



September 2025 Newsletter



Photo Credit: "Iowa's Fire Tower", Cody Davis of Grinnell, 2nd Place Iowa Landscape

[15th Annual Keep Iowa Beautiful Photography Contest Submission](#)

The 16th Annual

Keep Iowa Beautiful

Photography Contest is Open!

Each year, Keep Iowa Beautiful aims to raise awareness of Iowa's rural and urban beauty with our Annual Photography Contest. The photo contest offers both amateur and experienced photographers an opportunity to tell Iowa's story from the perspective of Iowans in a fun, engaging way!

Keep Iowa Beautiful encourages anyone interested to submit their work to this photo contest, which includes **cash awards totaling over \$2,000!** Participants can enter photos in as many categories as they like. Photos will be accepted until December 12th, 2025.

The six categories are:

- **Iowa Landscape:** Capture Iowa's beauty through depictions of Iowa's landscape, including but not limited to: farm fields, rolling hills, and wooded forests.
- **Iowa Water:** Feature Iowa's beautiful water systems with depictions of Iowa rivers, streams, ponds and lakes.
- **Iowa Cities:** Iowa's urban centers are hubs of history, culture, and beauty. This category features depictions of Iowa's cities, street scenes, and urban landmarks.
- **Iowans in Action:** This category aims to capture the spirit of Iowa through depictions of the people that live, work, and play in Iowa. All means of action that can be captured: biking, running, fishing, hunting and hiking are but a few.
- **Iowa Wildlife:** Iowa is home to a variety of beautiful critters. This category aims to showcase Iowa's beauty through depictions of Iowa's wildlife animals: mammals, fish, birds, bugs and more!

- **Hometown Pride:** 100+ Iowa towns have participated in our Hometown Pride program. This category features depictions of Hometown Pride towns and/or photos of activities by Hometown Pride committees. View our [Hometown Pride Communities](#) to see if your photo qualifies.

NEW THIS YEAR: a **Youth Winner!** Young photographers (Grades K-12 eligible) will be celebrated with their own award while also being eligible for all contest categories.

To view prior winners, read complete contest rules, and submit entries now through Friday, December 12th, click [here](#).

We can't wait to see Iowa's beauty through your lens!

Sincerely,

Andy Frantz

Executive Director, Keep Iowa Beautiful

[Enter Your Photos Now!](#)

Become a Hometown Pride Community!

Keep Iowa Beautiful invites communities like yours to reach out to us about joining our Hometown Pride program, a proven initiative designed to revitalize and strengthen Iowa's small towns.

Hometown Pride will help your town cultivate local leadership, enhance community amenities, foster civic pride, boost economic vitality and increase collaboration. More than 100 Iowa towns have participated in this valuable program, which brings together local volunteers to lead community betterment projects to help transform their community.

[Learn more about becoming a Hometown Pride Community!](#)



The 2026 application season is now open!

Communities that are interested in joining Hometown Pride in 2026 should complete statement of interest by February 6, 2026.

Communities apply as a group of 6-10 towns – only one form needs to be completed per group.

Eligible communities that submit a “statement of interest” will receive an invitation to submit a full application which will be due in early May 2026.

One group/region of 6+ communities will be selected for Hometown Pride, with an estimated start date of fall 2026.

Please reach out to KIB staff through website contact form to discuss application before submitting statement of interest.



#HometownPride Highlights



Lake View Hometown Pride

After nearly 10 years of tireless work, the Lake View Hometown Pride committee and the community of Lake View celebrated the opening of the \$2.4 million Lake View Community Center earlier this year! The community came together for a grand opening in May and have been keeping the building busy ever since. Hometown Pride volunteer Brent Mueggenberg notes that this is "one of the largest community betterment projects undertaken by our town" and attributed the success of the project to "a great pool of dedicated volunteers." Congratulations to all who worked hard to bring this great asset to Lake View!

Photo is from [Lake View Community Center Facebook page](#).





Rolfe Hometown Pride

With help from the Pocahontas County Foundation, Rolfe Hometown Pride has added a new bottle filler and bicycle repair station (pictured) to Wilcox Campground and Three Rivers Trailhead.

Rolfe Hometown Pride also held a tree planting events on September 23rd. This project, supported by Alliant Energy and Trees Forever grants, brought more trees to public areas throughout the community.





Baxter Hometown Pride

Baxter Hometown Pride and the Big Bolt Little Bolt Program recently celebrated a Growing Together event, planting 14 trees at the school, Geise Park, and the campgrounds. The project was made possible with a \$2,500 Iowa DNR Trees for Kids Grant.

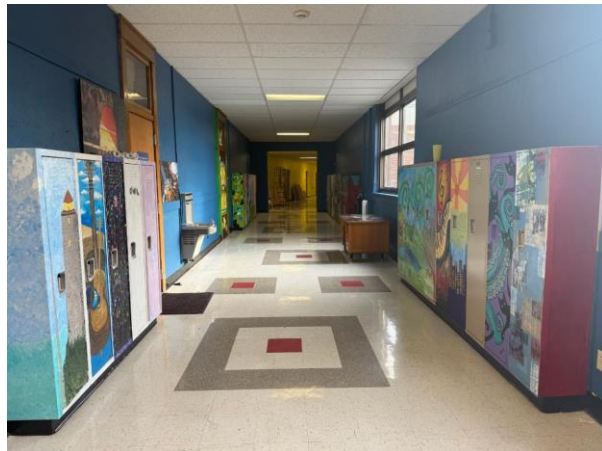
[Learn more about Hometown Pride Communities](#)

#PaintIowaBeautiful Progress



The Bridge of Storm Lake, a youth-serving organization in Storm Lake, utilized their Paint Iowa Beautiful grant funds to make their organization more identifiable to the community. This opportunity also allowed local art clubs and art students the chance to explore mural making.

The Eastern Iowa Arts Academy used their Paint Iowa Beautiful funding to give their hallways a makeover. The grant allowed the organization to transform one of their hallways into an art gallery just in time for their celebration gala!



Your Support Matters!

Consider supporting Keep Iowa Beautiful to help us continue our work improving Iowa communities! Remember: donations to Keep Iowa Beautiful are tax deductible!

Donations can be made online or checks can be mailed to our office:

Keep Iowa Beautiful

2910 Westown Pkwy. Suite 302

West Des Moines, IA 50266

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