

Pride & Progress

SECTION 1



FEATURING:

- Black Bros. Co.
- City of Mendota
- Financial Plus Credit Union
- HCC, Inc.
- Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce
- Mendota Elementary District 289
- Mendota High School District 280
- Sullivan's Foods

Mendota District 289 continues facility plan by going solar in '24

Beginning in 2021, Mendota Elementary School District 289 has had a set of strategic visions providing focus for the future of the schools. Two of those pillars are facilities and finance. Here are some of the improvements in those areas.

Facilities
In 2023, the district developed a five-year Facility Plan. As you know, the campus has students at three building sites, plus the track. With nearly 190,000 square feet under roof and a replacement cost of well over \$50 million, it is crucial to have a plan on how to keep the spaces functional and in good repair. Completed, planned, and possible projects include (but not limited to):

- 2022 - Updated heating and cooling. Air conditioning the campus while making heating updates, decreasing reliance on old boilers for heat.
- 2023 - Improved front entrance security in each building. Interior/exterior door replacement. Northbrook gym upgrades.
- 2024 - Solar panel installation, Surveillance camera updating. Northbrook hall-

way glass removal. Flooring updates at Blackstone, Northbrook. Northbrook gym bleachers.

• 2025 - Updating heating systems at Blackstone, Northbrook to take remaining antiquated boilers offline. Possible future projects include continued roof replacements, replacing single-pane windows/LED lighting in all three buildings and District storage.

Finance
On the finance side of things, Mendota Elementary continues to be very stable, while providing a great education at a great value. The last few years have seen an increase in cash reserves, looking at end-of-fiscal-year numbers:

- 2025 - \$9.21M
- 2023 - \$10.95M
- 2021 - \$8.55M
- 2019 - \$8.78M

The district continues to be mindful of taxpayer effort. In a comparison of other large LaSalle County elementary schools, Mendota Elementary has the lowest school tax rate (2023): Mendota 2.80, Streator 3.17, Ottawa 3.81, Peru 3.22, LaSalle 3.21.



Mendota Elementary School District 289 Board president Theresa Komitas helps children with the cutting of the ribbon during a July 2024 ceremony welcoming in the solar age to the school district. As part of its five-year facility plan, District 289 installed solar panels on the roof of all three schools.



Mendota Elementary School District 289 has on its 2025 agenda to update the heating systems at Blackstone and Northbrook to take remaining antiquated boilers offline. Possible future projects include continued roof replacements, replacing single-pane windows/LED lighting in all three buildings and district storage.



Family, School, Community:
Partners in Learning

WE BELIEVE STUDENTS COME FIRST.

WE BELIEVE A LEARNING COMMUNITY CELEBRATES DIVERSITY.

WE BELIEVE IN A SAFE, HEALTHY, AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.

WE BELIEVE IN FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY.

WE BELIEVE DATA SHOULD DRIVE INSTRUCTION.

WE BELIEVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS PROMOTE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.



What parents can do to save more for college

Raising a child is no small task. Though it's no surprise that parenting requires a substantial investment of time and energy, the financial cost of raising a child might raise more than a few eyebrows. According to the SmartAssetTM 2024 Study, the median annual cost to raise a child in the United States in 2024 is \$22,850, and that figure is considerably higher in many states.

Commitment and discipline are vital to getting across the financial finish line when raising a child, and that includes finding a way to finance a college education. Data from the College Board, a nonprofit that studies trends in the cost of a college education, indicates the cost of tuition and fees varies widely depending on the type of institution. Tuition and fees at an in-state four-year public school cost a little more than \$11,000 during the 2023-24 school year, while it was nearly four times as much (\$41,540) at a private nonprofit four-year institution.

Financing a child's college education can seem like a daunting task. However, an array of strategies can help parents save more for college.

- Take advantage of a 529 plan. A 529 education savings plan is an increasingly popular way to save for college. The Education Savings Programs at Bank of America reports that 529 plan assets increased from \$88.5 billion in 2008 to more than \$446 billion in 2023. A 529 plan is a tax-advantaged investment program administered by a state. When funds withdrawn from the plan are used for qualified expenses, such as tuition costs, then the earnings are free from federal income tax obligations. There are distinctions between 529

prepaid tuition programs and 529 savings programs, so parents are urged to discuss those differences with a financial advisor so they can choose the best plan for their situation.

- Redirect extra income to a college savings plan. Parents may have "extra" sources of income that can be used to fund college savings. Annual bonuses, money distributed through state-sponsored property tax relief programs and even money freed up when kids graduate from daycare and into elementary school can be redirected into college savings plans. Redirected daycare expenses may be particularly savvy, as parents know the cost of daycare is considerable. In fact, a recent report from Child Care Aware of America indicated the cost to place two children in child care exceeded annual typical mortgage payments in 45 states. Once kids are out of daycare, parents can redirect some or all the money they had been spending on child care into college savings plans.

