

A GUIDE TO
ART + CULTURE



2024 - 2025


W E L C O M E T O EFFINGHAM!

The City of Effingham is proud to be an arts-friendly community.

We welcome guests and residents to explore our local cultural outlets!

Whether you're catching a live show at the Effingham Performance Center, viewing a sculpture along our avenues or touring a local gallery, you're sure to find inspiration and creativity around every corner in Effingham...

Enjoy your visit!



Jodi Thoele
Director of Tourism
Visit Effingham

VISIT EFFINGHAM

201 E. Jefferson Ave.
Effingham, IL 62401

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Toll Free | 800.772.0750
Phone | 217.342.5310
Fax | 217.342.4939

Email | effinghamsculptures@gmail.com
Website | visiteffinghamil.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK
facebook.com/visiteffingham

INSTAGRAM
[visiteffingham](https://www.instagram.com/visiteffingham)

YOUTUBE
[@EffinghamTourism](https://www.youtube.com/@EffinghamTourism)

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GETAWAY

enjoy
illinois





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Nourish yourself - mind, body and soul - through locally-grown produce and handcrafted meals. Learn more about our Illinois Makers, as well!

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Learn more about locally-made artisan goods and where you can find them, here.




WALK OUR GALLERY

These sculptures, which bring life to the streets of Effingham, were created by some of the Midwest's most well-known sculptors (and some of its best-kept secrets, as well). Each one is part of the annual Sculptures on the Avenues outdoor exhibition.

Celebrating its 26th year, Sculptures on the Avenues is a self-guided walking tour that winds in and out of the Downtown Effingham area, stopping at City Hall.

Pause here, at 201 E. Jefferson Avenue, to view the piece that started it all... the "Flame of Hope."

We encourage you to visit and discover all of the incredible sculptures that have transformed the City's avenues into an outdoor, walkable art gallery!

