

We are
MADISON COUNTY
INDIANA



"We Are Madison County" is a celebration of meaningful, impactful groups and individuals who make up Madison County's unique and cherished culture.

We celebrate community partnerships.

We are human-focused.

We unite, not divide.

We promote, not advertise.

We advocate, not politicize.



Scan the code to sign up for our email list!



UNITY



Mark Thacker
Executive Director

I am an advocate for the quieter voice, the minority, the misrepresented and the misunderstood. I resist the urge to be like everyone else and embrace individuals' desires to present themselves as how they feel and want to be received. Anderson was blessed to have two events in July that fit those efforts and needs.

Event organizers did an amazing job of bringing Anderson Pride to Dickmann Town Center. Upon walking into this space, I could feel the air of acceptance and love while many celebrated the LGBTQIA+ community. There were hundreds of people walking and shopping the depth of numerous community vendor booths, listening to live entertainment, and rekindling relationships. While a heavy rainstorm pushed into the area and displaced a few vendors, it was a beautiful sight to witness a group of attendees dancing in the downpour while the band played on. Their spirits weren't going to be diminished by the rage of a storm. After the clouds moved away, booths consolidated, and more people joined to support and celebrate diversity.

Our next stop, Indiana Black Expo's Anderson Chapter hosted their Summer Celebration at Jackson Park the last weekend of July. We arrived shortly after the parade entered the park, so the park was already very lively. We parked a couple of blocks away, but the electric vibe and music escorted us into the activities. Boxing and Basketball had started, and the food booths spoke to my wallet. The environment felt like 'family' and we felt at home. We walked the vendor booths stopping along the way to catch up with people that I hadn't seen in a while and were introduced to others for new connections. While this event started as a few hundred people, it brought thousands together during the three-day festival.

Two fantastic festivals for Madison County! I appreciate and celebrate diversity and inclusion. We should 'fit the description' to celebrate each and every one. A celebration of community, yet reminiscent of this popular quote from Robert Frost, "I took the road less traveled by. And that has made all the difference."



CELEBRATING A HISTORIC WIN

As President & CEO of the Madison County Chamber of Commerce, I am thrilled to announce that we have won the prestigious Indiana Chamber of the Year award from the Indiana Chamber Executives Association (ICEA). This esteemed recognition marks an incredible milestone for our organization, highlighting our relentless commitment to business advocacy, community engagement, and economic development. It is especially significant as this is the first time in our history that we have achieved such an honor, underscoring the transformative efforts of our entire team.

Our success is a testament to the innovative vision and collaborative spirit that drive our work every day. I am incredibly proud of the strides we have made in fostering a vibrant business environment and enhancing the quality of life in Madison County. Our initiatives have focused on building strong partnerships and creating new opportunities for growth, ensuring that our community continues to thrive. Personally, this recognition follows another milestone for our organization, as I was honored to receive the Indiana Chamber Executive of the Year award in 2023.

A significant part of our achievement can be attributed to Patty Lovins, our Director of Membership and Events. Patty's dedication and meticulous planning have taken our events to new heights, attracting record numbers of attendees and participants. Her work on events like 'Taste of Madison County' has not only brought our community together but has also showcased the best of what our local businesses have to offer. Patty's contributions have been pivotal in raising our visibility and reputation within the community.

Additionally, Rachael McCracken, our Business Development Manager, has played a crucial role in our success. Her proactive approach to member engagement has resulted in a significant increase in new memberships, reflecting the growing confidence and trust in our mission. Rachael's efforts have expanded our network and provided essential resources and support to businesses across Madison County. The combined efforts of Patty, Rachael, and the entire Chamber team have culminated in this unprecedented achievement, marking a new era of growth and prosperity for our organization.



*Clayton Whitson
President & CEO*



AN UPCOMING “CELEBRATION OF PHILANTHROPY”



Ben Davis
President

On Tuesday, Sept. 17, the Madison County Community Foundation will hold its first Celebration of Philanthropy dinner.

In addition to awarding \$100,000 in grants and providing updates about the Foundation’s work in our community, the event will also be an opportunity to hear from three local “everyday philanthropist” couples who will share their perspectives on local impact through giving. Individually and collectively, their stories of giving illustrate how the community foundation model lives out its goal of being For good, Forever, For everyone.

