



News & Current Events

October 2025

From the Desk of the Mayor

In the month of September, we all enjoyed clear and great water! The water plant has performed fantastically and automated during the last month. The contractors are finalizing the removal of the old system and wrapping up the final changes. We will still have punch list items, but hopefully, the work in the plant will be complete before year-end. We hope to perform a ribbon cutting and open house for the residents to get insights into the new plant. Softening continues around the 60% level as we stabilize chlorine, fluoride and phosphate injection requirements of the IEPA.

What do you need in your home? This is a personal choice because taste to everyone varies. However, we do highly recommend a whole house filter to “catch” any sediment coming into your home. I and others have bypassed our water softener. I don’t have RO but do have a refrigerator filter and I drink the water from both now. Again, your preference may be different, and it is up to you if you keep using those expensive items.

The next question has been how much will the water rates increase? Right now, we can’t answer that because we don’t have enough data on the plant running. We have stated all along we will try to stay close to the survey number of \$15-17 / month. We will continue to meet and discuss this change and how best to recommend to the Board for implementation.

I apologize for not being able to do the Mayor Monday discussion due to work obligation. I will continue to be available each Monday before the Village Board Meeting (6 - 7pm @ Viking Brew). The goal is to provide a time for me to listen, be open and approachable without the formality of a stuffy meeting or public hearing. I hope you can take advantage of this monthly scheduled time. If you can’t make it and have something to discuss, please reach out for a one-on-one time to meet.



Downs project updates:

- 1) The new water plant is 100% operational. Deconstruction of the old plant inner workings is about 95% completed. I hope all work will be completed before the end of October but will likely spill into November.
- 2) Downs Crossing Tower and watermain extension. The pressure reducing stations now have power and we are waiting for the booster station to be powered (needed extra parts). Pressure tests are completed, and we must pass IEPA required tests. The tower will be filled and tested once the water main has been given the green light. Hopefully we will be operational by November.
- 3) Our streetscape project is progressing very well. Striping and signage are complete, and lighting is being installed as I write this update. Hopefully power poles will be removed this week as well. The Board discussed adding a “top cap” to “sitting walls”. We are pursuing doing this work on our own with left over funds. I don’t know if we will get the planters done this fall or not (hope they do). We are waiting for examples of the proposed plants from the contractor.
- 4) Illinois Senator Sally Turner secured a \$20k grant for Downs last year and we are using this grant to complete the sidewalks on the southside of W. Main St from Seminary to Price St which are a part of Phase II of the streetscape project. Knapp was the only contractor to bid on this project, and the price was \$43k. The village will use its employees to do some of the work on this project to get the price closer to \$20k. This work will be completed this fall as well.
- 5) Colleen Ln and S Lincoln St Road improvements got delayed but are starting to ramp up as I write this update. This project is being done by Roanoke Concrete and Stark and will widen and concrete this road. The Village will take the opportunity to upgrade old culverts during this work.

In your service,

Mike James, Mayor

309-830-7374, Mayor@VillageOfDowns.org



Village of Downs Board of Trustees Meeting Overview October 9th, 2025, 7 pm @ Village Hall & via ZOOM

Executive order **2021-9** by the Governor of Illinois allowed this meeting to be held via Zoom, telephone and at the Village Hall.

1. Mayor Mike James called the October 9, 2025, meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. Roll Call was taken. Trustees present were Maureen Roach, Diana Reynolds, Stephanie Adkisson, Sarah Gassaway, and Brian Warfel. Trustee Toby Twyford was absent. There was a quorum present. Also present were Mayor Mike James, Clerk Rachel Eagles, Treasurer Julie Bakewell, and Village Attorney Dawn Wall.
3. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
4. Reports can be found in the flyer.
5. Public Comment –public comments were received via email and were read and answered.
6. The board heard several updates and reports regarding ongoing infrastructure projects. Engineer Greg Crowe reported that the water plant project is nearly complete, the Downtown Streetscape project is progressing with final work on street lighting and markings, and the Downs Crossing water main extension is nearing startup. Additional updates included plans for the S. Lincoln and Colleen Lane road project, sidewalk construction on West Main Street, and submission of the Safe Routes to School grant. Mayor James announced that board meetings will move from Zoom to Microsoft Teams beginning next month. The board entered Executive Session twice for TIF Agreements and Potential Litigation.
7. A Motion to Continue the Village of Downs Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on October 23, 2025, at 7 p.m. at the Village Hall was made and approved.

