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JACKSON TRUSS COVERED BRIDGE



Effingham Daily News

2024 EDITION

Progress

Kindergarteners
in Dieterich



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ADVERTISER INDEX

Arrow Termite & Pest Control.....	55	Milano & Grunloh Engineers, LLC.....	51
Auctions by Schackmann Inc.	66	Neal Tire and Auto Service.....	92
Bank of Hillsboro.....	37	Neoga Package Liquor.....	86
Barlow Lock & Security, Inc.....	12-13	Newton Part Supply.....	91
Bauer Funeral Homes.....	21	Noah's Ark Pet Shoppe.....	84
Beecher City Foodliner.....	55	Pagel's Silver Dollar Lanes.....	99
Bluff Equipment.....	81	Personal Service Realty Inc.....	91
Bob's Discount Home Improvement Center.....	62	Probst Refrigeration & Heating, Inc.....	10-11
Brookstone Estates.....	72	Rauchs Jewelry & Gifts.....	91
Car Corral.....	61	RE/MAX Key Advantage.....	113
City of Neoga.....	90	Roy Schmidt Honda.....	14-15
Civil Design Inc.....	47	St. Michael Church & School.....	90
Clay County Hospital and Medical Clinics.....	24	Sarah Bush Lincoln Bonutti Clinic Orthopedics.....	1, 2, 3
Crossroads Bank.....	59	Sarah Bush Lincoln Bonutti Clinic Cardiology.....	95
Cross County Mall.....	54	Sarah Bush Lincoln Evergreen Clinic.....	64
Dan Hecht Chevrolet Toyota.....	73	Sarah Bush Lincoln Hand Center.....	22
Dent Coulson Elder Law.....	63	SDS Technology.....	83
Downtown Effingham Business Group.....	84	Schackmann Realty.....	66
Dust & Son Auto Supplies.....	85	Scott's Building Center.....	92
Effingham Builders Supply.....	40	Shelby Electric Cooperative.....	36
Effingham Computer Sales & Service.....	67	Siemer Milling Company.....	25
Effingham Convention & Visitors Bureau.....	45	Sigel Equipment Co Inc.....	88
Effingham County Chamber.....	6	Sigel Mutual Insurance Company.....	87
Effingham Performance Center.....	94	Slumberland Furniture.....	60
Effingham Prompt Care.....	99	Stevens Industries.....	78
Effingham Veterinary Clinic, LTD.....	7	Swengel-O'Dell Funeral Home.....	87
Fieldcrest Homes.....	65	T&S Auto Sales and Service.....	88
First Mid.....	103	Taylor Law Offices PC.....	79
First Neighbor Tax & Accounting.....	92	The Beanstalk Boutique/Humbled Soul Boutique.....	85
Goeckner Bros.....	114	The City of Effingham.....	21
Graham Family Foot & Ankle Care.....	54	The Fillin' Station Restaurant.....	92
IV Nutrition Effingham.....	100	The First National Bank of Brownstown.....	55
J. B. Esker & Sons.....	58	The Krusteaz Company.....	23
J & J Gaming.....	112	Tick Tock Energy.....	82
Johnson Funeral Home.....	44	Utz + Associates Architects.....	38
KC Summers.....	101	Varner & Rawlings Heating & Air Conditioning Inc.....	89
Kingery Printing.....	4-5	Village of Dieterich.....	70
Lake Sara Marina.....	80	Village of Greenup.....	93, 116
Land of Lincoln Credit Union.....	46	Wabash Communications.....	74-75
Lauren's Paws N Claws.....	86	Washington Savings Bank.....	77
Leading Lawyers.....	8-9	Weber Bros Equipment Inc.....	55
Lustig Custom Cabinets.....	98	Weber Optiks.....	39
Mediacom.....	41		



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Kingery Printing

Kingery Printing Company is an innovative, family-owned and operated company dedicated to the power and reliability of print. Built on the cornerstones of integrity, craftsmanship, and customer service, Kingery has been a trusted partner for over fifty-five years.

Kingery Printing was founded in 1968 by John and Dolores Kingery, in a rented building on the courthouse square in Effingham, Illinois. Since those humble beginnings, Kingery Printing has blazed new trails and established itself as an industry leader, now employing over 200 people across two locations in Effingham and Mattoon, Illinois.

“When my father started in 1968, the transition from hot lead to offset printing was just taking place,” said President Mike Kingery. “We entered the market with offset presses and we’ve been on the cutting edge ever since. Now, we’re pivoting again with new technology.” In early February of 2024, RICOH USA will begin installation of the RICOH Pro™ VC80000 high-speed digital inkjet web press in Kingery’s press room in Effingham. Kingery is proud to be the first book printer in the world to install this press.

At 50 feet long, the VC80000 incorporates



temperature-controlled inkjet heads, achieving a maximum resolution of 1,200 dpi (dots per inch). Each dot of ink is about 20 microns wide—or about one-fifth the size of a human hair. That means 1.44 million dots of ink are packed into a one-inch square and sprayed onto a giant sheet of paper moving at a speed of 492 feet per minute.

The VC80000 delivers speed and pre-

cision—with zero sacrifice in quality. The press is outfitted with scanners to constantly monitor print quality. It perpetually reviews each individual inkjet head, allowing for real-time automatic compensation for any nozzle issues. Color-to-color and front-to-back registration are immediately corrected.

“Printing is alive and well in Effingham,” Kingery said. “We were saddened to hear the news that Quad Graphics was closing their plants in Effingham. Printing has been a part of the fabric of Effingham and the surrounding area for decades. At one time in the 1980s, on a per-capita-basis, there was more printed product shipping from Effingham every day than anywhere else in the world.

“Kingery Printing and the other printers in the area are doing fine and will continue to push forward,” Kingery added. “We’re excited about investing in this technology. We’re the first book printer on the planet to do so.”

The RICOH press is only the first step in an overhaul of the production floor in Effingham’s KPC plant. A new cutter, perfect binder, and stitcher will be installed on the heels of the digital inkjet. One piece will be delivered every three weeks. Prep work began in late December, and after a few weeks of training this March, all new equipment will go live for jobs by early spring.

“We’re excited about this,” Kingery admitted. “This equipment will open new markets that we haven’t been in previously. This new press will set us up for the long-term,” Kingery explained. “Now we’ll be able to print a single book, or hundreds of thousands, and do so competitively. Our market will now be short-run books and direct mail.”

Kingery Printing’s roots are in commercial printing, specifically magazines. With its acquisition of United Graphics in late 2017, the pivot into the book market began. In six short years, books have climbed to roughly half of Kingery’s overall annual revenue.

“We are a printing family committed to our industry,” Kingery said. “We intend to remain viable long into the future with these kinds of investments. This new technology will change Kingery Printing forever.”



Effingham County Chamber

The primary objective of the Effingham County Chamber, as the foremost business organization in Effingham County, remains centered on delivering community and business leadership, as well as providing support for the requirements of both Chamber members and residents of the County.

Boasting 550 businesses representing a workforce of over 15,000 employees, the Chamber possesses the influence to attract the interest of companies seeking growth opportunities, government leaders aiming to comprehend local community needs, and community leaders in search of support to make Effingham County the ultimate place for living, working, and recreation.

Over the next year, the Chamber is dedicated to delivering outstanding resources and will persist in advocating for the well-being of both its members and the residents of Effingham County.

As part of its sustained dedication, the Chamber will carry on offering programs such as the 2024 Legal Updates for Employers, the Women in Business Workshop, a Succession Planning Symposium, and Expungement Day. Local businesses are encouraged to participate in Manufacturing & Trade/Skills Day to emphasize the enduring importance of these industries in our community.

The expansion of Chamber programs and services reflects a continuous effort to address the evolving needs of our community. Despite the growth, the mission remains unchanged – to advocate for business needs and stimulate regional prosperity.



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CAE, MBA, IOM
President & CEO



Becky Brown, NFPC
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Jeff Fritchtnitch, Ed. S.
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These **LEADING LAWYERS** have been recommended by their peers to be among the **TOP LAWYERS** in Illinois.

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Elizabeth Eberspacher Nohren Adoption/Reproductive Technology; Close/Private Held Business; Family; ADR: Family; Trust/Will/Estate	Dove & Dove	Shelbyville	217.774.2137
R. Samuel Postlewait Agriculture; Closely/Private Held Business; Commercial Litigation; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate	Hughes Tenney Postlewait Coale LLC	Decatur	217.428.5383
James D. Cottrell Agriculture; Closely/Private Held Business; Land Use/Zoning/Condemnation; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate	James D. Cottrell Law Office PC	Champaign	217.693.4905
Larry A. Apfelbaum Workers' Compensation	Kanoski Bresney	Champaign/Decatur	217.356.1570
Todd A. Bresney Personal Injury: General	Kanoski Bresney	Champaign/Decatur	217.356.1520
William J. Harrington Personal Injury: General	Kanoski Bresney	Champaign/Decatur	217.356.1570
Robert M. Javoronok Jr. Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation	Kanoski Bresney	Champaign/Decatur	217.356.1570
Kathy A. Olivero Workers' Compensation	Kanoski Bresney	Champaign/Decatur	217.356.1570
John J. Waldman Workers' Compensation	Kanoski Bresney	Champaign/Decatur	217.356.1570
Jack Kiley Civil Appellate; Commercial Litigation; Personal Injury Defense: General; Personal Injury: General	Kiley Klein Ltd	Decatur	217.428.0948
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Kevin M. Toth Commercial Litigation; Medical Malpractice Defense; Professional Malpractice Defense	Livingston Barger Brandt & Schroeder LLP	Champaign	217.351.7479
Joseph R. Wetzel Commercial Litigation; Medical Malpractice Defense; Personal Injury Defense: General	Livingston Barger Brandt & Schroeder LLP	Champaign	217.351.7479
Keith W. Casteel Agriculture; Banking/Financial Institutions; Environmental; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate	Samuels Miller Schroeder Jackson & Sly LLP	Decatur	217.429.4325
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Mark E. Jackson Adoption/Reproductive Technology; Medical Malpractice Defense; Personal Injury Defense: General; Products Liability Defense; Workers' Compensation Defense	Samuels Miller Schroeder Jackson & Sly LLP	Decatur	217.429.4325
Craig W. Runyon Banking/Financial Institutions; Creditor Rights/Commercial Collections; Real Estate: Commercial; Real Estate: Residential; Trust/Will/Estate	Samuels Miller Schroeder Jackson & Sly LLP	Decatur	217.429.4325
Darrell A. Woolums Agriculture; Banking/Financial Institutions; Governmental/Municipal/Lobbying/Administrative; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate	Samuels Miller Schroeder Jackson & Sly LLP	Decatur	217.429.4325
Nicholas M. Schiro Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation	Schiro & Themer	Danville	217.443.1721



Rowan E. Themer Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation	Schiro & Themer	Champaign	217.607.0750
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William A. Peithmann Agriculture; Real Estate: Commercial; Real Estate: Residential; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate	The Peithmann Law Office	Mahomet	217.586.6102
Denise Knipp Bates Elder; Real Estate: Residential	Thomas Mamer LLP	Champaign	217.351.1500
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Richard R. Harden Medical Malpractice Defense; Personal Injury Defense: General	Thomas Mamer LLP	Champaign	217.351.1500
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Lott H. Thomas Trust/Will/Estate	Thomas Mamer LLP	Champaign	217.351.1500
John T. Wozniak Trust/Will/Estate	Wozniak & Associates	Urbana	217.367.1647

These **EMERGING LAWYERS** have been identified by their peers to be among the **TOP LAWYERS** in Illinois who are 40 years of age or younger OR who have been admitted to the practice of law for 10 or fewer years.

Kaylee I. Boehm Adoption/Reproductive Technology; Family	Dove & Dove	Shelbyville	217.774.2137
Gina Couri-Cyphers Personal Injury: General	Kanoski Bresney	Champaign/Decatur	217.356.1570
Jordan T. Klein Closely/Private Held Business; Government/Municipal/Lobbying/Administrative; Personal Injury Defense: General	Kiley Klein Ltd	Decatur	217.428.0948
Charles W. Sprague Medical Malpractice Defense	Livingston Barger Brandt & Schroeder LLP	Champaign	217.351.7479
Nathan T. Kolb Civil Appellate; Insurance/Insurance Coverage/Reinsurance; Medical Malpractice Defense; Personal Injury Defense: General	Thomas Mamer LLP	Champaign	217.351.1500

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Family-operated Barlow Lock and Security, Inc. offers companies and homeowners peace of mind through a broad array of security and surveillance systems.

“The business was started over five decades ago in Dieterich by my father, Floyd,” said Cathy Bierman, who currently runs the business. “We’ve been in our current location in Effingham for 20 years.” Bierman’s sons Zak and Kurt work in the shop as well.

The business has grown over the years with an emphasis on security and surveillance systems. An incident with the company’s founder

actually led to the creation of the business.

“Floyd ran an appliance store in Dieterich,” said Cathy. “Someone broke into the business, so he installed his first security system in that business.”

The company has expanded with technology, like remote view camera systems.

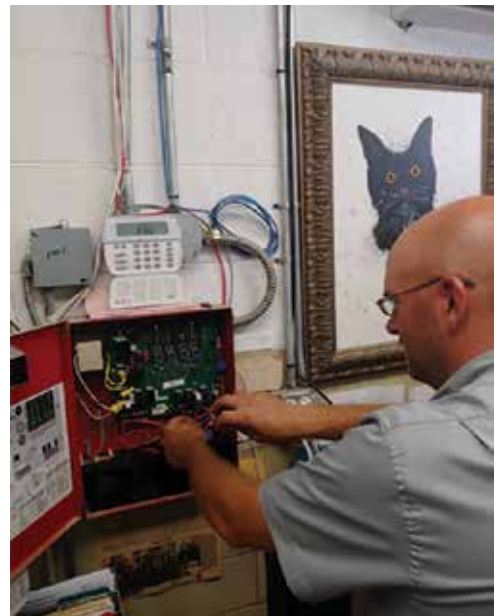
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Roy Schmidt Honda



Roy Schmidt and the employees of Roy Schmidt Honda, are welcoming 2024 with much excitement! The dealership is celebrating the beginning of 10 years in business as your local Honda dealer in Effingham! Roy and all the employees extend their gratitude for the local support of the dealership in sales, parts, and service!

Roy Schmidt Honda is excited in showcasing the awesome new 2024 vehicles arriving this year, including the all new 2024 Honda Prologue, Honda's first all-electric SUV. The Honda Prologue will be a stylish, sporty, and spacious SUV with an anticipated EPA range rating of 300 miles. It will include DC fast charging capability and a rugged design. The Honda Prologue has the size and ground clearance that puts it in the midsize SUV class! The Prologue will offer a single motor (front wheel drive) and a dual-motor (all-wheel drive) with three trim levels, EX, Touring, and Elite. Standard equipment that you will be excited to find on the Prologue include the latest digital services technology, features with Google built-in, wireless Apple CarPlay, and Android Auto compatibility. Honda always gives top priority to safety and the Prologue will not disappoint, as it provides standard features of Honda sensing suite of safety and driver-assistive technologies, including Honda's first applications of Rear Cross Traffic Braking, Blind Zone Steering Assist and Rear Pedestrian Alert! Honda's first all-electric SUV will be available nationwide with a MSRP to start in the upper \$40,000's. Roy Schmidt Honda's award winning sales team will be ready to provide you with the best sales experience in the area! Please make sure to stop by and take a look at this awesome new Honda Prologue EV, to be available soon.

Roy Schmidt Honda proudly displays two hybrid vehicles, the Honda Accord and Honda CRV. If you haven't driven these vehicles, please make sure to include them

when you are searching for your next new vehicle! Of course, don't forget the Pilot and Odyssey that provide comfort and space, for families needing the extra room. If you like a sporty drive, come by and take the Honda Civic for a spin! The Civic will give customers great value, sportiness, technology, and of course, safety. We can't forget to mention the Honda Ridgeline and the versatility this pickup has! Honda vehicles check all of the boxes!!!

Honda takes home more 2024 Car and Driver 10Best Awards than any other brand! Honda has earned three 2024 Car and Driver 10Best awards for the second consecutive year, more than any other brand, with the Honda Civic and Accord selected to the 10Best cars list and the Honda CR-V named to the 10Best SUV list. The Honda Accord

is America's best-selling car over the last five decades and most awarded vehicle in Car and Driver 10Best history by a wide margin. It has made the prestigious list an incredible 38 times!

Roy Schmidt Honda invites you to the dealership to test drive a new Honda and experience why Honda has claimed these awards! Roy Schmidt Honda not only provides quality vehicles, but backs up each sale by their award winning service and parts team, that provides outstanding service to their many customers of 10 years. Roy and his employees express their continued gratitude to their customers past and present, and are looking forward to 2024 while celebrating 10 years as your Honda dealer!



First row left to right: Clint Antrim, Jody Watts, Karen Doty, Roy Schmidt, Ashley Baumgarten, Twilla Ruholl, Jeff Parkison, Derek Pointivent

Second Row left to right: Landon Vickery, Jason Payne, Seth Yager, Doug Mette, Mark Schmidt, Shannon Roberts, Tyler Lindsay, Matt Rogers

Third Row left to right: Greg Heuerman, Brodie Freeman, John Kortte, Mike Wilson, Brian Niebrugge, Brent Abbott, Joe Light, Aaron Beard

Roy Schmidt Honda

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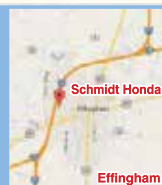


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Progress

AN EFFINGHAM DAILY NEWS PUBLICATION

2024 EDITION

FEATURE STORY

18 Growing Pains



Photo by Nick Taylor

Andes Health Mart Pharmacy owner Chip Andes stands in front of his pharmacy on Fayette Avenue in Effingham in January as construction on the street continues.

Departments

17
From the editor

17
Staff bios: Meet the writers

Features

18
Growing pains

26
New Chamber members

42
Pastor on a mission to revitalize Neoga

48
Wright Family Center opening soon in Dieterich

52
Ribbon-cuttings

56
Fundraising efforts continue for Effingham Showcase Center

68
Room to grow in Dieterich schools

76
Effingham County school officials discuss their plans

96
Mapping the path to progress in Montrose

102
Giving residents a lift

104
Property transfers

PUBLISHER

Amy Winter

amy.winter@effinghamdailynews.com

EDITOR

Jeff Long

jeff.long@effinghamdailynews.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Cathy Griffith

cathy.griffith@effinghamdailynews.com

ART DIRECTOR

Natalie Reidford

CONTRIBUTOR

Nick Taylor

SALES SUPERVISOR

Jody Hardiek

jody.hardiek@effinghamdailynews.com

ADVERTISING SALES CONSULTANTS

advertising@effinghamdailynews.com

DeeAnn Bauguss

Julie Harkins

CONTACT US

(217) 347-7151

E-MAIL

news@effinghamdailynews.com

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ON THE COVER

Kindergarteners in Dieterich School District enjoy extra space in one of their new classrooms that are part of a school construction project.

Photo provided

From the Editor



There are sometimes growing pains with progress. For the past few months, and looking ahead for some time, the construction on Fayette Avenue in Effingham is a prime example.

The \$21 million Illinois Department of Transportation project is expected to continue into 2026.

Nick Taylor reports in this edition of Progress that the overall aim of the project is to reduce congestion on the busy and sometimes dangerous roadway. Despite the challenges they're facing, Fayette Avenue business owners have been rolling with the punches as they plan to relocate to allow for the expansion of the road, which is used by approximately 19,000 drivers on a daily basis.

Chip Andes, the owner of Andes Health Mart Pharmacy, is grappling with those growing pains. He's relocating the store – out of the way of progress. In the end, he thinks he'll benefit.

"I guess I'm taking one for the team, with the team being Effingham, because it's well known that this highway is too narrow, dangerous and certainly needed improvement," Andes said.

Elsewhere, we explore projects across our community that are less painful.