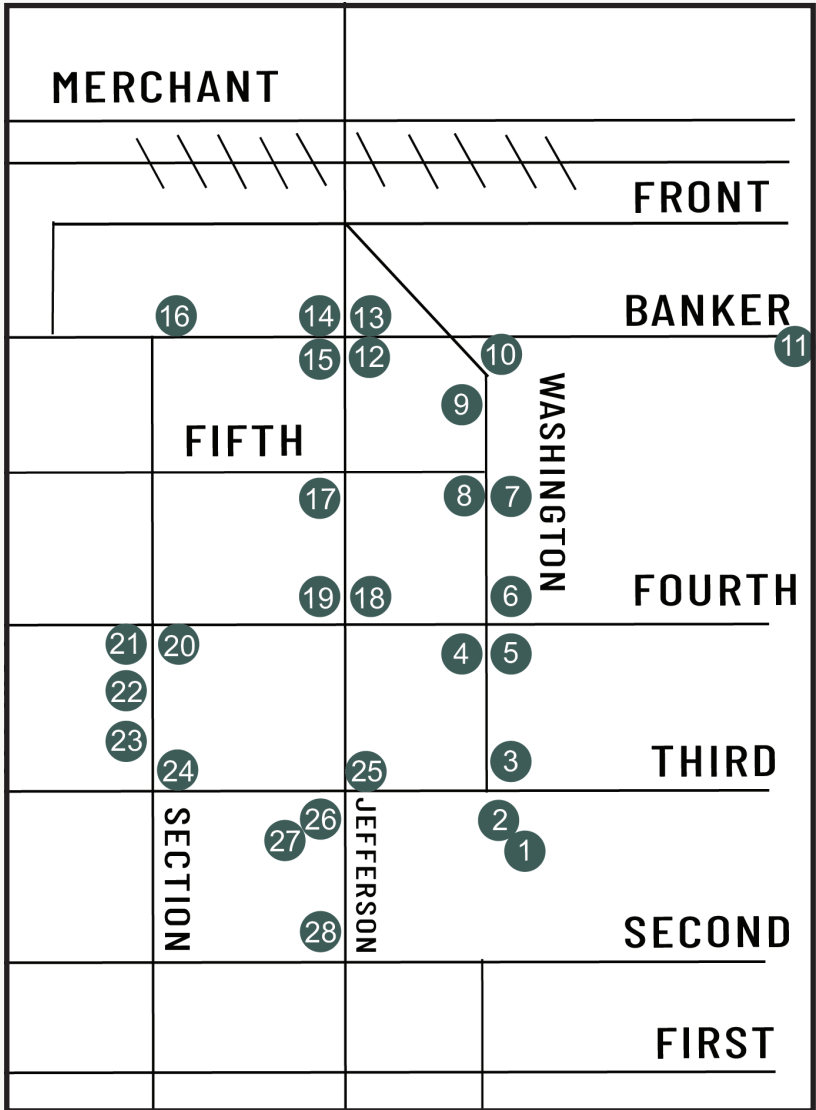


the flame of hope



In 1997, the Effingham Community Committee for the Arts commissioned Leonardo Nierman's "Flame of Hope," which continues to be the focal point of the sculpture exhibition.

take a tour...



BEGIN YOUR TOUR AT:
THE EFFINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
200 N. THIRD ST.

SCULPTURES

1. EFFIE DRIVER
MEMORIAL BENCH
2. LAVERNE WITH BIRDBATH
3. AMIDST THE RUINS
4. PILLAR FOR AMERICA
5. FLOWER POWER
6. THALIA
7. HOURGLASS
8. PINK HAVEN/ BLUE DOG
9. MELOS 3
10. LARGE EASEL
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13. ZEBRA
14. DAYDREAM BELIEVER
15. NATURE'S SERENITY
16. PUMP
17. GUSSET PUMP
18. SENTINEL
19. JUST A LITTLE PEACE
20. WAITING ROOM TOY
21. WAVE
22. RAPIDS
23. WHIRLPOOLS
24. EXPLODED OCTAGON
25. LITTLE BIG GIRL
26. FLAME OF HOPE
(PERMANENT)
27. BALANCING BOY & JOY
(PERMANENT)
28. BEST FRIENDS
(PERMANENT)

EFFIE DRIVER MEMORIAL BENCH

LORELEI SIMS
CHARLESTON, IL



"This bench was created to honor both Effie Driver and his wheelchair. Mr. Driver was a longtime volunteer at our local fair whose job was to lower and raise the ropes for the reserved VIP parking lot at the fairgrounds – a coveted position cloaked with prestige and social envy.

I made the bench several years before he passed and placed it at the entrance where he was stationed so others could sit down and enjoy his company while he monitored vehicles as the entered and exited the lot."



LaVerne with Birdbath

BY LORELEI SIMS, OF CHARLESTON, IL

"LaVerne is a collaborative effort by California blacksmith Robert Owings and myself that was created in 2000. She is constructed from modified farm and automobile found objects, and her spring neck provides movement - inspired by "drinking birds" - retro toy "heat engines" that mimic the motion of a bird drinking from water. I used two found objects from a junkyard to make the Birdbath - the dish was formerly the end cap of a riveted tank and the bottom portion is a cast iron pedestal base."



"AMIDST THE RUINS"

GREGORY MENDEZ

DECATUR, IN

This sculpture blossoms from the ground up.
The geometric branches shift to an organic form.

"Pillar for America 2024"



"A pivotal year in the nation. Needed, is a pillar of safety and strength for our foundations."