Please note: Detailed minutes from the Village Board of Trustees meetings are available after they are approved by the trustees at the following month's meeting. If you would like to be added to the email list to receive the approved minutes each month, please visit our website and use the form located at the bottom right corner of the home page. Or you can visit the Board Agenda and Minutes page to view all posted agendas and minutes.

Safe Route to School Grant

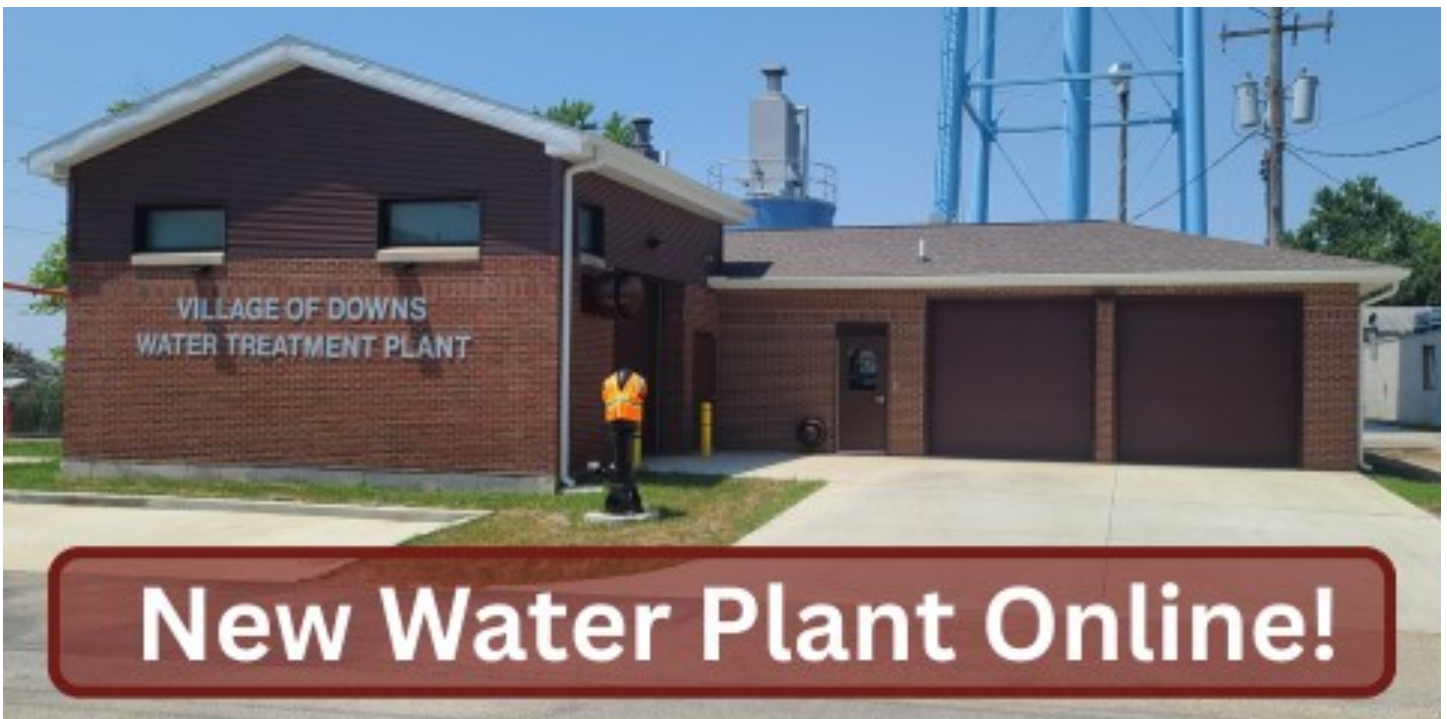
Thank you to those who signed petitions and wrote letters of support for the Village receiving the Safe Route to School Grant. We received approximately 226 online petitions and 227 signatures on paper petitions distributed throughout businesses, schools, and the Farmer's Market. Approximately 12 attended the public hearing.