We welcome the opening in late February of the \$5 million Wright Family Center in Dieterich. Located on South Pine Street, it includes a full-sized basketball court with two cross-courts, three pickleball courts, a volleyball court, a 24-hour fitness center with state-of-the-art equipment, a two-lane walking track and a badminton court. The building is also home to a new day care and three community rooms.

"It's such a long time coming, but it feels remarkable," said Wright Family Center Director Traci Bruns. "I'm just so excited for the community to have this space."

Meanwhile, the group behind the Effingham Showcase Center is gearing up its efforts to raise the \$18 million needed for construction of a building that will house softball, soccer, baseball and volleyball.

There could also be drone races, robot wars and other things for the youth to get involved in. And possibly events such as car shows, boat shows and rodeos.

Cathy Griffith reports that kindergarteners in Dieterich are excited to come to school each day now that they have new classrooms. The new kindergarten wing is part of a facilities expansion project at the pre-K-12 building that began in March last year and is nearing completion.

The expansion is to meet the needs of growing enrollment, which has increased about 30% in the past 12 years climbing to 607 students this school year.

The growth has mainly been in primary grades, where enrollment has consistently averaged upper 40s to lower 50s, swelling class sizes, especially

for the district's kindergarten level. During the first semester of this school year, the district had two kindergarten sections, with 27 students in one and 26 in the other.

Cathy also looks at how the village of Montrose has been on a path to progress ever since it received a \$600,000 parks grant last year. Montrose is using the grant to improve its campground and lake recreation area, which attracts people from all over the area.

Village President Steve Browning hopes to add another attraction to the lake — a wedding venue — with an observation deck for couples to hold their weddings that is being funded by the grant. The grant also will allow the village to install new playground equipment, restroom facilities, shower house for campers and boat ramp.

The momentum the grant has spurred has village officials embarking on a program to create a comprehensive plan for the village – a strategic visioning and planning process in which residents provide input to create that plan.

Elsewhere in the county, ETrax has seen steady ridership since it began operating in July. It's similar to a bus route in large cities, but there is one difference. Between the designated stops, buses may deviate up to one-quarter of a mile from the established route to pick up or drop off riders. Deviations must be prescheduled, and only one is allowed per loop. The scheduled stops include medical centers, stores, apartments and a travel center. A boarding pass is \$1, and a monthly pass is \$35.

Central Illinois Public Transit Program Director Beth Beck-Marts said the service has been averaging about 190 to 195 rides a month, with December seeing the most significant increase — 220 rides — despite operating fewer days because of the holidays.

"I think it's slowly catching on. It seems like all of our stops are doing well," said Beck-Marts, adding Walmart and Kirby Foods are popular stops.

Effingham County officials would like to eventually add a route to serve the city's southern portion. But Beck-Marts said it's too soon to tell if such a route is warranted.

Those stories and more fill this edition of Progress, spotlighting the bright future ahead for our community.

Jeff Long
Editor

Jeff Long is the editor of the Effingham Daily News. He is a 1987 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has worked for newspapers in England, Pennsylvania and Virginia. For 13 years, he was a reporter and later an editor at the Chicago Tribune. A past president and current board member of the Illinois Associated Press Media Editors, he lives in Altamont with his wife, Karen.

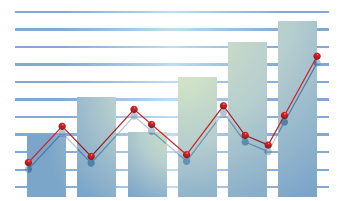
Staff Bios



Cathy Griffith is news editor of the Effingham Daily News. She is a 1998 graduate of Eastern Illinois University with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism. She has worked at the Daily News for 22 years in news and magazine publications. She is a lifelong resident of Effingham, where she resides with her husband, Tim, and daughter, Leah.



Nick Taylor covers Effingham County, Altamont, Teutopolis and Dieterich for the Effingham Daily News. He graduated from Butler University in 2021 with a bachelor's degree in philosophy. As the son of two Indiana attorneys, he worked as a paralegal assistant at Taylor Law Firm in his home state before moving to Effingham in the summer of 2022 to begin a career in journalism.



GROWING PAINS

Fayette Avenue business owners prepare to relocate amid ongoing construction

Story and photos by Nick Taylor

The ongoing construction on Fayette Avenue in Effingham has been an inconvenience for many residents since it began in May of 2023. Several local business owners are among those hit the hardest by the approximately \$21 million Illinois Department of Transportation project, which is expected to continue into 2026.

In total, the project will cost the city of Effingham approximately \$1.2 million. This includes \$400,200 in construction costs and

\$825,000 to cover the cost of relocating utilities. The city plans to cover these costs with its Triangle Business District and Main TIF funds.

The overall aim of the project is to reduce congestion on the busy and sometimes dangerous roadway.

Despite the challenges they're facing, Fayette Avenue business owners have been rolling with the punches as they plan to relocate to allow for the expansion of the road which is used by approximately 19,000 drivers on a daily basis.

The first phase of the project includes the widening and reconstruction of Fayette Avenue from Raney to Walnut streets, and this will continue from Banker to Long streets for the next phase of the project, which is expected to begin next year.

Some homes and businesses along Fayette Avenue have already been torn down to make way for the project, and several other local

Nirav Patel, the owner of A1 Liquors on Fayette Avenue in Effingham, stands behind the counter of his liquor store in January. His business is one of several being relocated due to the ongoing construction.





Andes Health Mart Pharmacy owner Chip Andes stands in front of his pharmacy on Fayette Avenue in Effingham in January as construction on the street continues.

businesses are planning to relocate in preparation for more demolitions.

Among the business owners grappling with the project is Chip Andes, the owner of Andes Health Mart Pharmacy, which is located within the section of Fayette Avenue included in the first phase of construction.

The store has been at the same location since opening in 1988. Aside from some minor expansions, the building has stayed relatively the same.

“It’s always been here,” Andes said.

Andes said he remembers when discussions about expanding Fayette Avenue began roughly 50 years ago, but he never anticipated the massive size of the project. He also noted that he didn’t think the state of Illinois would have enough funds to pay for the project, leading him to believe it was nothing more than a dream.

He thinks the scope of the project surprised the owners of other businesses in the area who are also having to relocate.

“I was just expecting four feet from each side, making nice 12-foot lanes,” Andes said. “I was surprised when they decided to make it five lanes and a bike path and that sort of thing. The scope of the project certainly fooled a lot of people.”

It wasn’t until about 15 years ago that Andes began to realize he would have to eventually relocate his store.

“I don’t like it,” Andes said. “Personally, I hate it. I dread it. I don’t wanna do it.”

Despite the difficulties he knows will come with relocating the pharmacy, Andes believes the expansion of the road is necessary for the overall betterment of the city.

“But then the other side of the coin is, and my attitude on it is, ‘Well, I guess I’m taking one for the team,’ with the team being Effingham because it’s well known that this highway is too narrow, dangerous and certainly needed improvement,” Andes said.

Since construction on Fayette Avenue began, fewer cars are able to line up in the pharmacy’s drive-thru, there’s been more congestion in the area and customers have had to access the store by walking across the drive-thru because there is no longer any front door parking.

“It’s really kind of a dangerous situation,” Andes said.

Also since the start of the construction, Andes has noticed a decrease in the number of impulse purchases being made at the store, and some elderly customers have been coming to the store less frequently.

“It has had an impact,” Andes said. “There’s some old folks that were told by their children, ‘You do not drive on Fayette anymore,’ ever since they started this project.”

Despite these issues, Andes said IDOT workers have been doing their best to ensure that the construction doesn’t completely hinder business at the pharmacy.

“The rank-and-file workers and people at IDOT have been very accommodating,” Andes said. “We’ve had an entrance in here, some way, some form all along.”

Although he received some money from the state of Illinois as part of a settlement, Andes said this will only cover about 7% of the total cost of constructing a new building and relocating his pharmacy to a property located on West Edgar Avenue, just south of his current building.

“I don’t think I got reimbursed fairly for what they did,” he said.



A1 Liquors on Fayette Avenue in Effingham is located along a section of the street that will be expanded as the second phase of the Fayette Avenue construction project. The store will have to be relocated before its demolition which is expected to take place in 2025.

“I can conservatively say that it’s going to be \$2 million out of my pocket.”

In addition to the financial burden of having to relocate, Andes had to evict his own daughter, who was among those living on the residential properties behind the pharmacy, which had to be demolished to make way for the new building.

Additionally, Andes said some of the residents in the area are against plans to move the pharmacy, and several of these residents spoke out against his request to rezone the property during an Effing-

ham Plan Commission meeting in November. Some cited concerns over the traffic it could bring.

“They weren’t happy,” Andes said.

Andes is also worried about what the demolition of some of the older homes on Fayette Avenue means for the area’s ongoing housing shortage and the low-moderate income residents who lived in them.

“It kind of made me sad,” Andes said.

As Andes and his employees wait for their new building to be constructed, they will be taking inventory of everything at the store’s current location and doing everything else necessary to ensure that they are prepared for the transition.

“We’re going to be working and working hard,” Andes said. “I would hope that we can get it done by the end of October, maybe sooner. The design stage is almost done.”

It will likely take some time for Andes to offset the cost of the relocation project, but he believes the new and improved facility could attract more business in the long run.

Meanwhile, another Fayette Avenue business, A1 Liquors, is preparing for a relocation of its own because it’s in the path of the second phase of the project.

However, similar to Andes’ new pharmacy, customers won’t have to look very hard to find the store’s new location. It will be built directly across the street from the current location.

“We’re hoping to break ground this spring or early summer,” said the liquor store’s owner, Nirav Patel.

According to Patel, the new building will be “bigger and cleaner,” but he wasn’t able to get permission from the city to move forward with all of his initial plans for the new location.

“We originally had planned to have a three-level building with a bar and a rooftop, but the city turned that down,” Patel said.

He said the city’s primary reason for rejecting the original plans was because of a concern that there wouldn’t be enough parking to accommodate visitors.

“It’s all about parking, but I feel like we have plenty of parking after 5 o’clock downtown,” Patel said.

Although the construction on Fayette Avenue has prevented vehicles from parking in front of Andes Health Mart Pharmacy, the owner of the store, Chip Andes, said workers with the Illinois Department of Transportation have made sure vehicles are able to access the pharmacy.





Directly across the street from the current A1 Liquors location on Fayette Avenue is where the store will be relocated once a new building is constructed. The building the store is currently in will eventually be demolished.

In addition to being larger, the new building will have three different entrances and an improved drive-thru, which Patel believes will allow for a “better flow” of customers in and out of the store.

“It’s going to have a wine room, a walk-in humidor,” Patel said.

Since 2006, Patel’s family has owned the property where the store is currently located, and before being transformed into a liquor store in March of 2011, a gas station was operated there.

Like just about everyone caught up in the Fayette reconstruction project, Patel has little to no control over the situation, but he said he’s been in close contact with the state of Illinois as he continues to prepare for the demolition of the store in 2025.

“It’s a difficult thing,” Patel said.

However, he’s excited to move his business into a brand new facility after spending more than a decade in the same building.

“The drive-thru’s always tight,” Patel said. “I guess it’s a sad thing to see it go, but yet I’m excited for new opportunities that come about. We don’t really have a whole lot of choice, but it’s got to be ready within early 2025.”

While the cost of constructing the new building has yet to be determined, Patel said he expects the building to be anywhere from 7,000 to 8,500 square feet in size with each square foot costing between \$300 and \$350.

“It could be higher; it could be lower,” Patel said. “It just depends on what the economy does and how it rolls.”

In the meantime, Patel said he and his

employees will try to be as “active and proactive” as possible to ensure that they are able to meet the relocation deadline.

“We really don’t have a whole lot of time to mess around,” he said.



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President Rick Siemer called it “the GOAT wheat crop!”

Prices were down from the previous year’s record highs, but markets still gave ample opportunity for a rewarding result. While double crop soybean yields were affected by late summer dryness, the total per acre revenue of wheat plus beans was competitive with a very good corn crop. Results were similar around Siemer’s other mill locations in western Kentucky and southeastern Indiana.

Siemer Milling is proud that it is a business that brings much more money to the area than it takes away. Buying 28 million bushels of locally-grown wheat at our three locations means annual revenue to area growers of more than \$175 million.

Add to that millions of dollars in wages, plus what they spend on locally-provided supplies and services. Most of Siemer’s revenue comes from customers around the country, who sell their products to consumers around the world.

In addition to being the major market for the areas around its mills, Siemer Milling makes significant investments in research to improve soft wheat performance. For the past five years, major financial support has been provided to the program at the University of Kentucky, with the primary research facility at Princeton, KY.

For the next five years, similar amounts will be provided to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Both Illinois and Kentucky are major soft wheat-producing states.

Kentucky was a pioneer in developing an intensive cultivation system that combines with improved genetics to achieve a high-value wheat crop. Siemer has actively helped to share that knowledge and practice in other parts of the soft wheat-growing region.

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New Chamber Members

The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new members in 2023.

▶▶ **A Notch Above**, a moving and home preparation company, has joined the Effingham County Chamber. Owned by Becky Laue, A Notch Above assists with home sale preparations, including sorting and packaging items, sorting unwanted items, transporting and arranging items for auction, top-to-bottom cleaning (inside and outside), power washing, yard maintenance and landscaping, home repairs and decking and complete preparation for estate sales. From left, back row, are Chamber Ambassadors Dan Capes, Randy Johnson and Steve Will; front row, Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner, Owner Becky Laue, Chamber Board Member Kara Wade, Marketing Representative Lexie Limes, Chamber Ambassadors Debbie Womack and Dan Patton, and Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Behold Aesthetics and Wellness Center**, located at 401 S Banker Street, Suite C in Effingham, with a ribbon-cutting. Behold Aesthetics and Wellness Center is a medical spa offering a comprehensive menu of services including injectables, laser services treating a variety of issues such as hair removal, vascular, skin rejuvenation and tattoo removal; medical-grade skincare, facials, chemical peels, IV hydration and vitamin injections. Pictured, front row, from left, are Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner; Trisha Schumer RN, BSN; Brittany Wermert RN, BSN; Adrian Nowitzke, CRNA, MSN, APRN; Cheyenne Casolari, LE; Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart; Chamber Ambassadors Steve Will and Debbie Womack. Back row, from left, are Amber Willhour, Receptionist; Ana Meyer RN, BSN; Chamber Ambassador Lisa Wilson; Mandy Watson, Receptionist; Effingham City Administrator Steve Miller and Chamber Ambassador Michael Wall.

The Effingham County Chamber welcomed **Murfee & Weishaar Insurance Agency** as one of its newest members. Murfee & Weishaar provides commercial, agriculture and personal insurance services to Effingham and the surrounding area. "We are excited to join forces with the Effingham County Chamber," said Brad Weishaar, President of Murfee & Weishaar Insurance. Vice President Matt Murfee said, "Our team is eager to connect with fellow business professionals and contribute to the growth and prosperity of our community." Back row, from left, are Chamber Ambassadors Randy Jones and Michael Wall; front row, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Chamber Ambassadors Deborah Womack and Tonya Siner, President Brad Weishaar, Director of Operations Jesse Patnaude, Vice President Matt Murfee and Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown. ►►



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Down Right Media**. The company's services include marketing/advertising, graphic arts, secretarial services and event planning. Founded by Michelle Hanley, an entrepreneur and owner, the company delivers personalized and hands-on services that cater to the unique needs of each client. "Our belief in the power of creativity and collaboration is at the heart of Down Right Media," said Michelle. "We are dedicated to providing exceptional solutions that drive growth and success for our clients." Her team includes two highly skilled secretarial professionals. The name of the company, which officially commenced operation on July 17, is inspired by Michelle's son, Connor, who has Down Syndrome, and Michelle's daughters Chloe and Claire were involved in the company's logo design. From left are Chamber Director of Marketing & Communications Nicole Morrison, Michelle Hanley and Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart.

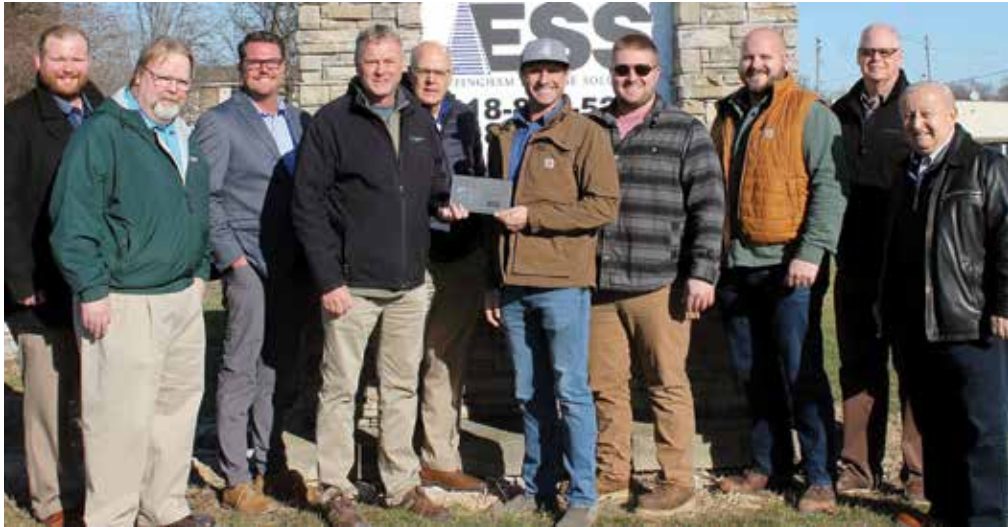


▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed **Blissful Bites** as one of its newest members. Founded in 2018 during Becca Webster's senior year of high school while participating in the Effingham County CEO program, Blissful Bites has grown into a thriving plant-based culinary venture with a commitment to health-conscious and delicious offerings. With an inherent passion for nutrition and food science, she crafted a recipe that birthed her signature plant-based Bliss Bite. With escalating demand, she transitioned into running Blissful Bites full time. While Blissful Bites is located in downtown Effingham, Webster also caters to an online customer base and serves a network of wholesalers. The Blissful Bites menu includes vegan and gluten-free bites, cinnamon rolls, cheesecakes and coffee. From left, back row, are Chamber Ambassadors Michael Wall, Lisa Cornell, Steve Will, Dan Capes and Randy Jones; front row, Membership Director Becky Brown, Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner, Rebecca Webster and Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart.



◀◀ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Air Evac Lifeteam**. Established in 1985 by a group of citizens in West Plains, Missouri, Air Evac Lifeteam is the leading air medical service in the United States, conducting its operations through more than 150 mutually supporting air medical bases across 18 states. Air Evac Lifeteam is committed to providing increased access to emergency trauma care to rural Americans. Approximately 90% of Air Evac's patient transports originate from a rural area as defined by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. From left, back row, are Chamber Ambassador Lisa Wilson, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Base Line Pilot Will Deem, Chamber Ambassador Michael Wall; front row, Flight Nurse Connor Stitch, Chamber Ambassadors Marty Stock, Jerry Jansen and Tonya Siner, Program Director AE28 & AE150 Thomas Allen and Chamber Ambassador Steve Will.

The Effingham County Chamber welcomed **Mediacom Business** as one of its newest members. With a foundation dating back to 1995, Mediacom Business' services encompasses internet, telephone and television solutions, catering to both residential and commercial needs. Additionally, the company offers digital home services and XPERT support plans. Initiatives such as Connect2Compete, World Class Scholars scholarships, the September 11 Memorial Fund, Entrepreneur of Tomorrow Awards, community grants and events like Say Yes to the Prom exemplify the company's dedication to creating a lasting impact. The company also offers opportunities to veterans, acknowledging their skills and dedication to service. From left are Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown, Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner, Mediacom Business Account Executive Kara Traxler, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, and Chamber Ambassador Debbie Womack. ▶▶



◀◀ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Effingham Storage Solutions**, a provider of self-storage solutions. Effingham Storage Solutions is owned by Darren, Zach, Cole and Mason Bailey, and offers state-of-the-art video surveillance and coded gate entry. The facility provides indoor parking for RVs, cars, boats and various other vehicles, offering 24-hour access. Effingham Storage Solutions has two locations — 709 West Wabash and 710 Linden. It also has commercial storage locations in Effingham at 511 Vulcan Drive and 2301 South Banker Street. From left are Chamber Ambassadors Russ Runde, Dan Capes, Jay Buehnerkemper, Steve Will and Michael Wall, Owner/Manager Zach Bailey, Cole Bailey, Mason Bailey, Chamber Ambassadors Randy Jones and Dan Patton.