- Don't go it alone. A 2023 survey from the College Savings Foundation found that 45 percent of parents would request that family and friends contribute to a child's 529 plan in lieu of the standard gifts given to children for their birthday, special events like graduation or during the holiday season. This practical yet less traditional approach can pad college savings plans by a considerable amount over the years, and close relatives might be more than happy to help parents fund a better education for their youngsters.

College is a costly investment, but parents can look to a handful of strategies to help defray tuition costs.



Chamber membership keeps businesses updated with pertinent information

The Mendota Chamber of Commerce benefits its members – and the community – in many ways. The Chamber provides an up-to-date website, sponsorship of the annual Sweet Corn Festival and many other events and programs that help to enhance business and community life in Mendota.

President and CEO, Sam Setchell, oversees the day-to-day operations of the Chamber along with the programs and policies of the board of directors and ambassador club. Responsibilities include public relations, fiscal oversight and the task of marketing Mendota. Setchell is assisted by Becky Biers, who has served as the Executive Assistant since October 2021. Together, they work to plan promotional events and carry out the directions of the chamber board.

The Chamber's website, www.mendotachamber.com, is a prominent benefit for Chamber members and is an important tool for connecting consumers with members' businesses. The site includes a directory that lists all Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce members and provides links to members' websites. The website includes members' job listings as well as an updated Calendar of Events listing members' events.

Every year, the Chamber's largest project is to coordinate the Mendota Sweet Corn Festival, which celebrates our community and the importance that agriculture and corn have played in Mendota's history. Always an impressive event, this year's Mendota Sweet Corn Festival will be no exception as it marks 78 years. The 2025 celebration is scheduled for Aug. 7-10. The Chamber's Sweet Corn Festival website, www.sweet-cornfestival.com, will show the 2025 calendar of events by late spring. The Chamber also compiles and distributes a brochure highlighting festival event sponsors and promoting member restaurants and motels. The Mendota Sweet Corn Festival brings around 40,000 visitors from around the country.

Some of the other benefits of Chamber membership are mailings, which keep members informed of upcoming events and programs; an e-newsletter broadcasting Chamber news, member events, and new members; advertising opportunities on the Chamber's double-sided LED sign located at the Mendota Civic Center; referrals of Chamber members; the Chamber ambassador's club, which welcomes new businesses and assists with grand openings and ribbon cutting; free participation in the Mendota Gift Certificate program; Chamber sponsored events and networking opportunities; seminars and workshops on topics of interest and concern to members; community events and tourism; opportunity to post job listings and coupons on the Chamber website, and the Mendota Community Calendar published monthly in The Mendota Reporter and free listing of Chamber members as monthly sponsors. All Chamber Members are also included in the Mendota Community Profile Book, which highlights different aspects of Mendota including City Government, School System, Industry, Health Care options, Tourism, etc. This publication is available in the Chamber Office or at www.mendotachamber.com.

The Chamber once again sponsored the Shop Local program this holiday season. The program ran from Nov. 21 through Dec. 21. For every \$10 spent in one of the over 60 participating businesses, customers received a sticker for their Shop Local card. Once cards were filled, they were turned into the Chamber office. The grand prize winner was Brenda Grobe of Mendota, who received over \$1,000 in gift certificates and merchandise



After visiting with Santa Claus, children could pick out a free book during the 'A Mendota Christmas' celebration sponsored by the Mendota Chamber in December.

donated by participating businesses. This holiday season, the Chamber had 312 Shop Local cards turned in, which is a grand total of \$78,000 spent in Mendota this holiday season.

The Mendota Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner/Awards Banquet recognizes the accomplishments of several area individuals and businesses with a number of special awards. The recipient of the H.D. Hume Outstanding Service Award for 2024 was Brian Basil, the 2024 Tom Merwin Gold Star Employee Award went to Omar Espinoza of the Mendota Area YMCA, and the 2024 Sweet Corn Festival Volunteer of the Year went to Taylor Olsen. The Beautification Award was presented to Scooter's Coffee.

Other events sponsored

by the Chamber include the Valentine Baby Contest, The Chamber Games, Easter Hop, Sweet Corn Festival Golf Classic, Mendota's 4th of July Celebration, Scarecrow Stroll, A Mendota Christmas, and Operation Elf Action. In addition, the Chamber partners with The Mendota Reporter in co-sponsoring the Mendota Community Calendar, which appears monthly in The Reporter.

The Chamber also serves to support and assist Mendota retailers in their promotions such as the Mrs. Santa Cookie Sales, and the "Woodhaven" and "Hi Neighbor" coupon books. The Chamber is also busy writing Chamber Gift Certificates throughout the year. Chamber Gift Certificates make wonderful gifts for the hard-to-buy-for per-

son because they can be used at more than 60 businesses.