NIK ALWERDT
ALTAMONT, IL

"FLOWER POWER"

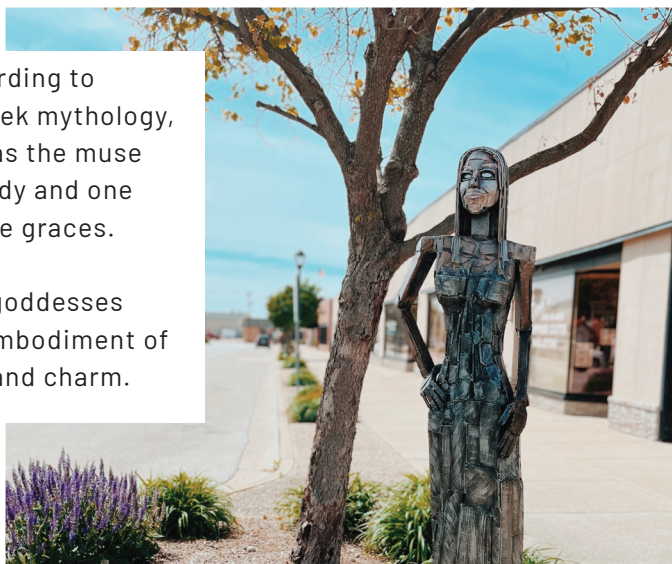
LORELEI SIMS
CHARLESTON, IL



"My very first project of 2024 is Flower Power. Made from modified found objects, you will find a 1979 Coleman space heater, rasp files my farrier used when shaping the hooves of my two horses and miniature donkey (Belle, Dakota, and Junior), school bus light covers I liberated from a 1980s school bus I came across at the junkyard, and a garden rake. The leaves are made from scythes - agricultural hand tools that were used to mow grass and harvest crops."

According to ancient Greek mythology, Thalia was the muse of comedy and one of three graces.

These goddesses were the embodiment of beauty and charm.



Thalia
GREGORY MENDEZ
DECATUR, IN

H O U R G L A S S

MATTHEW BOONSTRA
CHARLESTON, IL

*"The form of this sculpture is inspired by an
hourglass frozen in time."*





P I N K H A V E N / B L U E D O G

NIK ALWERDT | ALTAMONT, IL

“Much can be said about the Blue Dog in Mythology;
it now has a haven of pink to rest in.”

" M E L O S 3 "

GARY MITCHELL | ST. LOUIS, MO



"I am interested in connecting to forms of antique Roman and Greek sculptures."

" W O R D " by Darin Shumaker

CHARLESTON, IL

Find another
of this artist's
sculptures in
America's Groove
Record Store -
home to 'Word'!



"Word" like many of the pieces from Soul Fire Arts evolved one day after listening to music in the shop.

It stemmed from a place of joy and was important to me to allow the piece to be fun and have some movement.

This piece spoke to my inner child. It was created from repurposed parts from farm equipment, bar stools, rebar and a shovel, as well as random items from the garage.



" L A R G E E A S E L "

GARY AUERSWALD | ST. FRANCISVILLE, IL

...a description from the artist

"In a striking testament to the interplay between creation and nature, an artist has embarked on an ambitious journey, melding the realms of painting and metal sculpture into a singular, breathtaking vision. At the heart of this exploration stands a colossal easel, not just a structure, but a statement, towering amidst the vastness of the great outdoors. This is no ordinary easel; crafted with bold ambition, it serves as the foundation upon which the artist mounts his dynamic fusion of mediums.

Yet, in a poetic turn, the forces of nature have woven their narrative into the artwork. The wind, a sculptor of time and elements, has taken its toll on the easel, twisting its form, and imbuing it with a new dimension of expression. This transformation is not merely physical but deeply symbolic. It reflects the artist's philosophical journey—recognizing the delicate balance between the act of creation and the moment of stepping back, of letting go.

This pause, this surrender to the elements, is an integral part of the creative process. It embodies the understanding that art is not just shaped by the artist's hand but also by the world it inhabits. The twisted easel stands as a monument to this dialogue, a larger-than-life testament to the concept that true creation is a dance with impermanence, a blend of intention and serendipity.

