

PIQUA Spirit



UNITED WE STAND

SUMMER 2007

From the Office of the City Manager

Government

STREETS

**Health &
Sanitation**

Fire

Police

WATER

PARKS & REC.

Hotel Renovations Update

The first four months of construction on the Fort Piqua Hotel project have been comprised of asbestos abatement, controlled demolition and "beefing-up" the structural

support system of the old building. One can readily begin to visualize how the finished interior may look.

The ground floor has undergone a transformation from being a series of long, dark inaccessible concrete rooms to one wide open space that will soon become the children's department of the new library. New structural steel lintels have been bolted in place, and large sections of the 22" thick concrete walls have been removed to begin the transformation.

Interior framed walls have also been removed on the first, second and third floors, converting groups of small rooms into large open spaces



Interior Walls Removed - Looking South Towards "Founders Room"

as well. The asbestos insulation throughout the building has been removed, and what was once a stair tower in the northwest corner of the building is now a cavity waiting to be converted to usable space.



Exterior Renovations

The structure was built according to 1891 construction standards for hotels. Because it is to be occupied as a library according to 2007 building codes, every floor in the building will be virtually reconstructed. Additional concrete footers have been poured on the ground floor to support a new system of steel columns and beams that will supplement the existing skeleton. All of the floors that will support book stacks are being reinforced by adding new specially engineered floor joists between the existing floor joists.

The exterior of the building is also seeing major changes after four months. All of the exterior windows and doors have been removed. Each will be taken off-site, stripped, refinished and returned to the hotel to be placed into service for the next 118 years. Trisco Systems, the exterior restoration contractor, is also on site and has begun the clean up and tuck-pointing of the stone outer walls.

The selective demolition will continue into the summer. Contractors will then begin to place the permanent improvements that will be seen, used and enjoyed by all with the opening of the new facility in August of 2008.

"It's Time To Step Up" (Fund Raising Campaign)... The Hotel/Library Legacy Alliance will be conducting a community-wide fundraising campaign for the Hotel/Library project from July 16 through July 31st. Now is the time for anyone who has not contributed to the project to make the commitment. Make your tax-deductible check payable to the Piqua Community Foundation and mail to: P. O. Box 226, Piqua, Ohio 45356. We need your help to make our goal.

Piqua City Employees Meet....

Marcos Rodriguez

Police Officer Marcos Rodriguez is the featured employee for this issue of the Spirit Newsletter. Officer Rodriguez joined the Piqua Police Department on May 3, 2004.

After graduating from Genoa Area High School in 1999, Marcos entered the criminal justice program at Owens Community College and graduated with an Associates degree in 2002. He continued to further his education and attended the University of Toledo, where he graduated in 2003 with a Bachelors Degree in Criminal Justice.

After graduating from the University of Toledo, Marcos joined the Ohio Police Corps to receive his Peace Officer Training. Upon completion of that training, he accepted an offer to become a Piqua Police Officer.

Marcos Rodriguez may not have been born in Piqua, but he has adopted Piqua as his hometown. Marcos is a native of Genoa, Ohio, where his parents and brother still live, but he

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chose Piqua as his home when he started employment as a Piqua Police Officer on May 3, 2004.

Marcos is currently assigned to the Patrol Bureau. However, he has been selected to be one of the department's Computer Forensic Specialists. In that assignment, he is receiving specialized training on how to examine computers to detect and preserve digital evidence. In this capacity, he will assist other police officers in the prosecution of individuals who use the computer in the commission of a crime. In his spare time Marcos enjoys working with computers.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATES IN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



In January, volunteers facilitated a round of public meetings intended to provide members of the

community with an opportunity to participate in a community wide planning process. To stimulate the meeting participant's thoughts and ideas about the community, the facilitator asked those in attendance questions like, "What is making this community prosper?" and, "What can we do to make Piqua the best that it can be in the coming years?" Facilitators also used a "Strong Places, Weak Places" mapping exercise designed to elicit the participant's feelings about what they like and dislike about the community. All of the input provided by the meeting participants was documented by the facilitators. The exercises resulted in a broad range of ideas and a significant amount of feedback being provided. Consisting of more than 60 community leaders and citizen volunteers, 8 different sub committees provide expert guidance for each of the plan element focus areas.

At a recent Plan It Piqua workshop on April 10 the sub committees were asked to identify the key themes that emerged from the public input received, and use these findings to develop the preliminary goals and strategies for the comprehensive plan.

On May 22nd at 7:00 p.m. Plan It Piqua hosted a Community Choices event in the Municipal Government Complex Commission Chambers. The Plan's draft goals and strategies was presented to the public and feedback was solicited from the community members in attendance on the potential impact these initiatives may have on the future of Piqua.