The Effingham County Chamber welcomed the **Heart Theatre** as a new member. Located in downtown Effingham, The Heart Theatre is an art deco-style theater built in 1939. The Heart opened in January 1940 and operated for decades under the ownership of Mike Stephens. It remained in operation until 2002, continuing for a few additional years until ultimately shutting its doors in 2007. After years of being left to the elements, it was purchased by former Effingham native Tad Sligar and underwent many outdoor repairs throughout the years until he listed the property for sale in 2017-18. Amy Van Bergen purchased the Heart in the summer of 2022. Van Bergen was born in Effingham and owned property here until the 1990s. She is now a retired nonprofit executive living in Florida. After purchasing it, she immediately began working on what to do with the Effingham County landmark. A market feasibility study and community survey were done to help determine the future use of the building. In April, The Heart Theatre was officially recognized and received approval to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was specifically nominated and approved based on its historic Art Moderne art deco architecture style. Van Bergen hopes for "The Heart to be revived and reestablished as an anchor in Downtown Effingham for all to enjoy again." ▼▼



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Invenergy**, an Illinois-based company that develops, owns and operates large-scale renewable and other clean energy generation and storage facilities worldwide, including 20 projects in 17 counties across the state. Locally, Invenergy Transmission is the owner of the Grain Belt Express transmission line, a long-distance power line that is estimated to deliver over \$3 billion in energy cost savings to Illinois energy consumers. The company has 660-plus Illinois-based employees, with a local development office for Grain Belt Express located in Effingham. Following the recent final regulatory approvals for Grain Belt Express in Missouri and Illinois, the company is now working with landowners across nine Illinois counties to lease land, including in Shelby and Clark counties. Invenergy delivers affordable, clean power to families and businesses and supporting workers, landowners and governments through new revenue. The company has successfully developed 190 projects totaling more than 30,100 megawatts of energy to meet the needs of customers across Illinois and the world. More information about Invenergy's local Grain Belt Express project can be found online at GrainBeltExpress.com. From left are Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Illinois Project Representative Robert Scott, Community Engagement Consultant James Gilreath, Vice President of Transmission Development Brad Pnazek and Community Engagement Consultant Deb Gilreath.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Sport Designs and Graphics** in Effingham. Sport Designs and Graphics is a provider of decorating services to the athletic and sports apparel market. They offer business to business services for many of the top team dealers throughout the United States. Sport Designs and Graphics offers a variety of services, including custom screen printing, embroidery, digital fusion and vinyl CAD, and Bag & Tag. Pictured with President Robert Smothers and Vice Presidents Christi Pruett, Angi McDaniel and Lisa Berra are team members from screen printing, embroidery, receiving, vinyl, art, operations, finishing and sales.

The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Black Label Branding LLC**. Headquartered in Effingham, Black Label Branding LLC serves clients nationwide. Owner Lance Garza and the Black Label Branding team specialize in helping businesses create, implement and measure effective marketing strategies. The team provides a comprehensive marketing plan tailored to help you maximize your budget, reach new customers, and take your business to the next level. From left are Chamber Ambassadors Michael Wall and Dan Patton, Graphic Designer Shelby Harris, owner Lance Garza, Account Manager Bridget Welter and Chamber Ambassadors Tonya Siner and Lisa Wilson. ►►



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **LeAnn's Light**, a philanthropic initiative founded in memory of LeAnn Schroeder Hardiek, a mother who battled breast cancer. LeAnn was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 29. LeAnn's spirit and determination inspired the Effingham community to rally around her and her two young sons. LeAnn's Light was born out of her idea and passion to give back to a community that had shown generosity during her own challenging times. LeAnn's Light, also known as the LeAnn Schroeder Hardiek Friendship Endowment, focuses on providing support to children (aged 18 and under) of cancer patients. LeAnn's Light offers gift cards that can be used for various needs, ranging from meals and toys to unexpected school-related expenses and entertainment that provides a comforting distraction. To learn more about LeAnn's Light and how to contribute visit LeAnn's Light Website LeAnn'sLight.com and follow them on Facebook @ LeAnn'sLight. From left are Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown, Windy Westfall, Kathy Schroeder, Jim Schroeder, and Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Flying Buddha Fitness** in Effingham. The studio offers a unique blend of bungee fitness and yoga, aiming to address the full well-being of each participant. Owner Karie Apke is a certified bungee fitness instructor, certified personal trainer and a health care provider with over 20 years of experience. Owner Vicki Funneman is a 200 RYT Yoga Teacher with certifications in mindful meditation and movement, as well as yoga for athletes training and certified bungee fitness instructor. Flying Buddha Fitness offers a variety of classes, including different levels of bungee, aerial yoga, traditional yoga, Mommy and Me, Sensory Play for Kids and more. From left, back row, are Chamber Ambassadors Deborah Womack, Michael Wall, Russ Runde and Lisa Cornell; front row, Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown, Funneman, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Apke, and Chamber Ambassador Dan Capes.





◀◀ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Quality Inn & Suites**. Located in Mattoon, Quality Inn & Suites couples cozy and affordable accommodations with a convenient location off U.S. Highway 45 and Interstate 57. Quality Inn & Suites accommodates business travelers with its state-of-the-art business center and free wi-fi help. From left are Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Housekeeping Lead Supervisor Barbara Roberson, Guest Services Supervisor Megan Dowd, Front Desk Manager Maegan Grosshman, General Manager James Gabriel, and Chamber Ambassadors Steve Will and Russ Runde.

The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Affordable Home Improvements Inc.** in Effingham, also known as "The Gutter Guys." They specialize in new construction, interior (kitchens, bathrooms, doors and windows) and exterior remodel (siding, soffit, fascia, windows and doors), drywall, seamless guttering and gutter clean out. As of October 2021, Affordable Home Improvements Inc. has been run by new owners Dustin and Tarina Salger. It was previously owned by Steve and Teresa Gillum. From left, front row, are Chamber Ambassador Dan Patton, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Chamber Ambassador Jim Hecht, owners Tarina and Dustin Salger, Chamber Ambassador Stephanie Jackson; back row, Chamber Ambassadors Deborah Womack, Tonya Siner, Jeff Mihlbachler, Russ Runde and Michael Wall.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Effingham VFW Post 1769**, which has a history of advocating for veterans and providing vital resources to those who have served our nation. Effingham VFW is committed to assisting veterans by providing a wide range of services, including advocacy, mentorship, community support, and access to educational resources. Their dedication ensures that veterans receive the recognition, assistance and camaraderie they deserve. To learn more about Effingham VFW and its initiatives visit them at 2304 Veterans Drive in Effingham, on Facebook or call 217-342-3372. To explore the benefits of an Effingham County Chamber investment and learn how it supports business growth and community development, visit EffinghamCountyChamber.com, or contact Membership Director Becky Brown at (217) 347-6283. Pictured front (left to right): Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown, Joe Kreke, Archie Landruth, Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner, Commander Kevin Jamison, Charlie McWhorter, Bob McWhorter, and Lonnie Loy. Pictured back (left to right): Dean Conkling, Josh Bell, Gary Buehnerkemper, and Gary Lidy.





◀◀ The Effingham County Chamber announced **National Athletic Hall of Fame** as one of its newest members. The National Athletic Hall of Fame recognizes individuals and teams who have made outstanding contributions to athletics, including athletes, coaches, athletic directors, officials and media, and those who have contributed significantly to their community's post-retirement. Eligibility criteria vary for different categories, including former student-athletes, professional athletes, coaches/administrators, officials, posthumous honorees, media and recipients of the Award of Merit. Nominations for induction can be submitted through the online nomination forms available at nationalathletichalloffame.com. For inquiries about the National Athletic Hall of Fame, visit the official website, nationalathletichalloffame.com, or reach out via email at NationalHOF@gmail.com. From left, front row, are Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown, National HOF Executive Director Josh Mathis, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart and Chamber Ambassador Deborah Womack. Back row are Chamber Ambassadors Michael Wall, Russ Runde and Lisa Cornell.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Stine Seed**, which for over 40 years has provided corn and soybean growers with top-tier genetics in the industry. Stine Seed is based in Adel, Iowa, and is the nation's largest independent seed company. From left are Regional Sales Agronomist Region 13 Kevin Krabel, partner Travis Albin and Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **KetAssure IV Infusion Center**. Located in the Heartland Human Services building in Effingham, KetAssure IV Infusion Center, led by Cory Hess, ACNP, is one of Effingham County Chamber's newest members. KetAssure has a mission to provide safe, compassionate and effective treatment to the highest standards while using IV Ketamine infusions in conjunction with traditional therapies and psychiatric treatments to manage a myriad of mood disorders. KetAssure offers low-dose IV Ketamine that could provide relief in as few as one to two hours for those who need to regain a more balanced state of happiness. More information about KetAssure IV Infusion Center can be found online at ketassure.com or on Facebook @Ketassure. From left, front row, are Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Chamber Ambassador Steve Will, Cory Hess, ACNP, and Chamber Ambassador Deborah Womack; back row, Chamber Ambassadors Tonya Siner and Russ Runde.





◀◀ **Valvoline Instant Oil Change** joined the Effingham County Chamber. “We are excited to have Valvoline Instant Oil Change as a part of our Chamber community,” said Lucinda Hart, CAE, MBA, IOM, President & CEO of the Effingham County Chamber. “Their dedication to providing top-notch automotive services aligns perfectly with our mission to support and promote businesses that enhance the well-being of our community.” From left are Hart, Chamber Ambassador Russ Runde, Manager Tim McCandless, Assistant Manager Travis Durham, and Chamber Ambassadors Michael Wall, Steve Will and Deborah Womack.

The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Jackson Health PLLC**, located at 1901 S. Fourth Street, Suite 26 in the Lincolnland Building. Jackson Health PLLC specializes in Family Practice under the helm of owner Stephanie Jackson. Jackson and team see patients beginning at birth throughout their lifespan. Services include but are not limited to intravenous therapy for hydration, medication administration, IV antibiotics and CDL physical exams in the office. Jackson is also experienced in simple procedures such as lesion removals, laceration repairs, cyst removal and joint injections. In addition to traditional forms of payment through insurance, Jackson Health PLLC also offers plans for individuals without insurance and those with high deductibles through Direct Patient Care (DPC) and Concierge Care (CC) programs. From left, front row, are Chamber Ambassador Deborah Womack, owner Stephanie Jackson, Becky McGee and Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner; back row, Membership Director Becky Brown and Chamber Ambassadors Lisa Wilson, Jay Buehnerkemper, Steve Will and Russ Runde. ▶▶



◀◀ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Signature Weddings & Events** in Effingham. The wedding and event planning company aims to curate customized celebrations with every client’s signature style in mind. Signature Weddings & Events specializes in weddings, but are also available for birthdays, anniversaries, baby showers, wedding showers, corporate events and any celebration in between. It is owned and operated by Christina Miller, Jody Lohman and Make’l Hardiek. From left are Chamber Ambassador Michael Wall, Membership Director Becky Brown, Ambassador Lisa Wilson, Lohman, Miller and Hardiek.





▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Effingham Park District**. Located at Hendelmeyer Park, 1906 S. Fourth Street in Effingham, the Effingham Park District provides recreational programs and activities and oversees three parks within the City of Effingham — Community, Evergreen and Hendelmeyer — while managing a multitude of facilities including park pavilions, Kluthe Pool, Ron Diehl Center, Harmony Playground, Workman Complex, batting cages and skate park. The Park District offers a variety of programs and opportunities for kids of all ages and abilities to learn and develop skills and a love for different sports. Along with sports throughout the year, the district also offers sports clinics as a way for kids to receive specialized instruction from experts on a variety of sports fundamentals and skills. For adults, the park district offers leagues in men's basketball, softball and coed volleyball, pickleball and tennis, as well as bridge games. During the summer and Christmas break, the park district has full-day camps for kids. More information can be found online at EffinghamParkDistrict.org, on Facebook @EffinghamParkDistrict, or by calling 217-342-4415. From left, front row, are Chamber Ambassador Deborah Womack, Effingham Park District Office Manager Nina Jackson, Director of Recreation and Athletics Hillary Kopplin, Effingham Park District Director Jeff Althoff, Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart; back row, Chamber Ambassadors Russ Runde and Jay Buehnerkemper, Effingham Park District Maintenance Specialists Wyatt Jones and Brad Mesnard, Maintenance Director Jim Raddatz and Chamber Ambassadors Jeff Mihlbachler, Michael Wall and Jim Hecht.



◀◀ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **E-Environmental Solutions**. Headquartered in Effingham, E-Environmental Solutions specializes in hazardous material containment and remediation services, serving clients throughout the Midwest region. Their team utilizes advanced techniques and state-of-the-art equipment to ensure the safe handling, removal and disposal of hazardous substances. From left are Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown, Chamber Ambassador Steve Will, Claims Assistant Jessica Stufflebeam, Director of Claims Robert Workman, Chamber Ambassadors Deborah Womack and Jay Buehnerkemper, Operations Manager Johnathon Pahlke, Central Illinois Coordinator Kyle Althoff and Chamber Ambassador Russ Runde.

The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Robinson Outdoor LLC**. Located in Perryville, Missouri, Robinson Outdoor LLC is one of the fastest-growing digital billboard advertising networks in the Midwest, with locations in Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky and Missouri. Their newest billboard is located in front of Panda Express and Panera Bread Company on Keller Drive in Effingham. From left, front row, are Chamber Ambassador Marty Stock, Sales Manager Brent DeWilde and Chamber Ambassador Steve Will; back row, Chamber Ambassadors Russ Runde and Tonya Siner and Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart. ▶▶



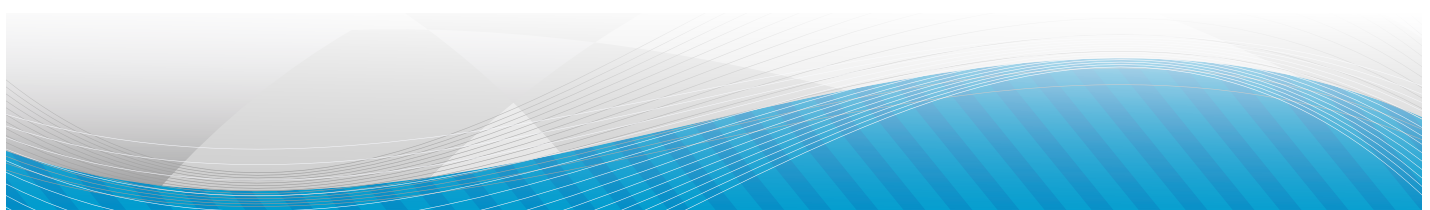
The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Katrina's Skin Escape**, which has been under the guidance of owner Katrina Smith since 2012. Krista Fehrenbacher, a licensed esthetician since 2014, joined Katrina's Skin Escape in 2019. She specializes in signature facials, dermaplaning, Environ TriaWave and chemical peels. Mattie Angel joined Katrina's in July. She offers facials, at-home skincare recommendations, relaxing body treatments and scalp massages. From left are Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown; Chamber Ambassadors Deborah Womack, Steve Will and Tonya Siner; Fehrenbacher, Smith; Angel; and Chamber Ambassadors Lisa Cornell, Jim Hecht and Russ Runde. ►►



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Lions Liquors**, also known as Lions Distinctive Wines. Located at 204 S. Henrietta St., Lions Liquors is one of the largest craft beer suppliers in the Effingham area. Since its opening in 2003, Lions Liquors has grown and evolved to better serve the Effingham community. In 2009, Lions Liquors grew its knowledge of wine and branched out to local businesses for wine and food pairings. It also expanded its location by building on an addition that not only doubled the square footage, but also gave them a private venue to host wine tastings and house over 200 varieties of wine. Recently remodeled, the wine room now houses a private video gaming room with six terminals, a private bar, a digital dartboard for individual or dart league use, a private secluded patio and a private area for small events. Lions Liquors offers a large selection of bourbons and whiskeys, in addition to other liquor, beer, wine, soda and mixers. From left, front row, are Chamber Ambassadors Lisa Wilson, Tonya Siner, Jim Hecht and Deborah Womack; back row, Chamber Ambassadors Steve Will, Randy Jones, owner Clay Stevenson, Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown and Chamber Ambassadors Jay Buehnerkemper and Russ Runde.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed **AFLAC – Jessica Webster** to its membership roster. Webster, a new representative of AFLAC, serves the needs of both individuals and businesses. "We are pleased to welcome Jessica Webster and AFLAC to our Chamber family," said Lucinda Hart, CAE, MBA, IOM, President & CEO of the Effingham County Chamber. "Her dedication to offering valuable insurance options out of the typical package make her a valuable asset to our network." From left are Hart, Webster, Chamber Ambassador Michael Wall and Membership Director Becky Brown.





▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Allsop Construction** in Beecher City. Led by Shon Allsop, Allsop Construction can help with remodeling or land improvement and has a track record of delivering exceptional results. From left are Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown, Chamber Ambassador Steve Will, Justin Blackburn, Dennis Allsop, Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner, Shon Allsop, Kendra Allsop, Chamber Ambassadors Lisa Wilson and Deborah Womack.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber welcomed new member **Krystle Starr LLC**. Located in Effingham County, Krystle Starr LLC, is an intuitive life coach and psychic medium who has dedicated her life to helping people overcome adversity and find their path to spiritual fulfillment. With over five years of experience in the field of personal development, Krystle offers services in the field of Intuitive Manifestation Mapping, Psychic Development, Psychic Reading, Guided Meditation, Event Readings and Keynote Speaker. From left are Chamber Membership Director Becky Brown, Krystle Starr and Effingham County PAVE Project Coordinator Brittany Sunderman.



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PASTOR ON A MISSION TO REVITALIZE NEOGA

By Cathy Griffith

A pastor is hoping to draw people to Neoga — but not just for church. Mel Workman plans to open a restaurant in Neoga that is not just any eating establishment.

It's all part of his plan to revitalize Neoga as a destination that will have people from Effingham, Mattoon, and as far away as Champaign heading to the small town of nearly 1,400.

Workman is the pastor of First Christian Church in Neoga. Before becoming a full-time minister, he started and ran his own business in Sullivan that provides information technology for school districts. Workman rehabbed the building that would house his company and found the process enjoyable.

"I just enjoyed the prospect of restoring an old building that hadn't been used in probably 10 or 15 years, and so I did that with a number of buildings in Sullivan," he said.

After living with his family in Neoga for a while, the opportunity

Mel Workman stands in front of the building he is remodeling that he plans to turn into a steakhouse on one side and a cafe on the other. Submitted photo.



came to buy some of the downtown buildings that were empty and underused or dilapidated.

"I decided if I ever had the opportunity, I would like to do the same thing here," he said.

Workman was able to acquire the buildings inexpensively.

"Once I acquired them, I started thinking about what would be the motivation," he said.

The motivation, he said, was what could be built or provided that would motivate people from neighboring communities to come to Neoga. Workman said his first thought was a restaurant.

"I had many people say we need to have a cafe, so I kind of have a blended view of one particular building I'm re-doing. It will fit perfectly with a cafe on one side and a restaurant on the other," he said.

Workman doesn't want to create just any restaurant. He wants to offer a unique experience.

"My goal is to have a very, very nice steakhouse," he said.

That includes a limited high-quality menu and a baby grand piano that would be used for live music on Friday and Saturday nights.

"I got a few people that are in the music program at Eastern that are very interested in performing. We may even have an ensemble with a piano and multiple instruments," he said. "Something unique that you can't find around here."

Although Workman said he hasn't been to such a place, he can envision it.

"I've had some other experiences traveling through Illinois and Missouri that have prompted me to think or envision a really exceptional restaurant would be a good draw for us," he said.

He's hoping to draw people from not just the area but the region.