The Chamber Ambassadors are another important part of the Chamber of Commerce serving as hosts for the annual dinner. The Ambassadors conduct Operation Elf Action during the holidays, which involves roughly 150 children annually. The Chamber Ambassadors also serve as a welcoming committee for new businesses in town for grand openings, ribbon cuttings, and Chamber After Hour events.

The Chamber office is located in the Mendota Municipal Building at 800 Washington St. in downtown Mendota. The building houses the city clerk's office and the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber office has long been an information center for visitors and res-


Mark your calendar for the 78th annual Sweet Corn Festival, August 7-10 in downtown Mendota!



The serving of free sweet corn is one of the highlights of the Chamber-sponsored Sweet Corn Festival. This year's event in August will be the 78th annual festival.

idents providing answers to the many questions that are asked each day. The Chamber supplies the community with information on Chamber members' businesses and gives out maps of the city, county, and state. Tourism is also a Chamber

priority, and the office provides a comprehensive list of activities and events. The Chamber continues to focus on the marketing of Mendota and the business interests of its members. They hope you will "Make Mendota a Destination!"



800 Washington Street • [815] 539-6507 • www.mendotachamber.com

Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce

...Serving Your Community And YOU!

2024-2025 CHAMBER MEMBERS:

<p>4M Graphix Abigail Women's Center ADM Grain Co. Advanced Drainage Systems Aimee Holland Al Bonnell Allure of Mendota American Machine, Inc. Ancare Veterinary Clinic Antojitos Gonzalez Anytime Fitness Mendota ARS Auto Repair Services August Hill Winery Barkman Concrete Construction Inc. Basil Construction Beck's BP Beck's I-39 Auto/Truck Plaza Becker Chiropractic Big Uproar Black Brothers Co. Boelk Truck Lines Bower's Corner Tap Buckman Iron & Metal Business Employment Skills Team Captain Thomas J. Heitmann Memorial Carquest Auto Parts Carriage House Electric Central Bank Illinois Chamlin & Associates, Inc. Charles Van Horn Entertainment Cherry Bear Bed and Breakfast Chris Eller - The Retirement Specialists Cindy's On 34 City of Mendota Comcast Comfort Inn & Suites Rochelle Commonwealth Edison Community Health Partnership of Illinois Compassus Davis Family Health DeLong's Auto Body Diaz Grocery and Tacos Edge of Your Seat Podcast Edward Jones Ekana Nursery & Landscaping El Rey Del Taco El Torito Mexican Grill El Zarape Mexican/American Restaurant Elite Welding & Service Euclid Beverage LTD. Eureka Savings Bank Expressions Salon Financial Plus Credit Union</p>	<p>First Federal Savings Bank First Presbyterian Church First State Bank First State Bank Plaza North First State Insurance Fitzers Flo's on Pulaski Floralcrest Florist & Greenhouse Frank Kobisek G & M Distributors Gahan Goy CPA's, Ltd. Good Vybz Ent. Graves-Hume Public Library Guilfoyle & Stevenson LLP Attorneys at Law H & H Builders, Inc. H & H Custom Firearms & Gunsmithing H.D. Hume Company HCC, Inc. Heritage Tractor Holy Cross School Homestead Realty Horizon House of Illinois Valley Horner-Merritt Funeral Home Hornung Electric & Construction, LLC Illinois Valley Community College Illinois Valley Counseling Services, LLC Illinois Valley Hispanic Partnership Council Illinois Valley Public Action to Deliver Shelter (IV Pads) Impact Networking, LLC J J & L Carpentry Jacquesi 2.0 Salon James Fitzpatrick Janelaine Boutique John Cross Jones Home Improvement Judge Troy Holland Kaleel Law Office Karen Donnelly Law Ken Otterbach Excavating & Demolition KingSpan Insulation, LLC Knights of Columbus Krenz Dental Corp. Kunz Engineering Kurt Bruno State Farm Insurance La Esquinita de Oro Icecream Shop La Salle NewsTribune Lakeside Liquors & Tobacco LaSalle County CASA org LaSalle County Veterans Assistance Commission Lee Stocking Leeward Renewable Energy</p>	<p>Liam's Market LLC Lilja Tiling & Excavating LLC Lulamaya M S Electric Mahoney Environmental Mauch Carpentry, Inc. Maxie's Salon McConville Realty & Auctioneer McDonald's MCS Advertising Mendota Area Christian Food Pantry Mendota Area Senior Services Mendota Area YMCA Mendota Business & Professional Women Mendota Civic Center Mendota Community Theatre Mendota Companion Animal Centre P.C. Mendota Elementary School Dist. 289 Mendota Elks Lodge Mendota Farmers Market Mendota FFA Alumni Mendota Fire Department Mendota Ford, Inc. Mendota Golf Club Mendota Lions Club Mendota Little League Mendota Moose Family Center Mendota Museum and Historical Society Mendota Mutual Insurance Company Mendota Police Dept. Mendota Rotary Club Mendota Township High School Mendota VFW Post 4079 Meyers Furniture Midland States Bank Moore Tires Nicol Gas Nightengales Thrift Shop North Central Area Transit Northern Illinois Ambulance Billing, Inc. Northern Illinois Seamless Roofing Northern Partners Cooperative NRG Media 1430AM WCMY & 95.3 JACK FM One Stop Heating and Cooling Inc OSF St. Paul Medical Center Ottawa Office Supply Painting Parties by Lucy Parkway Family Restaurant PC Tech 2 U Phalen Steel Construction Company Pizzas by Marchelloni Plano powered by Pure Fishing Prairie Land Millwright, Inc.</p>	<p>Prescott Brothers, Inc. Purpose Nutrition Quality First Inspections, LLC Quality Inn & Suites Ramos Pro Cleaning LLC Raynor Door Authority Red Ranch Photography Red's Landscaping LLC Reimagine Mendota Ridley Feed Ingredients Rochelle Broadcasting Co Rosati's Pizza Pub Rose Concrete Salinas Mexican Food Schimmer Chevrolet, Inc Scooter's Serenity Creek Massage/Healing Arts Henna Sew Quiltable LLC Shaw Local Radio Sports N Stuff n More LLC Starved Rock Country Community Foundation Starved Rock Media Starved Rock Technologies Starved Rock Wood Products, LLC State Representative Brad Fritts Stoncroft Village Studio 1500 Subway Sullivan's Ace Hardware Sullivan's Foods Super 8 Mendota By Wyndham Motel Surf Internet T2 Enterprises Tacos Guzman Tara N. VanDeWynngaerde, OD, PC Technology Made Easy The Chalet Sports Bar The Come Up LLC The Mendota Reporter Town & Country Realty Travel To You, Inc. Tri-County Fair Association Triple Service Plumbing Heating & Cooling Uncle Joe's Gaming Cafe United Way of Illinois Valley Valley-Coin-Jewelry-Pawn Waltham Curling Club Wasmer Funeral Home, Inc. West Side Family Dentistry Windy City Amusements Inc. Woodhaven Association Ziggie's Family Restaurant</p>
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The Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce, established in 1945, is a not-for-profit organization of businesses, representing industry, retail service, professionals and agriculture in partnership with tourism and government to further promote economic growth and quality of life in Mendota and the surrounding area. The strength of the Chamber lies in the active involvement of its membership. The Chamber office makes referrals of its members, and promotes them through a variety of activities, making the public aware of the goods and services available here in Mendota from its membership. The Mendota Chamber is a voice for business and is devoted to strengthening the business community and maintaining the exceptional characteristics of life here in Mendota.