The artist, in leaving his work exposed to the whims of nature, invites contemplation on the essence of creativity itself. It challenges observers to ponder the meaning of completion, the beauty of imperfection, and the value of perspective. In this open-air studio, under the vast canopy of the sky, the twisted easel becomes more than a tool; it transforms into a profound statement on the nature of art, change, and the eternal cycle of destruction and rebirth."



" V A R I A T I O N 3 " by aldon addington

"What have we here? A map, a precious gem, an interior inside a globe? That is for you, the viewer, to interpret.

Is it about smoothness and roughness, circular and raggedness, darkness and light? There is no answer."

"You will give it a response."



Z E B R A

V. SKIP WILLITS
CAMANCHE, IA

"Sometimes, I like to fold and weld found corrugated steel into heavy steel armatures."



DAY DREAM BELIEVER

V. SKIP WILLITS

CAMANACHE, IA



"I was working on this sculpture in the studio while The Monkeys were singing 'Day Dream Believer' on my stereo. And I've always been a big believer in day-dreaming. So I thought it an appropriate title. With that song in mind I've incorporated a small bluebird within the sculpture."

Inspired by a dragonfly that had taken up
residence in the artist's shop...
Made with repurposed car parts, this sculpture
brings to life the beauty of nature and the
peace that comes from it.



Nature's Serenity

DARIN SHUMAKER
CHARLESTON, IL

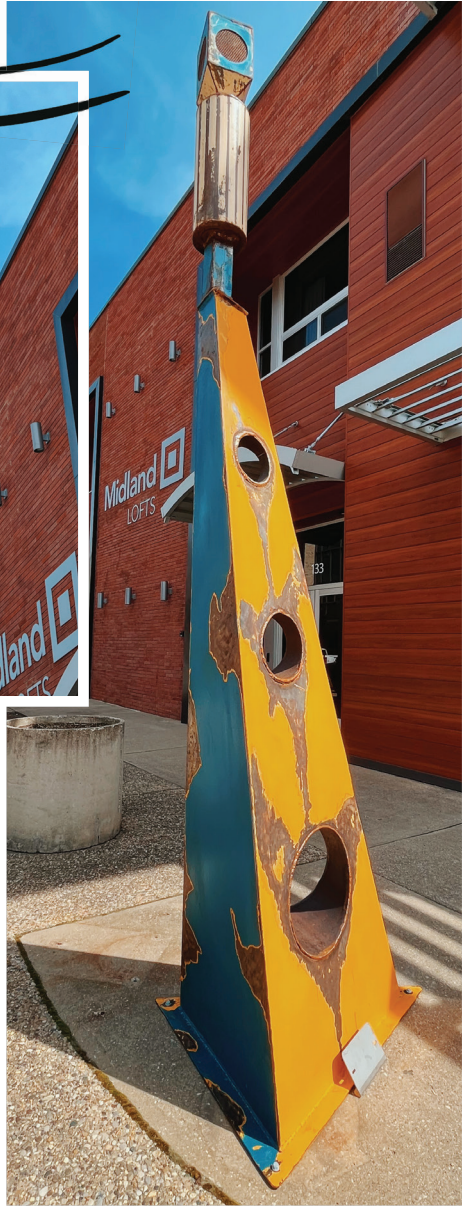
"PUMPS" BY MATT MOYER COLUMBIA, MO

"Both Gusset Pump and Pump continue to explore my fascination with pumps in industry and our society. They come in all shapes and sizes, used as conveniences and in emergency situations, bring us what we need and remove what we don't want. They are hidden below our streets, in our factories, houses and throughout our lives but often garner little attention. These two sculptures explore diverging creative directions for me."

"Pump", is new, bright, curvy and contemporary—exploring our refinement in aesthetic, but continued reliance on the humble pump.



Gusset Pump



MATT MOYER
COLUMBIA, MO

Gusset Pump harkens back to well-worn patina'd towering hunk of a pump that explores the neglected aspect of industrialization.