"Neoga does not have a lot to offer. It's just a fact. I think about what would motivate someone let's say from Champaign to drive an hour south," he said.

Due to the size of the building, Workman is hoping to eventually have reservations only on Friday and Saturday nights and more casual dining during the week.

For his vision to become a reality, Workman said he first needs to hire the perfect chef, who he is actively seeking now.

"I know the chef is the one who will make or break the restaurant," he said.

For now, Workman is in the demolition phase of the project.

He plans to preserve the original architecture of the building that was once a factory. That includes the 12-foot windows and tall tin ceilings.

While Workman is familiar with rehabbing buildings, he admits he's never owned or operated a restaurant.

"I'm still trying to figure out what's going to make sense, what would be the most attractive and appealing. What would cause people to invest their time and money to come to Neoga and enjoy an evening," he said.

That's where the advice of a chef comes in.

"My first goal is to find a chef who can help me think through and design a kitchen," he said.

Workman hopes to get the total remodel finished this summer. However, the project's timeline depends on finding the right chef.

"I know a restaurant, especially one that's going to be long term and be something that's really appealing, has got to have an exceptional person in charge of the kitchen," he said.

Workman admits people he has talked to about the venture are initially skeptical.

"They're like, 'I don't know if this is going to work.' I keep thinking, 'Of course, this is going to work.' You have to be patient. Plus, anything really outstanding takes a lot of time to build up," he said.

Having lived in Neoga for the last 10 years, Workman said he's heard the city needs a laundromat or a car wash or a Mexican restaurant.

"Most people in a small town like Neoga, they're focused on what they want for themselves as opposed to, well, what would it take for someone to drive from Effingham to come to Neoga?" he said, adding Effingham already has those amenities.

For the most part, Workman said residents are enthusiastic about the idea.

"And enthusiasm is contagious. I personally am very enthusiastic about this, excited about it, and I think it will

be catchy," he said.

Workman has bought other buildings in the city. One is the former IGA grocery store, which he plans to turn into an eight-lane bowling alley with a small area for kids' games and snacks. He hopes to have that open by summer.

He is in the process of acquiring other properties as well. That includes the former Short Furniture building. The five-building complex currently houses a flea market. Although Workman has plans for his other properties, he is still trying to figure out what to do with this one. So, he plans to recruit businesses to come to Neoga after the buildings are refurbished.

He hopes to attract unique opportunities there, too.

"In this day and age, retail is basically dead in these small towns. You got to find something unique to do with your retail space, provide some kind of services or some specialty you can't get at Amazon. If you can get it at Amazon, everybody's getting it at Amazon," he said.

Neoga Mayor Tom Helm said Workman's efforts come at the perfect time.

"I think Mel's interest and desire is purely to help Neoga to grow, which really fits perfectly into the city's newly formed economic development committee's plan," he said.

According to Helm, the committee was trying to come up with ideas to improve the city when Workman began the process of purchasing the buildings.

"It's like wow. Everything is coming right together by the looks of it," he said.

Helm is confident Workman will be able to achieve his goals.

"With all of the backing he has and the committee working with him, I believe we can get this accomplished," he said.

Like Workman, Helm believes a steakhouse would draw people to the community. It would also have a ripple effect on neighboring communities.

"It's mainly rural around Neoga, and there's a lot of people in the rural areas around smaller towns that don't have anything like that either. So, I think it would actually affect more than just Neoga. I think it would affect neighboring communities as well," he said.

Helm is excited to see what comes next.

"I want to thank him so very much for being so dedicated to our community. I believe with his help, we can accomplish a lot. We're excited to work with him in any way we can," he said.

"I've had some other experiences traveling through Illinois and Missouri that have prompted me to think or envision a really exceptional restaurant would be a good draw for us."

— Mel Workman, Neoga pastor and entrepreneur

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Johnson Funeral Home has been family owned and operated for six generations. Though there have been many advances through the years with traditional burial and cremation, one thing has stayed the same, their Mission. "Our mission remains to support each and every family with personalized care when their need is greatest," comments Patrick Johnson, current Funeral Director and sixth generation for Johnson Funeral Home.

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After learning of a CDI team member's desire to move nearer to his hometown, our Effingham location was established in 2013. Over 10 years later, our Effingham office has outgrown its original location, seen a move into a new-build office space off Washington Ave, and now houses nearly 30 land survey, engineering, and GIS professionals.

Since establishing a presence in Effingham, CDI has worked diligently to better the community for its residents. Whether through a variety of infrastructure and facility improvements for the City's roads, water systems, schools, and small businesses, or through contributions and volunteer hours for local non-profit organizations, CDI has

endeavored to further its mission to Build Stronger Communities in Effingham.

More recently, CDI was selected as a prime consultant for design of the second portion of Illinois Department of Transportation's Fayette Avenue Reconstruction project. CDI's scope of work comprises design of the road's east section, which runs from Banker Street to Long Street. Fayette Avenue's need for improvements spans years, with initial plans for improvements dating back to 2006.

A key component in Effingham's central corridor, the upcoming reconstruction aims to accommodate high traffic numbers (over 20,000 vehicles daily) with the reconstruction consisting of 4 12' lanes, left turn lanes at the signalized intersections, dual left turn lane in some areas, new traffic signals, and new storm water system. Additional improvements

include lighting replacements and new sidewalks and a multi-use path.

When completed, the above changes to Fayette Ave will increase capacity, provide safer pedestrian access, and cultivate opportunities for additional development throughout Effingham. As the City continues to further its footprint in central Illinois, CDI looks forward to maintaining our commitment to providing quality infrastructure for its residents in an ever-increasing capacity. We can't thank Effingham enough for the opportunities it lent us and can't wait to see what's next for "The Crossroads of Opportunity."



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Wright Family Center Director Traci Bruns stands in the Wright Family Center's gymnasium in January. The gymnasium includes basketball courts, a volleyball net and badminton courts.

Story and photos by Nick Taylor

After more than four years of collaboration between village officials, generous donors and other local entities, Dieterich's Wright Family Center is finally a reality. The construction of the approximately \$5 million facility is the most recent sign of growth in the small but ambitious community.

The center, which is located on South Pine Street next to Dieterich Junior-Senior High School, includes a full-sized basketball court with two cross-courts, three pickleball courts, a volleyball court, a 24-hour fitness center with state-of-the-art equipment, a two-lane walking track and a badminton court. The building is also home to a new day care and three community rooms.

Dieterich officials held a groundbreaking ceremony in September of 2022 for the facility, and, like many who've been involved in planning and fundraising for the facility, Wright Family Center Director Traci Bruns can hardly wait for residents to begin experiencing everything the center has to offer.

"It's such a long time coming, but it feels remarkable," Bruns said. "I'm just so excited for the community to have this space because Dieterich's a small town, so there's not much to do.

"We're growing and that's amazing, but I am just so excited to get kids in here and to see their smiling faces, and adults too."

Before becoming the director of the facility, Bruns worked for Country Financial, and she's been on the Dieterich Park District Board for seven years, which has helped prepare her for her new role as director.

"I have been involved in the Dieterich community for many years doing stuff like this," Bruns said.

She has also been involved in the Wright Family Center project since the village began planning for the facility in the fall of 2019 during strategic community planning meetings.

"I have been around since the MAPPING meetings where this was born," Bruns said.

Over the years, Bruns has become well aware of the fact that Dieterich residents have to travel to Effingham or other larger communities in the surrounding area to access a fitness facility, which is a problem that the Wright Family Center should be able to remedy.

Some final touches are still being made to the building ahead of its opening, but the majority of the work there is complete.

"We're almost done," Bruns said in late January. "We are touching up painting right now."

Remaining work that needs to be done to the facility includes the

addition of a front desk and a rolling metal divider which will help prevent any potential fires from spreading from the concession stand located in the gymnasium.

“We are waiting for that to come in right now,” Bruns said. “If there is ever a fire in the concession stand, it has a heat sensor, and it will close automatically.”

Although an exact opening date had yet to be set, Bruns said she hoped that the facility would be ready to open by the end of February. The day care, which



The Wright Family Center fitness facility will be the closest facility of its kind for many residents in the area who have to travel to surrounding communities to find fitness facilities.

is connected to the center and operated by Montessori Kids Universe, has been open since Jan. 16.

“It’s fully operational now,” Bruns said regarding the day care facility. “We did a very big push to get that side done before our side just because we knew that the beginning of the year’s a good time for kids to transition to something new.”

The day care has the capacity for up to 50 children, and the children currently enrolled in the day care are from all over the area, not just Dieterich. These new openings should help to somewhat alleviate the county’s ongoing affordable child care shortage.

The Wright Family Center is located across the street from Dieterich Junior-Senior High School, and the Dieterich Unit 30 School District has been supportive of efforts to build the facility.





Construction on the Wright Family Center is nearly complete, but a few things, including the installation of a sliding metal window in the center's concession stand, still need to be finished before the new facility is ready for public use.



The director of the Wright Family Center, Traci Bruns, stands in the 24-hour fitness facility located inside the Wright Family Center. The facility is already filled with new fitness equipment.

"I know that Effingham County has a need for day care, so I do think that they have some parents that drive from other communities," Bruns said. "They're from everywhere."

Only members will be able to access the center. Different memberships will be available for individuals, families and seniors.

"We have not started selling memberships yet," Bruns said last month.

Additionally, memberships can be monthly or annual, and there is different pricing for Dieterich residents, those residing within the Dieterich Unit 30 School District and those living outside of the school district.

The cost of monthly memberships range from \$25 to \$60 and annual memberships cost between \$250 and \$600, with out-of-district memberships costing the most. Pricing for memberships can be found on the center's website, wrightfamilycenter.com.

For any non-members still looking to utilize the facility, daily passes will be available for purchase as well.

There is still some work to be done before the facility's access control system for members is ready. The system will scan QR codes that members can display on their cell phones in order to gain access to the facility.

"It is actually an app on your phone," Bruns said. "And this QR code changes every time you come."

Brun has already hired several workers and is recruiting volun-

teers who will help with the facility's day-to-day operations once it opens. Their duties will include opening and closing the facility, managing equipment and cleaning.

"If you volunteer, you could possibly get the discounted membership if you work enough hours," Bruns said.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer can access an application form via the center's website.

"We are always looking for more volunteers," Bruns said.

Although the village owns the Wright Family Center, funding for the facility will come from several sources, including membership fees, payments for classes held in the facility, donations and a \$2 million Parks and Recreational Facilities Grant from the state of Illinois which helped jump-start the construction of the building.

"And then everything else comes from our TIF taxes," Bruns said.

So far, a total of about \$1.4 million in donations have been collected. Major Wright Family Center donors include the Tom Wright family, John Wright family, Dieterich Bank, the Dieterich Community Development Corporation, Melvin and Shirley Wohltman, HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital and Dieterich Unit 30.

"We're so thankful for everybody that's donated," Bruns said.

The center is still accepting donations, and anyone looking to make a donation can do so by visiting the Wright Family Center

The center is still accepting donations, and anyone looking to make a donation can do so by visiting the Wright Family Center website, calling the center or calling Dieterich Village Hall.

website, calling the center or calling Dieterich Village Hall.

“We couldn’t do it without the donations,” Bruns said. “We couldn’t do it without the grant, and I am just so thankful for everybody.”

Another significant portion of the funds used to cover the cost of the center came from a raffle for a house located in Hartke Subdivision in 2021. Each raffle ticket cost \$100 and more than 4,000 of them were sold.

“It was a big thing,” Bruns said.

Different sections of the facility can also be rented, including a community room which has dividing walls that can be opened or closed depending on the size of events.

“There is income potential there also,” Bruns said. “I want to have other activities also, like family nights, trivia nights, anything we can get the community involved in.”

Brun said renting the facility out to travel sports teams could also prove to be a significant source of income.

“I am always open to ideas also,” she said.

Anyone with ideas of how to utilize the space can email suggestions to her at director@wrightfamilycenter.com, and pricing for rental spaces is available on the center’s website.

“I want to do what the community wants,” Bruns said.

The Effingham County Chamber is going to host a ribbon-cutting for the facility on March 8, and there are also plans to hold an open house.

“We’ll probably have a drawing for free membership, and we’ll have something fun for the kids,” Bruns said regarding the open house.



The community rooms inside the Wright Family Center have walls that can be opened up to make event spaces larger when needed.

Prior to the center’s opening, residents have been signing up for some of the sports and other activities that will be offered there, and teams will begin playing basketball there sometime around the end of February.

“We have 150 some kids signed up for basketball through the park district,” Bruns said. “Also, we have little kid dance classes that the Dieterich Dance Team is putting on, and there is a good enough number of registrations for that already too.”

Additionally she said about 30 players have already signed up for the Wright Family Center’s pickleball league.



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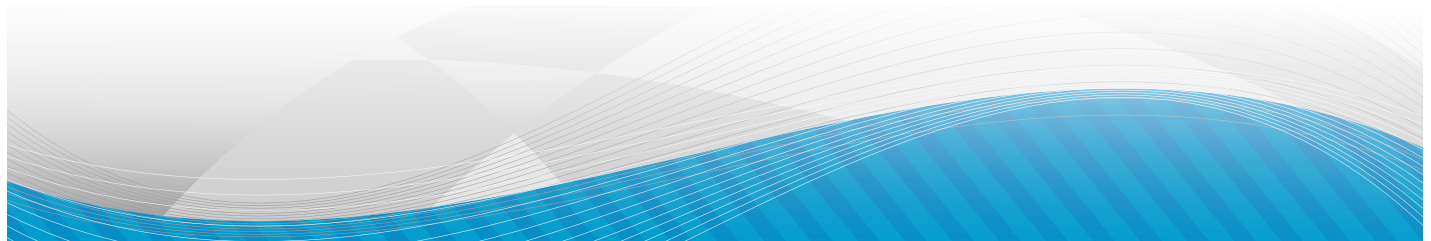
The Effingham County Chamber celebrated the opening of new businesses, businesses relocating and expanding and new ownership of businesses in 2023.



◀◀ Elite Powder Coating – The Effingham County Chamber welcomed **Elite Powder Coating & Technologies** at 103 Norb Avenue in Dieterich. Elite Elite Powder Coating & Technologies services range from industrial and automotive to agricultural and custom powder coating. The team also offers sandblasting and surface preparation, equipped to handle large items like industrial equipment, vehicles and boats. Pictured left to right: Chamber Ambassador Tonya Siner, Chamber Board Member Aroyn Borries, Mitch Stevens, Doug Giles, Jeremy Giles, and Chamber Ambassador Russ Runde.



▲▲ QuikTrip – The Effingham County Chamber joined in a ribbon-cutting of the newly opened **Travel Center by QuikTrip** in Effingham recently. Shown are QuikTrip store associates. In front, QT Store Manager Michael Franchi cutting the ribbon, QT Real Estate Property Manager Gwen Keen to the right of him, City of Effingham City Administrator Steve Miller holding the ribbon, Economic Development Director Todd Hull to his left, Chamber Ambassadors and Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart to the left of Hull holding the ribbon.





▲▲ A ribbon-cutting ceremony on Oct. 4 celebrated the new location for **HSHS Medical Group Family Medicine – Dieterich**. Dr. Michelle Braddy, Jennifer Kistner and representatives from HSHS Medical Group, HSHS St. Anthony’s Memorial Hospital, the Village of Dieterich, the Effingham County Chamber and the community attended.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber celebrated the renovation of **Layna Bond & Associates – American Family Insurance** in Effingham. Layna’s journey began at Lake Land College, where she demonstrated her commitment to both academics and community involvement as a member of the livestock judging team and a student ambassador. At Oklahoma State University, she excelled as a member of the 2017 National Livestock Judging Team and the 2017 Reserve National Meat Evaluation Team. Beyond her work in insurance, Layna coordinates over 10 shows across the state, hosts multiple fundraising events, and mentors youth in the show pig industry. She also volunteers at numerous shows across the state. Layna Bond & Associates is licensed in multiple states, including AZ, IL, IN, IA, KS, MO, ND, OH, OK, SD and WI, with two total office locations in Effingham and Highland, IL. Layna recently earned the title of State Agency of the Month for Illinois in November 2023. From left, back row, are Chamber Ambassadors Marty Stock and Lisa Cornell, City of Effingham Economic Development Director Todd Hull, Chamber Ambassadors Dan Capes and Russ Runde, and City of Effingham Economic Development Specialist Sasha Althoff; front row, Chamber Ambassador Steve Will, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Layna Bond, and Chamber Ambassadors Deborah Womack and Randy Jones.



▲▲ The Effingham County Chamber held a ribbon-cutting for **Rusty Reel Events**, which has joined the Chamber. Among the highlights of Rusty Reel Events was the Rusty Reel Lake Jam Oct. 12-14, a three-day country and rock music festival set against the backdrop of Lake Sara. From left, back row, are Tim Ellis, Co-Owner Jason Gines, Diana McWilliams, Chamber Ambassadors Michael Wall and Russ Runde; center row, Wendy Stang, Jamie Stang-Ellis, Chamber Ambassador Layna Bond, Co-Owner Kevin Wenthe and Chamber Ambassador Steve Will; front row, Chamber Ambassador Randy Jones, Chamber President & CEO Lucinda Hart, Co-Owners Kelly Gines and Becky Wenthe, and Chamber Ambassador Deborah Womack.

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Fundraising efforts continue for Effingham Showcase Center

By Nick Taylor

After seeing the economic impact sports complexes have had in communities throughout the country, a local group is looking to get Effingham involved in what has proven to be quite a lucrative industry. The group is racing to raise the funds it needs by the end of this year.

Following the approval of a purchase agreement for a 25-acre property on Schwerman Street in Effingham between the city and Unit 40 in November, the nonprofit organization behind plans for a new sports complex, the Effingham Showcase Center, is gearing up its efforts to raise the \$18 million needed for the construction of the proposed facility.

The city has agreed to purchase the property that would be the site of the new complex from Unit 40 for \$1.75 million, but the city will only pay for the property if the organization raises the \$18 million by the end of 2024, unless the agreement is amended before that time.

The Effingham resident and member of the organization spearheading the project is Ryan Engel, who works as an engineer for Earthrise Energy.

Born and raised in Effingham, Engel has a close connection to the community where he lives with his wife, Morgan Engel, 15-year-old daughter Ryley, 5-year-old son Jameson and 4-year-old daughter Emersyn.

Like his daughter, Ryley, who plays softball, volleyball and basketball at Effingham High School, Engel used to be a three-sport student. He played basketball, baseball and football, and spent many of his weekends traveling throughout the country to compete in various tournaments at complexes similar to the one he envisions for Effingham.

“I grew up playing sports in the area,” Engel said in an interview. “I was fortunate enough that my parents let me travel as I grew up. It’s one way that I felt that I could give back.”

Engel is still closely involved in local athletics, coaching for the Effingham Park District, the Effingham Intensity travel baseball team, and his daughter’s travel softball team, which he began coaching eight years ago.

Over the years, Engel has seen a number of successful sports complexes, both big and small, and he eventually decided to begin taking the first steps toward getting involved in the booming industry a few years ago.

“About three years ago, I got the itch,” Engel said. “These sports complexes are essentially popping up everywhere.”

He said the “main focus” of the current plans for the project are softball, soccer, baseball and volleyball.



Ryan Engel of Effingham stands with a sign reading “Effingham Showcase Center” during an Effingham Sportsbackers golf outing at the Effingham Country Club. Engel has been spearheading a local organization’s plans to bring a sports complex to Effingham.

“However, there’s going to be some very unique things – such as drone races, robot wars and other things for the youth to get involved in,” Engel said.

Additionally, there are plans to potentially host events such as car shows, boat shows and rodeos at the complex.

New ideas for the complex are constantly being considered by Engel and the other members of the organization, and additions could be made to the complex over time to better fit the needs and interests of the community.

According to Engel, current plans for the complex include a dome which would contain two indoor baseball fields, that could be converted into two indoor softball fields, and five indoor soccer fields.

There are also potential plans to allow for a variety of other sports and activities within the dome, including football, cheerleading and tumbling which is why Engel hopes to make the facility as versatile as possible.

