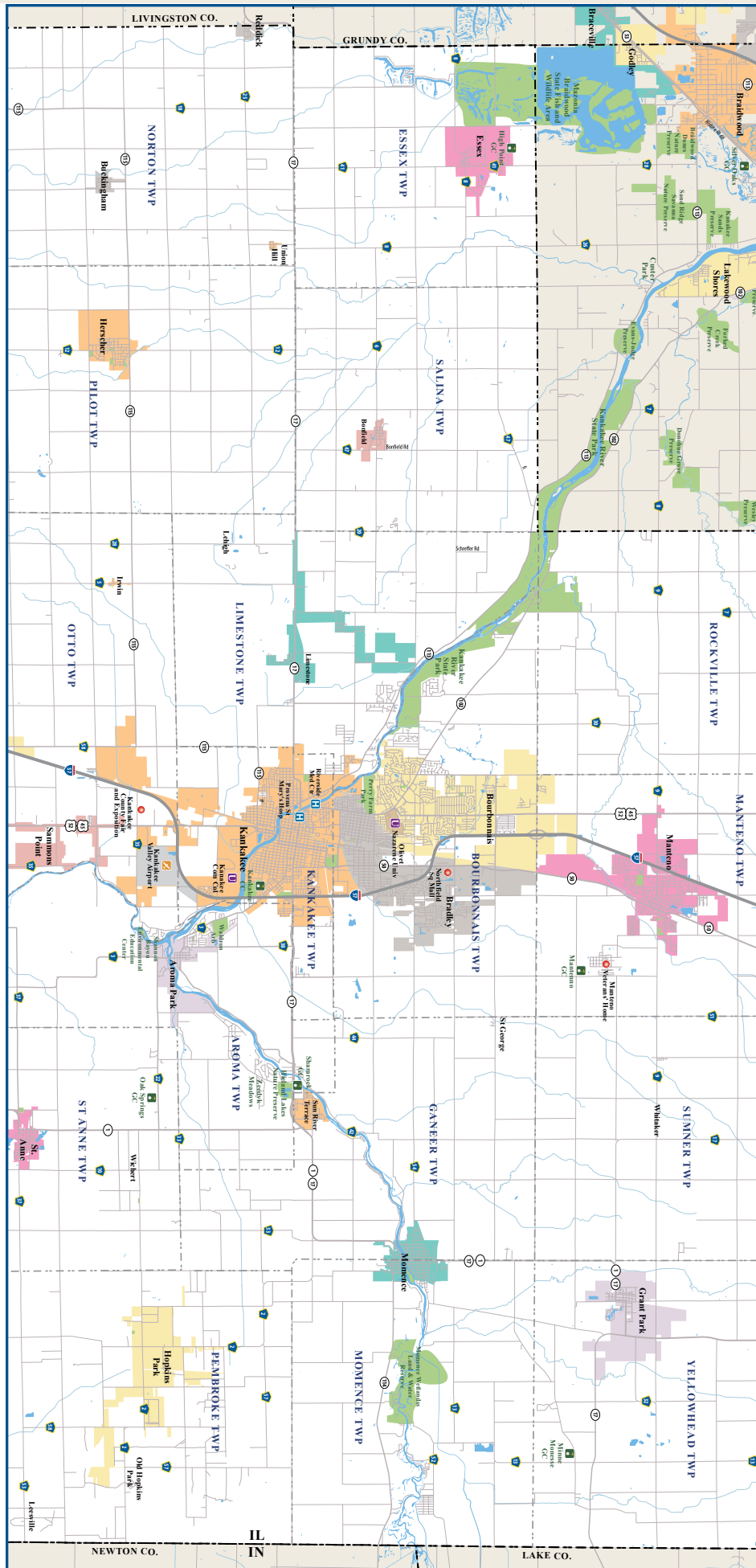




THRIVE

KANKAKEE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

2024-2025



KANKAKEE COUNTY



IRIS

As of September 17, 2024



90 REFERRALS
Many families were involved in multiple referrals



80 FAMILIES
Individuals who were the subject of at least one referral in IRIS.



88% ACCEPTED
The referral is accepted by the receiving agency

GROWING A CONNECTED NETWORK AROUND FAMILIES



OUR STORY

Funded by a grant resolved by the Kankakee County Board, IRIS (Integrated Referral Intake System) stands to close the referral loop between providers. As of September 2024, there are 36 communities and 2,305 organizations across 6 different states using IRIS. With the current total of referrals made through IRIS now in the 100,000s, we've connected more than 60,000 families to needed services. IRIS connects families with services without the redundant paperwork of a traditional referral. IRIS takes the guess work out of referrals and alleviates barriers that burden families when seeking services.

OUR VISION

Healthy people, thriving communities. Achieved through innovative practices. The vision of the Kankakee County Health Department rings true for our Community Vision for IRIS. By utilizing this innovative practice, we will aid medical and social services in quality and successful referrals. Our goals is to increase the percentage of Kankakee county's population that is enrolled in necessary programs and to address where more staff may be needed to adequately treat the volume of patients. Resource scarcity is impacted by both accessibility and workforce, and IRIS will be the key to aiding both issues.

BRIGHT SPOTS

Currently Maintaining a referral response time of under 24 hours. Over forty partners are participating in making referrals to configure IRIS for our county. Connecting families to services with effective, HIPPA Compliant referrals.

FUTURE GOALS

Our IRIS network will continue to grow as we engage in collaborative and future-driven discussions about the needs of our communities. As partners enter the arena, they will feel supported and welcome to participate in the wider activities of ensuring quality resources are accessible to all. Funding will be more abundant in our area thanks to the elevation that IRIS data will add to grant applications.

Contact: Kailee Zito • kzito@kankakeehealth.org • 815-802-9442



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info@kankakeehealth.org

Open Monday - Friday from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Closed on major holidays

THE STATE HAS NOTICED
THE COUNTRY HAS NOTICED
THE WORLD HAS NOTICED

Welcome to Kankakee County, a community that has captured the attention of global, national, and local investors. Our region is home to a diverse range of industries—from renewable energy and pharmaceuticals to plastics, metals, and food manufacturing. We are recognized for our determination and capability to provide substantial support across all sectors.

We recently marked a historic milestone with the arrival of Gotion Inc., which is establishing its first electric vehicle battery manufacturing facility in Manteno. This \$2 billion investment represents Illinois’ largest manufacturing deal in decades and will create 2,600 jobs at full capacity. The project is attracting additional business interest, further solidifying our reputation as a hub for innovation and growth.

Kankakee County’s future is bright, thanks in part to our robust educational systems, specialized training programs, collaborative municipalities, and dedicated community organizations. These assets position us for substantial economic expansion, offering a wealth of opportunities.

Here are just a few highlights of what makes Kankakee County stand out:

- #3 Manufacturing Hub: Ranked #3 among manufacturing hubs for small communities by Business Facilities magazine, with over 7,000 jobs offering an average wage of \$104,000.
- Affordable Living: With a cost of living at 87.9%, the expenses for housing, utilities, healthcare, and groceries consistently fall below the national average.
- Housing Boom: A 39% increase in houses sold over the past year reflects our growing and vibrant community. Now residential development incentives offer new home builders additional perks at putting down roots in many parts of Kankakee County.
- Significant Investments: In 2023 alone, \$2.15 billion in capital investment was announced, signaling confidence in our economic future.
- Global Impact: Over the past five years, Kankakee County has exported more than \$8.1 billion worth of goods, underscoring our role in the global marketplace

We are Kankakee County—a community where opportunity thrives, and growth is not just a goal, but a reality.



Timothy O. Nugent

Timothy O. Nugent
President/CEO
Economic Alliance of Kankakee County



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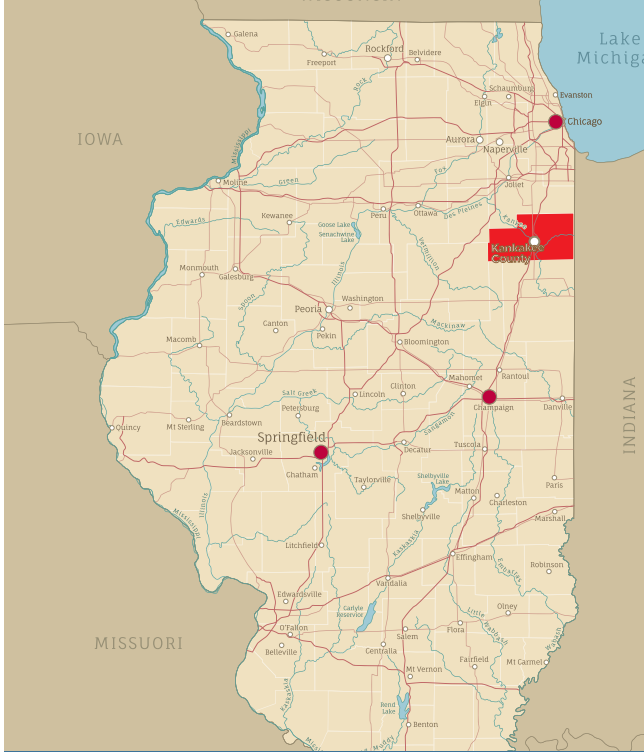
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THRIVE
KANKAKEE COUNTY, ILLINOIS | 2024-2025

KANKAKEE COUNTY

2024 ECONOMIC INDICATORS

- Population per square mile **158.9**
- Land area in square miles **676.56**
- Population **107,940**
- Median household income **\$65,489**
- Poverty rate **13.6%**
- Total employment **35,013**
- Median property value **\$76,800**