CHAMBER OFFICERS

Marion Quintana - Past Chair
Erica Henry - Chair of the Board
Kelly Becker - Vice Chair
Jessica Newcomer - Secretary
Brad Cox - Treasurer

CHAMBER STAFF

Sam Setchell - President & CEO
Administrative Assistant
Becky Biers



Record year, new building add to Black Bros. legacy

Black Bros. Co. — the world's leading manufacturer of laminating and roll coating equipment established in 1882 — is pleased to introduce the new 18,200 square-foot Roll Manufacturing Building at its Mendota headquarters. The addition increases the venerable company's campus to over 100,000 square feet and houses the complete process of steel-roll machining and rubber vulcanization.

Chief Operating Officer Jeff Simonton says it offers a big improvement over its predecessor, the original factory built in 1907.

"It provides a far-better working environment, a very nice, clean space with climate control and more efficient workflow," he said. "Rubber is like a musical instrument; it expands and contracts with different weather. We believe tightening up the temperature range is key to having more consistency in the manufacturing of our rolls."

The project, which broke ground in February of 2024, officially came to a close shortly before the new year as machinery was relocated with normal production following shortly after.

Simonton estimated it is the eighteenth Black Bros. expansion since establishing homebase in 1900 and the first since 2000, when the 42,000 square-foot project along Fifth Avenue nearly doubled the company's overall footprint.

Sixth-generation Owner Evan Carroll doubled down on the benefits of the new space. "I've talked to the guys out there, and I know they all love it," he said. "They love the organization, the flow, the upgraded cranes and other upgraded equipment we have in there."

fully the new building is just another stepping-stone to growth down the road for the next chapter of Black Bros.”