Engel also noted that most sports domes in the Midwest are only able to accommodate baseball fields for baseball players that are 12 years old or younger.

“Really, what’s going to be very unique about this one, it will be able to offer baseball at the high school level,” Engel said. “So we’ll be able to avoid all rain-outs during the spring for the school, which would be awesome.”

The dome would be 820 feet long, 320 feet wide and 125 feet tall, which will allow for two indoor baseball fields, and the dimensions of the dome have been approved by the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) for high school baseball.

Plans for the complex also include five outdoor softball fields, one outdoor baseball field, two sand volleyball courts, pickleball courts, a playground with a splash pad and 983 parking spots.

Engel said the Effingham Showcase Center would be responsible for managing and operating the facility, and there are currently plans to host travel sports tournaments at the complex Friday-Sunday and give access to the community Monday-Thursday.

Additionally, Engel and other members of the Effingham Showcase Center’s board have been working with Effingham Unit 40 on a potential agreement for shared use of the park.

The complex would also be in a convenient location for Unit 40 as it is already in close proximity to Effingham High School and a couple of the school’s existing athletic facilities.

“They talked about being able to have their team practice there, being able to utilize it for P.E. and other things during the day,” Engel said.

In addition to the many benefits the sports complex would provide for many local athletes, it could also be quite beneficial financially for the local community as a \$25,000 feasibility study by Washington University in St. Louis suggests.

One of his key goals with bringing the complex to Effingham is changing the city from a “stop-and-go town” to a “travel destination.”

“We wanted to make sure that we had information that backed up our intuition to what we really think this thing will be able to provide for not only the youth but the Effingham community as a whole,” Engel said.

He said the study took into account the estimated number of visi-

“What’s going to be very unique about this [complex], it will be able to offer baseball at the high school level. So we’ll be able to avoid all rain-outs during the spring for the school, which would be awesome.”

— Ryan Engel

tors the complex would attract each weekend.

In addition to traveling athletes, many parents would accompany their child to Effingham for tournaments, sometimes bringing other children, and while they are in the area, many of them will visit local businesses, restaurants and hotels.

“Most of the direct revenues will be through hotels and restaurants,” Engel said. “Those people have to find things to do in between games.”

In just one weekend, Engel claimed that the complex could be a “very large economic driver for Effingham” with area hotels potentially bringing in anywhere between \$200,000 and \$400,000 from visitors the facility would attract to the city.

“The revenue numbers are very high, which we’re excited about,” Engel said. “There’s just going to be a lot more people around Effingham trying to experience what the community has to offer, and I think it’s going to benefit a

bunch of different people in different ways.”

He also noted that the complex would be located on the south side of the city which means it could bring some new businesses to the area that has somewhat struggled to keep businesses in the past.

In addition to the potential benefit the complex could have on the local economy, Engel said it could also attract new businesses that offer activities for young visitors and their families like an indoor trampoline park.

“Hopefully, the south side can start becoming the new Keller,” Engel said in reference to the businesses on Keller Drive in Effingham. “Whenever you have complexes like this, those sort of things tend to pop up near them.”

He said the Effingham Showcase Center also plans to partner with the HSHS Foundation, Unit 40, local sportsbackers and other nonprofits in the area.

The Effingham Showcase Center’s board consists of seven mem-

A rendering of the large dome included in plans for the Effingham Showcase Center shows where the name of whatever entity purchasing the naming rights for the dome would go.





A rendering of plans for the Effingham Showcase Center shows what a sports complex in Effingham could look like.

most out of naming rights for the complex.

“They prioritize naming rights and evaluate your company to see exactly where that naming right can be applicable within the company,” Engel said. “They try to find people that are willing to step up and sponsor for naming rights.”

“We see them being a pretty big help going forward.”

The naming rights for the dome is expected to bring in the most advertising funds, and Engel said the board hopes to receive its first evaluation from IPG 360 on April 1.

“That’s our big one we’re anx-

iously awaiting,” he said. “We’re pretty excited about this agreement we just reached.”

As of January, only \$20,000 in donations have been collected for the complex, but Engel and the Effingham Showcase Center board are looking to soon intensify fundraising efforts.

Engel said the board is considering holding an informational meeting to get the word out about plans for the center and hear some of the ideas members of the community might have for the complex.

“We haven’t really sent after anything hard yet,” Engel said. “We’re trying to raise \$100,000 by the end of February.”

About half of this \$100,000 will be used to cover the cost of the IPG 360 contract.

Engel said anyone looking to donate to the Effingham Showcase Center can make a donation with the Southeastern Illinois Community Foundation under the organization’s name.

The organization also hopes to have a website established sometime during the first quarter of 2024.

“It’s not up and running yet, but we do have somebody working on it,” Engel said.

bers. They’ve been meeting for more than two years, developing plans for the project and getting the word out about these plans as well as the organization’s fundraising efforts.

“We have some near-term goals that we’re trying to reach to kick off our general contractor which is Byrne and Jones,” Engel said.

Engel said Byrne and Jones Construction is the same group that helped build Effingham High School’s football field, and they were also involved in the construction of the Rantoul Family Sports Complex, which is one of many complexes the organization considered when initially developing plans

for the Effingham Showcase Center.

“And then we’re also working with a consulting firm for naming rights of the facility, which we expect will bring a large portion of the fundraising,” Engel said.

Since the complex would be located close to U.S. Route 40, Engel sees it as an ideal location for a business or other groups to advertise.

In January, Engel said the Effingham Showcase Center board signed a contract with IPG 360, a consulting agency based out of Santa Monica, California, to help board members get a better idea of how to get the

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Bill is driven most by helping clients find security and "Win/Win" types of solutions to their legal concerns. In the years since graduating from Saint Louis University (with a degree in Finance, with honors) and Washington University School of Law, Bill has found that estate planning is a practice area which aligns with those principles quite well.

Bill gained his initial years of experience in estate planning, tax planning, and business succession planning at large law firms in St. Louis and Chicago. Bill joined Dent Coulson Elder Law because of the exciting opportunity to work more directly with clients and to serve a much broader portion of the community. Bill also saw the promise of mentorship from Wes Coulson and Kaye Dent – and they have taught Bill new and more specialized Elder Law techniques, already.

Bill enjoys the relationship-driven and personal nature of his practice. He understands that his counsel has a direct impact on the financial and personal well-being of clients. Because of this, Bill takes pride in being a clear communicator who is widely accessible to his clients. So that he can serve clients in Illinois and Missouri, Bill is licensed in both states.



Bill Horton
Licensed in IL and MO

Announcing the retirement of a founder of the firm, Wes Coulson (CONGRATULATIONS, Wes!)



Wes Coulson
Licensed in IL and MO
Retiring May 1, 2024

Bill's joining the firm is the first step in a two-step process that will see our senior attorney, Wes Coulson, retire on May 1, 2024 (his 70th birthday), after almost 46 years in practice. During his career, Wes was honored to have earned various professional designations and accolades.

Twenty years ago, he earned the designation of "CELA" (Certified Elder Law Attorney) from the National Elder Law Foundation, the only national organization authorized by the American Bar Association to do so. Later, he was given the Ron Runkle Award by the Illinois chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys ("NAELA"), an annual honor given to the person chosen as the chapter's most helpful member.

Most recently, last year he achieved his highest honor: being chosen for membership on NAELA's Council of Advanced Practitioners (CAP). Members are peer-nominated and approved NAELA attorneys who are exceptionally skilled and experienced in the practice of elder and special needs law, and exemplify professionalism, leadership, innovation, and a commitment to continued learning and growth.

Above all, Wes is proud to have been afforded the opportunity to assist so many clients over the years with putting in place estate and longterm care asset preservation plans that have worked out very well for them, and to have saved his clients many millions of dollars of their life savings that would otherwise have been lost to nursing home costs.

Bill, Kaye Dent, and the staff at Dent Coulson Elder Law are positioned well to continue and add to that legacy.

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Effingham Computer Sales & Service

Wayne Moran, owner of Effingham Computer, has built his business from a small, part-time “side gig”, into a full-fledged retail store on Effingham’s south side.

Wayne has been doing computer sales & service in the Effingham area for more than 20 years, previously working as a lead tech for a couple of local computer places, then working in local radio for WXFJ & WKJT for many years before branching out on his own in 2016.

Effingham Computer started as a home-based business, operating out of his garage from their home in Grupe Subdivision near Lake Sara. In 2018, Wayne and his wife Neeley bought a new home in Effingham, and moved the business into their basement. Moving inside the city brought a nearly instant change to his business, and it very quickly went

from that part-time “side gig”, to his full time job.

In 2021, Wayne and his family decided it was time to get the business out of the house, and began the search for a retail location, before finally deciding to move into the Village Square Mall. After 2 years and much success inside the mall, Wayne and Neeley bought the property at 1906 South Banker Street, right in front of the mall. The building, which Wayne describes as “that weird, round spaceship-looking place”, originally started out as an ice cream restaurant when it was built in 1999.

In 2024, Effingham Computer added additional services by becoming a UPS Access Point, after Wayne said he saw a lack of options for shipping services on the south end of town. “The response was immediate and very positive. Effingham

needed another option for UPS, and we’re excited to offer and grow the service.”

Wayne says his business is “all about local service and support”, and isn’t the typical “computer shop.” We’re a computer store with a shop right up front, not hidden in a “tech room.” I’m really proud of that. I want to be able to talk with customers while we work on stuff in front of them. We’re not going to talk down to you or over your head. We’re here to help people, that’s the goal.”

“We offer low, flat rates, and we do free estimates on everything. I don’t believe in “bench fees”, or fleecing you with an “annual maintenance” plan. I’d rather have customers for years than make a bunch of money and never see you again. When it comes to new systems, we don’t do the \$100+

markup most places do. We know you can hop on Amazon and have something here in a few days, but it won’t have local service or support. We carry a great selection of laptops from Dell, Lenovo, HP, Asus, and others. For desktops, we like to build from scratch. I’m proud to say we built 132 desktops last year, and over 500 in the last 5 years. Plus, we did over 200 new laptops last year. We do everything from regular home systems to a lot of gaming stuff, and they’re all quality, upgradeable systems. And, we do free setup and data migration on every new system.”

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Room to grow in Dieterich schools

Kindergarten students are excited about their new classrooms that allow for smaller class sizes. Submitted photo.

By Cathy Griffith

The end of Christmas break usually elicits groans and sighs from students as they return to school. But not kindergarteners in Dieterich School District. They are excited to come to school each day now that they have new classrooms.

The new kindergarten wing is part of a facilities expansion project at the pre-K-12 building that began in March last year and is nearing completion.

The expansion is to meet the needs of growing enrollment, which has increased about 30% in the past 12 years to 607 students this school year.

The growth has mainly been in primary grades, where enrollment has consistently averaged upper 40s to lower 50s, swelling class sizes, especially for the district's kindergarten level. During the first semester of this school year, the district had two kindergarten sections, with 27 students in one and 26 in the other.

With the new kindergarten wing finished, another section was added beginning this semester, and the class sizes were reduced to 17 students in one and 18 in each of the other two.

The smaller class sizes allow teachers to better meet the students' needs. Teachers are now able to meet with four or five students at a time instead of seven or eight, which allows them to identify specific needs and structure lessons

based on those needs.

Dieterich Elementary Principal Josh Benefiel said the smaller class sizes allow for more individualized instruction for students who are not only struggling in certain academic areas but also for students who are at or above grade level.

"We are also able to build better relationships with our students," said teacher Toni Zumbahlen.

According to teacher Loretta Zane, the classroom atmosphere is calmer and more conducive to learning.

Kindergarten teacher Janice Zimmerman likes that the kindergarten wing has minimal noise and is peaceful. She also likes that the restrooms are easily accessible, "which give us quick restroom breaks and more time for instruction," she said.

According to the teachers, the students are thriving from the less chaotic atmosphere and extra attention from them.

For the teachers, the new roomier classrooms allow maximum storage space for their many manipulatives. The cabinetry allows everything to have its place, keeping things nice and tidy, which they also like.

And there's the new tech.

"We have the most up-to-date Promethean board (interactive whiteboard), and each student has his or her own device," said Zane.

The need for more classroom space was overdue.

Students have already started occupying the science lab and high school math classroom in addition to the three kindergarten classrooms. The number of sections in first and second grades also will increase from two to three beginning next school year.



Students at Dieterich School District now have a state-of-the-art science lab thanks to the recent facilities expansion project. Submitted photo.



A newly renovated gym lobby is one of the several improvements at Dieterich pre-K-12 building following a school construction project. Submitted photo.



Dieterich School District underwent a facilities expansion that included new restrooms. Submitted photos.

The last expansion was in 1995 when six classrooms were added. That addition was, in part, to eliminate portable classroom structures and to construct a new cafeteria.

Since then, school facilities have remained the same despite growing enrollment. Then, in 2022, the school board approved plans to add more classrooms and renovate restrooms.

The current project will add another six classrooms — three to the elementary side and three to the junior-senior high side — a new state-of-the-art science lab and two new restroom facilities, and it includes renovations to the gym lobby. Additionally, the district will be renovating all existing restroom facilities to bring them up to date.

The latest construction project adds 20,700 square feet of space, bringing the total size of the pre-K-12 building to 117,981 square feet.

The project's total cost is estimated to be \$5,335,000, which is being paid for through the sale of construction bonds and working cash bonds, according to Superintendent Cary Jackson. He added that a portion of the project has been paid for by leveraging \$636,175 in ESSR III funds, which are part of the federal American Rescue Plan Act.

Construction will be completed in phases. Although it is scheduled to be fully completed by March, students have already started occupying the science lab and high school math classroom in addition to the three kindergarten classrooms. The number of sections in first and second grades also will increase from two to three beginning next school year.

“Reducing class sizes and providing an updated science lab were priorities of the district to better serve our students,” said Jackson.

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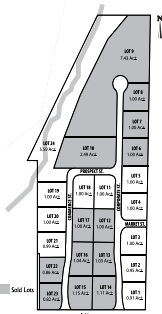
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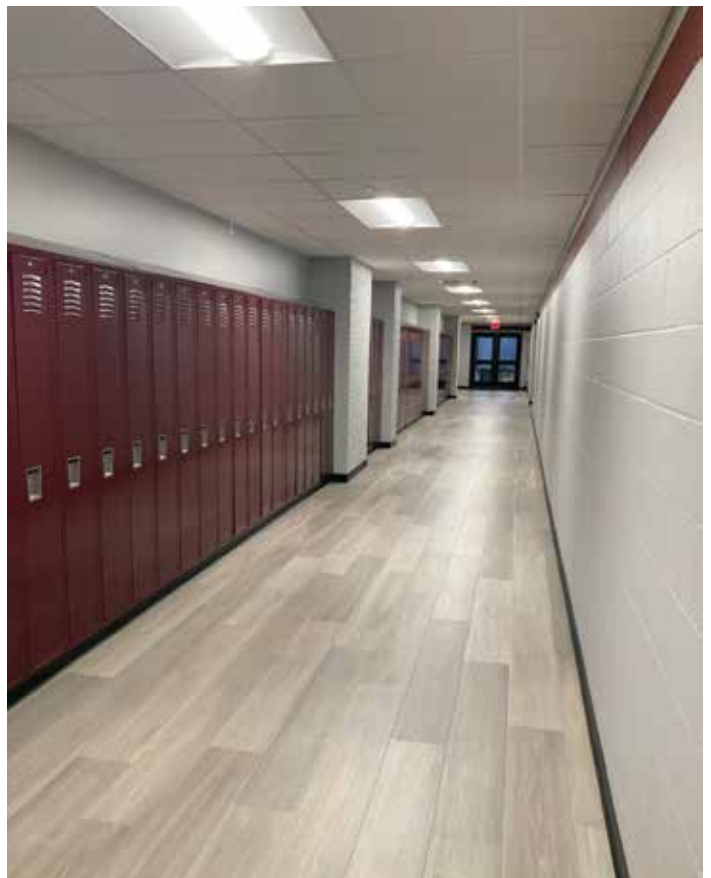
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▲▲ Kindergarteners line up in the hallway of the new kindergarten wing at Dieterich Elementary School. Submitted photo.

A shiny new hallway in the Dieterich school construction project. Submitted photo. ►►



▲▲ Kindergarteners in Dieterich School District enjoy extra space in one of their new classrooms that are part of a school construction project. Submitted photo.

Brookstone Estates

Brookstone Estates of Effingham is the county's only supportive living community for adults, 65 years of age and older, that need some assistance with daily activities for continued independent living.

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nities. Services offered include personalized care plans created in conjunction with health care providers, three delicious home cooked meals served daily in the dining room, medication management, daily wellness checks, assistance with daily activities such as bathing and dressing, certified clinical staff on site around the clock, housekeeping, laundry, maintenance, and transportation assistance in Effingham. Brookstone Estates offers a comfortable, private home to individuals, offering one and two-bedroom apartments with substantial living space, decorated to your personal taste with full kitchens, private bathrooms with safety features, spacious walk-in closets, emergency call services, individually controlled heating and cooling, complimentary wi-fi, cable television access, with private patio options all in a beautifully renovated building.

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Jim Hecht with his dad Dan Hecht Sr. at the groundbreaking of our current location in 1975.

Jim Hecht celebrates 50 Years at Dan Hecht

Jim Hecht's remarkable journey at Dan Hecht Chevrolet Toyota spans an impressive five decades, a testament to his steadfast dedication and tireless work ethic. Jim started on March 12, 1974, with humble beginnings sweeping floors and cleaning cars. Jim's ascent within the dealership has been nothing short of extraordinary. Throughout the years, Jim, alongside his father, Dan Sr., and brothers Dan Jr, Bob, and Jerry, collectively contributed to the dealership's success.

In 1984, Jim's career took a significant step forward as he assumed the role of Sales Manager, and by 1998, he progressed to the position of General Manager, taking over the reins from his father in their family-owned business. Responsible for overseeing a workforce of nearly 100 employees, Jim continues to play a pivotal role in elevating the dealership's operations to unprecedented levels. His unwavering commitment to excellence, coupled with the collaborative efforts of his brothers, has fostered a thriving environment that reflects the values instilled by the Hecht family, emphasizing community support and involvement.

The upcoming 50th-anniversary celebration signifies a significant milestone for Jim, coinciding with the dealership's 65th year in business.



Brothers Danny, Jerry, Jim & Bob Hecht accept the 2015 Excellence in Business Award for Dan Hecht Chevrolet & Toyota.



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Effingham County school officials discuss their plans

Story and photos by Nick Taylor

Leaders from area schools met in September to discuss the future of their respective districts. Several are working to tackle similar issues, including teacher shortages and increased enrollment.

Building expansions, renovations and community collaboration were among the topics discussed by the school representatives at the Holiday Inn in Effingham, in an event hosted by the Effingham County Chamber.

The first district representative to speak during the luncheon, Altamont Unit 10 Superintendent Casey Adam, discussed some of the district's recent projects, including the resurfacing of the district's track this summer and the purchase of a new pole vault pit.

"And next summer, we plan to remodel our high school kitchen," Adam said.

In addition to its strong FFA and industrial arts programs, Adam discussed the district's recent collaboration with local businesses

for a diversified occupations class and the district's own departments for a service learning class to help students "learn to become dependable future workers."

"Something new that we have this year is we have reinstated our business department at our high school," she said.

Meanwhile, Dieterich Unit 30 Superintendent Cary Jackson provided updates on his district's expansion, which includes the addition of six classrooms, a new science lab, renovating restrooms and adding two new restroom banks.

He said the expansion, which will cost the district roughly \$5.5 million, has become necessary as enrollment has increased by about 30% over the past 15 years.

"Over the past 15 years, Dieterich Schools has experienced an increase of 175 students," Jackson said. "So that's created excitement, but it's also created some issues. We're running out of space."

Additionally, Jackson said there are plans to improve the district's parking lot and its gymnasium lobby.

"The project will be completed in stages, starting this fall and

Representatives and students from area school districts stand with Effingham County Chamber President and CEO Lucinda Hart, left, during a luncheon in Effingham in September.



culminating in early spring,” he said during the September meeting.