RACE

- White alone **80.8%**
- Black or African American **15.2%**
- Asian **1.1%**
- American Indian and Alaska Native **0.5%**
- Two or more races **2.4%**
- Hispanic or Latino **13%**

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

- Veterans **5,991**
- Foreign born **5.1%**

HOUSING

- Housing units **45,495**
- Owner-occupied housing unit rate 68.1%
- Median value of owner-occupied housing units **\$176,800**
- Median mortgage **\$1,578**
- Households **40,591**
- Persons per household **2.53**
- Living in the same house for more than one year **92%**
- Language other than English spoken at home **10.1%**

EDUCATION

- High school graduate or higher **89.9%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **20.3%**

HEALTH

- With a disability, under age 65 - **9.8%**
- Persons without health insurance, under age 65 - **6.7%**

ECONOMY

- In the labor force, over age 16 - **61.4%**
- Total employment 35,013
- Total annual payroll (\$1,000) **\$1,794,645**
- Total accommodation and food service sales (\$1,000) **\$187,030**
- Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue (\$1,000) **\$720,693**
- Total annual economic output for manufacturing **\$5.0 Billion**
- Total retail sales (\$1,000) **\$1,515,996**
- Total retail sales per capita **\$13,716**

TRANSPORTATION

- Travel time to work in minutes **24.7**



KANKAKEE

Population **23,503**
Median household income **\$42,180**
Median housing value **\$99,600**
Total households **9,349**
High school graduate or higher **78.7%**
School enrollment, K-12 DIST 111 **4,668**
Graduation rate **71%**
Veterans **1,162**

BRADLEY

Population **15,263**
Median household income **\$59,746**
Median housing value **\$154,600**
Total households **5,987**
High school graduate or higher **91.3%**
School enrollment:

- Elementary District 61 K-8 **1,270**
- BBCHS District 307 **1,936**
- BBCHS HS Graduation rate **91%**

Veterans **718**

BOURBONNAIS

Population **18,042**
Median household income **\$77,738**
Median housing value **\$238,000**
Total households **5,834**
High school graduate or higher **95.1%**
School enrollment:

- Elementary District 53 K-8 **2,284**
- BBCHS District 307 **1,936**

BBCHS HS Graduation rate **91%**
Veterans **775**

MANTENO

Population **9,178**
Median household income **\$90,370**
Median housing value **\$235,600**
Total households **3,874**
High school graduate or higher **93.9%**
School enrollment CUSD 5 **1,787**
Manteno HS Graduation rate **88%**
Veterans **760**

Sources: US Census Bureau, Illinois Report Card, Economic Alliance of Kankakee County

MOMENCE TOWNSHIP

Population **3,044**
Median household income **\$52,788**
Median property value **\$137,400**
Total households **1,494**
School enrollment, K-12 CUSD **11,021**
Momence HS Graduation rate **84%**

TOP EMPLOYERS

(150 employees or more)
ABC Coating **160**
All Star Management **441**
Ascension Saint Mary **775**
A.N. Webber Inc **280**
AHF Products **285**
Baker & Taylor **454**
Cigna Healthcare **1,200**
Crown Holdings Inc. **155**
CSL Behring **1,500**
Del Monte Fresh Produce Co. **175**
Fratco Inc **200**
Heartland Harvest / Our Home **150**
Illinois Veterans' Home **368**
Indian Oaks Academy **310**
Johnsonville / Momence Packing **327**
Kankakee Community College **350**
Kensing **230**
McKesson **100**
Midwest Transit **300**
NFI Industries **260**
Olivet Nazarene University **560**
Nucor Steel **400**
Pactiv Evergreen **241**
Peddinghaus Corporation **230**
Rise Baking **180**
Riverside Healthcare **2,791**
River Valley Recycling **196**
Shapiro Developmental Center **1,200**
Valspar / Sherwin Williams Co. **170**
Shoup Manufacturing **200**
Silva International **265**
Urban Farmer LLC **450**
Van Drunen Farms **659**

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MOVING KANKAKEE COUNTY FORWARD

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GoTion in motion in Manteno

With intensive remodeling inside its 1.5-million-square-foot facility — and with employees being hired in waves — GoTion is, by all accounts, in motion.

Located inside the former Kmart distribution center at 333 S. Spruce St., Manteno, this plant of the China-based company will focus on making lithium batteries for both energy storage (which provides storage and energy to the likes of solar and wind farms) and electric vehicles.

On a tour of the space led by GoTion Manteno Plant Manager Mark Kreusel and Deputy Director of Battery Manufacturing Mohamad Zeitoun, the two leads shared what's been happening since closing on the property in December of 2023.

EMPLOYEES

As of August, the Manteno facility had approximately 50 employees on staff and is in the process of hiring another 20. The first set of hourly employees was hired at the end of May, and all went to the GoTion facility in China for a full month of training. During that time, the team worked with Chinese factories to produce a similar product to what will soon be produced in Manteno.

"We have our training process kind of solidified now," Kreusel said, adding that this time training in China gave him and Zeitoun time to identify what employees would be good fits for leadership roles.

"They proved themselves in China that they're good with a team," he said.

For the Manteno location, all current hourly employees have all been local hires. Eventually, the facility will make its way to the full projected staffing number of 2,600 employees.

The first group hired were employees with electrical knowledge. The second wave prioritized people with manufacturing and machining knowledge.

Kreusel noted that while GoTion employees from China are currently on site, they are there to help get the company up and running and most will return home. Each worker from China has been partnered with a U.S. worker to be their counterpart for training. Kreusel and Zeitoun also have counterparts.

"We have to have that connection. It has to continue on," he said of the collaboration between GoTion employees from the U.S. and China.

PRODUCTS/FACILITY

The warehouse in Manteno has been completely renovated to give GoTion the room to set up assembly lines, offices and other necessary spaces to complete production. The main production facility has bright white walls and flooring and will be meticulously kept clean for the safety of the employees and the products.

Half of the products created at the plant will be lithium batteries for electric vehicles. The other half of the products will be energy storage. GoTion eventually plans to have the Manteno plant run completely off energy storage batteries.

The company purchased approximately 220 acres of Manteno farmland (112 acres next door and a farm across the street) but are still going through the planning stages of what that land will be used for. GoTion is working on solar farms throughout the area and the company hopes to be off the power grid by 2030.

"We make ourselves work hard toward those goals," Kreusel said.

In addition to powering solar and wind farms, energy storage batteries exist to stabilize power supplies at industrial plants such as a data processing center.

While the EV market fluctuates, the demand for energy storage continues to increase.

"Demand for this is way beyond the EV," Zeitoun said.

Once the batteries are packed, they get loaded into a storage container for shipment. These containers are temperature controlled and feature a fire and smoke detection system. An example of where a GoTion battery will wind up is inside an Amazon delivery van.

Kreusel shared that GoTion Chairman Li Zhen has "a really good vision for the future ... that's why he started making batteries."

The plant manager said that he was drawn to the company by Zhen's vision, which "is quite green."

Smith earns IMPACT award for Diversatech, philanthropy and more

Hundreds of Manteno families live in homes developed by Francis Smith.

And thousands of Kankakee County residents work at jobs that were created at Illinois Diversatech, a business incubator Smith spearheaded.

For those accomplishments and a long career marked by success in philanthropy, insurance and banking, Smith received the IMPACT Award, a lifetime honor given by the Economic Alliance of Kankakee County.

"Francis has shown tireless efforts in shaping our



community," said Tim Nugent, president and CEO of the economic alliance and mayor of Manteno. "His accomplishments serve as a reminder of the power of innovation, determination and commitment in driving meaningful progress, and he has done this over the course of decades.

"Smitty's unwavering resolve and visionary outlook has really paved the way for lasting change in Manteno and Kankakee County. This is how work gets done, and how growth and development happen."

Michael Boyd, president of Kankakee Community College and alliance board president, said Smith "knows that a strong workforce drives economic prosperity. He just gets it, and he understands what we are doing at Kankakee Community College."

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Diversatech would eventually hold as many as 3,000 new jobs. It was born, Smith explained, out of necessity.

Today, Smith still sits on the Riverside Medical Center Board. He's known all three of Riverside's presidents: Robert Miller, Dennis Millirons and Phil Kambic. Smith played an important role in securing the grant that helped pay for the walkway that soars over West State Route 113 connecting two Riverside buildings.

The first IMPACT Award was given to Joe Franco, who was instrumental in the development and construction of many major projects in the Kankakee area.

"Be nice to people," Smith said. "I would like to be remembered as a good guy."

Kankakee County Farm Bureau welcomes new manager

For Korbin Collins, it is a dream job. Collins, a 2021 graduate of the University of Illinois with a degree in ag leadership, is the new manager of the Kankakee County Farm Bureau. She replaces Chad Miller.

Miller had been the manager of the Kankakee County Farm Bureau for 21 years but was promoted to head of region 2 of the Illinois Farm Bureau. Region 2, one of four farm bureau regions in the state, includes 17 different farm bureaus serving 20 counties. Region 2 includes Kankakee County.

Collins has eagerly been meeting the people of Kankakee County and getting involved in the community. It is the type of job, she said, she has prepared herself for all her life.

Before coming here, Collins had served simultaneously as the farm bureau manager for two smaller bureaus in Washington and Perry counties for a year and a half.



Collins was in both FFA and 4-H. In FFA, she was both the chapter president and earned the State Degree. In her senior year, she was president of the FFA, the student council and her class at the same time.

"There are definitely tons of jobs and opportunities in agriculture," she said. She encourages young people to grow an interest in farming and to contact their local farm bureau.