"SENTINEL"

GREGORY MENDEZ | DECATUR, IN



GREGORY
MENDEZ
is this year's
Leonardo Nierman
Award winner.
See p. 32



This sculpture stands guard without distraction.

It's difficult to tell if the figure stood in ancient times or if it's from the distant future...

"JUST A LITTLE PEACE"

ALEX MENDEZ | DECATUR, IN



"A little can go a long way..."



"WAITING ROOM TOY"

by Alex Mendez of Decatur, Indiana

Using his hands to create large scale versions of his creative thoughts produces visual representations of love, peace, music, movement, and nature.

Alex's lighthearted, optimistic, carefree nature is reflected in every piece of his work.

a Series by Todd Kingery
EDGEWOOD, ILLINOIS

Todd Kingery has created this three-part series of sculptures: Whirlpools, Rapids and Wave.

Inspired by the movement and beauty of water.

'Whirlpools'





'Rapids'



'Wave'

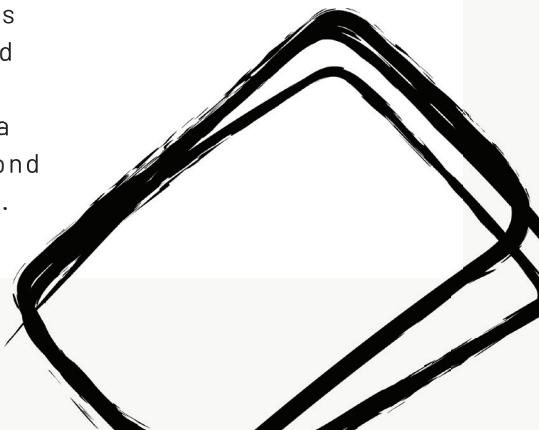
TODD KINGERY
EDGEWOOD, IL

"My exploration into the concept of 'Plane Geometry Exploded' through the splitting of an octagon under mystical influences opens a fascinating intersection between geometry and imaginative visualization. This exploration not only enriches the understanding of geometric forms, but also extends into the realm of artistic creation, offering a unique perspective on the transformation of simple shapes into complex, interconnected structures. Through this process, we delve into the potential for new geometric relationships, the emergence of unexpected shapes, and the artistic interpretation of these transformations. This journey from a precise mathematical figure to a source of inspiration for metal sculpture-making exemplifies the boundless possibilities when art and mathematics converge, fueled by creativity and a willingness to venture beyond conventional boundaries.



**E X P L O D E D
O C T A G O N**

**GARY AUERSWALD
ST. FRANCESVILLE, IL**



LITTLE BIG GIRL

GARY MITCHELL | ST. LOUIS, MO

My sculptures are designed to inform, delight and beautify. My material of aluminum sheet metal comes from the aircraft industry.



THE LEONARDO NIERMAN AWARD

Each year,
the City of Effingham's
residents and visitors
vote for their
favorite work of art
in our annual
Sculptures on the Avenues
program.

At the end of each
year's exhibition,
the artist with the most
votes is awarded the
Leonardo Nierman Award.

To participate in this
year's voting process,
visit our website at:
www.visiteffinghamil.com
and click on the link
to vote!

2023



"fashion ruin" by gregory mendez



2022



2021



FAIRS, MARKETS AND FESTIVALS

you won't want to miss!

EFFINGHAM FARMERS MARKET

May through October 2024

See page 36 for more detail.

HAZEL-JAYNE'S MAGIC & MISCHIEF: A FAIRY MARKET

June 8, 2024

A magical, family-friendly event showcasing a variety of artisan vendors, musicians and other unique talent.

MOCCASIN CREEK FESTIVAL

June 20 - 23, 2024

An annual 4-day music festival focusing on "Americana" music and bringing together musicians, festival families, craftspeople, tradespeople and music-lovers of all types.

EFFINGHAM ARTISAN FAIR

July 19 & 20, 2024

See the adjacent page for more detail.