For the most current information available concerning the Plan It Piqua comprehensive planning efforts to date visit www.planitpiqua.org.

Renew Piqua: Wanted – Your Help!



*"Piqua Business Painting
Elderly Resident's Home
Last Summer"*

Renewing the housing and renewing the spirit of Piqua... That's what this program's ultimately all about. The program is contributing to the continuing revitalization of Piqua.

Many homeowners in Piqua can participate. Eligibility for free paint consists of three things: 1) Own your home in Piqua. 2) Meet the household income limits for low and moderate incomes 3) Pay local property and income taxes or have an acceptable plan to do so. That's it!

We are looking for those who need paint and will paint their homes themselves. In addition to those who can paint for themselves, Renew Piqua offers help to elderly and disabled homeowners who are physically unable to do the painting and have no others to paint. In those cases, volunteer groups are being identified to do the painting - the paint and supplies are also free. Other minor exterior repairs may be done if funding is available. Getting these homes to be adopted by volunteer groups will only occur if groups from churches, businesses, service groups and groups of individuals or any combination of these step forward and adopt a home of an eligible homeowners to painted and fix up.

The Program's assistance in on a first come, first served basis and provides free paint and supplies (max. \$400). New this year, is an opportunity to receive a free tree from the City's "Re-Leaf Piqua" tree planting program offered with thanks to an anonymous donation to help plant trees in Piqua. If there are trees still available, one will be provided and planted to add to the attractiveness of that property.

Homeowners may make application at any time. The simple one page application is also a brochure about the Program and can be found around Piqua in the Municipal Government Complex offices, local banks and Chamber of Commerce. It can also be found on the City's web site www.piquaoh.org.

Those who wish to get involved to: donate their time to paint and/or make minor repairs, donate any sort of material for minor repairs to eligible homeowners, or have a tax-deductible, financial donation should call Andy Burner at 778-2054 (aburner@piquaoh.org).

Residence Pride Awards

Piqua citizens...

We need your nominations for Residence Pride awards. You may nominate a home or a business that has been improved. Maybe you may have noticed a neighbor who has helped someone else with an exterior home improvement project that deserves recognition. We encourage you to submit a nomination to the Residence Pride Committee.

The Residence Pride Committee meets on a regular basis to select the winners. The Committee will be meeting in the near future to select the summer award winners.

The Residence Pride award is based on the following criteria:

- Property appearance
- Landscape appearance
- Helpful neighbor in regards to landscape or home improvement project
- A donation made to help a neighbor/citizen with their home improvement project
- Home improvements-general clean-up of a property
- Business owner/landlord property

Nomination forms will be available on the City's website at www.piquaoh.org, the Municipal Government Complex in the City Managers office, or the front Reception Desk. Nominations or questions may also be emailed to: residencepride@piquaoh.org.



"One of Recent Residence Pride Award Recipients"

Upcoming city dates of note

- ◆ **July 4:** Fourth of July festivities and fireworks, Fountain Park.
- ◆ **July 5, 12, 19 & 26:** Mainstreet Piqua's "Brown Bag Lunch" series, 11:45 a.m., Municipal Govt. Complex Plaza (corner of Wayne & Water Streets)
- ◆ **July 7:** "City Hall in the Park", 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m., Kiwanis Park.
- ◆ **July 12, 19, 26:** Piqua Civic Band concert series, 7:00 p.m., Hance Pavillion
- ◆ **July 14:** "Great Miami River Cleanup", 4th Annual – Call Jeff at POWW to volunteer 615-9398
- ◆ **July 15, August 16 & 23:** "Music in the Park" series (Piqua Arts Council), 7:00 p.m., Hance Pavillion
- ◆ **July 21:** Car Show (benefiting Parks & Recreation), 9:00 a.m.-4 p.m., Rte. 66 Roadside Park
- ◆ **July 30 & August 20:** Dayton Dragons Game Trips. For information, call the Parks & Rec. Dept. (778-2085).
- ◆ **August 4:** "City Hall in the Park", 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m., Upper Mote Park
- ◆ **August 7:** "National Night Out", 6:00 p.m., Mote Park. For Information call the Police Dept. (778-2023).
- ◆ **August 10-11:** "Music Warehouse" presentation, 7:00 p.m., Hance Pavillion
- ◆ **September 1-3:** Heritage Festival, Johnston Farm (Piqua Historical Site)
- ◆ **September 8:** "City Hall in the Park", 12:00-2:00 p.m. Pitsenbarger Sports Complex

EMERALD ASH BORER – PLAN TO FIGHT THE DISEASE



"Dan Poast - Master Gardener (left) and Wayne Pope - Tree Committee Member Plant a Tree on West Greene Street."