And the next chapter may be now. A record year for machine sales, parts, and service in 2024 bodes well for the local manufacturing hub's future. Carroll attributes the continued success to the skill of Black Bros. employees. "We still have a ton of people here that have so much longevity and have done such a great job for such a long time," he said. "They're really the backbone of what keeps us successful and how we're able to have

“We still have a ton of people here that have so much longevity and have done such a great job for such a long time. They’re really the backbone of what keeps us successful and how we’re able to have these monster years. There’s a lot to be proud of!”

- Evan Carroll, Project Manager

these monster years. There's a lot to be proud of! We are in good standing and pushing to accomplish more and more. We're looking forward to another great year."

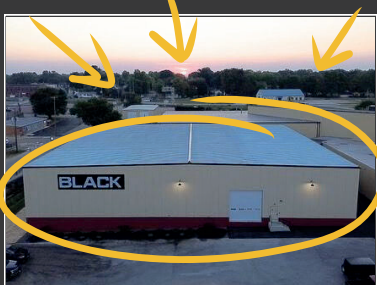
Offering laminating and coating solutions for cus-

tomers across multiple industries, the company's machinery can be found on every continent across the globe sans Antarctica. Black Bros. employs 65 associates in Mendota and its satellite location in High Point, N.C.



**MORE THAN A TRADITION
SIX GENERATIONS STRONG**
www.blackbros.com

INVESTING IN MENDOTA!



**JOIN
OUR
TEAM!**



BLACK



WORLD-CLASS MACHINERY PROUDLY MADE IN MENDOTA, IL



Black Bros. Co. executives, left to right, are Megan Kneebone, Chief Financial Officer; Matt Carroll, Chief Executive Officer; Evan Carroll, Project Engineer; and Jeff Simonton, President, Chief Operating Officer.



Veteran roll builders Craig Dinges, left, and Mike Fassig install the company's new Kingston Lathe. The custom lathe offers recipe storage and improves workflow by handling any sized roll or grinding specifications required by Black Bros. customers.

MHS adds RISE Network classroom, partners with city on walk/bike path

Mendota High School has seen some great changes over the year.

The RISE Network classroom was installed with audio and video technology in room 210. The Rural Illinois Shared Education (RISE) is a distance learning network dedicated to serving rural areas across Illinois as well as rural areas across the United States. RISE was created to foster an interactive and highly collaborative education network that encourages resource sharing for schools, virtual classrooms, and professional development for teachers and administrators. In this virtual environment, opportunities can be offered from an expanded course catalog to virtual field trips to access healthcare/mental health resources. Thanks to Illinois Valley Community College, many local high schools have benefited from the USDARISE grant opportunity. The high schools could install a state-of-the-art virtual classroom at a fraction of the overall cost. We look forward to offering IVCC Dual Credit courses on-site when in-person instructors cannot be provided by the college or district. The classroom is designed to both send out and receive instruction for a live learning experience.

Mendota High School is proud to partner with the City of Mendota in an easement approval to receive a walk/bike path. Mendota High School partnered with Reimagine Mendota and was a member of the Active People, Healthy Nation Illinois Walk-ability Virtual Academy. The result was a work plan that included eight goals designed to create more activity friendly routes for everyone. The high school also participated in the Community Heart and Soul Survey responses and data collection. When everyone

works together, we are hopeful to have a safe walk/bike path for our students to arrive at MHS in the near future. Unfortunately, the Illinois Department of Transportation and their engineering speed study does not consider that a reduced speed is warranted in front of Mendota High School. Per IDOT, the section of road in front of the high school does not fit within the consideration for a School Speed Zone. The high school appreciates the opportunity with the City of Mendota to build a walk/bike path to at least provide one safer option to our walking and biking students to the campus.

As another collaboration, Mr. Aaron Sester and his classes worked on a Project Sidewalk unit. The Project Sidewalk partners with the University of Illinois Chicago and middle school and high school students. Students had the opportunity to learn about the Americans with Disabilities Act, sidewalk infrastructure, and Project Sidewalk. The Sociology students had the opportunity to go on "missions" around neighborhoods to label sidewalk conditions and validate their peers' work. They could then analyze the data. What a great learning project that joined the school and the city.

Last but not least is the collaboration with the City of Mendota with the Youth Substance Prevention grant. The City of Mendota grant awarded \$375,000 per year for five years to develop a community coalition, set goals and plans, and reach the needs of our youth. The early dismissal school days have had some great activities planned with the grant funds and collaboration.

We look forward to the next school year bringing many more progress opportunities at MHS! #GoTrojans!



The RISE Network classroom was installed with audio and video technology in room 210 at Mendota High School. The Rural Illinois Shared Education (RISE) is a distance learning network dedicated to serving rural areas across Illinois as well as rural areas across the United States.



Mendota High School District 280 made improvements at the Jeff Prusator Athletic Complex in 2024 by paving and striping the parking lot at the stadium.

