

# Citylines

Southgate, Kentucky – City of Friendly Homes

July 2009 - Vol. 6, No. 2



### City Administration:

Mayor:	Jim Hamberg
Community Events & Ballfield:	Ron Bertsch
Finance:	Howard Bittner
Public Safety:	Virgil Miller
Blight & Safety:	Gene Blanchet
Public Works & Waste:	Dan Speier
Public Buildings, Parks & Recreation:	Chris Robisch
City Attorney:	Mary Ann Stewart
City Treasurer:	Don Berkemeyer 441-0075
Police: Chief	Carl Mullen
Asst. Chief	Mike Hall 441-0927
Fire Chief:	John Beatsch 441-1422
Public Works:	Arvil Bowman 441-8009
City Clerk:	Jody Anderson 441-0075



**Fire chief John Beatsch, Mayor Hamberg and former fire chief and special advisor Ray Muench during the groundbreaking ceremony for the new firehouse held immediately following the Memorial Day Parade.**

## A message from the Mayor



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implement a workable plan after the 2007 ballot; find ways to cut additional costs and, reduce the burden on the taxpayers as much as possible

As you know we began this process with a \$2.2 million dollar building which was turned away by the voters in November 2007. We went back to the drawing board shortly after the first of the year in 2008 and developed a new plan for a steel frame building at a projected cost of \$1,380,000. Again, we had the building plans ready for another vote in November 2008 and it was a success. Thanks again to all who voted for this project.

I am here to let you know that after estimated costs and our contingency we took a loan for \$1,280,000, saving an additional \$100,000. Further, the type of financing we secured was somewhat creative in that it has not been

As you can see, the new firehouse is well on its way and headed for completion in late November or early December of this year. Thanks again for all who voted for this well needed project. We are looking forward to getting the 50,000 pounds of excess weight off of the current fire bay floor. Be on the lookout for the dedication ceremonies towards the end of the year.

I wanted to let you know that the City and Fire Department Building Committees worked diligently to develop and

*(Continued on page 3)*



## Code Enforcement Update

In the spring of 2008 the City of Southgate initiated a blight program to ensure the public health, safety and welfare of the residents. The city issued 130 violations in 2008. The program was off to a successful start but was stalled last October when the previous Code Enforcement Officer left for another position.

The program restarted in April '09. There were 30 unresolved violations from 2008, all of these properties have been re-inspected and new violations and/or citations issued on those properties that continue to be in violation of the city's codes. Forty eight new violations have been issued since the program restarted. Normal working hours for our new Code Enforcement Officer are Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Property maintenance violations can be reported in person Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the city building, by phone at 441-0075 or e-mail at [codeofficer@southgateky.org](mailto:codeofficer@southgateky.org)

The objective of code enforcement is to obtain voluntary compliance. Prosecuting a code violation is the least efficient way to guarantee an improved community and is always a last resort; however repeated and deliberate violations must be corrected by legal action. Code enforcement programs achieve not only

their primary goals of improved health, safety and welfare of the community, but are utilized to enhance other programs and efforts such as historic preservation, rehabilitation and revitalization. Keeping neighborhoods neat and attractive benefits all citizens through stable property values. Such efforts are particularly vital to the aging areas of Southgate. Aggressive code enforcement is imperative to help allow those neighborhoods to age gracefully as predominantly owner-occupied dwellings. A wide range of issues can affect our environment, health, safety, property values, and general well being. Community preservation and improvement are now recognized by most government leaders as necessary to halt or reverse the deterioration of our surroundings.

The city is committed to this effort and confident the City of Southgate will continue to be a vibrant and stable community to live, play and work. Most homeowners in the city do a terrific job of maintaining their homes and property, the city and your neighbors appreciate your hard work and effort. Keep up your good works!