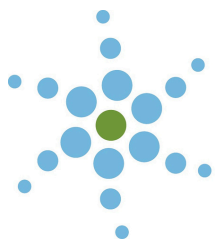
For good: Grants from the Foundation reflect Madison County’s unique people, issues, and ideas, and represent all sectors of our community including Arts, Culture, and History, Health and Human Services, Education, Thriving Community (animal welfare, recreation, parks, etc.), and Women and Children. Our variety of grant opportunities and cycles helps us support long-term solutions,

respond quickly to emergencies, and meet the changing social, cultural, and educational needs our community faces.

Forever: Our focus on endowed, or “permanent” funds, helps ensure that participating agencies and funded partners have a sustainable source of perpetual revenue that never dries up. When a fund is endowed, it grows forever as only the earnings and interest are distributed as grants (or scholarships). Over time, an endowed fund can have many times the charitable impact compared to a non-endowed fund.

For everyone: You don’t have to be wealthy to contribute to the Foundation. Anyone can contribute a gift of any amount to any of the Foundation’s 200+ existing, named funds. And, for those who would like to establish their own new fund, matching dollars are available for certain kinds of funds, to amplify the donor’s investment.

Tickets for Celebration of Philanthropy and more information about the event can be found on the Foundation website (madisonccf.org) and our social media channels. We would love to see you there, and to help you become the next local everyday philanthropist!



**MADISON COUNTY
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

MOUNDS LAKE – IMAGINE THE FUTURE OF MADISON COUNTY

As summer continues to play out with its festivals, thunderstorms, and sunny hot days, Mounds Lake continues to gain statewide attention as the regional water shortage becomes more highlighted. In an effort to create economic development in the metro region, the proposed reservoir project in Madison County, Mounds Lake, would contribute 35 billion gallons of water storage along the White River corridor. The Project would provide the much needed water resource for Central Indiana for the next 100 years, adding millions of gallons of water daily, as well as assisting with flood control during rainy seasons.

Could you imagine a few years from now when the boating industry is the leading economic driver in Madison County? Boating, jet skiing, tubing, fishing, camping, and so much more are just the start of the recreational activities that would attract visitors from near and far. Not to mention the local property values increasing with the addition of lakeview homes, condos, and apartments. All encompassed by surrounding trails that would connect these amenities and align with the new Madison County Park Board Plan.

The future of the water need is clear, and the quality of life in Madison County will increase dramatically with a project of this magnitude...will you join us for a swim?



Rob Sparks
Executive Director



STUDENT CREATES, STEWARDS PARK LIBRARY



Sara Wilson

Over the summer, I installed a Little Free Library in Markleville Town Park. Little Free Libraries are weatherproof boxes placed throughout a community so people of all ages can borrow a book or leave a book whenever they want.

There are Little Free Libraries across the world, and I wanted to add one to Markleville. I visit the park often with my friends. We see so much potential there and truly love the atmosphere of the park. It's been wonderful to bring something new to the park for the community to enjoy.

The Pendleton Community Library is far from Markleville, and when school isn't in session, many children don't have a way to access books. With the Little Free Library, children will be able to get books and gain knowledge while not in school. Children

don't have to leave anything in return, but if they have books to lend, they may do so. Everyone should have the chance to discover the amazing world of books and the joy they can bring!

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to steward the Little Free Library in Markleville. It's been a great experience to see how many people support this effort, including South Madison Community Foundation, which provided start-up funding, Markleville Park Board, which provided the Library's location, Jordan and Tom Coble who helped build the Little Free Library, Todd Melton who placed the library, my mom Lilly Wilson who helped with the little things, and the community for all the book donations!

Sara Wilson is a recent Pendleton Heights graduate and incoming Anderson University freshman. Her academic goal is to become an Elementary/Special Education Teacher. Sara has a lifelong love of reading she aims to share with others. She invites you to visit Markleville Town Park and borrow or donate a book at the Little Free Library.



**SOUTH MADISON COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

Positive change. Lasting impact.

