



*“It Just Makes Sense”*

Gerald F. Schnepf, Executive Director

January - 2007

## **”New Years Resolution for a More Beautiful Iowa” The Fort Dodge Example!**

Resolution time! Most of us have the best of intentions on our minds as we prepare our list of resolutions for the 2007. The worst case is someone that makes no resolutions. The following is a suggestion to add at the beginning of your list (or to take on if you normally do not make resolutions) – the resolve to help make Iowa a cleaner and more attractive State. Make it the first resolution and for some it may be the only resolution.

One community group that has made this resolution is the Fort Dodge volunteer group called **Pride In Community Appearance (PICA)**. A volunteer program organized by a local couple and widely supported locally. The volunteers meet twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday for two (2) hours, 9:00 – 11:00 AM. They select improvement projects at city parks and on public property. After the first hour, they take a break to “smell the roses”, have a cup of coffee, cookie or soft drink and socialize for awhile.

The group usually meets mid April through mid November. The beauty of the program is that it allows the volunteer to come whenever they have the time. Most of the volunteers are retired, but youth, teachers and others are also involved in the program.

Jan and Phyllis Wilson have been instrumental in the program. The results include some wonderful side benefits: making new friends, having fun and making positive improvements to their community.



The “Before” Picture!



The “After” Picture!

This sign is in a community park in Fort Dodge. “The brick for the edging around the sign was found near the white barrier on the left side of the after picture). What a positive change can be made by using nearby resources. One of the volunteer couples repainted the sign. Inside the brick edging, Crocus and Tulip bulbs were planted. Also, in the “after” picture, notice the repainted black railing along the steps, the trees were trimmed and mulched, the road barrier at the end of the street and posts were painted white.”

Jan and Phyllis first got the idea for **PICA** while volunteering for a Texas State Park during the winter months. They thought – “we are volunteering for a Texas Park during the winter, why not volunteer for our Community during Spring through Fall”, thus the birth of **PICA**.

What a great example of a resolution for the sharing of time and talent in the improvement of your community. We know there are other similar groups around Iowa. Follow PICA’s lead and set up your own special volunteer community enhancement program in your community.

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**See you in the next column.**

**Helping to Keep Iowa Beautiful**