We would like to thank Steve Bridewell for serving as Chair on the Code Enforcement Appeals Board this past year. The city is currently looking for interested members to serve on this Board. If you are interested please e-mail or send a short resume to the City Clerk. (e-mail: [clerk@southgateky.org](mailto:clerk@southgateky.org))

## Southgate Hosts NKY Fire Olympics...

On Saturday July 11, the Southgate Volunteer Fire Department hosted the Northern Kentucky Firefighter Olympics at the Southgate Community Center. This event was the qualifier for the Kentucky State Fire Olympics held in August at the state fire convention. The Olympics test the skills of firefighter and explorer teams in five events involving various firefighting skills. The Southgate Fire Department has won the state Olympics on three occasions in the last 23 years.



**The McIntosh children from Southgate proudly display the tree they planted from the Arbor Day Celebration sponsored by the Southgate Park and Tree Board. Pictured left to right are Henry, Sophia and Ethan.**

## News from Southgate Independent School District

*by Jim Palm, Superintendent*

The Southgate Independent School District was recently recognized by the Interim Education Commissioner as being an "Exemplary Growth District" in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Our school has met or exceeded the goals set in No Child Left Behind Act by the Federal Government and met or exceeded the CATS assessment goals set by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. During the 2007-08 biennium the school was ranked 14 out of 174 school districts in the Commonwealth with an assessment score of 90.6. These goals were reached by hard work of our students, staff and teachers with the support of our parents and community. This recent recognition is just one indication of the quality work taking place at "Your Southgate Public School".

***Southgate Super Seniors meet every third Thursday at the Southgate Community Center at 12 noon. New members welcome. Call Clayton "Bud" Chalk at 441-6590 for further information***

**Property owners of Southgate - do you check your insurance bill when you receive it?**

PLEASE check to make sure that you are paying Southgate tax versus Newport or Wilder tax. If Newport shows on your invoice, PLEASE call your insurance company and ask them to make sure Southgate is the city receiving your money.

We have also received calls from residents whose car taxes had the wrong city listed on their notices. It is a good practice to take an extra moment to look over any invoice that could possibly have a "city" tax. We appreciate your efforts in helping the city.

If you have any questions or comments regarding Insurance Premium or other taxes please contact the city clerk's office at 441-0075.

## *A message from the Mayor* (continued from page 1)

accomplished in Kentucky since the TANK tax some 20 years ago. As another saving measure, we also were able to take our variable rate loan and fix it for 25 years at a lower rate (using today's rates) in order for future City Councils to be able to properly budget for the annual assessed amount. This is yet another savings to the taxpayers.



I want to take this opportunity to thank you as well as the Southgate Volunteer Fire Department's Building Committee headed up by Chief John Beatsch and with members Steve Rath, Mike Watson, Greg Muench, Marcus Muench and Monica Rath. I also want to thank the City's Building Committee which includes: Chairman Chris Robisch, Co-Chairs - Gene Blanchet and Dan Speier, for their diligence as well. We persevered and tackled the obstacles one by one in order to bring this project to where it is today and we are looking forward to a successful completion. This truly was a collaborative effort.

It is important for you to know that we did try to get the new firehouse included in the President's Stimulus Package. We did everything right at the beginning of the year to have our project included.

However, due to the federal government taking so long to process the criteria for qualification, we no longer qualify for the Stimulus money. What we found was the grant process was a competitive grant for the "entire United States" for \$210 million dollars. I need not tell you that one New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami or Dallas fire house from part or a sum of these cities and we would not have seen a penny, even if we did qualify for the grant. I sent a letter to Congressman Davis and Senators McConnell and Bunning

informing them of this unfortunate action and voicing my displeasure with the process.

John Lauber our new Blight Officer, is performing an admirable job for our City. John works with the residents and businesses to try to find a workable solution for the violations he finds. He identifies and cites residents and businesses as a last resort. Our City looks much nicer and we appreciate all of you who have taken time to clean up your yard, paint, renovate and landscape your property. Please do not hesitate to call John if you see a property which needs some help. He can be reached by calling the City office at 441-0075.

