

november 2023

ecia spotlight



Bill Baum led ECIA from 1980-2001 (From left to right: Karl Biasi, First ECIA Director; Larry Nagle, past ECIA Assistant Director; Baum; and Kelley Deutmeyer, ECIA Executive Director)

Tribute to a Thoughtful Leader





One of four new, eight-passenger buses that anyone with a valid driver's license can drive

RTA Spotlight

The Region 8 Regional Transit Authority (RTA) was formed in 1982 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for the purpose of connecting the elderly, disabled, youth and low income citizens in Delaware, Dubuque and Jackson counties to critical services like healthcare, counseling, nutrition, childcare, education, employment, and social venues. The RTA provides accessible, safe, convenient, and efficient transportation for all citizens in the cities, communities and rural areas of the RTA region to enhance their quality of life.

The following testimonial is an example of the impact RTA has on its riders: There were no school busing options per the West Delaware Community School District for Suzanne's two great granddaughters because they live too close to the school for busing, but far enough that Suzanne wasn't comfortable with the girls walking alone. She spoke to Manchester's Chamber of Commerce and they connected her with the RTA, and the United Way Rides for Wellness vouchers. Tom, a volunteer driver for the Delaware County Connections program, drove the girls each day he was needed, with Suzanne as their chaperone until they were comfortable riding alone. The girls continue to ride safely with the RTA.

Thank you to the drivers who make a difference in people's lives (numbers signify years of service unless stated otherwise: Robert Blum (4), Steve Brimeyer (2 months), Jean Dalsing (37), Margie Davis (32), Patrick Freiburger (15), Lynn Gibson (7), Wade Hayward (12), June Holland-Reese (7 months), Marijo Heimann-Shreck (1.5 years), Greg Klostermann (1.5 years), Russell Long (12), Gerald Miller (15), Elnora Moser (3), Jill Noel (1.5), Darwin Polk (10), Terry Rauch (3), Randy Reeves (3), Gary Runde (2), Leo Seay (1), Jeffery Schemmel (6 months), Randy Stanek (1), Dave Stephan (2), Randy Thomspson (1), Tony Vargas (9), Ken Wagner (9), Pam Wagner (3), Shannon Weber (15), Mark Welbes (8).



\$480,000 to Sunshine

Sunshine Learning Center in Maquoketa was awarded a \$480,000 Community Facilities and Services Fund (CFSF) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to improve the efficiency, security, and suitability of the existing childcare facility.

Over the last few years, the need for childcare services in Jackson County has continued to increase while childcare centers have struggled to meet the demand. The City and Jackson County Economic Alliance (JCEA) worked together, along with the Maquoketa School District to identify the specific need and shortage of childcare for infants through two-year-olds. With Sunshine Learning Center being the largest childcare facility in the city, it was deemed a critical community asset. Maquoketa City Council voted unanimously to support the renovations to Sunshine Learning Center, with \$120,000 in matching funds to help secure the grant.

Josh Boldt, Maquoketa City Manager shared, “this progressive thinking is critical for every city large and small to boost their community’s profile. Thanks to our City Council, a part of Maquoketa’s future is secured, and this is one of the single most important positive events in Sunshine’s history. We are proud.”

Sunshine Learning Center has a wait list of 55 children: 45 age two and under. The CDBG funding and the City’s match means Sunshine can add 19 slots for this age group, increasing their capacity minimum by 21%, creating a more sustainable business model and freedom to flex care.

Executive Director for Sunshine Learning Center, MacKie Duhme stated, “We at Sunshine cannot express our profound gratitude enough for our City Council, ECIA, our staff, our community, and the hundreds of families we have served for over 51 years. The CDBG Grant has given us the ability to ensure a safe, stable, functional, and positive environment for our current and future students. With everyone’s relentless support, we can continue to serve our community for many years to come at an even greater capacity than ever before.”



The kiddos are super excited for the project!



Current facility

\$625,000 DFC Award to Jackson County

Jackson County was recently awarded their second Drug Free Communities Grant from the Department of Health and Human Services for the Prevention Coalition to continue their work of reducing drug, alcohol, and other substance use among Jackson County youth. The Coalition will receive \$125,000 a year for five years from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Jackson County Prevention Coalition leads the activities but it’s a group effort with the coalition made up of representatives from the following 12 sectors: Youth, Parent, Business, Media, School, Youth Serving, Law Enforcement, Religious, Civic, Health, State/Local, and Other. The Coalition must address the following two goals with grant funds through outreach, education, training, policy changes, and other activities: Increase community collaboration; and Reduce youth substance use and misuse.

Congratulations Jackson County and thank you for this important work!