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County tourism on the rise

The Kankakee County area generated a local economic impact of \$167.7 million and contributed to an increase in visitor spending across Illinois in 2023, Visit Kankakee County announced in August.

In addition, tourism contributed \$6.7 million in local tax revenue while directly supporting 1,239 jobs in the tourism and hospitality industry, according to the latest data provided by Tourism Economics, a global tourism research firm, which measures the number of visitors as well as their impact on Illinois' economy during the 2023 calendar year.

"This remarkable growth across the state emphasizes the strength and appeal of our diverse Illinois destinations, world-class hospitality and innovative marketing efforts," Nicole Gavin, executive director of Visit Kankakee County, said.



Visit Kankakee County works to market and sell Kankakee County. While Kankakee County experienced a slight decrease of 2% in tourism revenue, visitors still generated an increase of 1.5% in direct local tax revenue and also supported the increase of 1,229 to 1,239 tourism-related jobs.

"We are excited about new attractions, upcoming events and promotional campaigns designed to attract more visitors and create lasting impressions," Gavin said. "We're confident that our dedicated efforts and community support will drive renewed growth in tourism throughout Kankakee County."

Regarding Visit Kankakee County, Gavin said earlier in the summer that her goal in the next five to 10 years include executing a renewal for the area's intergovernmental agreement. An intergovernmental agreement (IGA) is a legally binding contract between two or more governments that work together to solve problems of mutual concern. IGAs can be used to provide services, facilities, or functions that are authorized by the participating agencies, departments, or organizations. They can also be used to jointly exercise powers that are common to the agencies.

The IGA for Visit Kankakee County and its participating municipalities — the city of Kankakee, Kankakee County and the villages of Manteno and Bourbonnais — expires in two years. Gavin said her goal is to extend the renewal for an additional 10 years.



Patient care is at the heart of Riverside's HEART AND VASCULAR INSTITUTE

Riverside's Heart and Vascular Institute's mission is about providing the services locally, said Lacey Binnendyk, Operations Director Heart & Vascular Institute at Riverside Healthcare.

"Patients don't have to travel far," Binnendyk said. With five interventional cardiologists and five

The institute uses innovation and technology together to add more local services.

The Riverside Cardiac and Neuro Diagnostics Center opened in 2023 to offer expanded access to diagnostic testing, which includes Holter monitoring, electroencephalography, stress tests, echocardiograms and tilt table tests.

Members of the Interventional Cardiology team and the Vascular Surgery team have brought minimally invasive procedures to Kankakee.

In 2023, the vascular surgery team started performing the transcarotid artery revascularization procedure at Riverside.

New procedures, better cardio rehabilitating and increasing the institute's footprint to provide more people in a four-county-wide area are areas of growth.

But it all comes back to helping the patient.

"The key to success for the Heart & Vascular Institute is having the patient at the center of care," said cardiologist Dr. Vikas Patel. "In addition, the continued expansion of teamwork within the organization will help improve access and types of therapies in the community."



open-heart surgeons, the institute specializes in a wide array of clinical program areas. Those include interventional cardiology, vascular surgery, cardiac-oncology, electrophysiology, cardiovascular surgery, cardiopulmonary rehabilitation and diagnostic services, as well as maintaining a graduate medical education program and research programs.

The Riverside Heart & Vascular Institute team brings the latest technology and the most advanced procedures to the community to improve and save lives. Riverside is the only Kankakee-area hospital performing open heart surgery.

LIVEABLE • WALKABLE • WORKABLE

In the heart of the City, Downtown Kankakee continues to become even more livable, walkable, and workable with these new features in 2024:

- ▶ The move of Gardant Management Systems' corporate HQ into the Executive Centre
- ▶ The opening of a new jazz club with the Venu' Lounge
- ▶ The introduction of a January music fest with WinterSong

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Ascension Saint Mary receives A RATING FROM LEAPFROG

A biannual hospital safety rankings report released Wednesday showed a number of hospitals in Illinois received “A” grades, including a hospital in Kankakee.

The report, from healthcare watchdog group and nonprofit Leapfrog, ranks nearly 3,000 hospitals across the country on safety through using more than 30 metrics that have a “direct impact on patient safety outcomes.”



Some of those include nurse and doctor communication, hospital staff responsiveness, patient satisfaction and communication and discharge information, a press release said.

Using experts and advisors at Johns Hopkins Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality, the group then worked to assign letter grades to hospitals on a scale of “A,” “B,” “C,” “D” and “F,” according to the release.

Among those to see a rise and receive a new “A” grades were Ascension Saint Francis in Evanston, Ottawa Regional Hospital and Health Care Center in Ottawa and Ascension Saint Mary in Kankakee.

In Illinois, 111 hospitals were graded, up from the 109 graded in the fall. Overall, Illinois ranked 30th nationwide for hospital safety, with 24.8 percent of hospitals in the state earning an “A” grade.

Additionally this year, Ascension Saint Mary in Kankakee was one of 21 Ascension hospitals to achieve four-star ratings, putting them among the top 25% of all hospitals in the U.S. as rated by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid.

These ratings, which assess quality of care, patient safety, and patient experience, are essential for patients and families making informed healthcare decisions.

For more information, go to healthcare.ascension.org.



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MANUFACTURING COMMUNITY



Opportunity is knocking in Kankakee County

Some of the 6 million aluminum cans produced daily at Crown (formerly Crown Cork & Seal) pass by on the production line in March 2022. This is one of the many manufacturing plants in Kankakee County which help the county rank No. 3 among small manufacturing economies in the U.S., according to Lightcast Labor Market Analytics/ Photo Tiffany Blanchette)

Last year, Tim Nugent, president and CEO of the Economic Alliance of Kankakee County, addressed the audience at the 2023 Daily Journal Progress Awards banquet and spoke of pending opportunities.

In May 2024, Nugent took to the podium once again. This year, however, he didn't speak about hoped-for, cross-your-fingers development.

Rather, Nugent spoke of development that is actually happening within the Kankakee County boundaries.

He spoke of industry diversity, the area's focus on renewable energy, the power the region has as a whole, rather than as fractured, separate entities.

"Today, one year later, we have realized many of these things 10 times over," he proclaimed.

He, of course, was speaking largely of the Gotion project, a \$2 billion investment from a China-based company which is calling Manteno home for a massive manufacturing site as a supplier for electric car batteries.

The company has promised 2,600 high-tech, good-paying jobs.

"But more than that, it allows our area to advance with the rest of the world in an industry that promises to get stronger over the next several decades," he said.

He said Gotion is just the first ripple in the water of development here.

"These are businesses that recognize our area as a central Midwest hub of opportunity," he said, noting the region's infrastructure of highways, railways, airways and waterways.

"We have the workforce, blue and white collar residents who know how to roll up their sleeves and get to work. ... We are Kankakee County, and we are on the global map for opportunity and progress."

Nugent listed a roll-call of area businesses who are key players in employing workers and have helped make Kankakee County one of the nation's leaders in manufacturing employment.

He noted the region excels in pharmaceutical, chemical, plastics, energy and now, energy storage manufacturing.

He also cautioned audience members not to forget the region's business spine — small business. He noted small, locally-owned businesses are the region's economic backbone.

"Together, our employers in Kankakee County create a diverse and dynamic economic landscape, fostering opportunity and vitality throughout the region," Nugent said.

Greif finds success around the world

It maintains a workforce of 40. It has called its East North Street location, just east of the Canadian National Railroad line, home since 1985. It produces plastic 55-gallon drums used around the world.

It would be fair to say Greif Bradley, the name of the 55-gallon plastic drum manufacturing plant, is largely an unknown entity to most area residents.

And while it occupies considerable space along one of the most-traveled streets in all of Kankakee County, most people would have little idea where the Greif manufacturing complex is.

Located in some 40,000 square feet of the former manufacturing powerhouse, Bradley Roper, the north-facing portion of the complex is now home to Greif.

The location was first operated by Van Leer Container in 1985. It operated there for 15 years before Greif purchased it in 2001.

Greif and its three production lines are in operation around the clock Monday through Friday, with each shift operated by eight-member crews churning out upwards of 1,500 to 1,700 plastic shipping drums every eight-hour shift.

And the plant has certainly not been overlooked by the company's leadership. Since 2018, some \$10 million has been invested to bring the latest in manufacturing advancements to the site.

For plant superintendent Mike Fred, of Crescent City and a 1990 graduate of Central High School, life at the little-known plant is just fine. He's been at the helm of the plant for the last six years. He started as a production worker 23 years ago and worked his way up the ladder.

Life outside the spotlight is just fine with him and the crew. They simply go about their work and do it in a top-notch fashion.

"We're not one of the top employers in the community. I guess you could say we fly under the radar, and you aren't going to find our products on a store shelf," he explained.

New state-of-the-art automated production lines allow Greif to produce products with basically no variations from one plastic drum to the next. Perfection is the goal, and perfection is most often the result.

Well Placed in Bradley

With some 30 location locations scattered across the country, the Delaware, Ohio-based company's products are involved in countless businesses not only based in the United States but worldwide.

Greif Bradley is actually one of five company plants located within the Chicagoland region. The other four are Alsip, Naperville, Lockport and Carol Stream. The Alsip plant produces steel drums.

Worldwide, the company has 248 locations and has a worldwide workforce of more than 14,000 colleagues in 39 countries.

So, transport drums are big business? For sure.

In 2023 the Bradley site shipped some 421,000 units. In Fiscal Year 2022, the company's products reached 35 countries and net sales of \$6.3 billion.

That's correct. That a "B" for billion.

