The Pepper Pike Post

A Publication of the City of Pepper Pike, Ohio

City Hall ◆ 28000 Shaker Boulevard ◆ Pepper Pike, Ohio 44124

PEPPER PIKE

MARCH 2009

Your City Government

Mayor

Bruce H. Akers..... 216-831-9604

City Council

Richard M. Hankins 216-595-0403
Allan C. Krulak..... 440-461-4278
Gail B. Mayland 216-591-0877
Paulette E. Morganstern..... 216-292-7244
David J. Portmann 216-292-3861
Clevis T. Svetlik 440-442-1006
Frederick I. Taft..... 216-595-9011

City Hall (All Departments) 216-831-8500

Police Chief.....John Crivel

Fire Chief .....Thomas J. Hartman

Service Director.....Robert Girardi

Dir. of Finance.....Prashant Shah

Building Commissioner.....Nino Monaco

Clerk of Council ....Sheila Brett-O'Connor

Mayor's Exec. Asst. .....Sue Molnar

Law Director.....Christopher L. Gibbon
216-928-2893

City Engineer.....Donald Sheehy
440-439-1999

E-Mail: BruceHAkers@pepperpike.org

Fax: 216-831-6525 • **www.pepperpike.org**

Pepper Pike Community Radio **1670 AM**

The Pepper Pike Post
Coordinated by Susan Schaul

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City of Pepper Pike Highlights – 2008

By Mayor Bruce H. Akers

- Again received a clean bill of health from the State Auditor's Office for the year 2008 audit. No findings, no recommendations.
- Rated by Moody's Investment Service; again received an Aa1 bond rating. Only 3 municipalities in all of Ohio enjoy such a rating.
- Earned approx. $300,000 in interest for the year 2008, even during a downward interest rate trend. Interest earnings from investments in the past four years have averaged $417,000 per year.
- Received a grant from the Chagrin River Watershed Partners to create two bio-retention swales, one at Orange High School (OHS), and one on Fox Hollow. The Pepper Pike Service Department performed the installation. The installations will be monitored for the next two years as part of the grant. Orange School students assisted with the plant installation on the OHS site.
- The northwest quadrant sewer project is approximately 85% complete, and will finish up in spring of 2009.
- Our Police officer who is a computer forensics specialist was able to track and locate the origin of a bomb threat made against Orange Schools. The responsible juvenile was arrested within 24 hours.
- We have received many accolades for our continued participation in the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force from the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office.
- We have received awards for pedestrian safety and participation in the regional drunk driver reduction initiative.
- 61.53% of discarded materials were recycled, making Pepper Pike third in the county for recycling. This was Pepper Pike's sixth year of being among the top three recyclers in the county.
- Pepper Pike retained the title of Tree City USA for the eighth consecutive year.
- Container Drop-Off Program: we rented out our large refuse containers 174 times.
- Service Director Girardi collaborated with other service directors in the county to compile a Sensible Salting Practice Policy. The plan was overwhelmingly adopted by the Mayors & City Managers Association in Novem-

"Highlights" continues on page 3

For Your Information:

Upcoming Pepper Pike meetings to be held in Pepper Pike City Hall
All meetings are open to the public.

Monday, March 2, 2009
Planning & Zoning Meeting (upon application) – 7:30pm

Wednesday, March 11, 2009
Road & Safety/Finance & Planning Committee Meeting – 7:30pm

Wednesday, March 18, 2009
City Council Meeting – 8pm

Monday, April 6, 2009
Planning & Zoning Meeting (upon application) – 7:30pm

Tuesday, April 7, 2009
Road & Safety/Finance & Planning Committee Meeting – 7:30pm

Wednesday, April 15, 2009
City Council Meeting – 8pm

Monday, May 4, 2009
Planning & Zoning Meeting (upon application) – 7:30pm

Wednesday, May 13, 2009
Road & Safety/Finance & Planning Committee Meeting – 7:30pm

Wednesday, May 20, 2009
City Council Meeting – 8pm

Monday, June 1, 2009
Planning & Zoning Meeting (upon application) – 7:30pm

Wednesday, June 10, 2009
Road & Safety/Finance & Planning Committee Meeting – 7:30pm

Wednesday, June 17, 2009
City Council Meeting – 8pm

Departmental News

Police Department: A troubled economy often leads to an increase in fraud activity. Here are some things residents should know:

• Always be guarded with personal information such as social security numbers, PIN numbers and passwords.

• Protect your purse or wallet. One of the leading causes of identity theft is lost or stolen belongings containing personal information. The grocery store is a popular place for purse thefts. Do not leave your purse in the cart unattended.

• Do not put PIN numbers or other personal information on credit cards, keep them separate.

• Guard your PIN when using your card. Check the ATM area for suspicious activity before inserting your card. Someone standing directly behind you may be trying to get your PIN number. If this occurs, cancel your transaction and return at a later time.

• Financial institutions ***never*** ask for passwords, PIN or account numbers by phone or on the Internet. If you call them they may request this information in order to access your account.

