

Ask the Mayor – November 2006

There has been a change in the plan for the Saturday Cleanup Day scheduled for **NOVEMBER 11TH, 12TH @ 10AM – 3PM.** We had planned to work the Courthouse Hill area, but because of the wonderful work by the Building a Better Bridgeton group on October 21, that neighborhood is looking spic and span. So we are going to tackle something a little different – the abandoned gas station at the intersection of Irving and East Avenues.

That building has been deteriorating for years. The property is full of debris; the building itself is covered with graffiti. What we plan to do over that weekend is Day 1 haul away the trash, clean the property, we'll put on a coat of primer paint on it and let it dry over night. Day 2 Councilwoman Celeste Riley and a group of volunteer artists will put on the finish coats of paint. If weather cooperates, by the end of weekend we will have cleaned up an awful eyesore.

On another note, we're looking for adult men & women to form an adult basketball league. We hope to have two divisions, 19 to 25 and 26 to 34. We've arranging to have the use of the school courts. Call Recreation Dept. @ 451-8840 and let's see if there is enough interest to support a league. I want names, phone # and addresses before December 15th, the start date of the league will be the first full week in January.

The recent mauling of a 12-year-old by a pit bull disturbs everyone. Different plans for dealing with the problem have been proposed. But here's one thing we can all do right now that doesn't require any new laws or ordinances. If you know of a dog that is not registered or one who is being abused or if you suspect someone is raising or training dogs to be used for fighting – call the police! You don't have to give your name. And your phone call might prevent another child from being attacked.

This is the month of Thanksgiving. With all the problems our town is facing, we still have much to be thankful for. I have been overwhelmed by the spirit of volunteerism from every neighborhood in all the cleanup events this fall. Folks are coming out to the city council meetings with constructive criticisms, new ideas and offers of help. Community organizations are forming to address problems.

I remember a poster I used to see in a church basement. "Don't pray for an easy life," it said. "Pray to be a strong person." We don't have it easy here in Bridgeton – we have lots of problems. But we have lots of strong people willing to take them on. And for that, I am very thankful.