And the semi-trailers with Greif etched on them carry 380 containers per load. An estimated seven to 10 trucks pull out of the complex daily delivering these containers both near and far.

Depending on the style of drum it can weigh between 18 to 21 pounds.

The plant chiefly produces plastic agricultural and petro chemical drums. Fred said some food transport containers are also produced. He is hoping that particular market can grow.

He stressed the drums are not meant as long-term industrial storage options.

"The drums are for getting products from point A to point B. Holding the product for a short time is fine," he said, but the goal is to get the product unloaded.

He said the containers can be cleaned and reused or ground and recycled.

While plastic containers are the calling card for the Bradley facility, the company collection of manufacturing sites also produces steel and fiber drums, jerrycans, intermediate bulk containers, containerboard, uncoated recycled paperboard, tubes and cores, corrugated sheets, bulk corrugated boxes and other specialty products.

Long History



Greif is not a recent entry into the container world.

To that end, Greif was born in 1877 in Cleveland, Ohio, by William Greif and Albert Vanderwyst.

By 1923, the first bitumen steel drum was produced. This type of drum is still part of the company's product portfolio.

In 1964, Greif purchased technology from Haveg Industries for blow-molder liners, which are inserts for steel and fiber drums, creating an entirely new product line.

Through the years, the product line expanded. In 2001, Greif acquired Van Leer Industrial. The acquisition provided Greif an international footprint and doubled the company's size.

Perhaps being somewhat modest, Fred said what the company does "is not overly complicated. It's a pretty simple process."

But what they do, they do well. That simple formula allows them to continue expansion not only in Bradley, but across the world.

RECOGNIZE THESE Brands?



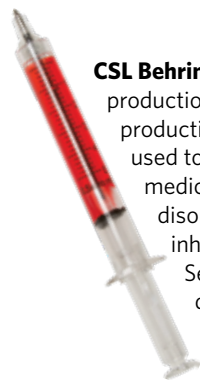
ABC Coating, Manteno
Fabricates steel rebar typically used in the construction of interstates and highways.



AHF Products, Kankakee
One of the world's leading manufacturers of retail flooring products, AHF Products creates tiles in various shapes and colors.



Momence Packing Co. (Johnsonville Sausage), Momence Makes Italian sausage, breakfast sausage and bratwurst products sold under the Johnsonville name.



CSL Behring, Bradley Pharmaceutical production plant specializes in production of plasma fractionation, used to treat serious and rare medical conditions such as bleeding disorders, tissue swelling and inherited respiratory diseases. Several recent multimillion-dollar expansions.



Spikeball Inc., Kankakee
Developed by a Kankakee native, Spikeball is one of the fastest-growing, fully portable outdoor games in the country. It takes the best elements of 2-on-2 volleyball and condenses it into a new, face-paced, boundary-line-free sport.



IKO Midwest, Kankakee
Family-owned company makes shingles for roof installation and also provides insulation and waterproofing solutions worldwide.

Crown, Bradley
Makes aluminum beverage cans, including for BrickStone Brewery. More than 5 million cans are produced at the facility daily — more than a billion a year.



FutureCeuticals, Momence
Makes fruit and vegetable products in the form of extracts, supplements and powders. Recently expanded headquarters.



BrickStone Brewery, Bourbonnais
Makes a dozen varieties of craft beer, from IPAs to APAs to pale ales and more.

R.S. Cryo Equipment, Manteno
Makes cryogenic freezers (up to -238 degrees Fahrenheit). These freezers are used in food storage and also have unique and important purposes such as housing life-saving medicine.



Rise Baking, Manteno
Making a variety of baked goods including artisan breads, bars, cookies, cakes and more. They provide baked goods to national food and retail chains.



Del Monte Fresh Produce, Kankakee
Receives truckloads daily of fresh fruit and packages them for sale at retail grocery outlets. Some products are private labeled and some are Del Monte labeled and shipped from the Kankakee plant to national food and retail chains.



LN Engineering, Momence
Manufactures high-end aftermarket parts for Porsche vehicles.



High Performance Lubricants, Manteno
Produces a variety of oils, including motor oil purchased and used by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, lubricants for industrial equipment and cooking oil.



Van Drunen Farms, Momence
One of the largest growers, manufactures and suppliers of freeze-dried, drum-dried, IQF and other frozen specialty products in the country. Among their many products are the dried strawberries in name-brand cereals.



Valspar Corp., Kankakee
The wholly-owned subsidiary of The Sherwin-Williams Company, founded in 1866, the Kankakee plant manufactures and distributes paints, coatings and related products for sale across the country.



Greif, Bradley
A leading supplier of industrial packaging products and services.

Arctic Snow & Ice Products, Bradley
A leading manufacturer of innovative pushers, plows, and other products.



Urban Farmer, Manteno
Was the first company in the frozen pizza industry to offer a gluten-free alternative.



Our Home
Specializes in making flavorful, delicious snacks for every occasion. Brands include Pop Chips, From the Ground Up and Pop Secret.



Nucor Corp., Bourbonnais Largest steel recycler in the country, manufacturing rebar, merchant bar quality angles, flats and channel steel. Nucor Steel was used in Trump International Hotel & Tower in Chicago.



Stor-Loc, Kankakee
Produces tool cabinets and has a contract with the federal government. Has a unique patent for "Stor-Frame" product.



Pactiv Evergreen With operations in both Manteno and Grant Park, Pactiv Evergreen is an essential industry producing plastic containers used in food distribution such as cookie and cake trays and soup containers. The Grant Park location produces 2 million pounds of plastic product each month, with 90% of their raw materials coming from Pactiv's Manteno site.



Plochman's Mustard, Manteno
Makes more than a dozen varieties of world-famous mustard and recently introduced salad dressing.



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Community campus, The Grove, unveiled in village
Just after the Bourbonnais Friendship Festival ended its annual five-day run, Bourbonnais Mayor Paul Schore talked about the success of the festival as well as the public's help in coming up with the Community Campus, known as The Grove, which put its first event under its belt in early summer 2024. Schore pointed out one of the reasons for the park's success was the input from the community.

Nearly 4,000 people took part in open houses and online surveys to help village trustees and officials design the park that sits on 12.5 acres of land behind the village's municipal center. The village held two open houses to let the residents come up with options for the park. There was also an online survey. Schore said it was important to get the residents involved since it is their park.

"It was an unusual situation for government. We had the guts to ask the taxpayers what they wanted and that is what we delivered," Schore said.

Trustee Randy King commented on how the public played a big role in the project. "Special recognition to the nearly 4,000 people who put the time in to let us know what direction to take in this project," King said. "Their input is what we see out there."

The Children's Safety Town, playground and splash pad finished construction later in the summer. The \$18.1 million project was a concept that came to fruition

after five years of brainstorming a concept, gathering community input as to what residents wanted in the park and being financially responsible for the village's residents.

Funding for the project came from the issuance of \$21.5 million in municipal bonds. Schore said the taxpayers' money was very well used.

The funds to pay off the bonds come from three sources: interest earned from the funds of three business districts; state sales tax revenue; interest earned from the proceeds the village received in the sale of its wastewater treatment system as well as a service charge of \$230,000 paid by Aqua to the village for use of its connector to the Kankakee River Metropolitan Agency, which runs the wastewater treatment plant.

PSI bringing warehouse project to village
Village of Bourbonnais trustees adopted an ordinance in fall 2023 establishing an economic development agreement with PSI General Contractors of Kankakee. The company plans to build a \$40-million warehouse complex on property located behind the Road Ranger Travel Center.

There are four warehouses planned, PSI officials said. Each warehouse would be approximately 100,000 square feet. The ordinance would allow economic incentives through the village in the form of Tax Increment Financing. The land sits in one of the village's TIF districts.

The proposed TIF agreement runs for 10 years. In years 1-5, PSI would receive 75% from leasers. The remaining 25% goes to the village. Years 6-10 would have the sharing be 50/50.

PSI officials said the project will be built in four phases. In Phase 1, PSI would build a 100,000-square-foot warehouse that it would lease. The warehouse could be subdivided or expanded. PSI is building the warehouse first and then recruiting businesses, company officials said during a summer 2023 meeting. There are three other phases. Upon leasing out the first warehouse, the next phase would be started.



Village 'driving economic impact' with sports complex

With the hoisting of some 10 golden shovels filled with black dirt on a brilliant, sun-soaked morning, Bradley officials officially began the 12-diamond youth baseball and softball complex in spring 2024. The \$45 million Bradley Sports Complex is anticipated to be a centerpiece for new development within Bradley and the surrounding region and is projected to have an annual economic impact between \$33 million and \$35 million.

The 126-acre complex, in which soccer can also be played, is being considered a first major piece for transforming Bradley into a destination point for tourism.

Bradley Mayor Mike Watson forecasted the development will help make Bradley the "mecca" of youth baseball. The site is only a short distance from the six-field Diamond Point baseball-softball complex owned by the Bourbonnais Township Park District along Career Center Road.

"Today's ceremony speaks to the future of Bradley," Watson said. "... This 12-diamond ball field is a major component for our future."

The site is being projected to attract upwards of 3,000 visitors per weekend during the spring and summer, pumping millions of dollars into the local economy, Watson said.

"This is about driving economic impact," he said. In attendance at the groundbreaking was Herb Forkenbrock, president of Bourbonnais-based Ballpark Sports Baseball Inc., a company which helps fill youth baseball and softball complexes with teams.

Forkenbrock said the Diamond Point economic impact has been annually placed at \$8.5 million. He said lodging locations will be filled for miles once the site is developed and ready for action.