SUMMER SUNDOWN MUSIC FESTIVAL

September 13 - 15, 2024

An annual 3-day music festival focusing on the music makers and music lovers of Central Illinois and beyond.

ANNUAL ARTISAN FAIR



Photo by Astrid Johana Photography

*July 19 & 20, 2024
Tuscan Hills Winery
Exit 162*

The Annual Artisan Fair will include work from 50 unique regional artists and makers!

This year, at its scenic location - Tuscan Hills Winery - you'll find everything from ceramics to macrame, paintings, jewelry and more!

These artisan goods will be displayed both for purchase and for viewing.

Enjoy live music, kids' activities, food trucks and, of course, fine wines and spirits!

Bring the entire family to this vibrant event, and soak in a beautiful weekend, celebrating the arts in Effingham.

For more information and an updated schedule, visit www.effinghamartisanfair.org.



Photo by Astrid Johana Photography

Effingham Farmers Market





Effingham Farmers Market
Downtown Effingham
Exit 159

The Effingham Farmers Market provides our community with fresh, locally-grown food, locally-made artwork, live music and quality artisan goods.

Everything at the market is produced right here in our region!

Support our community -- and your health -- by buying local at the Effingham Farmers Market!

Visit every Saturday morning from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Downtown Effingham on the courthouse lawn, from May through October.

For more information, email effinghamfarmersmarket@gmail.com.

PHOTO CREDIT: ASTRID JOHANA PHOTOGRAPHY



Heartland Health Food

Heartland Health Foods exists to serve those who seek healthier and more nutritious products than you can find at most grocery stores.

Heartland carries a wide array of natural and organic items, including: produce, snacks, nuts, juices, entrees, baking goods, vegetarian and vegan meat replacements, gluten-free items, baby items, gelatin-free supplements and vitamins, cleaning supplies and more.

Find locally-grown, fresh produce here, when in season, as well! Visit www.heartlandhealthyfoods.com for more information, and be sure to follow them on Facebook and Instagram at: [@heartlandhealthyfoods](https://www.instagram.com/heartlandhealthyfoods)

FIREFLY GRILL

ILLINOIS MAKER



"Firefly Grill is like that much-loved relative who is always in charge of throwing the family dinners for extended family - except the food tastes better."

Firefly Grill is an award-winning, eco-friendly roadhouse on the shores of Lake Kristie. Chef Niall Campbell and his wife Kristie own and operate this oasis of farm to table cuisine in the heart of the Midwest.



Firefly's ever-changing menu boasts soulful, American-fresh cuisine. Firefly is so passionate about sourcing the best ingredients that they grow many themselves in their on-site, beyond-organic farm.



What they can't grow themselves, they source locally from artisan farmers and foragers. Reserve your table at www.ffgrill.com/reservations.

JOE SIPPERS CAFE

ILLINOIS MAKER



"In a culture where convenience is king, quality is often sacrificed. While efficiency is important, Joe Sippers Cafe has a high regard for craftsmanship and tradition."

Enjoy a hand-brewed coffee or tea or perhaps a local favorite, Blackberries & Cream Latte.

In the kitchen the team at Joe Sippers Cafe makes, bakes, and creates what they can with quality ingredients like local stone-ground flour, local free-range eggs, all-natural deli meats, and lofty portions of nutritious produce.

Joe Sippers Cafe invite you to stop in, check out the goods, and enjoy your cafe experience!

WWW.JOESIPPERS.COM

"The world's most celebrated chefs do their best carving and chopping on hardwood boards handcrafted in Effingham, IL."

Known for their BOOS BLOCKS cutting boards, crafted of solid quality American Hardwoods (maple, walnut and cherry), John Boos products can be seen on major cooking shows, including Chopped, Masterchef and The Kitchen, and they are used by chefs and celebs, too!