Effingham Unit 40 Superintendent Andrew Johnson shared more information regarding the district’s short and long term goals, including efforts to consolidate its elementary buildings.

“We’ve spent the better part of the last year working on a strategic plan,” Johnson said. “Today we have a company doing a facility assessment of our entire property to help us decide what the next steps are as far as education is concerned.”

As part of the district’s strategic plan, it hired a marketing and communications specialist, Erin Hartke who described the district’s strategic marketing plan as “a cohesive rebrand” that also “highlights self-promotion.”

“We do have a district website app which is really concise,” Hartke said.

The district’s plan includes the establishment of an alumni database as well as the introduction of a new Effingham Flaming



Unit 40 Superintendent Andrew Johnson is shown during a recent meeting.

Hearts logo, which she said has a “fresh, clean, modern look.”

“We can also manipulate it a little bit,” Hartke said regarding the new logo design.

Teutopolis Unit 50 recently put together a strategic plan for its own expansion to accommodate growing enrollment, according to Superintendent Matthew Sturgeon.

“We identified similarly to Effingham,” Sturgeon said. “Now the district, with a current enrollment of over 1,142, which is up approximately 140 students over the last decade, is looking for its next future project.”

Sturgeon also addressed the shortage of teachers which is being experienced by districts throughout the county and said that his district is constantly working to attract and retain quality staff by offering them services such as day care for their children through Stevens Industries’ Tot Mate Central Child Care Facility.



The marketing and communications specialist for Effingham Unit 40, Erin Hartke, discusses the district’s strategic plan during a September luncheon.

“It was a day care-based program for every one of their employees, and they extended that opportunity to the Teutopolis district,” he said.

All district employees now have access to the day care.

The communications coordinator for Sacred Heart School, Andrea Wright, said the school recently renovated its library, which contains over 10,000 book titles.

“It received a facelift over the summer and now boasts a beautiful forest theme with new seating and flooring,” she said.

Wright also addressed the ongoing construction taking place near the school and said the school has been working to “tweak” some routes to and from school for students as a result.

“One challenge we are facing this year is the Fayette Avenue construction project, which is basically at our front door,” Wright said.

St. Anthony High School Principal Greg Fearday talked about the opportunities offered to students for “life beyond high

school.”

“After being here for now a decade, the opportunities that our high school kids have here in Effingham and the surrounding areas very much rival that of much larger urban areas,” Fearday said.

Representatives from Beecher City Unit 20 also spoke during the luncheon, with high school seniors Marissa Summers and Layne Jones providing updates.

“Back in 2015, our school got a \$4.5 million renovation to our high school, and due to increased enrollment numbers, we are having to hire new teachers,” Summers said.

In addition to hiring three new grade school teachers, Summers said the district is adding a new classroom at the high school.

Additionally, Jones said the district recently began offering a variety of business classes to students, including a personal finance class, business law class and cyber-security class.

“I took personal finance last year as a



Unit 10 Superintendent Casey Adam is shown during a recent school board meeting.

junior and believe that it really helped me to learn different things that I really didn’t know about taxes, budgeting and investing.”

Meanwhile, the vice president for academic services at Lake Land College, Ikemefuna Nwosu, and the college’s chief

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Dieterich Unit 30 Superintendent Cary Jackson shares updates on his district, including plans to expand the district's building during the Effingham County Chamber's First Friday luncheon in Effingham.

of staff, Jean Anne Highland, spoke about the purchase of the Patterson Technology Center building, which will house the Effingham Regional Career Academy and is expected to open for classes in the fall of 2024.

"We are right in the middle of going from an idea that has been patched together with many partnerships to something having a

"Back in 2015, our school got a \$4.5 million renovation to our high school, and due to increased enrollment numbers, we are having to hire new teachers."

— Marissa Summers, Beecher City Unit 20 high school senior

permanent home in the Patterson building, so we are really excited about that," Nwosu said.

Dr. John Storsved, the dean of the College of Health and Human services at Eastern Illinois University, said he's beginning to see students there return to a sense of normalcy following the peak years of the COVID-19 pandemic which put a serious strain on their social lives.

He said the campus is now "brimming with activity."

"The students are getting back out and



Teutopolis Unit 50 Superintendent Matthew Sturgeon is shown during a recent meeting.

meeting each other," Storsved said.

Storsved said the primary goal of its staff is "getting to know our students" which he said is much easier at a school like Eastern Illinois University where he claimed 98% of classes have less than 50 students.

Additionally, he said there will be a groundbreaking in the spring for Eastern Illinois University's life sciences building, which he called "very necessary."

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Downtown Effingham hosts a number of fun events during the year including Farmers Market each Saturday morning during the summer months, Food Trucks



on the square each Friday during the summer months, Ladies Night Out, seasonal open houses, EffinghamHAM JAM barbeque festival, Cruise Night, a huge Halloween parade, a downtown Trick or Treat event and a marvelous Christmas celebration that includes tasty treats, stunning lights and a visit from Santa at Santa's

House. Traditional activities during the Christmas celebration include carriage rides, live entertainment, an ice rink, light parade, train rides and live reindeer, to name a few!

There are many monstrous light displays that stay all winter long on the lawn of the Effingham County Museum as an awesome

photo op for thousands of visitors.

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Neoga & Sigel

Neoga, Illinois is located on Route 45 and right off Interstate 57 at exit 177. Neoga is nestled between Effingham to the south and Mattoon to the north. Easy access to both of these industry rich cities makes Neoga the per-

fect place to call home. Neoga is a city in Cumberland County and had a population of 1,398 with the 2020 census. Neoga was incorporated in 1856. Neoga means "deer" in the Kickapoo language. Neoga hosts a strong banking

and finance industry, with First Neighbor Bank and First Mid Bank having locations within Neoga. The City of Neoga provides a variety of recreational facilities, with public parks featuring tennis and basketball courts

in addition to several area lakes with swimming, boating and water sports. For the avid outdoors person, nearby Fox Ridge and Lincoln Trail State Parks offer camping, hiking, snowmobiling, walking paths and horseback riding.

Neoga is home to Neoga Grade and High School. Lake Land Community College, located 12 miles north of the City of Neoga, offers access to higher education and workforce training programs.

Sigel is an incorporated town in Shelby County, Illinois with a population of 329 at the 2020 census. Sigel is located in the southeast corner of Shelby County. U.S. Route 45 is the main roadway to and from Sigel while Interstate 57 runs just to the east of the town. Sigel is about 5 miles northeast of Effingham.

The town was named after Franz Sigel, (1824–1902), a



Lake Mattoon in Neoga.



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St. Michael School in Sigel.

Union general in the American Civil War. Jack Berch, singer, was born in Sigel. Sigel is home to St. Michael School and Sigel Community Bank, a branch of Teutopolis State Bank. It is also home to several agricultural related businesses as farming is a cornerstone of this community and area. St. Michael School in Sigel is proceeding with plans to construct a school addition to

replace the 1929, two story school building. Construction is planned to be completed by the start of the 2024-2025 school year. To learn more about this exciting development for Sigel, visit their website at www.ssmcs.org

Neoga and Sigel are communities strongly tied to the early development of central Illinois' railroad industry.



Neoga native Allie Keck makes it to the Battle Round of "The Voice" in March 2023. Even though she didn't advance to the next round, her social media continues to be flooded with love and support. Even Ginger Ale's in Effingham named a drink after her, The Allie Keck, which is a sour apple Sprite with shimmer and Pop Rocks, according to its Facebook post. Former Neoga Mayor Marty Hartke said on behalf of the City of Neoga, "we couldn't be more proud of you, Allie Keck. Your hard work, determination and God-given talents have taken you a long way. Thank you for proving a small-town girl can still climb to the top," he said. "Little eyes around here look up to you. We look forward to watching you continue to grow, as we know many doors will open in your future."

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Megan Baker was announced as the National Winner of the National FFA Agri-Science Fair in the Environmental Service & Natural Resource Systems Division at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis in November 2023.



Neoga Hometown Christmas is held each year in downtown Neoga on the last Saturday in November. This holiday event grows in popularity each year and includes an ice skating rink, ice sculpting demonstration, antique tractor sleigh rides, kids activities, live music, lighted parade, and more!



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Sooyefest, an annual event hosted by Neoga Partnership for Progress, is held on the third Saturday of October in Jennings Park in Neoga. Activities include live music, games, food and craft vendors, a free ham & bean lunch and the ever-popular smoke-off competition.



St. Michael School Class of 2019 alumni, Kaylee Niebrugge, was crowned the 2023 Teutopolis High School prom queen in April 2023.




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Newton

Jasper County was formed in 1831 out of Clay and Crawford Counties. It was named for Sgt. William Jasper, a Revolutionary War hero from South Carolina. During the defense of Fort Moultrie in 1776, the staff of the American flag was shot away. Sgt. Jasper attached the flag to a pole and stood on the wall waving the flag at the British until a new staff was erected.

Newton is located a short drive from two major interstates and several airports accommodating small planes as well as commuter flights. Locally, state routes 33 and 130 are both class two truck routes and rail services are provided by both the Indiana Railroad and Illinois Central Railroad.

Friendly neighborhoods and a progressive school system make you feel at home right away, and there is always something to occupy your time. Hunting lodges,



two parks (including an aquatic center and skate park) and a drive-in are just a few of our recreation options.

If you are thinking of making Newton your home or the home of your business, or if you are just passing through, we hope you enjoy our mix of small town ideals and big city ambition!

Notable residents:

- Glenn Brummer, baseball catcher for the Major League

Baseball St. Louis Cardinals and Texas Rangers; member of the 1982 World Champion Cardinals

- Irene Hunt, author of the classic "Across Five Aprils"
- Albert Isley, Illinois judge, lawyer, and state senator

- Burl Ives, folk singer, author, and actor
- Ross Wolf, baseball pitcher; played for the SK Wyverns of the Korea Baseball Championship; formerly played for several Major League Baseball teams



Burl Ives statue in Newton.

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Village of Greenup

Greenup, Illinois, is an opportunity to step back in time and see a simpler way of life, while never leaving the amenities to which we have become accustomed. Platted by William C. Greenup in 1834, while he served in a supervisory capacity on the National Road, Greenup has a rich and interesting history. Residents and visitors alike can appreciate Greenup for its numerous elements of charm.

The village of Greenup is a small community of just over 1,300 residents, located along interstate 70 and at the junction of Illinois Route 130 and Illinois Route 121. The National Road, US Route 40, runs through the southern edge of Greenup as well providing another source of tourism and transportation. Greenup is strategically located 23 miles to the east of Effingham, 25 miles to the south east of Mattoon, and 16 miles south of Charleston, providing residents with numerous options for dining, entertainment and employment all within a short commute.

That is not to say that Greenup doesn't have an impressive offering of services itself, particularly given its size! Greenup has a large lineup of businesses that includes

an impressive Cameo Vineyards winery and a bustling new Love's Travel Stop, just off the interstate, offering travelers and locals a chance to enjoy eateries that include Chester's Chicken, Godfather's Pizza and Naf Naf Grill. The locals appreciate that they have their own grocery store and various convenience options should they not want to travel. The school district, located outside of town, prepares students to become productive citizens. People wishing to pursue higher education or learn a trade have access to Eastern Illinois University and Lake Land Community College, both less than an hour's commute from the community. The largest employer in Greenup is by far Evapco, employing over 400 skilled workers, building high end industrial AC and refrigeration units that are utilized around the world!

Within the village proper, Greenup has 7 restaurants to provide a variety of choices. After dinner, residents or visitors can treat themselves to a unique downtown experience with the view of the store fronts which provide Greenup its title, "The Village of Porches". The porches have a style that would be perhaps as much at home in 1880's New Orleans as a rural community in Illi-

nois, and they give visitors an enjoyable look at the beauty of historic architecture in the area. For those interested in seeing beautiful architecture up close, Greenup is also home to a modern covered bridge, built in 2000 and boasting no weight restriction on its use. The Greenup covered bridge has an observation deck as well as a nature trail along the banks of the Embarrass River. History lovers will enjoy that the original covered bridge that had occupied the site used timbers laid by Abe and Thomas Lincoln. Of course, being the land of Lincoln, the ties to the Lincoln family don't end with the bridge. Greenup is just south of the famed Lincoln Log Cabin, home to the Lincoln's after they moved to Illinois, as well as the Thomas Lincoln Cemetery, the final resting place of Abraham's father and step-mother.

For those looking to make an extended trip of their visit to Greenup, there are options from which to choose. Greenup has two motels as well as four Airbnbs. During that extended stay, visitors may want to visit our two local museums or take in one of the two local parks. Whatever your reason for visiting, Greenup has your needs and your comfort covered.



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Downtown Greenup

EPC welcomes national acts

Lee Brice, Rodney Carrington, Home Free, Wayne Newton and more coming this spring!

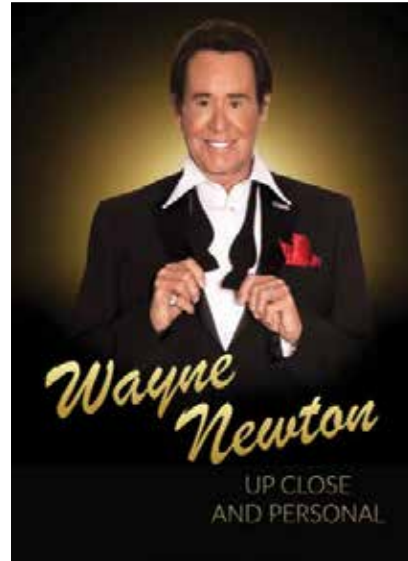
The Effingham Performance Center is ready for spring with national performers set to take the stage, as the theatre celebrates its 14th season.

“This season has been one of our most successful, and we hope to continue that success as we welcome national touring artists to our stage,” said Kim Jansen, executive director of the EPC.

Shows for the season included Ashley McBride, Craig Morgan, Crowder, and The Oak Ridge Boys with artists including Lee Brice, Rodney Carrington, Home Free and Wayne Newton set to perform this spring.

The EPC will be announcing the lineup for Season 15 on July 17, 2024. Season brochures will be sent to patrons in late July.

Tickets are available for purchase through the EPC’s Box Office, by stopping by or calling (217) 540-2788, or online at www.ticketmaster.com/epc.





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DATE/TIME	SHOW	TOP TIER	LEVEL A	LEVEL B
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Mar. 8 7:00 pm	Lee Brice: Me & My Guitar	\$95	\$75	\$65
Mar. 15 7:00 pm	Buckets N Boards	\$35	\$20	\$20
Mar. 17 2:00 pm	The Price Is Right Live	\$60	\$50	\$40
Mar. 22 7:00 pm	Rodney Carrington	\$69.50	\$59.50	\$49.50
Apr. 5 7:00 pm	Etta May & The Southern Fried Chicks	\$45	\$35	\$25
Apr. 11 7:00 pm	Home Free Crazy(er) Life Tour	\$65	\$47	\$30
Apr. 13 7:00 pm	Buckcherry	\$68	\$48	\$38
Apr. 18 7:00 pm	Jordan Feliz & Colton Dixon The Love + Light Tour	\$49.99	\$39.99	\$29.99
Apr. 20 7:00 pm	Wayne Newton: Up Close & Personal	\$69	\$59	\$45
Apr. 26 7:00 pm	EPC Idol Finals	\$10	\$10	\$10
June 1 7:00 pm	Scott Wattles & The Blue Suede Crew	\$20	\$20	\$20



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MAPPING THE PATH TO PROGRESS IN MONTROSE

By Cathy Griffith

The village of Montrose has been on a path to progress ever since it received a \$600,000 parks grant last year.

The state awarded the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant to local park projects throughout Illinois to help communities acquire land and develop recreational opportunities.

Montrose is using the grant to improve its campground and lake recreation area, which attracts people from all over the area.

The lake is popular with area anglers and those passing through with its plethora of catfish, bluegill, red ear, crappie and good-size bass. And the campground gets a lot of repeat interstate travelers who find it peaceful and safe.

Village President Steve Browning is hoping to add another attraction to the lake – wedding venue – with an observation deck for couples to hold their weddings that is being funded by the OSLAD grant. The grant also will allow the village to install new playground equipment, restroom facilities, shower house for campers and boat ramp.

The grant is also being used to help pay for a new ball diamond that organizers hope will attract people to tournaments and bring more out-of-town traffic to the village that is home to about 200 residents. While work has already begun on the ball diamond thanks to Dieterich-based Crush Athletics, which has partnered with the village to set up the home field, officials hope to start on the other projects this spring.

Montrose Village President Steve Browning stands along the village's lake. The village plans to build an observation deck to the lake, as well as a bigger dock as part of a \$600,000 parks grant the village received. Cathy Griffith photo





Gisele F. Hamm, MAPPING Program Director for the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs out of Western Illinois University, speaks to a room full of community members in Montrose about the program. Submitted photo

In the meantime, the momentum the grant has spurred has village officials embarking on a program to create a comprehensive plan for the village.

The program, MAPPING, is a strategic visioning and planning process in which residents provide input to create that plan. MAPPING, which stands for Management and Planning Programs Involving Nonmetropolitan Groups, is offered through the Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs.

“We decided we wanted to grow like Dieterich, and we’re basically going to steal Dieterich’s business plan,” Browning said of the neighboring village, which went through the program and has become a model of growth among rural communities in Illinois, bucking the trend of shrinking small towns in the state.

Browning was introduced to the Dieterich Community Development Corporation, a group of Dieterich residents who look for ways to invest in Dieterich. After sharing his intentions to grow the village, they didn’t hesitate to help.

“They go, ‘OK, we’re going to introduce you to people because we want to see Montrose grow just as bad as you want to see Montrose grow.’ They introduced us to people, and through the process of

meeting the people, they said the first thing you really want to do is map your destiny,” he said.

A special meeting was held in December to see if residents were interested in starting the process. The response was overwhelming. Nearly 40 residents packed the small village hall, and 13 signed up to be on the steering committee.

“I thought we were only maybe having four or five people show up. We were just ecstatic,” said Browning.

Lifelong resident Keith McKinney, who volunteered to be on the steering committee, also was surprised by the turnout.

The village won’t begin the MAPPING process until this fall. Still, village officials are hoping to keep the momentum going until then with monthly meetings of the steering committee to start getting some ideas.

“In order for the community to grow, it must be attractive to businesses and homeowners. Better infrastructure would make it attractive.”

— Keith McKinney, MAPPING steering committee member



This pavilion in Montrose will get a makeover as part of a state parks grant the village received. Cathy Griffith photo.

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McKinney would like to see the community grow and, with it, its infrastructure – water, sewer, roads, parks and accessibility. While he feels the village’s current infrastructure is adequate, it’s not enough to support expansion.

“In order for the community to grow, it must be attractive to businesses and homeowners. Better infrastructure would make it attractive,” he said.

That’s why village officials are looking for ways to help improve the village’s infrastructure.

Browning said the village is seeking a grant to finish upgrading its storm sewers after half of them were replaced several years ago.

“Before you build, you got to have your infrastructure in place,” said Browning. “We’re trying to build the town one piece at a time.”

Another piece is the recreational improvements.

“I hope once we get it all said and done that people will come and enjoy the park and think about building here in Montrose eventually,” he said.

While Browning hopes the actions the village is taking lead to population growth, he admits the village is getting a late start compared to others that have already completed the MAPPING program.

“You got to start somewhere, and we’re moving forward, and everybody said they’re glad to see us making the first step, and we’re hoping to keep the motivation going in a forward direction,” said Browning.

With Dieterich experiencing exponential growth and other area

villages already taking steps to mimic that, McKinney believes there is still room for Montrose to prosper.

“It does not matter that other communities have completed this program. We can still benefit,” he said.

Village Clerk Holly Huber believes the village can benefit from others that have gone through the program.

“We now have the opportunity to talk with those involved and hear what worked and didn’t work and what they would have done differently,” she said. “Other communities, Teutopolis and Strasburg, just to name a few, have done a tremendous job with their MAPPING program.”