All these efforts will hopefully help our application. The Village will hear from the Illinois Department of Transportation in spring if we are to be awarded the grant. Thank you for your support!

Best regards,

Maureen Roach, Public Safety Trustee

Public Works



Billing

Billing Questions, Issues, and Payments

All questions regarding billing issues including payment arrangements need to be directed to the Village Hall at 309-378-3221 during office hours. Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 12:30pm.

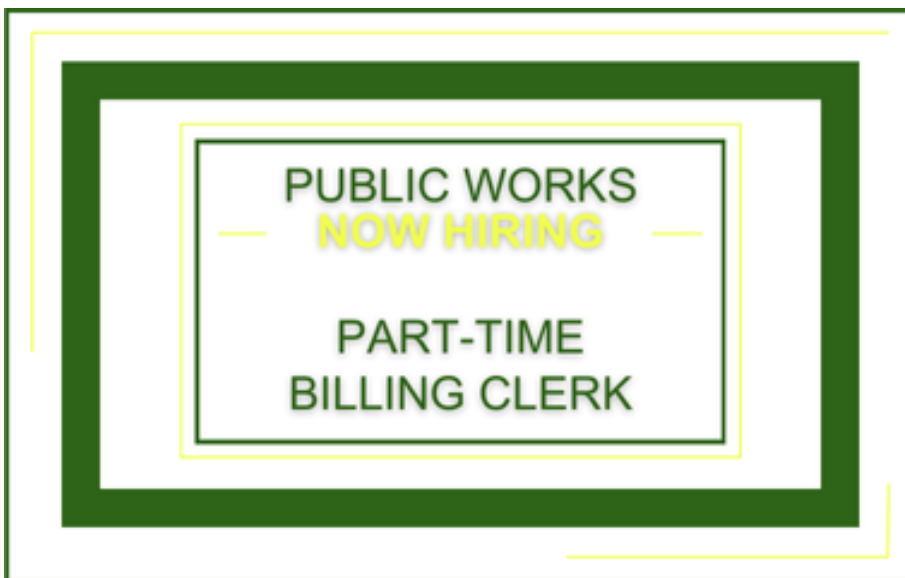
REMINDER: The billing due date is the **15th of the month**. Payments received after the 15th are subject to the late fees. If not paid by the 25th of the month, and the office has to call you regarding payment, there will be an additional fee of \$20. If not paid on the 26th, shut off of water can occur. To reconnect, there is a additional fee of \$30.

The Village is using an **ACH** (automatic withdrawal) program. This program has NO FEE to you! If you sign up for this program, you will continue to receive your monthly bill. On the 15th of the month, the Village will withdraw the entire amount due from the checking or savings account you provided on the authorization form. Authorization forms are on the website and will need to be submitted to the Billing Office by the 1st of the month you wish your first payment withdrawal to be made.

Reminder: If an ACH comes back as NSF it is treated like a check, and cash or money order is needed to cover the \$25 NSF fee + the amount of the bill. A 2nd NSF will result in no longer being eligible for ACH and all payments will need to be in cash or a money order. Please put your service id on your payment.

Hiring Part-Time Billing Clerk

We have a part-time Billing Clerk position open in the Village Hall. The job is 8-12 hours per week plus additional hours available when the demand increases. Check out our Employment page for a brief Job description and an employment application.



Visit our Employment Page located on our website under the Contact Us Tab.

<http://www.villageofdowns.org/village-of-downs-employment.htm>

Water Sewer report for September 2025.

The average iron concentration for the finished water was **.05** ppm. Monthly bacteriological testing on the raw, finished, and distribution samples were all satisfactory; fluoride concentration was **.5**. The volume of water pumped in September was **3.334** million gallons, averaging **111,113** gallons per day. The sewer lift station pumped **1.831** million gallons for the month, averaging **61,040** million gallons per day.