John Boos & Co. is a leader in manufacturing butcher block prep surfaces for celeb chefs and foodies (cutting boards, butcher blocks, countertops, kitchen carts and prep tables), as well as custom fabricated stainless steel equipment for the food service industry (chef counters, compartment sinks, work tables and more).

John Boos is the only company in the U.S. that has a wood and metal facility on location. Boos has been in continuous business since 1887 and is the oldest industry in Effingham.

Find out more at www.butcherblockspecialist.com.



J O H N B O O S & C O .

ILLINOIS MAKER

EFFINGHAM ART GUILD

The Effingham Art Guild is home to dozens of award-winning artists. The Art Guild has traveling exhibitions that are open to the public at different locations in the community. The exhibits change every four months and can be found at the locations, listed below. Email effinghamart@gmail.com for more information.

SARAH BUSH LINCOLN
BONUTTI CLINIC
1303 W. EVERGREEN
AVE.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY
COURTHOUSE MUSEUM
100 E. JEFFERSON AVE.

EFFINGHAM SURGICAL
ASSOCIATES SC
900 W. TEMPLE AVE. #101

HEARTLAND HUMAN
SERVICES
1200 N. 4TH ST.

EFFINGHAM
PERFORMANCE CENTER
1325 OUTER BELT WEST

EFFINGHAM
PUBLIC LIBRARY
200 N. THIRD ST.

JOE SIPPERS CAFE
114 S. FOURTH ST.

112 W. Washington

StangARTS is a gallery studio in Downtown Effingham that features art classes for adults, teens, children and couples. They also host a variety of other events, such as paint parties.

Owner and artist, Jamie Stang-Ellis, showcases her work in her own gallery, which contains portraits, airbrush work, murals and more! StangARTS is open during studio hours and by appointment.

www.stangarts.com
850.960.0106

Stang Arts Studio & Gallery



Alwerdt Artworks Sculpture Park

3238 E. 800th Ave. | Altamont, IL

Life-long artist, Nik Alwerdt, (featured on pages 9 & 13) is the founder of Alwerdt Artwork Sculpture Park.

Founded in 2017, near a newly-renovated one-and-a-half acre farm pond, the Alwerdt Artworks Sculpture Park is open to the public, from sunrise to sunset, year-round. Enjoy a relaxing outdoor experience, viewing 33 sculptures (and growing!) from local and Midwestern-based artists while walking the half-mile path around the pond.

Featured artists include: Aldon Addington - IL, Nik Alwerdt - IL, Jim LaPaso - TX, Todd Kingery - IL, Thomas Horn - IL and April Luchtefeld - IL.

618.322.5798 | www.alwerdtartworks.com

EFFINGHAM PERFORMANCE CENTER

*1325 Outer Belt West
Exit 160*

The Effingham Performance Center is a 1,518-seat, live performance theater that hosts more than 30 performances a year. Several nationally-recognized performers have taken the stage at the theater, including Craig Morgan, Night Ranger, Lee Brice and more! Each year, like the years before, the EPC brings amazing acts and incredible talent...

Come see a show soon!

217.540.2788

www.TheEPC.org



F.A.C.E.

F.A.C.E. is a not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to enrich, educate and entertain our community by providing superior theatrical, musical and choral experiences for both participants and audiences.

Visit www.effinghamface.com for more information!

Made in Effingham

#MadeinEffingham highlights our local makers - those in Effingham County who use local resources for their art.

Whether they craft, paint, sculpt, brew, cook with locally sourced foods or anything in between, we're proud to support those who help make Effingham the vibrant and extraordinary community that it is!

If you feel you may be one of our Effingham Makers and would like to be part of this prestigious program, check out our website for more information:
www.visiteffinghamil.com.

Not a maker? You can still get involved! Share your interactions with local makers by using the hashtag "#MadeinEffingham" on social media.

We love hearing about your experiences with the individuals and businesses that make Effingham unique!





est. 1867



VISIT
Effingham

IL • USA
A MIDWESTERN
GETAWAY