HCC, Inc. reinvests in operation with robotics and automation

Beginning its 142nd year of business, HCC, Inc., continues to be a key member of the manufacturing landscape in the local Mendota community. As a leading supplier of high-quality equipment to the agriculture industry, HCC relies on its team of employees to meet the demand of its large OEM customers.

HCC, Inc., continues to reinvest in its operations, adding robotics and automation to keep HCC a leading-edge manufacturer. In addition, its internal welding training program, which was started in January 2022, continues to support the skilled labor needs. With the help of area high schools and local recruiting efforts, HCC continues to attract new employees and offer new skills. These efforts will ensure HCC has the staffing and skills required to continue to meet its customer's expectations well






into the future.


HCC, Inc. is proud to be a 100% Employee-Owned ESOP, offering its employees pride of ownership. The ESOP journey started in 1996 with the intention to share the success and growth of the company with HCC employees. Over the past 28

years, HCC believes it has done just that by generating share price value and helping its employees grow their retirement plans and future.

HCC, Inc., roots run deep in the Mendota Community, and the company looks forward to continuing to contribute to the community.

Welcome to Trojan Town!



MENDOTA TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

"Home of the Trojans"

Excellence in Education

MISSION STATEMENT:

The learning environment of Mendota Township High School offers educational opportunities for the individual to develop a personally satisfying life, to function as an intelligent and responsible member of our society, and to achieve what is necessary to become a productive citizen.

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City lands grants that will aid in future improvements

The City of Mendota continued its upward trend in the making improvements to the city in 2024 with the securing of several grants to help children have a safer path to school and to aid in the remediation of the land in the 800 block of Main Street that became vacant after a 2022 fire destroyed the building at that location.

While 2024 saw some businesses close, new ones opened offering Mendotans a multitude of goods and services. Improvements were made to streets and alleys to better help residents navigate through the city.

JANUARY

One bid was submitted for the construction of new restrooms at Blackstone Park and Lake Mendota Park near the west shelter. Huffcutt Concrete of Chippewa Falls, Wis., was awarded the bid in the amount of \$125,625 for each restroom facility.

A new officer was introduced for the Mendota Police Department. Matthew Kristensen is a graduate of Oglesby and a native of LaSalle-Peru High School.

Mayor David Boelk commended city workers for their job in handling the two major snowfalls and sub-zero temperature ramifications. He said the city departments did a wonderful job in keeping things operating.

After a complaint from a non-citizen of Mendota about a landlord of a dwelling, Mayor Boelk said the goal of the city is to employ a full-time building inspector/code enforcement officer that can better monitor situations like these that arise.

FEBRUARY

The city approved an ordinance creating a code hearing unit. Beginning in May and continuing every other month, a hearing officer



Mendota city clerk Emily McConville addresses the gathering at a press conference at Lincoln School in May announcing that Mendota is the recipient of two Safe Routes to School program grants that will help boost the health and safety of children by making walking and biking to school safer and more accessible.

will handle cases in Mendota involving city ordinance code violations instead of them being heard in Ottawa. By having the hearings in Mendota, it will allow the city to keep a larger portion of the fine revenue.

Recognizing the importance of sustainable growth and community wellbeing, the City of Mendota has hired three individuals to join the city's workforce and contribute to the implementation of innovative development strategies and grant initiatives. This includes a skilled and diverse team who will collaborate on projects designed to enhance the local economy, improve quality of life and create positive youth opportunities. The three employees include Project Director Annie Short, Project Coordinator Maria J. Arteaga and Grant Manager Alexandria (Ali) Braboy.

An ordinance was adopted for a redevelopment agreement with Black Bros. Co. for construction of a new building on the BBDO property, which will be an additional 18,000 square feet of manufacturing space near its north parking lot to house the company's roll department.

MARCH

In an effort to revitalize the city of Mendota for economic vitality and prevent further deterioration, it was determined the city will be getting stricter on the enforcement of codes by enhancing and enforcing contract registration, building permits and business registration.

The first steps toward the rehabilitation of the property at 704 Illinois Ave. that was damaged by the fire were taken when it was announced that bids will be taken for the

removal of asbestos from the structure.

The city purchased the vacant lot at 714 Illinois Ave. for \$14,500, lots A & B at 712 Illinois Ave. for \$16,400 and the lot at 716 Illinois Ave. for \$12,800.

Eleven owners of food trucks expressed interest in being part the food truck mania promotion conducted by Reimagine Mendota. The food truck mania is located in the IC parking lot on Main Street.

The Mendota Police Department issued 40 violations of the public nuisance ordinance in an effort to clean up properties within the city.

APRIL

B&B Environmental Contractors of Rockford submitted a bid of \$70,525 for asbestos abatement at 704 Illinois Ave.

The city drafted a Building Construction, Renovation and Occupancy Permitting Handbook for residential and commercial buildings.

The number of video gaming licenses was increased by the city council.