Representative Keene and I had a conversation in the early part of the year regarding what road projects we may be able to obtain help with over the next year or two from the State. I immediately mentioned resurfacing the north end of Linden Avenue. The Representative was able to secure these funds for us. However, the Commonwealth has yet to issue bonds to pay for this street project. In discussion with the Commonwealth, we found that bonds may be let until the 2009/10 or 2010/11 fiscal year. Estimated cost of the project is nearly \$250,000 in today's dollars. It is possible that Council may approve beginning this project by taking down trees which are invading the street and curbs. We will keep you posted on this most needed project. I am hoping to resurface other areas of the City with the remaining funds from this project.

Thanks to Council Member Dan Speier who was able to secure a grant to renovate the playground equipment at the Community Center for \$5,000.

No doubt, you are well aware of the Highland Heights-Southgate Police officers who have been cruising our City. As you know, the cities of Highland Heights and Southgate merged our police departments at the first of the year. The officers, many of whom are former Southgate officers, are doing a fine job for us. Be sure to wave or stop the officers so they get to know you and your family whenever you see them on your street.

I am working with the Northern Kentucky Area Development District and the cities of Highland Heights, Fort Thomas and Newport to perform an economic development impact study on the US27 corridor from I-471 to Third Street in Newport. I am hopeful this study will inform us of the potential economic impact that this corridor can bring to our City in the years to come.

Council approved the budget for 2009/10 on June 24. As part of this new budget, and for the first time since 2005, City Clerk Jody Anderson will have our Ordinances codified and brought up to date. Also, Public Works Forman Arvil Bowman and his crew will be working in various areas of the City making continuous improvements.

Finally, we applied for a "Safe Routes to School" grant in early April of this year. This grant will provide sidewalks from Temple Place to Mook Road on the west side of US27. The amount of this grant is \$250,000. We are looking to receive an answer on our application sometime in mid-late July.

Thanks for taking time to read this article. As you can see, we've been very busy for you and our City. We will continue to move ahead in the hope of increasing the quality of life for you, your family and all of us in Southgate.

Jim Hamberg, Mayor



**CONGRATULATIONS  
PARK & TREE  
BOARD!**

4th consecutive year of "Tree City  
USA Growth Award" recognition by  
The Arbor Day Foundation



*1st Annual*  
**City-wide  
Yard Sale!**  
Saturday, September 12th  
8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Obtain your permit at the City Building, the fee is a contribution of a non-perishable food item. Join your City's efforts to aid families in our area. Call 441-0075 for permit information.

**REMINDER...**

Trash/waste cans may not be put out prior to dusk the day before waste pickup, and should be off the street by dusk the day of pickup.

We have recently had problems with residents placing trash curbside over the weekend and as many as 2-3 days before the collection day (Tuesday). It is the responsibility of the property owner to see that trash is put out and cans put back during the regulated hours. You may be cited for this violation and it makes the city untidy. If it rains or we have winds then the whole city is affected. PLEASE - keep your trash cans in your yard until Monday evening. Thank you for cooperation in this matter.

**NORTHERN  
KENTUCKY  
SOLID WASTE  
RESOURCE GUIDE**


Visit [www.campbellcounty.ky.gov/county\\_services/](http://www.campbellcounty.ky.gov/county_services/); click on "Solid Waste", then click on "NKWMA Resource Guide 2009. Information on recycling household hazardous waste & more.

**Park and Tree Board Recognition**



The Southgate Park and Tree Board awarded their July "Green Thumb Award" to Christine and Jason Boberg of Valley View Terrace. Congratulations and thanks for helping make our city beautiful.

May - Jeff Strickly of Center Street  
June - Mr. & Mrs. Wagner of Electric Avenue



**Citizens Bank**  
*of Northern Kentucky*

*The Bank That's Just Right...For You!  
Is Getting Better*

<b>Newport</b> 572-2660	<b>Bellevue</b> 491-5510	<b>Alexandria</b> 635-0777
<b>Ft. Thomas</b> 442-7600	<b>Florence</b> 384-5420	<b>Independence</b> 363-4470
<b>Highland Heights</b> 442-8220	<b>Crestview Hills Town Center</b> 363-4490	

[www.cbnkcc.com](http://www.cbnkcc.com)

**FDIC** **LENDER**