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| • 0 Water shut offs | • 30 JULIE tickets within Village |
| • 2 outdated water meters/transmitters replaced with updated units | □ 3 Streets/Water Department |
| | □ 27 outside companies |
| • 4 Water leak repairs | • 43 JULIE tickets outside Village |

Water meters/transmitters replacement changeout continues. We will be contacting you in the future to schedule a time when our team can replace the old units with updated versions. This will be at no cost to the homeowner as it is Village Property.

Please continue to be cautious of our Village workers and all the new construction workers who are out and about. We want to make sure the Village is safe for the residents, visitors and ourselves.

The Public Works department would like to welcome Jon Bettisch and Ryan Lee to our team. Jon has been a local resident for years and was involved with the Haunted House back in the day. With his knowledge of the Village and residents he's quickly learning what the Public Works handles and doing a great job. Ryan comes to us from Heyworth where he recently worked for Adkisson Construction for the past 4 years. Ryans background includes building, concrete, maintenance among many other skills. If you see these gentlemen around, consider introducing yourself and welcoming them to the team.



As always, your support means a lot. If you have any questions/ comments, please contact me.

Jill Kasprzak
Supervisor of Public Works & Maintenance

Final Monthly Brush Pickup

November 2025

If the designated Monday pickup is not favorable, we will pick up on the next nice day following that Monday. The following are the rules we will follow with no exceptions.

- Items to be picked up must be burnable and free from all nails, screws, and metal (ex: Leaves, sticks, brush, branches, etc.)
- Leaves must be bagged.
- All items must be within the Village right away on curb, driveway or as close to the road as possible without creating a hazard in the road. (Note: Since we use a backhoe, in most cases, to do this work, we DO NOT want to tear up or rut yards or ditches. If we can't reach the debris from the road or a driveway, we WILL NOT pick it up.
- If you know you will have a larger than normal pile, please contact the office so they can make the streets department aware.

Please note that there is NO BURNING in the ditches or on the road. Doing this causes clogging and backup in the ditches and culverts. It can also damage the road surface causing us to spend what little tax dollars we have, to fix these issues.

Illegal Dumping

Please do not dump yard waste and ANY other items at the entrances to Kickapoo Park, Village storage yard, and/or along Huff Rd South of Main St. Violators will be caught and fined accordingly!

If you have questions or concerns, please call Brian Warfel at 309-261-0183.

Dumpster Use

Please remember, Dumpsters at residences, businesses, and parks are private and not for public use. If you have a need for a dumpster you can call GFL customer service at 309-688-0760 to order one.

Door-to-Door Sales

Permit Required

Door-to-door solicitation permits are needed PRIOR to doing solicitation door-to-door. No warnings will be granted. Please report anyone that does not have a permit to come to your door. Please try and get their name and car make/model/color. Solicitors without a permit will be fined.

GFL Environmental

Bulk Pickup—First Garbage Day Pickup of the Month

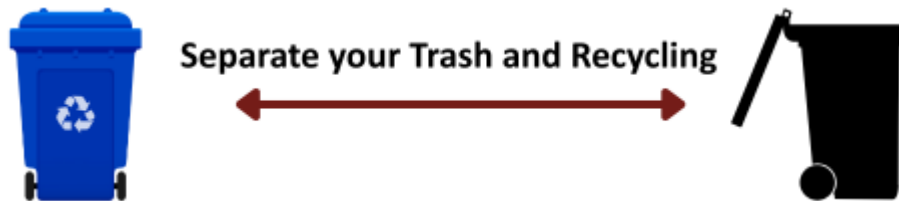
Do not forget that the first garbage pickup of each month is our contracted bulk waste pickup for the Village. If you have a large item or a lot, please call GFL customer service prior to the scheduled pickup. Sample of items not taken - electronics, appliance with a compressor, batteries, landscaping material, bricks, block, construction material. If you have questions call GFL customer service at 309-688-0760.

Recycling Guidelines

Passed down from our Local Pickup Crew:

- Label recycling with the word Recycle or the Recycle Symbol.
- Place recycling well separated from trash. For example: Place your containers on separate sides at the end of your driveway.