Tribute to a Thoughtful Leader



1975

Baum To Join Staff Of ECIA

William J. Baum, for the last four years administrative assistant for the City of Dyersville, has been hired as associate planner on the ECIA staff. His position will be funded under the CETA program for the next 10 months.

Bill will be assisting cities and towns of the five-county ECIA region with administrative problems.

A native of Monticello, Bill has a bachelor degree in history from University of Iowa. He also studied at Loras college and University of Dubuque.

He served four years in the Navy as radioman and began work for the City of Dyersville in 1971. While there he has had a wide range of civic and fraternal activities in Dyersville and Dubuque-county.

Bill begins work with ECIA on July 7.



1984

Sometimes, you don't realize a person's impact until they are gone. ECIA staff who remembered past executive director, Bill Baum, were saddened in October to learn of his death. After a brief illness, at age 77, Bill passed away on October 7, 2023.

Bill began his career at ECIA in 1975 as an associate planner to assist with technical assistance and common challenges cities and counties faced throughout the ECIA region. In 1977, he became Assistant Director based on a staff evaluation by the executive committee of ECIA and in 1980, he was named Executive Director and served until August of 2001 in that capacity.

Programs and initiatives created or started under Bill's leadership include, but are not limited to, creating the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority; securing funding for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program; constructing scattered site Public Housing units; construction of USDA senior housing units; creating the Regional Planning Affiliation; creating ECIA Business Growth Inc. and securing funding for several revolving loan funds; working on the NW Arterial development through DMATS; SW Arterial location study as part of DMATS; assuming management of the JPTA employment and training program; and moving ECIA into the electronic world with a little thing called electronic mail (email.)

Baum Named Assistant Director

William J. Baum, for the last year and a half an associate planner with the East Central Intergovernmental Association staff, has been promoted to assistant director of the association.

In his new position he will work more closely with ECIA Executive Director Karl E. Biasi in the ECIA operation.

Baum's promotion to assistant director came after a staff evaluation carried out by the executive committee of ECIA.

Baum joined ECIA in July 1975 as associate planner after four years as administrative assistant to the city of Dyersville. At ECIA he originally took over the technical assistance program for city members of ECIA. He continues to oversee that program, but devotes the major portion of his time to providing assistance to member governments to gain funding under

federal and state programs.

ECIA is the regional planning association covering the counties of Cedar, Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque and Jackson with offices in Dubuque.

A native of Monticello, Baum has a bachelor degree in history from University of Iowa. He also studied at Loras College and University of Dubuque.

He served four years in the Navy as radioman and began work for the city of Dyersville in 1971. He and his wife and two children continue to live in Dyersville.

1977

1997



E-Mail Arrives at ECIA

Please make note that ECIA now has an E-Mail address. The address is as follows: ecia@mwci.net in case you forget it will appear at the bottom of ECIA stationary near the telephone number.

2014

ECIA NEWS

East Central Intergovernmental Association

Volume 27, No. 2 November 2001

Bill Baum's Farewell Message

October 12, 2001 was my last day at ECIA. As most of you know, I have accepted the Economic Development Director position with the City of Dubuque.

I certainly did not realize, back in 1975, that I would be staying with the same agency for such a long time (26 years). However, what I found here was a great organization with a great board of directors dedicated to making the organization a success.

That board's dedication, as well as the satisfaction of assisting local governments and people in the areas of housing, community development, economic development, transportation planning, and job training made my stay here most enjoyable.

I remember how we started in the mid-70s. We had a small staff, not much money, and a lot of work to do. What we did have was a board that insisted we help people in our region, and make a difference to the local governments we serve.

The rest is history! Through dedicated and supportive board members we have become one of the best (some would say best) Council of Governments in the State of Iowa. ECIA is a recognized leader in Housing, Community Development, Economic Development, Planning and Technical Assistance, Job Training, Transportation Planning, and GIS.

No agency can succeed without a good staff. The programs and services here are staffed by dedicated professionals, under excellent supervision.

Thanks to everyone who has made my career at ECIA enjoyable and successful!



Bill Baum, Executive Director

2001



Past Executive Director Karl Biasi, Past Assistant Director Larry Nagle, Baum, and Executive Director Kelley Deutmeyer

(Taken from his obituary) Throughout his career and life, Bill was a thoughtful leader who always sought to listen first, seek understanding, and work diligently to find mutually beneficial solutions. His dedication has made Dubuque and the surrounding counties a better community for its residents and businesses.

"Bill was a mentor and friend. His loss is a deep wound in my heart. Bill believed in me as a 20-year-old college senior needing an internship to graduate. He hired me to "computerize" ECIA and the housing authority. Bill took a chance on this college student, and it paid off. I have had a wonderful life and career with ECIA. I will be forever grateful to Bill. May he rest in peace, and someday I hope to run into him on a golf course in heaven. Thank you, Bill, for believing in me." Kelley Deutmeyer, ECIA Executive Director.

