to repair sidewalks the team identified as in need of repair/replacement.
- The County is providing the Village with some funds ($250,000) to do some resurfacing/construction. The Infrastructure Team will develop recommendations on where the funds could be best used.
- Teutopolis for Tomorrow organized a Golf Cart Movie Night on May 31st showing the movie Elemental. The event included food trucks, face painting, bounce houses, Teutopolis Fire Protection District trucks, and a petting zoo.
- Sponsored an annual Adopt-A-Planter program to bring flowers to the downtown.

The winners of the 2nd annual Pitch competition in Teutopolis.

- Teutopolis for Tomorrow organized Garage Band Night on August 17th. Sold t-shirts featuring the event in June to fund the event.
- It was announced on August 12th that thanks to sponsorship from Teutopolis for Tomorrow, the Effingham Imagination Library that provides free books for kids is now open to residents of Teutopolis.
- In September, the Beautification Team planted fall flowers in the containers downtown.
- Organized a Staff Appreciation Luncheon on October 17th for all School District #50 employees.
- Teutopolis for Tomorrow's Parks and Recreation Team held their 3rd Annual Trunk or Treat event on October 25th.
- The Infrastructure Team is working with the City on an update of the comprehensive plan. The City is working with the University of Illinois on the plan. Two members of the Infrastructure Team have volunteered to serve on the comprehensive plan steering committee.
- The city has been working on sidewalk replacements based on the Infrastructure Team's recommendations. Approximately $59,000 worth of sidewalk replacements have been completed. The team plans to complete surveys every two years to continue to maintain the sidewalks.
- The Infrastructure Team has created a street paving program that will select one street to be paved each year based on traffic counts from IDOT to prioritize high-traffic areas.

Walnut, pop. 1,311 (MAPPING 2017):

- Working on Walnut (WOW) organized Music on Main free concert series starting in May and continuing through July.
- Held a Children's Business Fair at the Liberty Square in June.
- Organized a 5k Run/Walk for ALS on July 6th.
- Began a fundraising raffle on May 1st in memory of Danielle Wallace to benefit the ALS Therapy Development Institute. The raffle drawing was held during the July 17th Concert on Main.
- In August, Walnut Main Street Revitalization announced a building for sale appraised for $25,000. To purchase the building, the buyer had to have a solid business plan and a commitment to benefiting the community.
- Organized the 7th Annual Chili Cook Off as part of the Fall Fest on Main on October 4th.
- The Main Street Revitalization Team announced in November that a new resale shop would be opening downtown in 2025.

Winchester, pop. 1,769 (MAPPING 1997, 2018):

- On February 10th, the WInchester Civic Group organized the annual Galentine's Day shopping event.
- Held the Winchester Spring Fling and Easter Egg Hunt on March 29th and 30th.
- Sponsored a Progressive Dinner on April 27th. The evening featured a stroll around the Square and a four-course dining experience.
- The 2024 Music in the Park Concert Series kicked off on June 6th and continued every Thursday through the end of July. Dinner was available for purchase.
- The Farmer's Market also kicked off Thursday evenings on the Square from from June 6th through the end of July.
- Organized the Spring Fling held June 6th – June 9th. Event included the farmers market, Music in the Park, specials offered at local businesses and restaurants, a cookout, swimming special at the Winchester Public Pool, and more.
- Coordinated the annual Glow Run on July 18th.
- Organized the annual Ladies Night Out on September 13th.
- In September, the Winchester Civic group received grants from Two Rivers Arts Council and the Illinois Arts Council to hire muralist, Maggie Tarr-Soer to design and paint a mural for Winchester on the Rural Cyclery building.
- Winchester Civic Group started promoting the Memory Tree program in September where community members can honor a loved one with a living Christmas tree on the square during the holidays that can then be planted by the family or donated to the city to be planted.
- The Winchester Civic Group donated a "Be Local" gift basket to the Dig Pink volleyball event held October 10th.
- The Winchester Civic Group put out a plea for donations on October 15th to fund the completion of the mural that was underway.

Artist Maggie Tar Soer working on a mural in Winchester.

- Winchester Civc Group organized the Harvest Fest on October 20th with food trucks, pumpkin painting, live music, and kids activities.
- Launched "Grow Where You Are Planted" t-shirts on October 22nd to fund the mural project.
- Organized Winchester Hometown Christmas on December 7th. Event included a vendor fair, Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast, specials at local businesses, cookie walk, visits with Santa, lighted parade, and more.

Windsor, pop. 1,079 (MAPPING 2011, 2022):

- Windsor Happenings Around Town (WHAT) organized an Easter Egg hunt for Jr/Sr High School students and the school faculty in late March.
- Partnered with the FAR 4-H Club to plant the pots around downtown in May. The FAR 4-H Club received a grant that covered the cost of the plants. The Beautification Team watered the flowers all summer.
- Hosted a movie in the park on July 26th featuring "Twister". Thirty-two people attended and $64 was raised through concession sales. Two other movies planned for June and August were canceled due to inclement weather.
- Held a booth selling desserts Windsor Harvest Picnic on August 15th and 16th. The event included live music, food, pageant, parade and more. The proceeds will go towards funding live reindeer for the Windsor Wonderland event.
- WHAT organized the Miss Windsor Pageant as part of the Harvest Picnic. The winners in three age categories were selected by the amount of money each girl raised during June and July. A total of $3,180 was raised, and funds will be used for community projects. The winners were announced during the Harvest Picnic on August 15th.
- WHAT held a open house on September 15th at the Sand Creek Church of Christ that is being renovated. The event included a presentation on the history of the church as well as refreshments. Approximately 150 people attended and the event raised $731.
- Organized a Trunk or Treat activity on October 25th. Local businesses, organizations, and churches offered treats and games out of the back of vehicles. Approximately 150 community members attended.
- Sold yard signs following the tragic loss of three young girls in a neighboring community. The proceeds of $1,000 were donated to the high school the girls attended on September 30th.
- Organized Windsor Wonderland on December 7th. The event included crafts, food, games, tree lighting, a lighted golf cart and ATV parade, visits with Santa and live Reindeer, and more.

Band playing during the Windsor Wonderland Festival.

Gisele Hamm
Program Director
MAPPING the Future of Your Community
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
520 Stipes Hall
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle
Macomb, IL 61455
Phone: 309-298-4019
Email: GF-Hamm@wiu.edu
www.iira.org

Linda Lee Blaine
Program Coordinator
MAPPING the Future of Your Community
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
525 Stipes Hall
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle
Macomb, IL 61455
Phone: 309-298-2647
Email: LL-Blaine@wiu.edu
www.iira.org