McKinney notes Montrose has strengths other communities don’t, such as interstate access and proximity to Effingham and Mattoon. It also intersects with routes 40 and 121/Dieterich Blacktop.

Huber believes another asset the village has is its location within Dieterich Unit 30 School District.

“The administration, faculty and teachers are all top-notch and show great dedication and care for their students and school,” she said.

It’s one reason Huber and her husband built their home just south of the village.

“We wanted our children to have a good education and knew Dieterich Unit 30 would meet our expectations,” she said.

More than access to a good education, Huber wants Montrose to be a place her children want to return to after college. She envisions

a village with amenities like a coffee shop, unique stores and a restaurant.

“A place where people of all ages can go with multiple activities available,” she said.

She also wants to see stronger community involvement, whether as a volunteer firefighter, village trustee or president. Before the last election in 2023, the village had struggled to fill those positions.

Huber is encouraged by the turnout at the meeting in December.

“Economic growth takes community involvement, and the showing of support from those in attendance at the December presentation indicates we are at the perfect time, and I know Montrose will accomplish our goals and be just as successful,” she said.

She hopes the MAPPING program will provide the foundation for more participation in the community as fall planning sessions begin.

“Montrose is unique. We have a wide variety of individuals who, I have no doubt, will make our MAPPING program fit the dynamics and desires of Montrose with their own ideas,” she said.

Like Huber, McKinney seeks the MAPPING program to strengthen the community.

“I would like to see the members of the community rally around the community with common goals to improve it, hopefully, working toward and believing in those goals,” he said. “Doing such makes the community stronger.”

“I hope once we get it all said and done that people will come and enjoy the park and think about building here in Montrose eventually.”

— Steve Browning, Montrose village president

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- Trace Minerals (Selenium, Zinc), Essential Amino Acids, Magnesium, Vitamin C, Biotin, B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, B12

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CIPT Program Director Beth Beck-Marts and driver/dispatcher Sandy Burk stand in front of one of the many Effingham County Public Transportation passenger vehicles.

GIVING RESIDENTS A LIFT

Story and photos by Cathy Griffith

Linda Kraus rides the Central Illinois Public Transit vehicle to and from work five days a week.

CIPT picks her up at her home near Funkhouser and takes her to her job at Prince Corporation in Teutopolis at 7:15 a.m.

"I'm usually the only one on the bus going to work," said Kraus.

CIPT then picks her up from work at 4:30 p.m. and brings her home.

Kraus has relied on the service for more than five years.

"Everybody's polite, and they usually pick me up right on time without a problem. They pick me up from work with no problem. They take me right to the door at work. Very professional, very friendly," she said.

Without the service, Kraus said it would be difficult to get back and forth to work.

"I can't drive anymore, so I take the bus," she said. "If the service wasn't available, I either would have to get family members to take me to work, or I wouldn't work."

The transportation service is also affordable for Kraus. A monthly pass for transportation in Effingham County is \$35.

The public transportation service operates on a demand-response basis Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. and is administered by CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation. It is open to

everyone.

While people needing a ride must call a dispatcher ahead of time to schedule one, a new service started last year allows riders to hop on and off at designated stops on the north side of the city of Effingham between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday without calling ahead.

ETrax is similar to a bus route in large cities, but there is one difference. Between the designated stops, buses may deviate up to one-quarter of a mile from the established route to pick up or drop off riders. Deviations must be prescheduled, and only one is allowed per loop. The scheduled stops include medical centers, stores, apartments and a travel center. A boarding pass is \$1, and a monthly pass is \$35.

Since it began operating in July, ETrax has seen steady ridership, according to Central Illinois Public Transit Program Director Beth Beck-Marts. The service has been averaging about 190 to 195 rides a month, with December seeing the most significant increase – 220 rides – despite operating fewer days because of the holidays.

"I think it's slowly catching on. It seems like all of our stops are doing well," said Beck-Marts, adding Walmart and Kirby Foods are popular stops.

Effingham County officials would like to eventually add a route to serve the city's southern portion. But Beck-Marts said it's too soon to tell if such a route is warranted.

“We got to get the numbers up on this first one before we do the south end,” she said. She said they may get a better picture a full year into the program. They also will have to hire more drivers. Logistically, she said it would be more challenging to implement an ETrax route similar to the current one.

“It will be more challenging, of course, because of the railroad tracks. A deviated route is required to be on a very fixed time schedule. So, trying to figure out how we can account for a 20-minute stop here on these tracks is going to be the challenge. And there’s just less down here to go to. There’s plenty of stops where we are at now, but down here, there’s just not a lot of places that are fully utilized,” she said.

Still, Beck-Marts said they want to do some route, even if it’s a shuttle to the north end.

She noted that residents on the city’s south end can currently get a ride to ETrax.

“They can call in and say, ‘Hey, I need to go to Walmart,’ and we can pick them up and take them to like Kirby’s, and they can hop on the ETrax, and we can arrange to pick them up there to take them back home. So they can still utilize the ETrax. They would just need a demand response to get to that point,” she said.

ETrax, she said, serves as a focal point for people to do their business throughout the day.

Effingham County officials are helping to make the service more affordable for seniors, veterans and people with disabilities. The Effingham County Board voted to give the program \$10,000 earlier this year, allowing those groups to ride for a suggested donation.

“It just allows them to ride for what’s affordable for them,” said Beck-Marts.

While the service currently has grants that allow seniors – which is the largest demographic of riders – to ride the demand-response CIPT for a suggested donation of \$1 rather than the \$3 fare, the grant from the county now allows veterans and the disabled to ride for a suggested donation also.

“So, this will cover two demographics that are not covered right now,” she said.

With the other grants, Beck-Marts explained seniors ride for a suggested donation, and if they give a suggested donation, then they can transfer right over to the ETrax. But if they don’t offer a donation on the demand-response pickup, they have to pay to ride ETrax, or if they just go to an ETrax station, they have to pay the \$1.

“So, I think that’s kind of made some seniors hesitant to utilize it,” she said.

To take advantage of the new discount, people who fall into those groups must apply



CIPT driver/dispatcher Sandy Burk enjoys getting to know the passengers when she drives.

for identification cards that will be used for rides. Beck-Marts is hoping to have those applications available in February or March.

While people can use ETrax to travel to medical appointments – stops include HSHS St. Anthony’s and Sarah Bush Lincoln facili-

ties as well as Veterans Administration Clinic – CIPT also provides a dedicated route to medical providers in and outside the county. For Medicaid clients, Medicaid covers the cost. Beck-Marts said many trips are to specialists out of the county, which would be expensive if clients had to pay out of pocket. A trip outside the county is \$1 per mile.

“A lot of people can’t afford that,” she said.

CEFS has contracts with two managed care organizations that Medicaid outsources with and is now adding a third.

“That just allows us to cover more people that may have been assigned these managed care organizations. So, the more contracts we have with these providers, the more accessibility our residents have,” she said.

With the addition of providers, the service has increased Medicaid transports by 52% over the last year and a half.

As CEFS continues to make rides more affordable, Beck-Marts is happy the county’s latest contribution will provide that opportunity to more residents.

“I’m excited about that,” she said. “Hopefully, this donation from the county will be ongoing every year, and we will be able to provide that for those three demographics.”

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Property Transfers



EFFINGHAM COUNTY PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 718 property transfers recorded in Effingham County in 2023. Sales totaled \$180,856,782. Although acreage is not listed on every sale, the total that was listed came to 3,733.62 acres.

The top 50 sales by price totaled \$75,753,071 and encompassed 1,233.15 acres. They are listed below in descending order by sales price.

Address: 1201 Althoff Drive, Effingham
Price: \$15,500,000

Seller: Patterson Technology Center, Inc.
Buyer: Board of Trustees of Community College District No. 517
Acres: 21
Date recorded: 05-09-23

Address: 2301 S. Banker St., Effingham
Price: \$7,342,333
Seller: Effingham Storage Solutions, LLC – South Banker Series
Buyer: Bailey Family Enterprises, LLC
Acres: 18.6
Date recorded: 08-18-23

Address: 1200 N. Raney St., Effingham
Price: \$4,200,000

Seller: Central Midwest Hospitality Effingham CI, LLC
Buyer: VHS Properties, Inc., An Illinois Corporation
Acres: 2
Date recorded: 01-26-23

Address: E. Cumberland Road, Altamont
Price: \$4,117,263
Seller: Opilka Realty, LLC
Buyer: Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System
Acres: 1
Date recorded: 04-04-23

Address: S. Banker St., Effingham (Number not listed)
Price: \$2,544,000
Seller: LLR Development, LLC
Buyer: Stacey L. Durbin
Acres: 96
Date recorded: 08-23-23

Address: 709 W. Wabash Ave., Effingham
Price: \$2,366,667
Seller: Effingham Storage Solutions 2 – Loudon Property
Buyer: Bailey Family Enterprises LLC
Acres: 2
Date recorded: 10-11-23

Address: 1207 N. Keller Drive, Effingham
Price: \$2,275,000
Seller: BKK Holdings, LLC
Buyer: DLM Illinois, LLC
Acres: 0.5
Date recorded: 03-07-23

Address: N. 1225th St., Effingham
Price: \$2,004,375
Seller: Haarman Family Trust #1
Buyer: Beck's Superior Hybrids, Inc.
Acres: 59
Date recorded: 01-27-23

Address: Newcomb Drive, Effingham (Number not listed)
Price: \$1,956,930
Seller: Historic Hills, LLC
Buyer: Habe 2, LLC

Acres: 10
Date recorded: 12-07-23

Address: 2212 N. Raney St., Effingham
Price: \$1,825,000
Seller: Karen A. Luchtefeld & Kristie L. Kirby
Buyer: ABKS, Inc.
Acres: 12
Date recorded: 02-08-23

Address: 303 W. Fayette Ave., Effingham
Price: \$1,400,000
Seller: JT&KT, LLC
Buyer: JGKW Holdings, LLC
Acres: 1.5
Date recorded: 01-17-23

Address: 104 E. Blohm Ave., Effingham
Price: \$1,325,000
Seller: Willowbrook Development, LLC
Buyer: Effingham County Health Department
Acres: 1.5
Date recorded: 02-01-23

Address: 103 Norb Ave., Dieterich
Price: \$1,270,000
Seller: Rodney & Diana Fish
Buyer: EPCT Real Estate, LLC
Acres: 2
Date recorded: 04-20-23

Address: 11135 E. Cambridge Lane, Effingham
Price: \$1,200,000
Seller: Emanuele Trupiano
Buyer: Chad K. Green & Jenna N. Green
Acres: 3
Date recorded: 07-17-23

Address: 401 N. Keller Drive, Effingham
Price: \$1,175,000
Seller: Midtowne Developers, LLC
Buyer: AMZ Development LLC
Acres: 1.3
Date recorded: 11-30-23

Address: 1306 Thelma Keller Ave., Effingham
Price: \$1,056,300

Seller: Ruholl Family Investments LLC
 Buyer: Prairie Holdings Thelma K LLC
 Acres: 0.6
 Date recorded: 11-29-23

Address: E. 125th Ave., Mason (Number not listed)

Price: \$1,046,000
 Seller: Deborah D. Nelson
 Trustee
 Buyer: Travis L. Worman Co
 Trustee
 Acres: 80
 Date recorded: 12-04-23

Address: 8944 E. 1400th Ave., Effingham

Price: \$1,000,000
 Seller: Matthew Straube & Jane Santangelo
 Buyer: Joseph R. & Sheila I. Dively
 Acres: 1.5
 Date recorded: 04-03-23

Address: E. 1400th Ave., Effingham (Number not listed)

Price: \$960,000
 Seller: Roger Herrmann, ET AL
 Buyer: Timothy E. Neu & Jessica A. Neu
 Acres: 80
 Date recorded: 11-09-23

Address: 1310 Pike Ave., Effingham

Price: \$900,000
 Seller: Overbeck Investments, LLC
 Buyer: Mid-Illinois Concrete, Inc.
 Acres: (Not listed)
 Date recorded: 06-15-23

Address: E. 300th Ave., Mason (Number not listed)

Price: \$852,000
 Seller: Beck's Superior Hybrids, Inc.
 Buyer: Haarmann Family Trust #1
 Acres: 70.5
 Date recorded: 01-24-23

Address: 12826 N. Country Club Rd., Effingham

Price: \$850,000
 Seller: Scott A. Conant
 Buyer: Jeffrey S. Pryor
 Acres: 8
 Date recorded: 08-22-23

Address: 9153 E. US Hwy. 40, Effingham

Price: \$845,000
 Seller: Jeffrey S. Pryor
 Buyer: Jon E. & Monica M. Fopay
 Acres: 32
 Date recorded: 08-24-23

Address: RR 500N, Mason (Number not listed)

Price: \$840,000
 Seller: Sonia K. Hyde, Trustee
 Buyer: Logan A. Hill
 Acres: 60
 Date recorded: 04-18-23

Address: N. 2400th St., Montrose (Number not listed)

Price: \$835,539
 Seller: Marcia K. Cox/Roger L. Krabbe/Stanley L. Krabbe & Marcia L. Krabbe, as Trustee
 Buyer: Alan A. Goebel & Margaret A. Goebel
 Acres: 52.5
 Date recorded: 03-31-23

Address: 13275 N. Country Club Rd., Effingham

Price: \$820,500
 Seller: Jeffrey R. Lauritzen & Lisa M. Lauritzen
 Buyer: Christopher S. Tingley & Michelle L. Tingley
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 10-25-23

Address: N. 600th St., Altamont (Number not listed)

Price: \$790,000
 Seller: William H. Hulbert
 Buyer: Joshua S. Bobbitt
 Acres: 79
 Date recorded: 07-27-23

Address: 216 W. Main St., Teutopolis

Price: \$785,016
 Seller: Esker Family Trust A
 Buyer: EBJ Land Trust #95-146
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 05-05-23

Address: N. Raney St. (Number not listed)

Price: \$775,495
 Seller: City of Effingham
 Buyer: Effingham Hospitality Partners II, LLC
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 03-02-23

Address: 18221 Wild Oaks Drive, Effingham

Price: \$749,900

Seller: Danny W. Beal
 Buyer: Jason R. Heuerman & Michele K. Hartke
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 10-27-23

Address: 1017 Beckman Drive, Effingham

Price: \$725,000
 Seller: R. Dean Bingham & Mary Colleen Bingham
 Buyer: James Schultz & Stephanie Christine Schultz
 Acres: 1
 Date recorded: 01-04-23

Address: 400 & 320 W. Clark Ave., Effingham

Price: \$700,000
 Seller: Candy A. Tabor
 Buyer: JM Tegeker Holdings, LLC
 Acres: 3
 Date recorded: 09-01-23

Address: 14940 N. 16th Ave., Effingham

Price: \$700,000
 Seller: Raymond L. & Crystal J. Heinrich
 Buyer: Ralph Hegel & Charlene Hegel Revocable Trust
 Acres: 1
 Date recorded: 10-23-23

Address: E. 700th Ave., Altamont (Number not listed)

Price: \$696,410
 Seller: Stephen W. Alwerdt
 Buyer: Larry J. Spilker
 Acres: 67
 Date recorded: 05-25-23

Address: 18802 N. US Hwy. 45, Effingham

Price: \$690,000
 Seller: Mark R. Croxell & Leslie A. Croxell
 Buyer: Stillwater Mulch, Inc.
 Acres: 8
 Date recorded: 01-09-23

Address: N. 600th St., Edgewood (Number not listed)

Price: \$653,250
 Seller: Valerie D. Kuhns, et al
 Buyer: HTK Farms, LLC
 Acres: 65
 Date recorded: 09-25-23

Address: 11174 E. Lincolnshire Lane, Effingham

Price: \$650,500
 Seller: Christopher S. Tingley
 Buyer: Katherine Anderson
 Acres: 0.5

Date recorded: 11-14-23

Address: 1208 N. Wenthe Drive, Effingham

Price: \$650,000
 Seller: Crossroads Bank
 Buyer: IAG Investments LLC – Effingham
 Acres: 7.7
 Date recorded: 09-19-23

Address: Off Stevens Ave. (Number not listed)

Price: \$645,000
 Seller: Agracel, Inc.
 Buyer: IAG Investments LLC – Effingham
 Acres: 8.6
 Date recorded: 08-01-23

Address: 15460 N. East Road, Effingham

Price: \$630,000
 Seller: Daniel Harrington
 Buyer: Harlan K. & Martha M. Fabert
 Acres: 1.5
 Date recorded: 07-18-23

Address: 9061 E. Wren Drive, Effingham

Price: \$629,000
 Seller: Spraul Family Trust
 Buyer: MFT Properties, LLC
 Acres: 1.25
 Date recorded: 09-01-23

Address: N. 1030th St., Mason (Number not listed)

Price: \$573,101
 Seller: Cecil H. Bartels, Jr.
 Buyer: Shane Frederking, ET UX.
 Acres: 154
 Date recorded: 04-03-23

Address: N. 300th St., Mason (Number not listed)

Price: \$550,000
 Seller: Glenn E., Jr. & Shirley A. Ernst
 Buyer: Blake Forrest Roberts, ET AL
 Acres: 72
 Date recorded: 04-03-23

Address: 11258 E. Lincolnshire Lane, Effingham

Price: \$550,000
 Seller: Donald T. & Aleta Bushue
 Buyer: Kevin & Allison McDonald
 Acres: 1.6
 Date recorded: 06-30-23



Address: 13140 Augusta National Drive, Effingham
 Price: \$535,000
 Seller: MJC Associates, LLC
 Buyer: Alex Turner & Sadie Turner
 Acres: 0.5
 Date recorded: 11-14-23

Address: N. 1900th Ave., Teutopolis (Number not listed)
 Price: \$534,000
 Seller: James Pruemmer, Independent Executor
 Buyer: Neil A. Goeckner, ET UX.
 Acres: 40
 Date recorded: 04-14-23

Address: 613 Bent Tree Drive, Effingham
 Price: \$520,000
 Seller: Michael R. & Christina Tangman
 Buyer: Caleb & Kelsey Mette
 Acres: 0.5
 Date recorded: 02-01-23

Address: 15122 Lorton Road, Effingham
 Price: \$510,000
 Seller: Jeffrey S. Mumma
 Buyer: Scott Bechtel Trust & Lisa Bechtel Trust
 Acres: Not listed

Date recorded: 02-23-23

Address: W. Green Ave., Effingham (Number not listed)
 Price: \$502,986
 Seller: Carolyn L. Lambert, ET AL
 Buyer: Habe 2, LLC
 Acres: 57
 Date recorded: 04-21-23

Address: E. 1250th Ave., Teutopolis (Number not listed)
 Price: \$501,506
 Seller: David J. Zerrusen, ET UX.
 Buyer: Darren J. Zerrusen, ET UX.
 Acres: 39.5
 Date recorded: 01-26-23

ALTAMONT PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 68 property transfers in Altamont in 2023, which totaled \$14,642,397. Although acreage is not listed for every transfer, the acreage listed came to 219.28. Here are the top 10 property transfers in Altamont in 2023, which totaled \$7,706,673.

