



MIKE McKENNA (above) dug a trench for the back wall of the new playground on Main Street in Jennings during the town cleanup day on Saturday. Brandon Vacura, 10, (right) mowed a yard. Others fed the hungry volunteers. Kay Brown

(below) cut a pie. And, you're never too young to help: Maddix Green, 5, (below right) pitched a big stick onto a pile of debris. Volunteers (bottom) balanced a load of tree limbs on the back of a dump truck headed to the town



Volunteers pitch in to clean up Jennings, feed workers after job

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The Jennings Citywide Clean-up has become a tradition in the small, but active, town.

Several years ago, when Marge Hartzog was elected mayor, she organized the activity to improve the looks of the town. Since then, many former residents make an effort to return to Jennings for the weekend and help their old hometown.

Saturday morning at 8 a.m., when fog was still hanging heavy in the air, about 30 volunteers met on the steps of the Jennings City Building. Throughout the morning, more than 40 more joined the effort to beautify the town.

Before the clean-up, residents were contacted to determine who needed refuse picked up at their home.

From that information, a list was compiled, block by block, to guide the volunteers. Some homeowners asked that lots be mowed, while others needed junk removed or limbs cut.

All over town, clusters of volunteers raked leaves, trimmed trees, mowed lawns and loaded debris into trucks. Mayor Hartzog said at least three loads of debris went to the Decatur County landfill; two loads of metal went to F&F Iron in Norton to be sold; and countless loads of tree limbs and brush were taken to the city's big burn pit southeast of town.

Some volunteers helped in ways not associated with yard work, feeding the work crews. Several brought in covered dishes for the lunch. Hungry workers were served barbecued beef, hot dogs, salads and desserts.

"I am very humbled by the response," the mayor said. "We really accomplished a lot. For a town our size, I think Jennings gets a lot done."



— Story and photos by Carolyn Plotts