"This is something Bradley will be proud of into the future," Watson said. "Bradley wants to be the youth baseball mecca."

Village of Bradley Finance Director Rob Romo said the complex will most assuredly bring additional development to the region in terms of hotels, restaurants and retail, and the impact will stretch far beyond Bradley's village limits.

Romo said businesses doing well, will do even better. Businesses doing OK, will begin to do well; and struggling businesses will see an upswing in revenues. Basically, he said, it will be a development which will aid everyone.

The sound of youngsters' aluminum bats connecting with a fastball should be filling the air by mid May 2025, which is around the time the project is anticipated to be completed.

Site work has already been underway and an earthwork contract of \$3.21 million was awarded to Tenco Excavating, of Bourbonnais, near mid April.

All work at the site is being overseen by the watchful eyes of Providence, R.I.-based Gilbane Building Company and PSi Inc., of Kankakee, the companies serving as the project's construction managers.



Regatta returns to river

The return of powerboat racing on the Kankakee River during Labor Day weekend took the checkered flag.

After an 11-year absence, the American Power Boat Association event brought back the roar of boat engines.

The Kankakee River Valley Regatta brought in an estimated \$21,700, Kankakee Valley Park District Executive Director Dayna Heitz said.

Beer sales brought in between \$8,000 and \$9,000, and food vendors were very happy with their sales numbers, Heitz said.

There were 1,243 vehicles that paid admission during the regatta's three-day run.

"I think that is a good number," Heitz said. "There sure was a crowd for the finals on Sunday. Spectators were three deep."

"The weather was a little hot Friday. It was perfect for Saturday. After the wind died down, Sunday was a nice day."

For putting the regatta together in less than a year, it was a strong start for 2025.

"It was unbelievable," Heitz said. "That was due to all that went behind the scenes from the committees, public works, park maintenance and everyone involved."

Work already has started for next year's regatta. "We really got some great suggestions," Heitz said.

For more information, go to kankakeeriverregatta.com

Plans progress for city's riverwalk



Over six years in the making, the East Riverwalk is in the process of going from concept and design to construction and reality.

The Currents of Kankakee has been hard at work developing the 1-acre first phase of the planned 4-mile Kankakee Riverwalk.

The first phase is known as the East Riverwalk and is located at the southeast corner of East River Street and South Schuyler Avenue.

The Currents of Kankakee is the umbrella organization for the proposed riverfront development of the 4-mile stretch of the Kankakee River flowing through the

city from the Frank Lloyd Wright historic properties to Riverside Medical Center.

Additional elements include a kayak launch and observation deck.

Working in conjunction with The Currents of Kankakee is the Kankakee Riverfront Society, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the implementation of the Kankakee Riverfront Master Plan.

The society includes city of Kankakee and Kankakee Valley Park District officials and other community leaders whose mission is "to make The Currents of Kankakee an extraordinary riverfront experience that will transform the region's image, raise its marketplace appeal and enhance its quality of life," according to The Currents of Kankakee website.

The Currents of Kankakee brand for the Kankakee Riverfront effort was created and is owned by the Kankakee Riverfront Society.

Find out more about the project at thecurrentsofkankakee.com.



New public housing underway

There is a new public housing development underway in Kankakee's 5th Ward in the 700 block of West Harbor Street — just off of North Fifth Avenue — and it will not resemble the existing government-assisted dwellings previously developed.

The \$14 million, 36-unit development on 6 acres will consist of 20 two-bedroom units and 16 three-bedroom units. The two-bedroom dwellings will be 1,205 square feet, and the three-bedroom units will be 1,510 square feet.

The change, however, comes in how the units will be constructed.

There will be 18 single-family houses erected and nine duplex structures comprising 18 apartments.

In short, 27 buildings will house upwards of 100 as compared to 10 buildings in the now-demolished development.



The new development — named West Harbor Residences — replaces the former 10-building, 34-unit complex that had been planted on 3 acres in the same area built in 1970 by the Kankakee County Housing Authority.

It will be the KCHA's first major development since the 1970s, said Randy McGill, KCHA's executive director.

"We know our public housing is old. Its life cycle is near the end. West Harbor is our first step in redeveloping our public housing," McGill said. "This will be the first step of many."

Ricky Rockets opens, QuikTrip planned



After years of starts and stops, the Ricky Rockets Fuel Center on Kankakee's east side has opened.

In February, motorists began fueling gas-powered at one of the 12 fuel islands at Shell gas station.

David Redfern, Ricky Rockets director of operations, had one word to describe how he felt about the opening at 2209 E. Court St.: "Excited."

The projected \$20 million Kankakee development is the largest of the 11 Ricky Rockets locations. The company now has 10 sites in Illinois and one in Texas.

Fuel centers have become must-have developments in highway interchanges as companies fight for truck driver business.

The development at the 13-acre East Court Street site — once the longtime home for a 104,000-square-foot Kmart store that closed in 1994 — had been announced in 2016, when the city was led by then-Mayor Nina Epstein.

For a variety of reasons, the project never gained any momentum, and it eventually fell off the project table of Ricky Rockets owner Rick Heidner.

When Mayor Chris Curtis took office in 2021, one of his first acts was contacting Heidner to gauge if he had any intention of recommitting to the Kankakee project. After some discussion, the project came back, and in May 2022, a ground-breaking ceremony was held at the site.

"I reached out to Rick and asked how we could revive this project?" Curtis said. "This is a big deal for the city. Just bringing lights back to this area helps. This is exciting."



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Ricky Rockets Assistant Manager Rachel Willis, of St. Anne, said while the opening faced some obstacles, it is a positive thing to have on East Court Street.

"This is something good and needed, and it looks nice. It brightens and uplifts the area," Willis said. "I hope it's going to be great for the East side."

Adjoining the Ricky Rockets convenience-type store to the west is a Wendy's restaurant. The Wendy's opened for business in mid-February and features a drive-thru.

The Ricky Rockets property is designed to cater to over-the-road truck drivers.

The location has a truck wash, truck weight scales and shower facilities as well as a lounge area for drivers to relax.

The property also is equipped with washers and dryers for clothing.

In addition to clothes washing, Redfern said a dog washing site also will be opened. The dog wash likely will open in late summer or early fall, and it will be open to anyone, not just truck drivers. There are also plans for a dog park.

The store area will feature a Rocket Express, which is a sandwich and pizza area. As a first for Ricky Rockets, the sandwich area allows customers to make their own sub sandwiches.

The site also will be home to a carpeted, 10-video-poker-station gaming lounge. Players must be 21 to enter the Gold Rush Gaming room.

Also coming to Kankakee is QuikTrip, which Skyler Evans, a QuikTrip real estate project manager, anticipates will open in either late 2025 or early 2026.

The site will be located just off the Interstate 57's 308 interchange on the city's south side.

The Tulsa, Okla.-based company is making a big push into Illinois. When the Kankakee project was announced a little more than a year ago, QuikTrip had three developments in Illinois.

Evans said based on timeline of the Kankakee project, Kankakee would likely be the company's 11th Illinois location.

The project's cost is anticipated to be in the \$12 million range.



Updates to Thies Park

The popularity of pickleball and the use of the existing four courts at Lucille Thies Park in Manteno is part of the reason the village added six courts among other amenities to the park at 800 Park St.

R & R Inc., of Bradley, worked on phase 1 improvements at Thies Park. Phase 1 consists of the underground work and grading at the park. Phase 2 work was done by Tenco Excavating, of Bourbonnais, to continue with the improvements that include six pickleball courts, an artificial turf Wiffle ball field, two volleyball courts, a shuffleboard court and two Bocce ball courts among other amenities.

"There will also be a covered seating area between the courts, so people can get out of the sun while waiting to play," said Village Administrator Chris LaRocque.

Thies Park is in the Park West subdivision on Park Street.

The upgrades also call for a soccer field and a parking lot just off Park Street to facilitate the increased use at the park. There will also be a covered seating area between the courts that will include restrooms.



Vintage Purse Museum comes to Manteno

The Vintage Purse Museum is a non-profit charity that provides a workplace for special needs adults; a fresh, unique international vintage museum.

Exhibits include thousands of vintage fashion including purses, dresses, hats, and shoes, along with nostalgic comic book, Barbie and World War II exhibits.

The Vintage Purse Museum is a stepping stone to acquire skills and confidence to achieve a more joyful life by breaking down the barriers that imprison special needs adults in poverty. A sanctuary and flexible

employment environment (we can create a job that matches their skill-set), with mentoring and training that provides a safe haven to reach out, interact with people, feel satisfaction and confidence from a job done well to expand horizons and life goals. VPM encourages growth and independence, no matter what challenges a person faces so they may thrive.

Vintage Purse Museum is located in the historic 3 Diversatech Drive building in Manteno. The organization surpassed its fundraising goal of \$275,000. For more information, go to vintagepursemuseum.org.

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Herscher School District goes electric

Though its school colors are black and gold, Herscher School District is leading the way when it comes to going green. Recently, just more than half of its fleet of buses became fully electric vehicles.

A total of 25 electric buses were purchased through an U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant for the rural school district.

Herscher School District was accepted for the EPA's Clean School Bus Program, a plan designed to incentivize schools to replace their used diesel buses with clean and zero-emission models.

Not only was the district selected to be part of the program, but Herscher was one of two school districts in Illinois and 21 nationwide to receive the highest grant amount — \$9,875,000 for the purchase of 25 electric buses and charging infrastructure.