• Watch what goes out in the trash. Shred any documents with personal information.

Service Department: During the month of April -

• The Service Department will pick up donations for Goodwill. Re-usable, in-good-condition items will be collected on Fridays and delivered to the Goodwill trailer across from the Lander Circle Heinen's.

• It is Computer Round-Up time. Drop off your old computers at the Service Department or call 216-896-6149 to schedule a Friday Special Pick-up.

• The Household Hazardous Waste Round-Up is scheduled for April 6-May 7. Drop off your household hazardous waste to the Service Department or call 216-896-6149 to schedule a Friday Special Pick-up.

Resident Profile… Dave DeWolf

A tall and fit-looking fellow, Dave DeWolf (39) wears a close-cropped beard only during the winter months for warmth and convenience, but displays a quick, easy smile all year round. "I am a geek and proud of it," he boasts. "I have worked at Progressive for 22 years, first starting out metering mail, then moved to facilities management, and now as an IT systems engineer." Not being able to "sit on his hands," he prefers to be involved in projects and activities. In fact, he rather enjoys work with his hands, like yard work and landscaping around his house and recently, figuring out his new digital camera. "I am the go-to guy for my buddies and neighbors," he says. "When they have a question about home remodeling, they ask me. I learned to be a do-it-yourselfer from my father," he adds.

Dave DeWolf

Having spent his childhood in Mayfield Heights, DeWolf continues to have family ties and roots in Northeast Ohio. His wife, Hilarie, and two small children, a daughter, Hannah (9), and a son, Ryan (7), lived in University Heights seven years before moving to Pepper Pike. When they were looking for a new house and school system, they found that the Orange School District had a strong education track record. His wife was raised here and his in-laws, still residing in the community, added their vote of support to the move. It was an auspicious beginning when they moved to Pepper Pike in 2003 during the August power blackout. "I remember pulling my truck into the front yard," recalls DeWolf, "and keeping on the headlights so we could see inside the house where things were located."

DeWolf is a charter member of the 50-member Pepper Pike MERC (Municipal Emergency Response Corps) Team. He initially joined to learn about Pepper Pike and meet his neighbors. Now he works together with Dave Sheinbart, both serving as co-chairmen, to lead the group of community volunteers. Every MERC member, instructed in FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) emergency preparedness procedures, is required to go through the standardized training to become CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) certified and qualified to help in the event of an emergency.

DeWolf has volunteered, a trait learned from his mother, on several projects at City Hall including the Citizens Review Committee for the Master Plan, the wireless task force, and the re-designed City web site committee. He has also helped put together an exhibition for Preparedness Day at the Fire Station so residents could learn about the MERC Team's projects. His wife volunteers for the Ice Cream Social Committee.

"We have an inter-faith marriage," says DeWolf. "I am Methodist and Hilarie is Jewish. The kids are being raised Jewish and in the process, they become exposed to and learn about different traditions. And this way, scheduling for the holidays is not a problem," he smiles. DeWolf also teaches a construction class around Purim time, How to Build Carnival Games, to 7th and 8th grade students at Suburban Temple.

> "For young couples like us, they need to know that the tax rate is economically feasible…"

What does he like about Pepper Pike? "For young couples like us, they need to know that the tax rate is economically feasible," DeWolf states. "And the community feels diverse with all the advantages of a big city. Yet it is small enough so you know your neighbors and check on them when something is not right," he adds. "This is just one of the many reasons to live in this great city." PP

Highlights 2008 *cont'd. from pg. 1*

ber 2008, and has as its goal to reduce the use of salt by 30%. This policy was partially motivated by a severe shortage of salt supplies.

- Shelter Assessments: One of the primary functions of Municipal Emergency Response Corps team is to identify potential emergency shelters in advance and establish a relationship before any crisis. Our MERC team has identified, met with and toured the following shelter sites in 2008: Garfield Memorial Church, Gross Schechter School, Brady Middle School, Ursuline College and The Ratner School. In turn, these locations are afforded an opportunity to become a certified Red Cross disaster shelter to which the Red Cross can respond in the event they are needed.
- Continued to offer residents our Pepper Pike Emergency Preparedness Course; 35 additional residents received Red Cross Certification in CPR/AED, Basic 1st aid and in-home preparedness.
- 164 houses were remodeled or expanded with new additions.
- Continued to enforce the existing Exterior Maintenance Program for new roofs, driveway replacements, homes painted, etc.
- Annual Pepper Pike Park Ice Cream Social drew over 700 residents. We passed out new PP green recycling bags to all attendees.
- In its second year, the Pepper Pike Community Band performed 3 concerts in the Park.
- Continued our quarterly shredding services. Nearly 24 tons of paper have been shredded since we started the program.
- Smith Barney moved into its new building on Chagrin Blvd. in March. Two additional tenants have since moved in and the building is now fully leased.
- Worked with the OHS Audio-Visual Class to put together an oral/visual history of Pepper Pike.
- We initiated, in conjunction with University Hospitals, a service of free cardiovascular screenings for our residents. One resident came in to thank us because they found he had a life- threatening condition.
- Bostwick Design Partners developed (and Council approved) a Master Plan for City Hall Complex.
- Voters approved the rezoning of lot immediately east of City Hall for potential use for a new Police Station.
- Mayor Akers appointed a Citizens Review Committee to review the Master Plan.
- We are working with the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District and Moreland Hills to convert the Creekside/Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant to a pump station. We have received financial commitments of approximately $925,000 towards this work.
- Conducted two more sessions of our Citizens Police Academy.
- Ended the year with a $5 mm surplus.

