



City of Bluff City
Mayor Percy J. Brown

Office of the Mayor

City Hall / 100 Broad Avenue
Bluff City, Ohio

July 31, 2007

Dear Bluff City Citizens:

Can you believe that July is already over?! Whew, what a month! First off, allow me to thank all of you who attended this year's Red, White, & Bang July Fourth fireworks celebration! Your understanding and cooperation during the celebration and subsequent fire kept the event from turning into a complete tragedy, despite the panicked stampede and near riot.

Fortunately, most spectators followed Police Department commands to disperse in an orderly fashion. However, there were some people who did not disperse and those people were forcibly pepper sprayed by police. I still support the police chief's decision to use pepper spray. And I also formally apologize to the forty-seven members of the Bluff City Deaf Club who were attending the Red, White, & Bang event and were mistakenly pepper sprayed by police when they did not respond to orders to disperse. Rest assured the city will cover all medical bills related to the pepper spray.

While the police use of force may sound extreme, please understand that we had to quickly clear out civilians and get Fire Department personnel into the Riverfront Warehouse District to battle the blazes before everything was lost. Fortunately, only seven warehouses were destroyed, including the Bluff City Supply Warehouse. Also fortunate was the fact that no lives were lost and – most importantly – the Chapatalulah Riverfront casino was completely spared! The gaming goes on!

The fish kill from the burning river, however, was most unfortunate. Our Refuse Collection crews spent the following three days cleaning up the charred fish remains from the riverfront area. And all charred fish remains that were deemed edible were donated to the Bluff City Homeless Shelter.

The fireworks explosions and subsequent fire appear to have been caused by careless manual ignition by the fireworks contractor, Snigbloggen's Explosive Entertainment. Evidently, modern fireworks contractors utilize electronic ignition of their fireworks. Snigbloggen's utilized manual ignition (a man running around with a box of matches), which obviously invites greater risks and danger, as evidenced by our still smoldering riverfront. The official arson investigation stated that the Snigbloggen chief igniter accidentally knocked over a stand of lighted fireworks which subsequently blew up, igniting the whole cache of fireworks. The cascading chain of explosions from the fireworks cache then ignited the neighboring warehouses. The fire quickly spread to other nearby warehouses and then the river. The Fire Chief remarked that "it looks like Hell. Literally." Then he was trampled in the spectator stampede.

But rest assured we will incorporate this riverfront blight into our Bluff City Downtown Master Development Plan! I guarantee that we will not be remembered as "The Town That Looked Like Hell!", as labeled by the Bluff City Squealer. I have a great idea for that area – an urban, upscale shopping mall! We'll call it "Bluff City Riverfront Memorial Mall"! It will be fantastic! It will be my legacy!

We'll be holding a "Supply Drive" next week at Bluff City city hall. We're calling on you, our loyal citizens, to donate much needed pens and paper for your local government! See you there!

Sincerely,
Percy J. Brown
Your Honorable Mayor