Following the above guidelines will help our Recycle and Trash crews pickup the correct items and not leave some behind.



All Building Permits

All Building and Demolition Permit Applications must be processed, approved, and issued a permit number, BEFORE WORK CAN BEGIN. This includes small projects, renovations, and new builds which could take up to 2 weeks to process. Please leave enough time before working on your project.

Our permits are revised and posted on the website throughout the year. Make sure to print out the latest forms. Permit Forms can be found on our [Forms and Applications page](#) on the Village Website listed under Quick Links.

Let Us Know How We Can Use Your Expertise Volunteer Registration

Often someone wants to help but doesn't know how. Often, I hear, "Let me know if I can help.", but I don't know how. See the dilemma? Our website contains a "[Volunteer Registration Form](#)". This registration will allow you to tell us where you can help and how we can utilize your talents and skills. I hope you will take the time to consider how you can you help.

Keep up to Date with Facebook and Village Website Village of Downs Social Media Sites of Interest

- Events Committee: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DownsEvents/>.
- You know you are from Downs: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/downsil/>
- Downs Citizens In Action (CIA): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/115323465475046/>
- Downs Haunted House:
 - ◇ <https://www.facebook.com/downs.hauntedhouse>
 - ◇ <http://www.downshauntedhouse.org>
- Dooley Park: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/108924229128032/>
- Downs Freedom Run: <https://www.facebook.com/downsfreedomrun/>
- Downs GPS (Grow, Play, Stay): <https://www.facebook.com/DownsGPS>
- Downs Village Market:
 - ◇ <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090958995532>
 - ◇ <https://www.instagram.com/downsvillagemarket/?igshid=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ%3D%3D>



Village Of Downs Food Pantry



Our Mission

To serve the people of Tri-Valley School District who need food assistance by providing monthly food boxes and to be on call to assist in any emergency that involves a need for food and emotional support.

"Serving the residents of the Tri-Valley School District."

2025 Schedule

Month	Friday	Saturday
November	7th	8th
December	5th	6th

Distribution hours

10:00 am until Noon

Location

The Food Pantry is in the Youth Center located at the Washington St. entrance to Dooley Park.

2025 Food Pantry Distribution Schedule

Food boxes are distributed during the first Friday and Saturday after the first Monday of each month barring holidays when the distribution is usually the following week.

Contact the Food Pantry:

Linda Bowman:
309-261-3809
llbowman3@gmail.com

Bill Clark:
309-531-7884
downstwpclerk@aol.com

Parks

Parks Meeting Schedule

Dooley Park Pavilion @ 6 pm

Held the Tuesday after the Board Meeting. Coming up: November 18th

Dooley Park Pavilion

Rent the Pavilion for your events

Rental Agreements and availability are available on the Village of Downs website at www.villageofdowns.org or call the Village Hall at 309-378-3221.

starting
JULY 1, 2025



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TRANSIT



Haunted House Characters and Volunteers Needed

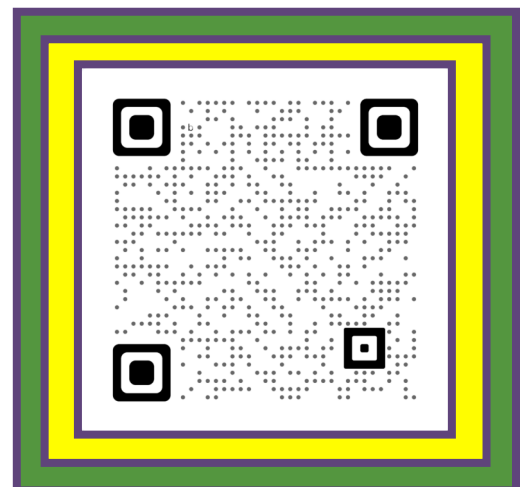
Celebrating 33 Years of Scare

In October, the Village of Downs Haunted House will celebrate 33 years. Haunted House takes place every Friday and Saturday in October. This event draws thousands of people from all over Illinois and even surrounding states during October. We have been able to maintain all our activities including the hayrack rides, concessions, and Dooley Park activities with the help of our dedicated volunteers; in 2012, we started the free Un-Haunted version for the younger children to enjoy with no-scares and will continue that tradition on November 2nd starting at 1 pm.