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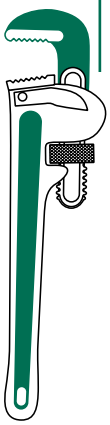
Home Improvement Loans and Help

Thinking about fixing up your house? Cuyahoga County offers two home improvement loan programs –the Housing Enhancement Loan Program (HELP) and the Heritage Home Loan Program (HHLP). The City of Pepper Pike is a member of these Cuyahoga County-sponsored home improvement assistance programs. Residents who are homeowners can benefit with low interest loans to repair, restore, and improve their homes.



The HELP Program puts your tax dollars to work allowing homeowners to borrow money to fix up their homes and improve the community at below market home improvement loan terms. Please contact the Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Community Programs and Outreach Division at 216-443-2149 for more information.

The Heritage Home Loan Program, in partnership with Cuyahoga County, is designed to help owners of older and historic homes preserve and maintain their historic distinctive character. If your home is 50 years or older, the Cleveland Restoration Society (www.clevelandrestoration.org) will come to your home to offer free advice about home improvements. Exterior and interior projects such as painting, additions, roofing, kitchens, baths, and more are eligible. Call 216-426-3116 for more information.

Departmental News

Fire Department: Fires resulting from cooking continue to be the most common type of fire experienced in U.S. households. Cooking fires are also the leading cause of fire injuries in residences. These fires are preventable by simply being more attentive to the use of cooking materials and equipment.

- ***Never*** leave boiling, frying, or broiling food unattended.
- Wear short, tight-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Keep anything that can catch fire ***away*** from the stovetop.

If You Have a Cooking Fire Don't Panic...

- Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- Call 9-1-1 after you leave.
- Always keep a lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Do not move the pan. To keep the fire from restarting, leave the lid on until the pan is completely cool.
- In case of an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed. After a fire, the oven should be checked and/or serviced before being used again.

Building Department:

- To help warn of mechanical failures, installing a battery-operated or plug-in temperature sensor is a good way to avoid major problems. They can detect a furnace breakdown or frozen or bursting pipes. Leak detectors use wireless or wired sensors to sound an alarm; they can be wired to an automatic shutoff valve. Some insurance companies will discount your premium 2 to 5 percent if you have safeguards in place.

Benefits of Reduced Road Salt Application

From the Chagrin River Watershed Partners

While salt is a necessary part of winter road and walkway safety, it does have its drawbacks. Road salt applied to roadways can enter air, soil, groundwater, and surface water from direct snowmelt runoff. The accumulation and persistence of salt poses risk to our cars, homes, landscaping, and stream life.

Recently, Ohio has seen a dramatic increase in the price of salt needed to treat roadways and bridges. According to a recent Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) report, the cost of rock salt for this year increased between 50 and 300 percent from last winter. The City of Pepper Pike spent $276,156 during the 2007/2008 winter season to purchase 7,671 tons of salt. The same tonnage of salt purchased this year, if it can be found to purchase, could cost approximately $575,325. To be mindful of the budget and product availability for many communities in Cuyahoga County, ODOT instituted a Smart Salt Strategy developed to reduce salt usage by 30 percent. The strategy requires a more efficient salt use that ensures continued safe and passable roadway conditions. The Ohio EPA also recommends reducing salt usage as a pollution prevention measure.

Salt's corrosive nature contributes to rusting, but road de-icing salt can also damage concrete, including bridge infrastructures.

Excess road de-icing salt has a toxic effect on the health of a stream, including its aquatic insects and fish. Approximately 55 percent of road salt is transported via water runoff from roads to streams, while the remaining 45 percent seeps into the soil and groundwater aquifers. The City of Pepper Pike and many communities along the I-271 corridor are part of the Chagrin River watershed, which means water runoff drains into streams that make their way to the Chagrin River and ultimately Lake Erie.

Unfortunately, salt often ends up on landscaping, injuring plants several ways. The salt spray may scorch leaves or kill buds and twig tips on deciduous plants, especially during the spring. Accumulation of salt in the soil also makes it difficult for plant roots to absorb water, prevents seed germination, and decreases soil fertility.

Although many communities have considered more efficient and sensible salt usage on roads due to the cost and availability of salt, the benefits of this practice include less salt entering the storm water system and ultimately reaching our streams and Lake Erie. The benefits of reduced road-salt use also include reduced damage to landscaping and road surfaces. PP

Pepper Pike City Hall
28000 Shaker Boulevard
Pepper Pike, Ohio 44124

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