Address: E. Cumberland Road (Number not listed)
 Price: \$4,117,263
 Seller: Opilka Realty, LLC
 Buyer: Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System
 Acres: 1
 Date recorded: 04-04-23

Address: N. 600th Street (Number not listed)
 Price: \$790,000
 Seller: William H. Hulbert
 Buyer: Joshua S. Bobbitt
 Acres: 79
 Date recorded: 07-27-23

Address: E. 700th Avenue (Number not listed)
 Price: \$696,410
 Seller: Stephen W. Alwerdt
 Buyer: Larry J. Spilker
 Acres: 67
 Date recorded: 05-25-23

Address: 6520 E. 950th Ave.
 Price: \$400,000
 Seller: David M. Wolff
 Buyer: Aaron J. Bartimus
 Acres: 12.5
 Date recorded: 12-22-23

Address: Fox Run Drive (Number not listed)
 Price: \$349,000

Seller: Terry D. White
 Buyer: RMP Enterprises, LLC
 Acres: 3
 Date recorded: 04-10-23

Address: 10251 N. 450th St.
 Price: \$300,000
 Seller: Charles A. Siebert
 Buyer: Wyatt W. Steffen & Rachel B. West
 Acres: 1
 Date recorded: 11-09-23

Address: 105 Ash St.
 Price: \$269,000
 Seller: Roy A. Clarkson
 Buyer: Brock T. Ledbetter & Molly S. Ledbetter
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 07-05-23

Address: 111 & 115 N. Main St.
 Price: \$265,000
 Seller: Bernice L. Grobengieser, ET VIR.
 Buyer: Roger M. Beccue, ET UX.
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 04-03-23

Address: 8386 N. Cardinal Lane.
 Price: \$260,000
 Seller: Mark A. Pemberton & Kay Pemberton
 Buyer: Thomas John Aldrich & Jennifer Mary Aldrich
 Acres: 0.03
 Date recorded: 10-10-23

Address: 23 N. Main St.
 Price: \$260,000
 Seller: S&W Supermarket, Inc.
 Buyer: IP Traders, Inc.
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 12-07-23

BEECHER CITY PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 14 property transfers in Beecher City in 2023, which totaled \$1,053,500. Although acreage is not listed for every transfer, the acreage listed came to 23.95. Here are the top 10 property transfers in Beecher City in 2023, which totaled \$1,003,000

Address: 407 S. Charles St.
 Price: \$172,000
 Seller: Jeffrey & Georgia Evans

Buyer: William & Patricia R. Prichard
 Acres: 1
 Date recorded: 10-19-23

Address: 206 W. Henry Ave.
 Price: \$155,000
 Seller: The Clark Family Trust
 Buyer: Don & Carolyn Clark
 Joint Tenancy Trust dated September 20, 2023
 Acres: 0.5
 Date recorded: 10-23-23

Address: 500 E. Poplar St.
 Price: \$135,000
 Seller: Rebecca Laffoon
 Buyer: Craig & April Johnson
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 09-06-23

Address: 509 W. Poplar St.
 Price: \$112,500
 Seller: Nicholas R. Wheeler & Kayla L. Wheeler
 Buyer: Damion W. Shumard & Bridget L. Wilson
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 06-05-23

Address: 400 E. Vine St.
 Price: \$95,000
 Seller: Jason D. Flowers
 Buyer: Kelsy M. Flowers
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 10-27-23

Address: Address not listed (farmland)
 Price: \$92,000
 Seller: Compass West, Inc.
 Buyer: Charles & Breana Johnson
 Acres: 20
 Date recorded: 07-14-23

Address: 502 E. Sheridan St.
 Price: \$87,000
 Seller: Lois M. Henry, Trustee
 Buyer: Austin W. Rexroad
 Acres: 0.75
 Date recorded: 12-22-23

Address: 200 S. Charles St.
 Price: \$72,000
 Seller: Jacob G. Mansker
 Buyer: Cody & Makenzee Doty
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 04-28-23

Address: 103 S. George St.
 Price: \$42,500
 Seller: Nancy Warner
 Buyer: Tri-County Fire Protection District
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 09-13-23



Address: 502 E. Poplar St.
 Price: \$40,000
 Seller: Caleb Burrus & Staci Burrus
 Buyer: Christina Cripe
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 09-08-23

DIETERICH PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 46 property transfers in Dieterich in 2023, which totaled \$8,789,166. Although acreage is not listed for



every transfer, the acreage listed came to 337.75. Here are the top 10 property transfers in Dieterich in 2023, which totaled \$4,546,000.

Address: 103 Norb Ave.
 Price: \$1,270,000
 Seller: Rodney & Diana Fish
 Buyer: EPCT Real Estate, LLC
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 04-20-23

Address: E. 200th Avenue (Number not listed)
 Price: \$456,000
 Seller: Ricky L. Elmore
 Buyer: Gregory A. Elmore & Elizabeth A. Elmore

Acres: 38
 Date recorded: 10-27-23

Address: N. 2200th Street (Number not listed)
 Price: \$400,000
 Seller: Amy Jo Frederking
 Buyer: James B. Westendorf & Nancy L. Westendorf
 Acres: 27
 Date recorded: 03-21-23

Address: N. 2200th Street (Number not listed)
 Price: \$400,000
 Seller: James B. Westendorf & Nancy L. Westendorf
 Buyer: Ted M. Westendorf & Kate M. Westendorf
 Acres: 26.6
 Date recorded: 06-14-23

Address: 201 Liberty Drive
 Price: \$365,000
 Seller: Accent Design Concepts, LLC
 Buyer: Tami A. Michl
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 08-23-23

Address: Lucas Township (Address not listed)
 Price: \$360,000
 Seller: Estate of Phyllis Joy Phillips
 Buyer: Cody & Leslie Gerth
 Acres: 40
 Date recorded: 02-24-23

Address: 404 N. Pointe Drive
 Price: \$340,000
 Seller: David A. Mahaffey
 Buyer: Joshua R. Campbell
 Acres: 0.4
 Date recorded: 12-12-23

Address: 208 Willow Ave.
 Price: \$325,000
 Seller: Michele K. Hartke
 Buyer: Joshua D. H. & Kaitlin Jo Stremme
 Acres: 0.5
 Date recorded: 10-24-23

Address: 311 Veterans Drive
 Price: \$315,000
 Seller: Alec & Kayla Westrich
 Buyer: Damon Hoene & Shannon Daugherty
 Acres: 0.5
 Date recorded: 01-26-23

Address: 401 N. Pointe Drive
 Price: \$315,000
 Seller: Dalton S. & Shelby L. Hinterscher
 Buyer: Alex Hardiek
 Acres: 0.5
 Date recorded: 05-08-23

EDGEWOOD PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 14 property transfers in Edgewood in 2023, which totaled \$1,404,516. Although acreage is not listed for every transfer, the acreage listed came to 241.2.
 Here are the top 10 property transfers in Edgewood in 2023, which totaled \$1,393,984.

Address: N. 600th Street (Number not listed)
 Price: \$653,250
 Seller: Valerie D. Kuhns, et al
 Buyer: HTK Farms, LLC
 Acres: 65
 Date recorded: 09-25-23

Address: SW 1002/123 E. 1st St.
 Price: \$210,000
 Seller: Kathryn A. Ernst
 Buyer: Stanton W. Stine
 Acres: 40
 Date recorded: 11-29-23

Address: 601 Broad St.
 Price: \$157,000
 Seller: Matthew W. & Hannah M. Page
 Buyer: Levi West
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 07-19-23

Address: 503 Hickory St.
 Price: \$140,000
 Seller: Larry D. Kuhns
 Buyer: Matthew P. Kuhns
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 09-22-23

Address: 6861 E. 100th Ave.
 Price: \$110,000
 Seller: Damon & Vicky Simmons
 Buyer: Ronnie L. Merritt, Jr
 Acres: 12
 Date recorded: 12-04-23

Address: 307 Poplar St. & 308 Locust St.
 Price: \$65,000
 Seller: David & Tammy Burkett
 Buyer: REJE, LLC
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 08-21-23

Address: 404 Broad St.
 Price: \$37,500
 Seller: Richard Backstrom, Sr.
 Buyer: Raivieri & Claudia C. Castillo
 Acres: 0.7
 Date recorded: 11-02-23

Address: 1236 Walnut St.
 Price: \$8,100
 Seller: Jamie Parks
 Buyer: John Dean Limes, Pansy Faith Limes & Stephen H. Limes
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 08-30-23

Address: Not listed
 Price: \$8,000
 Seller: Henry F. Bennett Estate
 Buyer: Damon B. Simmons & Vicky S. Simmons
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 05-01-23

Address: Indiana St. & N. 300th (Number not listed)
 Price: \$5,134
 Seller: Gregory Dallas
 Buyer: Edward G. Schatz



Acres: 120
Date recorded: 01-04-23

MASON PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 35 property transfers in Mason in 2023, which totaled \$7,121,306. Although acreage is not listed for every transfer, the acreage listed came to 766.4. Here are the top 10 property transfers in Mason in 2023, which totaled \$5,506,301.

Address: E. 125th Avenue (Number not listed)
Price: \$1,046,000
Seller: Deborah D. Nelson Trustee
Buyer: Travis L. Worman Co Trustee
Acres: 80
Date recorded: 12-04-23

Address: E. 300th Avenue (Number not listed)
Price: \$852,000
Seller: Beck's Superior Hybrids, Inc.
Buyer: Haarmann Family Trust #1
Acres: 70.5
Date recorded: 01-24-23

Address: RR 500N. (Number not listed)
Price: \$840,000
Seller: Sonia K. Hyde, Trustee
Buyer: Logan A. Hill
Acres: 60
Date recorded: 04-18-23

Address: N. 1030th Street (Number not listed)
Price: \$573,101
Seller: Cecil H. Bartels, Jr.
Buyer: Shane Frederking, ET UX.
Acres: 154
Date recorded: 04-03-23

Address: N. 300th Street (Number not listed)
Price: \$550,000

Seller: Glenn E., Jr. & Shirley A. Ernst
Buyer: Blake Forrest Roberts, ET AL
Acres: 72
Date recorded: 04-03-23

Address: 2351 N. State Hwy. 37 & E. 250th Ave.
Price: \$460,000
Seller: Jacob P. & Andrea M. Wright
Buyer: Becky Stallings & Cheri Dawn Joas
Acres: 42
Date recorded: 06-30-23

Address: 3860 N. 400th Road
Price: \$325,000
Seller: Joshua & Jamie Fergus
Buyer: Allison A. & Christopher M. Cogar
Acres: 4
Date recorded: 04-03-23

Address: 2705 N. 1275th St.
Price: \$312,000
Seller: Brian G. Anderson
Buyer: Joshua Fergus
Acres: 4.5
Date recorded: 04-05-23

Address: 1866 N. 1150th St.
Price: \$282,000
Seller: You & Me 2022, LLC
Buyer: Lloyd Robert Gerald & Kendra Jo Gerald
Acres: 3
Date recorded: 09-05-23

Address: N. 400th Street (Number not listed)
Price: \$266,200
Seller: Lauren M. Kabbes
Buyer: Carol L. Clarkson Revocable Trust
Acres: 80
Date recorded: 11-13-23

MONTROSE PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 14 property transfers in Montrose in 2023, which totaled \$2,412,346. Although acreage is not listed for every transfer, the acreage listed came to 182.5. Here are the top 10 property transfers in Montrose in 2023, which totaled \$2,391,596.



**Address: N. 2400th Street
(Number not listed)**
 Price: \$835,539
 Seller: Marcia K. Cox/Roger L. Krabbe/Stanley L. Krabbe & Marcia L. Krabbe, as Trustee
 Buyer: Alan A. Goebel & Margaret A. Goebel
 Acres: 52.5
 Date recorded: 03-31-23

**Address: 407 S. Spring
Creek Road**
 Price: \$350,000
 Seller: Neal R. & Sarah J. Mellendorf
 Buyer: Brock R. & Toni M. Mellendorf
 Acres: 5
 Date recorded: 06-02-23

**Address: E. 1600th Ave.
(Number not listed)**
 Price: \$300,000
 Seller: Debra Wendt
 Buyer: Brian Wendt
 Acres: 50
 Date recorded: 12-14-23

**Address: E. 1600th Ave.
(Number not listed)**
 Price: \$300,000
 Seller: Brian Wendt
 Buyer: Debra Wendt
 Acres: 50
 Date recorded: 12-14-23

**Address: E. National Road
(Number not listed)**
 Price: \$272,909
 Seller: Marcia K. Cox/Roger L. Krabbe/Stanley L. Krabbe & Marcia L. Krabbe, as Trustee
 Buyer: Richard V. Boerngen & Carol S. Boerngen
 Acres: 20
 Date recorded: 03-31-23

Address: 16296 N. 2300th
 Price: \$129,000
 Seller: Levi O. Swingler
 Buyer: Nicholas Overbeck; Mickala Klay
 Acres: 1
 Date recorded: 05-22-23

Address: 313 S. Maple St.
 Price: \$82,160
 Seller: Craig Toler
 Buyer: Trevor Joseph Gordon
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 09-08-23

Address: 202 E. Oak Ave.
 Price: \$50,000
 Seller: Premier Construction Management Group, LLC
 Buyer: Accent Design Concepts, LLC
 Acres: 0.5
 Date recorded: 03-31-23

**Address: Frontage Road
(Number not listed)**
 Price: \$48,988
 Seller: Marcia K. Cox/Roger L. Krabbe/Stanley L. Krabbe & Marcia L. Krabbe, as Trustee
 Buyer: Benjamin W. Goebel & Angela M. Goebel
 Acres: 3.5
 Date recorded: 03-31-23

Address: 116 W. Mead Ave.
 Price: \$23,000
 Seller: Kesney Estrada
 Buyer: Timothy Avery
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 12-08-23

SHUMWAY PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 14 property transfers in Shumway in 2023, which totaled \$2,247,302. Although acreage is not listed for every transfer, the acreage listed came to 82.25.
 Here are the top 10 property transfers in Shumway in 2023, which totaled \$2,131,802.

Address: 5265 E. 1800th Ave.
 Price: \$340,000
 Seller: Sandy C. Cornett & Cynthia Cornett
 Buyer: Michael Gasper & Patricia Gasper
 Acres: 2.5
 Date recorded: 03-31-23

**Address: E. 1800th Avenue
(Number not listed)**
 Price: \$329,702
 Seller: Jason Kyle, Trustee, Ronald/Sally Kyle Trust
 Buyer: Troy W. Kyle
 Acres: 33
 Date recorded: 06-27-23

Address: 1855 N. 600th St.
 Price: \$315,000
 Seller: Julie Stuckemeyer, Thomas & Sandra Laue
 Buyer: Zac R. & Kassandra L. Stuckemeyer
 Acres: 5
 Date recorded: 04-20-23

**Address: E 1800th Avenue
(Number not listed)**
 Price: \$300,900
 Seller: Ronald W. Kyle & Sally L. Kyle Trust
 Buyer: Roy D. Wendte
 Acres: 20
 Date recorded: 04-06-23

Address: 16532 N. 700th St.
 Price: \$195,000
 Seller: Douglas R. Hankins
 Buyer: Nathan & Ashley Delks
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 10-23-23

Address: 9160 E. 1900th Ave.
 Price: \$180,000
 Seller: Ronald E. Kelly, Ryman E. Kelly & Dee Newton a/k/a Darthamae Newton
 Buyer: Randall Kelly & Elizabeth Kelly
 Acres: 3
 Date recorded: 02-17-23

Address: 9195 E. State Hwy. 33
 Price: \$160,000
 Seller: Joseph P. Gasper
 Buyer: Shay Orsborn
 Acres: 0.75
 Date recorded: 06-07-23

Address: 5837 E. 1800 Ave.
 Price: \$140,000
 Seller: Ronald W. Kyle & Sally L. Kyle Trust
 Buyer: Jeremy W. Kyle
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 03-06-23

Address: 8874 N. State Hwy, 33
 Price: \$113,000
 Seller: Donald L. Himes
 Buyer: Isaac Bouyd Mathis
 Acres: 1
 Date recorded: 11-30-23

Address: 3887 E. State Hwy 33
 Price: \$58,200
 Seller: Norma L. Tipsword Estate
 Buyer: Mark Workman
 Acres: 3
 Date recorded: 11-22-23



TEUTOPOLIS PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 64 property transfers in Teutopolis in 2023, which totaled \$11,462,173. Although acreage is not listed for every transfer, the acreage listed came to 308.15.

Here are the top 10 property transfers in Teutopolis in 2023, which totaled \$4,398,522.

Address: 216 W. Main St.
 Price: \$785,016
 Seller: Esker Family Trust A
 Buyer: EBJ Land Trust #95-146
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 05-05-23

Address: N. 1900th Avenue (Number not listed)
 Price: \$534,000
 Seller: James Pruemmer, Independent Executor
 Buyer: Neil A. Goeckner, ET UX.
 Acres: 40
 Date recorded: 04-14-23

Address: E. 1250th Avenue (Number not listed)
 Price: \$501,506
 Seller: David J. Zerrusen, ET UX.
 Buyer: Darren J. Zerrusen, ET UX.
 Acres: 39.5
 Date recorded: 01-26-23

Address: 400 N. John St.
 Price: \$487,500
 Seller: John H. & Janice A. Wessel
 Buyer: Lee & Sara Buehnerkemper
 Acres: 1
 Date recorded: 12-04-23

Address: E. 1100th Avenue (Number not listed)
 Price: \$400,000
 Seller: Estate of Francis A. Koeberlein
 Buyer: Jeffrey Allen & Cynthia Kay Hardiek
 Acres: 40
 Date recorded: 01-03-23

Address: Not listed
 Price: \$385,600
 Seller: Shane D. Frederking &

Amy Frederking
 Buyer: G&H Partners, LLC, an Illinois Limited Liability Co.
 Acres: 20.5
 Date recorded: 03-30-23

Address: 604 S. John St.
 Price: \$359,900
 Seller: Adam L. Buening & Rachael A. Buening
 Buyer: Brian J. Ruholl & Jill Ruholl
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 08-15-23

Address: 105 E. Main St.
 Price: \$350,000
 Seller: Rick Hemmen & Stacey Hemmen
 Buyer: BNS LLC
 Acres: 0.3
 Date recorded: 10-11-23

Address: 801 S. John St.
 Price: \$300,000
 Seller: P.E.L. Land Trust
 Buyer: Tyler M. Platz
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 02-09-23

Address: 15930 E. 1420th Ave.
 Price: \$295,000
 Seller: Joseph C. & Donna M. Wagner
 Buyer: Tony R. & Marcia Orndorff
 Acres: 2
 Date recorded: 12-18-23

WATSON PROPERTY TRANSFERS

There were 19 property transfers in Watson in 2023, which totaled \$2,093,600. Although acreage is not listed for every transfer, the acreage listed came to 87.4.
 Here are the top 10 property transfers in Watson in 2023, which totaled \$1,723,600.

Address: 15132 E. 500th Ave.
 Price: \$425,000
 Seller: Jon E. & Monica M. Fopay
 Buyer: Kyle & Ashley Clough
 Acres: 8
 Date recorded: 12-05-23

Address: 10480 E. 800th Ave.
 Price: \$311,000
 Seller: Isaac B. & Sara E. Mathis
 Buyer: Kevin F. Williams, Jr.

Acres: 6.3
 Date recorded: 12-05-23

Address: 15014 E. 650th Ave.
 Price: \$172,500
 Seller: Stephanie D. & Benjamin Foster
 Buyer: Turner Kronewitter
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 11-08-23

Address: 13593 E. 500th Ave.
 Price: \$139,380
 Seller: Estate of Elsie H. James
 Buyer: Dexter H. Hille
 Acres: 16.5
 Date recorded: 12-28-23

Address: E. 650th Ave. (Number not listed)
 Price: \$130,720
 Seller: Todd M. Hewing & Michael A. Hewing
 Buyer: Sonya Deibel & Anthony R. Althoff
 Acres: 12
 Date recorded: 08-03-23

Address: 103 Chaparral St.
 Price: \$115,000
 Seller: Timothy N. Thomson & Judy M. McWhorter
 Buyer: Zachari Case
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 08-08-23

Address: 301 E. Vine St.
 Price: \$112,000
 Seller: Eric J. Loy
 Buyer: Joshua L. Anderson
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 01-31-23

Address: 103 Casa Grande Dr.
 Price: \$111,000
 Seller: Joey N. & Brittany Meyer
 Buyer: Rachel Catherine Habbe
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 02-27-23

Address: 204 S. Jackson St.
 Price: \$107,000
 Seller: Tyler R. Schwabe
 Buyer: Joshua L. Kollman & Lisa M. Thompson
 Acres: Not listed
 Date recorded: 06-20-23

Address: 15630 E. 700th Ave.
 Price: \$100,000
 Seller: Michele Denise Anderson
 Buyer: Lynette Lee Adamson
 Acres: 40
 Date recorded: 03-02-23



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Broker Associate
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Broker Associate
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Marilyn Purcell
Broker Associate
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Broker Associate
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Jeff Speer
Broker Associate
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