The proceeds from Haunted House help fund other Village of Downs annual events (Mainly 4th of July) and make significant additions/improvements to the haunt each year. With your help, this year will be the best yet!

Volunteers are needed for construction, prop building, acting, makeup application, costume coordination, hay rack drivers, vendor donations, and concessions. If you are available to volunteer and help continue our small-town tradition, please email us at info@downshauntedhouse.org or fill out the volunteer/actor registration form at www.downshauntedhouse.org.

For Tickets



Looking Ahead

Quick Glance at Upcoming Village Events, Activities and Meetings

October:

- 17th & 18th—Downs Haunted House: 7—11 pm, Tickets online @ DownsHauntedHouse.org
- 23rd – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 23rd - Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Continued, 7 pm @ Village Hall
- 24th & 25th—Downs Haunted House: 7—11 pm, Tickets online @ DownsHauntedHouse.org
- 30th – Garbage Collection
- 31st—Downs Haunted House: 7—11 pm, Tickets online @ DownsHauntedHouse.org

November:

- 2nd—Downs UnHaunted House: 1—3 pm
- 3rd – Village Monthly Brush Pickup
- 6th – Garbage Collection – GFL Monthly Bulk pickup
- 11th – Events Committee Regular Meeting, 6 pm, @ Village Hall
- 13th – Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 7 pm @ Village Hall; Video/Audio via Teams
- 13th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 18th – Parks Committee Regular Meeting, 6:30 pm @ Pavilion
- 20th – Garbage Collection
- 27th— Happy Thanksgiving—Village Hall is closed
- 28th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 28th—Village Hall is closed

December:

- 4th – Garbage Collection – GFL Monthly Bulk pickup
- 6th and 7th - Cookies with Santa@Pavilion
- 9th – Events Committee Regular Meeting, 6 pm, @ Village Hall
- 11th – Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 7 pm @ Village Hall; Video/Audio via Teams
- 11th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 16th – Parks Committee Regular Meeting, 6:30 pm @ Pavilion
- 18th – Garbage Collection
- 25th - Merry Christmas - Village Hall is closed
- 26th – Garbage and Recycle Collection

**** More information and registration forms are available on the Village website or at the Village Hall**

Video/Audio Information for Public Meetings which use Zoom

Broadcast for Village Board of Trustee Meetings Will Continue

Persons who wish to attend in person are allowed at the meeting location shown on the agenda without special consideration. Both Audio and Video are available using a computer or smartphone using the information below. If you don't have access to the internet you can dial-in for audio only using any telephone via the information below. Please keep your phone muted until called upon for your question or you need to make a follow-up comment during your 5-minute time (See rules for public comment).

You may submit comments or questions via the following methods:

- Online chat during the meeting
- During the "Public Comment" item on the agenda using conference call audio/video
- e-mail the clerk@villageofdowns.org

Video/Audio conference call information:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/uzvjsq6>

Meeting ID: 715 697 2265

Password: VOD2020

Dial by your location: (312) 626-6799 US
(Chicago)

Meeting ID: 715 697 2265

Password: 682969

Board meetings will be using Teams starting next month.

Instructions will be posted on the website and then available in the next newsletter.

Looking for Houses to Clean

Also do private
care in seniors
homes



Immediate
openings

call Trisha 309-273-8610

**** More information and registration forms are available on the Village website or at the Village Hall**

FY2026 (May 2025 – April 2026) Village of Downs Event Plan

Current Plan—Subject to Change

The following describes each planned event at a high level. Further details and changes will occur during final planning by the committee or sub-committee in charge of the event. Budgets have been estimated based on last year's expenditures and revenue. Some events have been eliminated due to lack of participation or they were merged with something else.

Dooley Park Cruise-In – This event will be held on the first Saturday in June in Dooley Park from 3 – 7 pm. There will be no rainout date.