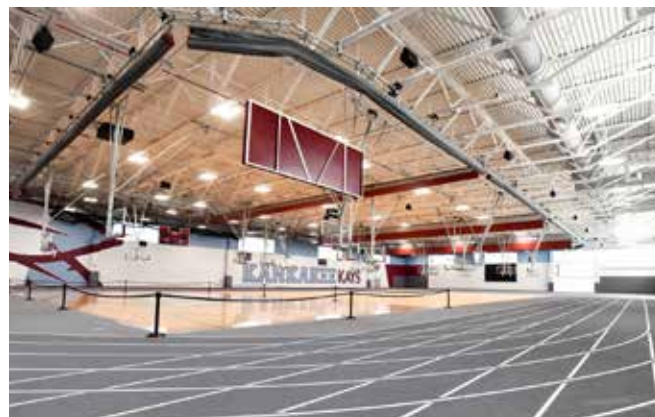
Superintendent Rich Decman said the electric buses have been “very effective.”

Doors open on KSD 111's \$26 million Community Center

About two-and-a-half years after plans were set in motion, the doors of the Dr. Geneva Walters K Community Center opened in May with a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the \$26.5 million fieldhouse. Superintendent Geneva Walters said she envisioned the facility to be part of the “long-term answer to mitigating gun violence.”

“In my mind, the answer is more activities and more structure with meaningful adults and mentors that can support them ...” she said. “We’re going to have layers and layers and layers of solutions in order to really make sure we’re supporting the community and make sure we have a safe place [for youth] to be.”

The junior high and high school combined have more than 400 athletes and 2,000 students, all of whom will have opportunities to engage in activities at the K Center, Walters said.



In addition to Kays athletics, extracurricular programs such as the Robotics team and JROTC also will be able to take advantage of the space, she said.

The 82,147-square-foot addition features four basketball/volleyball courts, a 200-meter track and two long-jump pits. Two of the courts are lined for indoor tennis as well.

About 17,706 square-feet of the existing high school building also were renovated as part of the project, including updates to the back gym and a new indoor turf room.

On the second floor of the fieldhouse are new offices for the athletic department and Youth Empowerment Program and a community room for events.

“This is more than just a building,” Walters said. The space is open for community members to use.

Kankakee County CEO student wins national business competition

The number one has been a common thread during the 2023-24 school year for Kankakee County CEO, which is providing local high school students a venture into entrepreneurship education.

First, this is year one of the local program, which is part of the national CEO program and stands for Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities.

Second, the class of five has been working together as one to create a shared learning experience. The class is made up of Kankakee High School seniors James Bretzlaff, Da’Jon Casiel and Rachel White; Kankakee Trinity Academy senior Jonathan Harwood; and Bishop McNamara Catholic High School senior Jay Blanchette.

The group has spent the year learning from area businesses and entrepreneurs. The content learned in the first semester helped them plan and execute a trivia night fundraiser in February, and they hosted a trade show last month. The trade show had the students present the individual businesses they’ve started as part of the class.

The third example of the number one: Bretzlaff received first place in the nation for his business, Gopher Forest Games.

The Midland Institute of Entrepreneurship’s National CEO Pitch Competition featured 426 other entries. The

first-place prize winnings amounted to \$2,500. When Bretzlaff’s name was called during a Zoom meeting featuring all 400-plus participants, all five Kankakee County CEO students shot out of their chairs in excitement.

“It was a great feeling not only for me but for the whole class,” Bretzlaff said. “It’s so great to win something so big when you put in a lot of work. Everyone in the class is putting in a lot of work and seeing one of us win was a great feeling for everybody.”



KACC students help build trailer raising awareness for drug abuse

Raising awareness for drug abuse is now on wheels in Kankakee County.

An outfitted 18-foot trailer, dubbed Hidden in Plain Sight,



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is an initiative that shows parents and other adults the ways in which youth might be hiding drugs and alcohol. Spearheaded by Pledge for Life Partnership and a grant funded through community efforts, the trailer was designed by staff and students at the Kankakee Area Career Center to create a bedroom/bathroom of a teenager to show the places in which illicit items might be hidden.



The idea is the brainchild of James Schreiner, Drug-Free Communities Grant Project Coordinator for the Iroquois-Kankakee Regional Office of Education. With more than 30 years of experience as a schoolteacher — 24 of those years spent at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School — Schreiner has seen it all.

“You wouldn’t believe the extremes these kids go to,” he said, noting something that looks like a common yellow highlighter marker actually could be a vape pen. He said former students and youth he encounters at Pledge for Life informational booths also prove helpful in sharing where parents can look for hidden items.

KCC’s commitment to area at large continues to grow

When an international manufacturer was mulling establishing a plant in Kankakee County, bringing 2,600 jobs with it, one of the key factors to consider was the local community college.

Kankakee Community College President Michael Boyd said major companies such as Gotion, the Chinese-based manufacturer of electric vehicle batteries, look at several big-picture items before putting roots down in a new area.

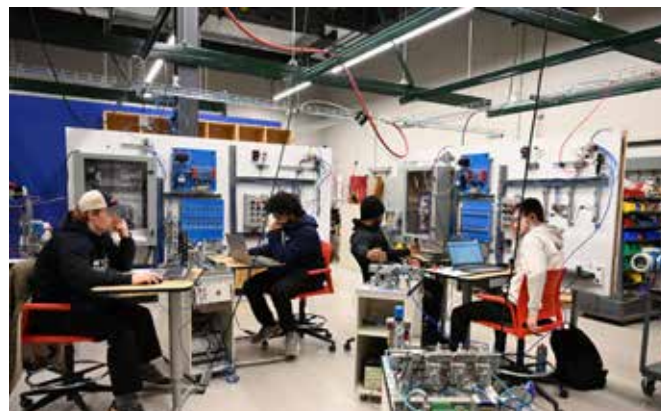
After verifying it would have the access to the space and utilities required for the operation, the second thing that invariably comes up is “show me the community college,” Boyd said.

“Once [business leaders] know that we have the utilities, we can get the water, the electricity, and we have enough land, now I need people,” he said. “I need people to drive the operation.” Gotion had three sites across the nation targeted when Boyd walked company representatives through KCC’s electrical engineering technology program. “You should have seen these folks’ eyes light up,” Boyd said.

Electric vehicles and creating batteries is an emerging market centered on new, innovative technology, Boyd noted. The batteries that were in Teslas five and 10 years ago are not the ones being manufactured today, he said.

It seems as though KCC did, in fact, stack up. In one of the largest economic development projects in the state of Illinois, Gotion is establishing a Manteno factory and will be partnering with KCC to establish a work training program.

“Gotion is doing their thing; we’re gonna do our thing,” Boyd said. “The reason we’re doing it is to connect our students with family-sustaining careers in our communities. If Gotion is going to provide those, I want to connect them.”



Gotion is just one of the partnerships KCC has forged with local manufacturers. Others such as CSL Behring, Nucor Steel, Peddinghaus Corporation and Crown (formerly Crown Cork & Seal) also work with the college to provide advanced manufacturing training to students to ensure a skilled, educated workforce.

KCC’s commitment to remaining on the cutting-edge of rapidly evolving shifts in industry and technology is reflected in the continued growth of its manufacturing programs — enrollment in this area increased 84% from 2022-23.

As Boyd puts it, the institution aims to be “three steps ahead” so its students remain competitive.



2024 orientation sets new records for ONU

As Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais prepared for its fall 2024 semester, the Office of Admissions welcomed more than 1,800 guests to a special in-person two-day orientation event on campus. This year’s event was the largest in ONU history with 650 freshmen and 57 transfer students attending, according to olivet.edu.

They represent 37 U.S. states plus several other countries, including the Pacific Rim countries. While on campus, they were introduced to academics and campus life. There was also time for them to get acquainted with one another.

“Orientation is a special time for the University to welcome incoming students,” said Luke Franklin, MBA grad and executive director of traditional enrollment for ONU, in a news release from the school. “We

consistently hear from students who attended orientation, saying they cannot wait to come back to campus and start their Olivet experience.”

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OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

Hiking, biking, canoeing, hunting, fishing, skiing and more are all possible in Kankakee County. You can even do these activities while exploring the unspoiled beauty of the Kankakee River State Park and other preserved natural areas.

Explore underwater attractions and diverse fish populations at Haigh Quarry off North Street in Kankakee. Take a trip on the river with Reed's Canoe Trips, or enjoy the river's banks with a day of fishing.

FAMILY MATTERS

Kids of all ages can learn and explore throughout Kankakee County. The Bourbonnais Township Park District's Exploration Station is a children's museum offering hands-on exploration and discovery for children and their families. Or catch some family-friendly entertainment with Kankakee Valley Theatre Association's live shows.

TAKE A SPIN, TAKE A DIP

Test your skills at the village of Bourbonnais' event and skate plaza — on wheels during the summer and ice skates in the winter. Cool down with the splash pad at Manteno's Legacy Park or at Splash Valley Aquatic Park in Kankakee.

TAKE A HIKE

Kankakee County has several multi-use trails including the Riverfront Trail, Kankakee River State Park, BTPD's Perry Farm and Willowhaven, Bourbonnais' Riverfront Park and throughout the village of Manteno.

SPORTS FANATICS

Lace it up and skate at the Kankakee Valley Park District Ice Valley Centre or roll the lanes at Brookmont Bowling Center, both in Kankakee. Right on Target in Bourbonnais and X-Line in Kankakee offer shooting ranges. There are even air sports at the Greater Kankakee Airport. Don't forget that Kankakee County has nine amazing golf courses, too. Check out Adventure Commons for indoor sporting leagues, miniature golf and pickleball.