\$7.7MM Awarded to Dubuque

Congratulations to the City of Dubuque on receiving 2018 Disaster Supplemental Funding of \$7,700,000 for the Flood Gates/ Pumps Construction Project. This project is anticipated to create 150 jobs and a total private investment leveraged of \$16.5 million. This is also the largest EDA award ECIA has helped a member government to receive.

This EDA investment supports the City of Dubuque with constructing the Bee Branch Stormwater Pumping Station. The project work includes replacing existing flood gates and pumps, constructing one additional new flood gate, and installing an additional back-up generator for pumps. Once completed, the project will help in rebuilding, following the extensive flooding in the area, which will lay the groundwork for long-term economic vitality and advance economic resiliency throughout the region.



“Thank you to the ECIA team. We are very grateful for the partnership and excellent collaboration,” Teri Goodman, Director of Strategic Partnerships, City of Dubuque.

FSS Success Story

Did you know that Section 8 households have the opportunity to participate in the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program? The FSS program is designed to promote employment and offer participants an opportunity to save money. As a household's income increases their earnings through employment, an amount equal to 30% of that increase is deposited into an escrow account. The account earns interest and is returned to the participant upon successful completion of their Family or Elderly Self-Sufficiency (FSS or ESS) contract. The following is how a recent participant was impacted by the program staff:

(From an October 2023 letter) I'm writing this letter of request for my escrow account. From the start to the end this program, this has been absolutely amazingly motivating to me and my child. We moved to Asbury Iowa in 2014 with no family or friends nearby. I was scared at first because it was just us. But Mindy and Jenny (ECIA Family Support Specialists) assured me that everything would be just fine on this journey that I took with hopes and dreams that I wouldn't let my son down. They supported me in every way possible from great guidance to long conversations on the phone. They made sure I set goals and reached them one by one! The fact that I was able to put money in an account that wasn't taken from my actual pay checks was really cool. I can now do fun activities and outings with my child without worrying how I will replace it to make sure bills are paid on time or telling him 'no, not now.' I truly appreciate them for every second, minute and hour they took out of their day, it really meant a lot. I see so much growth from the time I started to now which is the end, I won't say goodbye but 'see you guys later!' Just wanted to add that you guys are so amazing with some of the biggest hearts I've ever seen. Thanks so much for not giving up on me!



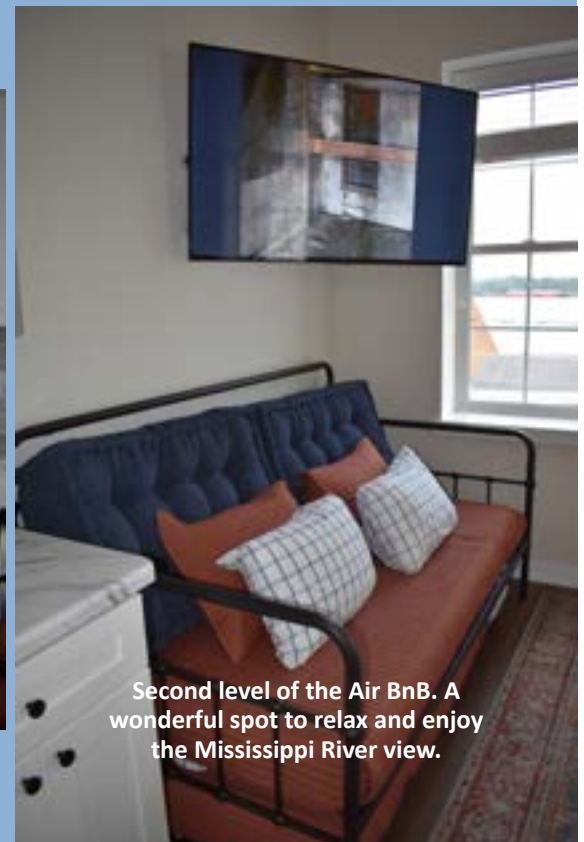
Sabula Catalyst Project Complete

Thanks to a \$100,000 Community Catalyst Building Remediation Grant awarded in 2020, Travis and Linsey Kieffer transformed an old grocery store in Sabula into The Pearl, which has two upper story apartments (one is an Airbnb), and two main floor business areas. The City and the building owner also contributed financially to the project. At a recent open house to celebrate the completed project, Linsey Kieffer asked guests for ideas on what the one business should be, since she is planning to open a shop in the other space. Many positive comments were expressed at the open house and the community ideas started the wheels churning as the possibilities for the space are endless.

The Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program assists communities with the redevelopment or rehabilitation of buildings to stimulate economic growth or reinvestment in the community. Funding is based on annual availability, maximum grant is \$100,000, and 40% of funds will be awarded to cities with populations under \$1,500. Funds available for the rehabilitation of one commercial building per community or two buildings with same ownership that are adjacent. Deconstruction is allowed in dire situations or for safety reasons. City must be the applicant and provide financial and/or in-kind resources. Pre-applications are due January 31, 2024 and if invited to apply, full applications are due April 14, 2024. Please visit <https://www.iowaeda.com/downtown-resource-center/community-catalyst/> for more information or contact Marla Quinn, Grants and Municipal Coordinator, at mquinn@ecia.org.



The Air BnB kitchen area



Second level of the Air BnB. A wonderful spot to relax and enjoy the Mississippi River view.

Bear River Cottages Receives Award

ECIA's Carl Reimer and Michelle Schnier attended the National NAHRO Conference and Exhibition reception in New Orleans, LA on October 6, 2023 and received the Award of Merit for the Bear River Cottages Pocket Neighborhood. The achievement is recognized in the NAHRO 2023 Awards of Merit Catalog, in the NAHRO Best Practices Database, and through a NAHRO press release. In addition, the Bear River Cottages Pocket Neighborhood has been nominated as an award of excellence nominee which, if picked as a top candidate, will be awarded at the Spring 2024 National NAHRO conference.



KIB/HP Project Highlights

ECIA staff have been involved in the Keep Iowa Beautiful (KIB) Hometown Pride (HP) program since 2017, but really amped up efforts in 2021 when this state organization approached ECIA to take on more communities. Since then, eight staff are coaching 31 communities. The Hometown Pride program has been a win/win for staff and the communities because it provides a coach to work side by side with community champions to help move projects along in a variety of ways. Recent highlights include:

Funding –

- Delhi has all funds secured to start construction on two pickleball courts that will be located at Silver Lake Park thanks to a recent \$20,000 Rural Enrichment grant. Construction will begin in spring 2024. Lt. Gov. Adam Gregg visited the site in October in conjunction with an overall Delaware County tour.
- The McDonough Foundation awarded funds to several KIB HP projects: \$3,000 each to Delaware's park improvements project, Sabula's park project, Preston's Main Street Square, Baldwin's park pavilion, LaMotte's inclusive park, Miles' park improvements; \$5,000 to the Delaware County Historical Society for museum cataloging; and \$1,500 to Worthington for redoing their baseball batting practice cage. All the committees continue to fundraise for their projects through events and initiatives.
- Delaware park enhancements project also received funding from the Foundation for the Future of Delaware County (\$4,000) and McElroy Trust (\$7,500).
- The Community Foundation of Jackson County awarded grants to the following: \$3,000 for Preston's Main Street Square, \$2,000 for Sabula's park project, \$5,000 for Baldwin's park pavilion. All the committees continue to fundraise for their projects through events and initiatives.
- Luxemburg was awarded \$500 from the Foundation of Cornerstone Communities grant for the park trail.

Events/Project Progress –

- Coordinated Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Walk-Arounds in Earlville, Holy Cross, Mechanicsville, and Preston. This process is comprised of a four-hour visit with community members and state officials who make recommendations and develop a simple report based on the visit which is presented to the community the same day with a final report at a later date.
- Colesburg is planning for a spring adult prom fundraising event for future projects.
- Earlville had a fall market with 34 vendors and food trucks.
- Edgewood just completed a community-wide survey focusing on recreational hopes and dreams.
- Greeley had a classic car cruise in September and the committee is planning for a Souper Bowl event in February, raising funds for future projects.
- Hopkinton's downtown greenspace project is nearly complete.
- Luxemburg held a Music in the Park in August and will have a Santa Claus is Coming to Town event on December 6th.
- Manchester is having its annual Window Walk on December 7th and the dog park committee is using this opportunity to fundraise for the project.
- Maquoketa is fundraising for their greenspace redevelopment.
- The new pavilion at the Ryan ballpark will be complete by spring 2024.
- The Hardacre Theater in Tipton continues to fundraise for theater restoration and has \$71,992.00 to go. They had a fundraising event and tours in October.
- West Branch completed their Master Park Plan Update, including a community-wide survey.
- Worthington had a Harvest Festival in October and will have their first annual Saint Nicholas Night Christmas Tree Lighting on December 6th.

The Keep Iowa Beautiful Hometown Pride program was developed in 2012 as an effort to improve the appearance of, and encourage a sense of pride in, Iowa's communities. The five-year program offers tools and solutions by way of a community coach in providing guidance to your own community champions to improve cultural and economic vitality and sustainability in communities.