MAY

Construction work will begin on the bridge in the area of Pennsylvania Avenue and Chicago Street.

The first Food Truck Mania was held on Monday, May 13 on Main Street in downtown Mendota. Food trucks will be at that location the second and fourth Mondays of the month through October, with the exception of the Monday following the Sweet Corn Festival in August.

It was announced that public nuisance notification door hangers will be placed on the doors of properties where no one is available to personally accept the notification from police officers. The door hanger will include the property inspection date and the corrective action date to address violations of tall grass and weeds, a public nuisance affecting health, and the maintenance of exterior of premises.

The city purchased a 2022 Ford Side Door for its ambulance fleet.

Greg Kellen retired as Mendota Police Chief after serving in that capacity since 2018.

JUNE

Children going to school and the Mendota community as a whole will benefit from the city being the recipient of two Safe Routes to School program grants announced at a press conference attended by Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman and other state and local dignitaries in front of Lincoln School in Mendota. Administered by IDOT using federal funds, Safe Routes to School supports projects and activities that improve safety and encourage active transportation options in areas around elementary, middle and high schools. Improvements include new and upgraded sidewalks, efforts to reduce speeding and other traffic offenses, public education and outreach programs.

Tyler Kent was affirmed as interim chief of the Mendota Police Department effective June 21. He had been serving as deputy chief.

It was announced that a new city website is up and running. The website is more user friendly and will contain more information, including the newly adopted building codes. The website has the same address as current – www.mendota.il.us.

A U.S. EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant was received for \$1,270,305 to help fund the demolition of the former Car Quest Auto Parts store and the remediation cleanup of the former Campbell Cleaners property. Black Bros. Co. of Mendota announced it will match donations, dollar for dollar, up to \$100,000. Reimagine Mendota, a group created in 2018 to help revitalize the city, stated what is in the works for the property after



City of Mendota project manager Annie Short speaks during a press conference in June announcing Mendota as the recipient of a U.S. EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant in the amount of \$1,270,305 to help fund the demolition of the former Car Quest Auto Parts store and the remediation cleanup of the former Campbell Cleaners property.

the cleanup. A pavilion, a band shelter, or an outdoor space for community gatherings are in the plans.

JULY

After the doors seemed closed on a proposed soccer complex for Mendota, the city leaders gave their support to again pursue the matter.

A new festival for Mendota, "Amigo Fest," was given approval to take place in downtown Mendota on Sept. 21, sponsored by Reimagine Mendota and the Hispanic Partnership Council.

Bid letting for engineering services for the Safe Routes to School grant that was awarded to the city in May was approved. Work will include replacement of sidewalks around Lincoln School.

AUGUST

A resolution was adopted to appropriate \$160,000 in Rebuild Illinois funds for the Fifth Street and Eighth Avenue bridge repair.

In an update to the progress being made in the 700 block of Illinois Avenue, a letter was shared with the owner of the building at the northwest corner of the block about what is required as far as maintenance to the building that was damaged during the December 2022 fire. Construction to the roof, securing a beam inside the building, covering windows and fixing of gutters are items that need to be addressed. The roof is mostly repaired and up to code and the building will be enclosed. The city now owns all of the empty lots between the buildings still standing. The old Meyers Furniture building, which the city also owns, has been cleared of asbestos and mold will be removed from the basement. After that, any demolition that needs to be done will be completed and the city will go forward with putting the building back together.

The city of Mendota applied for the OSLAD Grant project offered through the IDNR. The program is a state-financed grant program that provides funding assistance to local government agencies for acquisition and/or development of land for public parks and open space.

The city will move forward with a swimming pool feasibility study, which is Phase I in the process in hopes of seeking a grant for a possible new swimming pool.

SEPTEMBER

The City of Mendota recognized and honored community partners whose dedication will advance the city's work toward a more walkable and bikeable town. Over the summer, Mendota

community partners took part in the "The Active People, Healthy Nation Illinois Walkability Virtual Academy." The academy is available to communities to learn and create an action plan to promote mobility, activity, and economic vitality in a community.

OCTOBER

The Mendota Public Arts Group has recommended the creation of a Public Arts Commission and program that would foster an environment for established and emerging artists to thrive in Mendota, promote life-long participation and learning in the arts and integrate art into the urban environment.

The city reached engineering agreement with Chamlin & Associates for the Ninth Avenue and Fifth Street and the Eighth Avenue and Fifth Street bridge projects in the amount of \$21,000.

NOVEMBER

Approval was given for an Illinois Department of Transportation Supplemental Resolution to use Rebuild Illinois funds in the amount of \$150,000 for the improvement of a small stretch of 11 streets/alleys in Mendota.

The bid from Vissering Construction Company of Streator in the amount of \$6,867,000 was accepted for the waste water treatment plant head works project. Work on the project will take 14-16 months to complete.