315 Festival Bradley

A LOVE OF HISTORY AND ART

View local art at the Community Arts Council Arts Center inside Northfield Square Mall, Merchant Street Art Gallery of Artists with Autism and Moon Cookie Gallery, all in Kankakee. Learn the history of Kankakee County and beyond at the Kankakee County Museum, as well as the county's French background at the French Heritage Museum, both in Kankakee.

HOMETOWN HERITAGE

Learn about the history of Bourbonnais at the George R. Letourneau Home Museum and the Bourbonnais Grove Log Schoolhouse. Other local museums include the Railroad Museum in Kankakee; the Manteno Historical Society in Manteno; the Herscher Area Historical Society in Herscher; and the Earl D. Schoeffner Farm Museum, Graham Historic House and Museum, Little Red Schoolhouse, Momence, Railroad Depot and the Pioneer Cabin at Conrad Park, all in Momence.

BACK IN THE DAY

Find treasures and collectibles at Indian Oaks Antique Mall in Bourbonnais, Bargains & Treasures in Bradley, Manteno Antique Mall in Manteno and Route 50 Consignments & More in Kankakee. From rare antiques to vintage finds, you never know what you'll discover.



Knack Brewery & Fermentations



Fishing on the Kankakee River

At **Belson Steel**, we make scrap recycling easy, managing all logistics of drop-off and pick-up and providing scrap containers and trailers for on site storage



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SPRING

Step outside and enjoy the local parks. Whether taking a long hike at Kankakee River State Park or enjoying the nature-based playground at Island Park in Momence, there's a place and a pace for everyone. Perry Farm in Bourbonnais offers farm animal meet-and-greets as well as many outdoor events. Take time to remember those who have bravely served our country by visiting Legion Park in Manteno.

SUMMER

Every Saturday morning from spring through Halloween, the Kankakee Farmers' Market draws people from in and around the county for shopping, dining and entertainment. Summer would be nothing without an outdoor festival, and Kankakee County has tons. Bourbonnais Friendship Fest happens in June, Merchant Street Music in Kankakee takes place in July and Momence Gladiolus Festival happens in August. This is just the tip of the festival iceberg. Not only do the festivals provide residents with endless entertainment, but they attract out-of-town visitors that help stimulate the local economy.

FALL

Fall starts out strong with Labor Day celebrations in Herscher and Aroma Park. Manteno carries the festival torch with September's Oktoberfest while Greek Fest is held in Bourbonnais that same month. To get a head start on holiday shopping, there is no shortage of local shops with something for everyone, including Busse and Rieck, in Kankakee, and The Swanky Home and Tholen's in Bourbonnais.

WINTER

Indoor activities are perfect for winter, from a tour of the Frank Lloyd Wright B. Harley Bradley House in Kankakee to visiting the Kankakee County Museum, there's much to see and learn. Enjoy a movie at AMC's Cinemark Movies 10 in Bourbonnais, or at Classic Cinemas' Meadowview or Paramount Theatres in Kankakee, which were both recently renovated



Community resources & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Acting Out Theatre Co., Bradley

Theatre organization that offers summer stock productions and community outdoor theater. actingouttheatreco.org; 815.644.0854

Agape Community Outreach Mission Inc., Kankakee

Provides emergency assistance, information and referral and case management in response to local needs. acom-inc.org/programs; 815.304.4990

Al-Anon/Alateen, Kankakee

A fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength and hope in order to solve their common problems. kankakeealanon.com

Alcoholics Anonymous, Bradley

Fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope that they may help others to recover from alcoholism. kankakee-aa.org; 815.939.4996

ALIVE (Adult Literacy Initiative Volunteers Expanded),

Kankakee ALIVE teaches adult literacy to those reading at or below a ninth grade level. kcc.edu; 815.802.8307

Alzheimer's Association, Illinois Chapter

Provides education and support to Alzheimer's victims and their families to lessen the physical and emotional burden placed on the caregiver and patient. alz.org/illinois; 815.744.0804

American Cancer Society

Dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem through research, education, advocacy and service. cancer.org/about-us/local/illinois.html; 815.227.2345

American Diabetes Association

Provides programs such as a camp for children with diabetes and workshops. diabetes.org/Chicago; 312.346.1805

American Heart Association

Funds cardiovascular medical research, educates consumers on healthy living

and fosters cardiac care to reduce disability and deaths caused by cardiovascular disease and stroke. Heart.org

American Liver Foundation

Promotes education, advocacy, support services and research for the prevention, treatment and cure of liver disease. liverfoundation.org

American Lung Association

Works to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease, through research, education and advocacy. lung.org

American Red Cross

Provides disaster services and emergency relief in the form of shelter, food and clothing immediately following disasters. redcross.org; 815.223.0922

American Veterans Service Dog Academy (AVSDA), Manteno

Pairs and trains companion, emotional and certified service dogs with military veterans coping with the effects of Post Traumatic Stress. avsd.com

Ascension Saint Mary's Hospital Foundation, Kankakee

Donations help sustain care, broaden services and invest in the latest treatments and technologies. Formerly AMITA Health. amitahealth.org/giving

Blessings in a Backpack

Provides weekend nourishment to local school children on the federal free and reduced meal program. cccbourbonnais.com

Bradley-Bourbonnais Rotary Club

Rotarians are neighbors, friends and community leaders who come together to create positive, lasting change in the community and around the world. bradley.clubexpress.com

Camp Shaw-Waw-Nas-See, Manteno

Provides outdoor and camping opportunities. campshaw.org; 815.933.3011

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet, Kankakee

Provides emergency services and homelessness prevention, Horizons Transitional Housing, counseling and addiction services, case management and senior services. catholiccharitiesjoliet.org; 815.933.7791

Center of Hope, Kankakee

A client-choice food pantry, low-income families select food items from the food pantry on a weekly basis. centerofhopek3.org; 815.937.4277

Child Network, Bradley

Umbrella agency dedicated to advocacy for neglected and physically and sexually abused children. The agency houses two programs, Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of Kankakee County and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Kankakee County. childnetwork.org; 815.936.7372

Christmas Day Inc., Kankakee County

Serves Christmas dinner in nine locations in Kankakee County to those who would otherwise be alone on Christmas. facebook.com/christmasgolf

Clove Alliance

Improves the quality of services to sexual assault and abuse victims to assist in their recovery and to work toward the elimination of sexual assault and abuse in Kankakee and Iroquois counties. clovealliance.org; 815.932.7273; crisis line, 815.932.3322

Community Foundation of the Kankakee River Valley, Kankakee

A vehicle for charitable giving that builds overtime, substantial endowment funds for the community. cfkrv.org; 815.939.1611

Cornerstone Services, Kankakee County

Provides services to people with disabilities promoting choice, dignity and the opportunity to live and work in the community. Cornerstoneservices.org; 815.823.8412

Dream Catcher Farms Rescue Youth Connect Program, St. Anne

Offers at-risk youth the opportunity to connect with rescue horses.
[815.954.4451](tel:815.954.4451)

Duane Dean Behavioral Health Center, Kankakee

Provides outpatient substance abuse treatment.
Duanedean.org; 779.236.1177

Easter Seals of MidEastern Illinois, Bradley

Medical rehabilitation, therapies and summer day camps for disabled children.
easterseals.com/joliet/; 815.932.0623

Easy Street Theater

Offers social and artistic opportunities for all persons with cognitive and/ or physical disabilities.
Easystreettheater.com; 815.697.2665

Fortitude Community Outreach

Provides emergency shelter, street outreach, transitional housing and workforce development for the homeless.
fortitudecommunityoutreach.org; 815.546.3271

Garden of Prayer Youth Center, Kankakee, Momence and Aroma Park

Provides year round structured educational and recreational programs and activities that enhance personal development, dignity, pride, self-esteem and self-worth.
gopyouthcenter.org; 815.933.2493

Gigi's Playhouse, Bradley-Kankakee

Provides resources, specialized teaching and support to individuals with Down syndrome, their families and the community.
gigisplayhouse.org/bradley-kankakee; 815.939.PLAY

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana

Provides girls with opportunities to develop their potential and have fun with their peers in a supportive, all-girl setting.
girlscoutsgcnwi.org; 855.456.8347

Good Shepherd Manor, Momence

Good Shepherd Manor is a residential facility for 124 men with developmental disabilities. The Brothers of the Good Shepherd and the staff of professional personnel are involved with the high standards of caring for the residents.
goodshepherdmanor.org; 815.472.3700

Habitat for Humanity, Kankakee County

Dedicated to eliminating substandard housing and homelessness and to making adequate, affordable shelter.
kankakeehabitat.org; 815.802.0225

Helen Wheeler Center for Community Mental Health, Kankakee

Outpatient community mental health center. Mental health assessment and individualized treatment planning, therapy and counseling services.
facebook.com/helenwheelercenter; 815.939.3543

Hippocrates Medical Clinic, Kankakee Free medical clinic.

hmckankakee.wixsite.com/hmckankakee; 815.216.3446

Hundred Club, Kankakee County

Provides assistance to the surviving spouses and dependents of law enforcement and firefighting personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty while working in Kankakee County.
The100clubkankakeecounty.org; 815.933.5529

Illinois Coalition For Community Services, Kankakee

Provides free social service youth programs throughout Illinois.
lccscares.org

Illinois Horse Rescue of Will County, Beecher

Provides shelter and care for mistreated or abandoned horses and other animals until a suitable home can be found and provides educational and therapeutic programs at local schools and charities.
Illinoishorserescue.org; 708.258.3959

Jumpstart, Bradley

A free, home visiting program through Easterseals Joliet Region, working with expecting families and those that have children aged 0-3, providing developmental screenings and activities, parenting enrichment and support and more.
Parentasexpert.com; 815.304.4106