The City of Piqua was notified on August 10, 2006 that a discovery of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was located at the southbound rest area along Interstate 75 south of Piqua. The EAB is an exotic insect from Asia that is responsible for the death of over 5 million ash trees in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Maryland.

Due to the large number of ash trees located within the public right-of-way in addition to the various other types of trees that are dead and/or diseased, the City will begin removing these trees within the public right-of-way this year.

While the removal of the dead and/or diseased trees is necessary to ensure public safety, the City realizes the impact that losing a tree has on a property. Therefore, with the assistance of an anonymous \$25,000 donation, the City of Piqua has established a Re-Leaf Piqua Tree Fund. The sole purpose of this fund is for planting trees throughout the City. To date, 22 trees have been planted along W. Greene Street and Boone Street. The City of Piqua Tree Committee has already begun planning for a fall tree planting in the Southside

Neighborhood and the Shawnee District. For more information on the tree plantings or the Re-Leaf Piqua Tree Fund, please contact the Engineering Department at (937) 778-2044.



"Typical Ash Tree Leaves"

Did You Know?

Facts About the City and Its Operations

- ✓ Remember the City's website address? For a wide variety of information on city services, programs, press releases, job information, photos of city projects, i.e. Ft. Piqua Hotel Renovations, and information about current happenings in your City's government see us at www.piquaoh.org.
- ✓ Questions about Fair Housing? The Miami County Fair Housing Committee handles all local housing discrimination matters for Piqua. The City's Fair Housing Coordinator, Bill Lutz (778-2062) can assist individuals in filing a complaint.
- ✓ Piqua's public transit needs are served by the Miami County Transit Service throughout the entire week. Prescheduled rides (preferably 24 hours advance) can be arranged by calling toll-free 335-RIDE (7433).
- ✓ City utility customers can pay Piqua Utility bills automatically. It's free to all through the safe and convenient BillPayer 2000 program (automatic payment from your checking account). To apply, simply contact the Utilities Business Office at 778-2000.
- ✓ Certain city Parks & Recreation facilities, including the Hance Pavillion, Hollow and Fountain Park shelter and dining hall, and Swimming Pool, are available to rent to citizens for various private functions for a charge. Call the Department at 778-2085 or check the City's website at www.piquaoh.org/facilities.htm.
- ✓ Need to communicate a suggestion, complaint or just have a question for your city government? Call, e-mail, or meet with the Mayor, any City Commissioner, City Manager, department head or even a staff person. Our telephone numbers and e-mail addresses are listed in the Spirit as well as on our web site and you can call 778-2051. Many times such matters can be resolved rather quickly by such a communication.
- ✓ Look soon for the City to unveil a new tool to help us communicate with you and for you to communicate with us. We will have an electronic government or E-Gov system that has been successful in many cities. It's another way to improve communications in a way that complements the other methods.

City Staff and Citizens Work Towards Common Goals

The City of Piqua Neighborhood Improvement Team (NIT) is a collaboration of city officials who work to strengthen and revitalize the neighborhoods of Piqua. The team works to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods by identifying areas of concern and then focusing resources to eliminate those concerns. One key component to strengthening neighborhoods is to build relationships with citizens.

As the NIT was formed, city staff immediately began discussing ideas of how to best get citizens involved in the effort. When the team began to work in the historic Shawnee Neighborhood, we invited the citizens of the neighborhood to a meeting. City staff and a large number of residents discussed concerns in the neighborhood and how the city and the residents could work together to find solutions. This first meeting was followed by a series of follow up meetings which resulted in the formation of the first Neighborhood Association in Piqua.

The Shawnee Neighborhood Association has become an extremely valuable organization not only to the Shawnee neighborhood, but also to other neighborhoods and to city staff. In the spirit of cooperation, the Shawnee Neighborhood Association members have assisted the Police Department in crime prevention efforts, the Health Department in property maintenance efforts, and have even helped other neighborhoods begin to form their own associations.

Currently, two other neighborhoods, are exploring the idea of creating a neighborhood association. From our experience, neighborhood associations offer the following benefits: open the lines of communication between the city and residents, focus city resources where they are most needed, empower residents to find solutions to problems without involving the city, and encourage neighborhood pride. We encourage all citizens to take pride in their community and their neighborhood....a great way to do both would be to join or start a neighborhood association in your area.

To find out more about neighborhood associations or the NIT, please contact Amy Welker, Director of Health & Sanitation at 778-2060.

Piqua Spirit is a quarterly newsletter from the City of Piqua. The purpose is to keep you informed about what is happening in your City.

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Your comments and questions
are welcomed.

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