To support local holiday light displays across northern Illinois, ComEd and the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus announced grants of up to \$2,500 each for 24 northern Illinois communities through the annual ComEd Powering the Holidays Program. The city of Mendota is among the recipients for its "A Mendota Christmas" event.

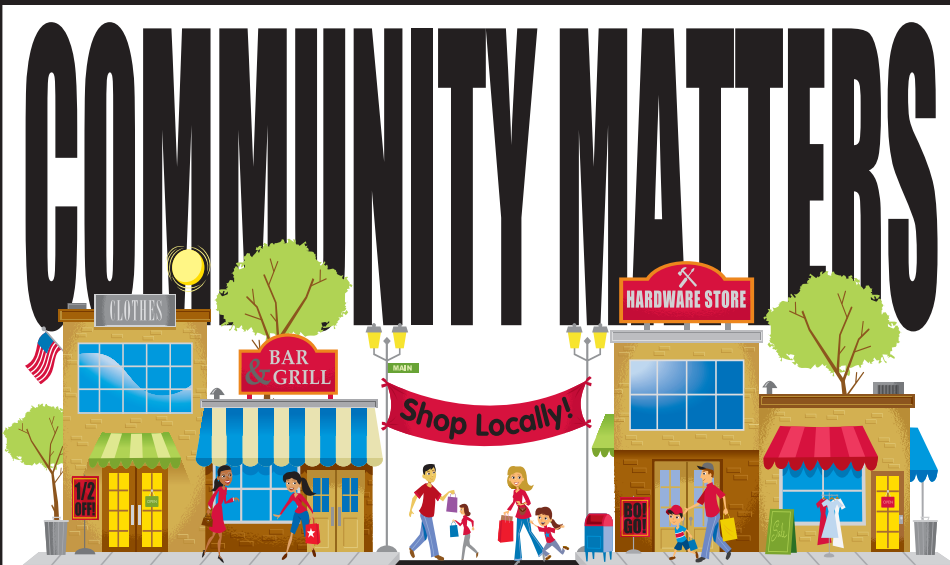
On the eve of "A Mendota Christmas," the first-ever Christmas tree lighting ceremony was held in Veterans Park. The tree will be decorated with lights that were obtained through a grant received from ComEd.

DECEMBER

City project director Annie Short announced that the city is seeking a building inspector. Also, election petitions were filed for mayor, city clerk, city treasurer and aldermanic positions in Mendota, for the April 2025 election.

Two ordinances were approved by the council. The first ordinance establishes rental housing registration, inspection and certification. The second ordinance establishes property regulations and liens for vacant buildings in the downtown Mendota business district.

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The Mendota Reporter



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Sullivan's Foods - Mendota

Management

Dylan Inman, right, store director
Juan Renteria, left, asst. store director



Bakery Department

Julie Kerley, manager

Deli Department

Darla Kleckner, manager



Meat Department

Jeff Chandler, manager

Produced or grown in Northern Illinois!
Available at Sullivan's Foods.

<p>Made in Stockton!</p>	<p>Fresh from Silvis!</p>
<p>Crafted in Utica!</p>	<p>Produced in Walnut!</p>
<p>Made in LaSalle!</p>	<p>Produced in Aurora!</p>
<p>Distilled in Peru!</p>	<p>Fresh from Peru!</p>

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MENDOTA



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- | | |
|--|--|
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Kyle Kim
Vicki Johnson
John Hessenberger
Jim Fitzpatrick
John Holland
Jay Miller
Mark Peasley
Leo Hochstatter |
| City Clerk
Emily McConville | |
| City Treasurer
Rob Letterly | |
| Civic Center
Executive Director
Rachel Green | Building Inspector
Justin Boelk |

Mendota City Officials

- | | |
|--|---|
| City Clerk’s Office
Wendy Letterly
Rita Borelli
Ali Braboy
Maria Arteaga
Annie Short | Fire Dept.
Dennis Rutishauser
Lonny Eisenberg
Brady Rutishauser
Justin Setchell
Jennifer Coppes |
| Public Works Director
Tim Kimrey | Police Dept.
Tyler Kent
Brad Martin
Amy Oscepinski
Tammy Kackert
Joshua Sarver
Zach Urbanski
Chad Hochstatter
Seth Martin
Randy Tucker
Daniel Hernandez
William Hansen
James Shankle
Ashton Dossett
Logan Eppard
Matthew Kristensen |
| Water Dept.
Daniel Falcon
Jason Phalen
Sean Fox
Ivan Pantoja | |
| Sewer Dept.
Nathan Kim
Vic Gonda
Jason McStoots | |
| Street Dept.
Nick Stremlau
Mark Grinka
Ethan Guede
Robert Martinez
Jeffrey Schillinger | |



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