Kankakee Area LGBTQ Network

As active members and openly LGBTQ members and allies in various corners of the community, the network receives inquiries about services and connections for LGBTQ folks in the community. The network has ideas and motivation to create spaces for services and connections in our community.
bit.ly/3OpWJlw

Kankakee County Community Services, Inc., Kankakee

Community action agency that works to alleviate the effects of poverty on low-income families, and/or individuals in Kankakee County.
Kccsi-cap.org; 815.933.7883



Kankakee County Humane Foundation, St. Anne

Rescues unwanted and abandoned animals and adopts out animals to safe homes. Provides pet food assistance, free vaccine clinics and works to eliminate dog fighting and abuse.
K3humanefoundation.org; 815.933.5999

Kankakee County Museum, Kankakee

The museum exists to share the exciting historical experiences of the County.
Kankakeecountymuseum.com; 815.932.5279

Kankakee County Training Center

Providing an array of quality services that assist adults with developmental disabilities in achieving their full potential in all areas of their lives.
kankakeecountytrainingcenter.org; 815.939.9980

Kankakee Municipal Band

Band performs free concerts that include crowd marches, show tunes, overtures and popular favorites.
Kankakeeband.org; 815.671.6149

Kankakee Parish Nurse Network

Promotes and motivates healthy behaviors in the faith communities; strives to achieve higher levels of wellness through the integration of faith and nursing.
facebook.com/kankakeeparishnurse; 815.922.9823

Kankakee Rotary Club

An organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations and help build goodwill and peace in the world.
kankakee.clubexpress.com; 815.685.9287

Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra

Provides entertainment for special events.
kvso.org; 815.214.9555

Kankakee Valley Theatre Association

Promotes arts through live stage productions.
Kvta.org; 815.935.8510

Kankakee YMCA, Kankakee

Provides programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.
K3ymca.org; 815.933.1741

Let's Ketchup

A nonprofit organization that works to ensure that all students have access to proper nutrition.
letsketchup.org

LoveALatte Coffee

A job training opportunity in Kankakee County for young adults with special needs, housed within a community pop-up coffee shop.
lovealattecoffee.com

Limelight Theatre Works

Theatre company dedicated to producing small theater pieces.
facebook.com/LimelightTheatreWorks

Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center, Bradley

Pregnancy and parenting education classes, assistance in maternity and baby clothing, referrals for medical care.
Rivervalleyprc.org; 815.802.9917

The Living Room Program – by Duane Dean

A community respite program that offers an alternative to Emergency Departments (ED) for people experiencing an emotional crisis.
duanedean.org/livingroom; 779.236.1177

Make-A-Wish Foundation

Provides life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.
Illinois.wish.org

Manteno Interfaith Food Pantry, Manteno

Food pantry open twice a month.
815.468.6818

March of Dimes, Bourbonnais

Support programs in research, community services, health education and advocacy to prevent birth defects and infant mortality.
marchofdimes.com; 312.435.4007

Mattea's Joy

Brings joy to families with hospitalized children and provides comfort and support with the hope of lifting families' burdens.
Matteasjoy.org

Mental Health Network of Kankakee County

Network bringing community sectors to the table – including providers, residents, educators, first responders, social services, employers, faith leaders, media, government – to discuss mental health.
facebook.com/MHNMKankakee

Merchant Street Art Gallery for Artists with Autism, Kankakee

Empowers artists diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
merchantstreetartgallery.org 815.685.9057



New Beginnings for Cats, Bourbonnais

Cage-free cat shelter and sanctuary.
newbeginningsforcats.com; 815.472.4734

One Neighbor at a Time

Helping others with basic necessities like clean running water, indoor plumbing and protection from the elements, so that they can see beyond their needs and help others.
Onaat.org

Options Center for Independent Living, Bourbonnais

Promotes independent living for people with disabilities by providing information/referral, advocacy, peer support, independent living skills training, free equipment loans, community reintegration program,

personal assistance program, TTY distribution, sign language interpreter referral, assistive technology center for people with vision impairment, vision services and youth services.
optionscil.org; 815.936.0100

Perfect Paws Animal Rescue, Bourbonnais

Focused on saving lives of stray, abandoned and neglected animals.
perfectpawsanimalrescue.org

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc., Kankakee

Provides free legal help to senior citizens and low-income persons.
pslegal.org; 815.935.2750

Project Headspace and Timing

Promotes positive mental health practices to veterans and works to unify them with their communities, nature, and themselves.
projectheadspaceandtiming.org

Riverside Healthcare Foundation, Kankakee

Funds are directed toward specific programs and services.
riversidehealthcare.org/ways-to-give/riverside-foundation

River Valley Animal Rescue, Momence

No-kill animal rescue and shelter. Operates on proceeds from resale shop and donations.
Rivervalleyanimalrescue.org; 815.507.5007

River Valley Special Recreation Association, Bradley

An association formed by member agencies to provide community-based Therapeutic Recreation to individuals with disabilities and special needs.
Rivervalleysra.com; 815.933.7336

River Valley Wind Ensemble

Wind and percussion players perform a diverse blend of musical styles.
Windensemble.org

Rotary 609

Rotary Club for the River Valley. Not limited to any one community but reflective of the area. With a focus on young professionals, but open to all.
facebook.com/rotary609

Salvation Army, Kankakee

Programs include spiritual support, emergency assistance, free lunch, housing resources and support services.
sakankakee.org; 815.933.8421

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**Samuel R. Myers Foundation for
Suicide and Mental Health**

Encourages and supports suicide and mental health awareness, training and education.

sammyersfoundation.com/;
815.671.2058

**Sleep in Heavenly Peace,
Kankakee Area**

Reaching every child in the greater Kankakee area who is in need and provide them with a safe and comfortable bed.

facebook.com/SHP.kankakee

Still I Rise

A dynamic and innovative leadership development non-profit that empowers youth and young adults to create a positive change in society.

still-irise.org/; 815.414.9614

Success By 6, Kankakee

A joint initiative of the United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties and the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley to promote early childhood learning, child development and parenting.

myunitedway.org/successby6/;
815.932.7476

Sunrise Center Animal Rescue, St. Anne

Provides animal rescue services, humane investigations, access to low cost veterinary services and educational resources to further the prevention of animal abuse and neglect. Now including Furry Friends Spay and Neuter Clinic.

sunrisecenteranimalrescue.org/;
815.482.4486

**Sunrise Center Therapeutic Riding,
St. Anne**

Provides horse riding opportunities for those suffering from mental and physical disabilities. The combination of the movement of therapeutic riding instructors produces immense benefits to riders with disabilities.

sunrisefarmsinc.com/; 815.932.6170

**TMC - Teen Mother Choices
International**

Support for pregnant or parenting teens 21 and younger.

[teenmotherchoices.org/tmc/](https://teenmotherchoices.org/tmc/programs/bourbonnais)
[programs/bourbonnais](https://teenmotherchoices.org/tmc/programs/bourbonnais)

Thresholds, Kankakee

Provides healthcare, housing and hope for those with mental illnesses and substance use disorders. Through care,

employment, advocacy and housing, Thresholds assists and inspires people with mental illnesses to reclaim their lives.

thresholds.org/; 815.935.8886

**United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois
Counties**

Resources to strengthen lives, build a caring community.

myunitedway.org/; 815.932.7476

UpliftedCare, Bourbonnais

Provides compassionate physical, emotional, spiritual and social support for individuals living with terminal illness and their families.

upliftedcare.org/; 815.939.4141

Wesley's Table Food Pantry, Bradley

A mission and ministry of Wesley United Methodist Church. Shoppers can choose food items on Sundays.

815.954.9276

Women United - by United Way

Harnesses the power and dedication of women leaders to transform local communities. We are a diverse, vibrant community, bound together by a powerful sense of belonging - to each other, to our mission and to the communities we call home.

myunitedway.org/women-united

Wright in Kankakee, Kankakee

Preserves the Frank Lloyd Wright campus and advances appreciation of it.

[Wrightinkankakee.org/](https://wrightinkankakee.org/); 815.936.9630

YWCA, Kankakee

Meets community needs through programs in family life, community and leadership, health promotion, empowerment and youth development.

myunitedway.org/ywca/; 815.933.4516

Youth for Christ's City Life Center

For junior high and high school students in Kankakee County, City Life is a relational, holistic, community-based ministry that desires to see deep change in an urban neighborhood through the raising of indigenous leaders from the young people in that community.

yfcchicago.org/kankakee-city-life/;
815.935.2020

Zonta Club, Kankakee County

Locally supports Harbor House and Clove Alliance through service, advocacy and fundraising.

Zontakankakee.org

WHY KANKAKEE COUNTY

1. LOCATION

Six I-57 exits, daily traffic +40k cars/day, three Class-1 Rail lines, Enterprise Zone benefits, easy access to Midway International Airport

2. INFRASTRUCTURE

Ready-access utilities with abundant electric, natural gas, water and wastewater treatment, high speed internet and fiber networks

3. INDUSTRY

Global, national, state and local headquarters and branches

4. WORKFORCE

2.8 million labor force within 45 minutes; 800,000 labor force within 30 minutes

5. EDUCATION

Olivet Nazarene University
Kankakee Community College

INDUSTRY DIVERSITY

- General Manufacturing
- Iron/Steel/Metals
- Food Processing
- Plastics Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Transportation/Logistics/
Distribution
- Chemicals Manufacturing
- Biotechnology

 **ECONOMIC ALLIANCE**
OF KANKAKEE COUNTY

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