

Focus on Phelps from Mayor James E. Cheney

October 2009

HARVEST FESTIVAL



On **October 24th from 1:00 – 3:00**, the Phelps Community Center, with the help of Youth, Parks & Recreation and several other community organizations, will be hosting the annual Phelps Harvest Festival. Thanks to all who are involved. It's always a great community event. Most of the activities are free. They're trying to make this one bigger and better than ever. So, stop by and have some good, clean community fun.

FALL LEAF PICKUP

The Village crew will be out during the months of October and November picking up bagged leaves. Please watch the Merchandiser for more details and follow the guidelines. Because they are busy, they might not get around every week. The week of Thanksgiving is the last week we will be picking up for this season.



FRANKLIN STREET

The Franklin Street water line project is about to get started. We will replace the water line this year and patch up the street for the winter. After everything has had a chance to settle, we will pave the street next year.

TRANSFER STATION

The ramps to the transfer station will be paved soon also. Given the grade of these ramps, we want to make sure we get them done before winter to make them safer for users.

HALLOWEEN PARADE

We will again be having our annual Halloween Parade on Saturday, October 31st before Trick-or-Treating. We will gather at 5:30 in the parking lot behind the Phelps Hotel and parade down Main Street to the Community Center, where we'll have cider and doughnuts and judge the costumes. Trick-or-treating will begin at 6:00 pm



**START PLANNING NOW FOR THE PHELPS
CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING**



Many organizations are working together to bolster our annual Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration. This year it will be held on December 5th. **The reason for telling you about it now is so that you can start planning your entry in our LIGHT PARADE.**

Instead of just meeting at the tree to light it, we are going to bring the light to the tree. We did this last year for the first time and it was a lot of fun.

The parade will begin at 5:30 and proceed to the tree. You can decorate yourselves and join the parade or you can decorate a vehicle or make a float that is lit up. Everything in the parade has to be lit up. We are encouraging as many businesses, organizations and families to participate as possible. You might dress your family up as a choir of angels and carry battery operated lights or you might use a power converter in your car to put lights all over your car and make it look like its floating down the street. Be creative and have fun! This is about having fun as a community!

ARTS CENTER

In case you haven't noticed them yet, be on the lookout for sculptures around the Village. The Phelps Arts Center is putting them on display throughout the Village in an effort to share more of the work of local artists with the community. There is a small horse at the Community Center and a farmer at the Howe House. See how many more you notice.

Willie, the statue of the little boy holding a flag, is not part of the Arts Center collection. He is a hobby of Carl Peake, one of our longtime village employees. Carl moves him around to different places to keep people guessing where he'll show up next, just for some fun.

PHELPS COMMUNITY CENTER

We will be installing new doors at the Community Center to help secure the building better. We are also working with the PCC facility committee and the Preston Foundation on improving the heating and air conditioning system.

The Community Center, as do all community organizations, depends on volunteers to operate. Anyone interested in helping them or has suggestions for new programs or services that you would like to see offered, should contact them at 548-8484.

Consider helping any of our community groups!

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Historical Society is looking into the possibility of returning an original millstone to Phelps. The stone made its way to Canada when a local family moved

and took it with them. That family would like to see it returned to Phelps. If they're able to work it out, it will sit in the little park above the falls. Keep watching.

LIFE IN THE FINGER LAKES

If you missed it, Phelps was written up in the Life in the Finger Lakes magazine. The article focused on the efforts of our local community to keep growing and getting better in spite of the current economy. It is nice to see the efforts of so many people recognized.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Phelps Sauerkraut again gained us national recognition. Several newspapers, including the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post, picked up on an article written about the Festival. The writer cited the Festival as an example of small towns and their efforts to combat the economic downturn. It was an interesting perspective on our annual tradition.

DOWNTOWN

Unless you don't travel through our downtown, you can't help but notice the painting project that the Phelps Business Development & Tourism Council undertook this year, with support from the Preston Foundation. The cooperation of the businesses and building owners has been terrific.

Each building owner has been asked to make certain improvements or modifications to their building in order to receive the painting. It is an impressive way to leverage grant money into more permanent improvements beyond just a paint job. Jesse Sheckler has acted as the clerk of the works on the project and done a great job. The expectation is that the remainder of the buildings will be completed next year.

Last year, in the October newsletter, I wrote about my fear for our local businesses. Unfortunately, they proved to be well founded. We lost several businesses from our community this summer. Thankfully, there is activity starting again. Many storefronts are filling. Please support these businesses.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Village Planning Board is revising much of our zoning codes in attempt to make it clearer, with better definitions. Hopefully, this will make the process easier for residents and businesses. While certain regulations are important to keep the character of our community intact, it shouldn't be a hindrance to development or improvements. Keep watching for details on these important changes

BRIDGE TO THE SCHOOL

I am working with a few people from the community and the school district to build a bridge between the two. With all the schools moving to the campus, many of us felt that the connection between the two was not strong enough.

The quality of a school district is very important to the perception of the quality of an entire community. For families, the community and the school district to raise productive, responsible adults, we have to work together and deliver a consistent message to our children.

The school district has terrific facilities and does a great job educating our children. Unfortunately, more and more, they also end up teaching children about hard work, responsibility and pride. If that message is not the same that they receive at home or in their community, it gets lost. So, we're working to do our part to make sure they'll receive it in our community.

One of the initial projects we're working on and you will be hearing more about (and asking for your assistance in) is a work-study program. Not all high schoolers are great students. The thinking is that if we can get them out of the classroom and into the working world, they'll learn more from a mentor than from a teacher. Past experiences by those involved have proven that these teenagers also become better students because they have to keep their grades up in order to participate in the program. They also tend to be better citizens, avoiding problematic behaviors.

At some point, as we better solidify our plans, we will involve more of the community in this project to get more ideas.

The overall theme of this project is to Celebrate Success. Success is defined differently for different people. We want to let all our children know that we're proud of them every time they're successful, whether it be in sports, academics or another interest.