Village Cleanup Day – This event will be held on the first Saturday in June each year. We hope to have containers for garbage, recycle, electronics, batteries, tires (extra fee). Home pick up can be arranged for a donation.

Freedom Run – The Freedom Run will be held June 28 (Saturday before July 4) and is a 5K Run, 1 Mile Walk & Kids Fun Run. Event will start and end at the Tri-Valley Middle School & High School. See Facebook/Meta for more information.

4th of July – This event will be the first of two large events for the Village. This year will be a one-day event.

Creepy Car Cruise-In – This event will be held the first Saturday in October at Dooley Park from 3 – 7 pm. There will be no rainout date.

Downs Haunted House – This event will be the second of the two large events. This event will be every Friday and Saturday in October until Halloween. The Un-Haunted House for kids will be on the November 2nd.

Cookies with Santa – This very popular family-oriented event providing free picture(s) with Santa for the family and/or kids, cookies, and drinks. Cookies with Santa will continue to use the ticketing system used last year. The event will take place the first Saturday and Sunday in December in several sessions to be announced later.

Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt – This event will be hosted in Dooley Park on Saturday, March 28, 2026, and will involve the areas Churches for the egg hunt. The host for the family breakfast before the egg hunt in the park is TBD and we are open for any business to volunteer to host.

**** More information and registration forms are available on the Village website or at the Village Hall**

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SCOUTS | BSA

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**Small Cubs,
Big Adventures Ahead!**



<https://sites.google.com/site/wdboycepack53>

For more information on joining the adventure, please contact:
Chad Mirock: chad.mirock@gmail.com

This page was created by Troop 953's youth Historian



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youtube.com/@livinghopechristianchurchd8107



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journey, you'll receive
a warm welcome at
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LivingHopeDowns.com



Downsumc.org

309-378-2651

Up and Coming Events

- Sunday morning Adult Sunday School 8:30am in Youth Room
- *YOUTH WORSHIP during the regular worship service. It is a service geared for the 4th through 8th grade students and they meet in the Youth Room.*
- Sunday evenings at 4pm is in person Bible Study in the Chapel
- Tuesday morning Bible Study 10am in Youth Room and on Zoom.
- Wednesdays 5:30pm Next Gen Ministries (student ministries) K-8th
- Wednesdays 6:00pm Choir practice in Chapel.



Is October 31st 5-7:30pm.

Come join us at 205 S Highway Avenue.

Treats and games.

Worship Service

Sundays 9:30am In Person

Online at www.downsumc.org



SERMON SERIES

"Journey Series:"

Continues, studying the book of John



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EMAIL QUESTIONS TO
SWAPROOM@DOWNSUMC.ORG



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Village Of Downs

Officials & Contacts

Mayor	Mike James	309-830-7374	mayor@Villageofdowns.org
Clerk	Rachel Eagles	541-390-6709	clerk@villageofdowns.org
Public Safety Trustee - Pro Tem	Maureen Roach	309-830-4297	publicsafety@villageofdowns.org
Streets Trustee	Brian Warfel	309-261-0183	streets@villageofdowns.org
Finance Trustee	Sarah Gassaway	309-261-2540	finance@villageofdowns.org
Public Works Trustee	Toby Twyford	309-830-3448	publicworks@villageofdowns.org
Parks Trustee	Stephanie Adkisson	309-212-8345	parks@villageofdowns.org
Building Trustee	Diana Reynolds	309-498-8361	building@villageofdowns.org
Treasurer	Julie Bakewell	309-378-3221	treasurer@villageofdowns.org
Public Works Supervisor	Jill Combs	309-319-1010	pwsuper@villageofdowns.org
Police Chief	Joshua Dingler	309-622-2207	downs.Village.pd@gmail.com
Non-Emergency	MetCom	309-888-5030	
Emergency		911	
GFL Disposal	Customer Service	309-688-0760	
Village Hall		309-378-3221	info@villageofdowns.org
Zoning Enforcement Officer	Lyndall Cuba	309-378-3221	info@villageofdowns.org
Zoning Board of Appeals Chair	Eric Thompson	309-378-3221	info@villageofdowns.org
EMA Director	Travis Misch	309-378-3221	