Exploring Social Collaboration

In Chapter 8, Exploring Communities, we added custom portlets to communities of the neighborhood site. The neighbors can talk online and play videos games at the site. In this bonus chapter, we will populate the neighborhood organizations and communities with the collaborative portlets, which include the following portlets:

- Wikis
- Message boards
- Blogs
- Calendars

These portlets enrich the neighbors' online social lives.

Introducing the Wiki portlet

We will first talk about the **Wiki** portlet. This portlet is for the creation and management of wiki articles. A wiki article, also called a **wiki**, is created with a What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get (WYSIWYG) editor and is typically used collaboratively by multiple users. This means that, with proper permissions, multiple users can change, add, or delete content in a wiki.

The **Wiki** portlet provides two formats for wiki creation: Creole and Hypertext Markup Language (HTML). The Creole format uses the WikiCreole syntax.

The default view of the **Wiki** portlet for the portal administrator is as follows:
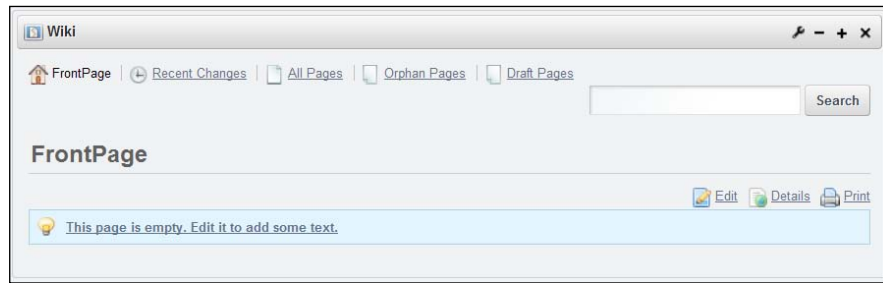
Crawling the Wiki portlet

On the default view of the **Wiki** portlet for the portal administrator, the following links are present on top of the page:

- ◆ **FrontPage**—This is the default page of the **Wiki** portlet. A user will create the first wiki article on this page.
- ◆ **Recent Changes**—This link shows the wikis created or updated in the past few days.
- ◆ **All Pages**—This shows all the wiki articles, including the wiki created on the **FrontPage**.
- ◆ **Orphan Pages**—This link shows the wiki pages that do not have a parent. The **FrontPage** is an orphan page.
- ◆ **Draft Pages**—This link shows the wiki articles that have been saved as drafts.

The default view also contains a **Search** button. A user can enter a keyword in the **Search** input box and click on the **Search** button. The **Wiki** portlet will search in the title and content of the wikis for that keyword. The wikis that contain this keyword will be displayed in a list.

There are also the following links at the bottom of the portlet:

- ◆ **Edit**
- ◆ **Details**
- ◆ **Print**
- ◆ **This page is empty. Edit it to add some text**

The **Edit** link is used to create a new wiki or update an existing one. When a user clicks on the **Edit** link, he will come to the wiki creation page. A screenshot of the page is as follows:

Under the **Content** tab, the user can see the version and status of the wiki to be created. He can also find the following buttons and links:

◆ **Format**—This is a selection input box. A user can choose the syntax for the wiki here.

◆ A textarea input box—The user uses the Creole or HTML format to enter the content of the wiki here.

◆ **Categories**—By clicking on the **Select** button for **Categories**, the user can select a category for this wiki.

◆ **Tags**—The user can input a tag value and click on the **Add** button; he can click on the **Select** button to choose from the tags created in the tag portlet for this community; he can click on the **Suggestions** button to find the suggested tags for this wiki.

◆ **Summary**—The user types in a summary of the wiki.

- ◆ **Minor edit** checkbox—The user can enable this checkbox when he modifies a wiki.
- ◆ **Save as Draft**—The wiki will be saved as a draft.
- ◆ **Publish**—Approve the wiki and make it viewable to other users.
- ◆ **Preview**—Preview the wiki just created.
- ◆ **Cancel**—Discard all changes.

On the same wiki creation page, the **Details** tab will show the information about the wiki:

- ◆ **Title**—The wiki page name.
- ◆ **Format**—Creole or HTML.
- ◆ **Latest Version**—For example, 1.7.
- ◆ **Created By**—Author of the wiki and creation date.
- ◆ **Last Changed by**—Editor of the wiki and edit date.
- ◆ **Attachments**—Files attached to the wiki.
- ◆ **Convert To**—You can click on the links on the left-hand side of this line to convert the wiki article to Word, ODT, PDF, RTF, SXW, and TXT formats, if the portal administrator has already configured the Liferay Portal instance for document conversion.
- ◆ **RSS Subscription**—A user can click on the links to add this wiki as feed in his browser. He can choose to use the Atom 1.0, RSS 1.0, or RSS 2.0 formats.
- ◆ **Email Subscription**—If a user clicks on the links, he will receive an e-mail about any future change of the wiki.
- ◆ **Advanced Actions**—The user can set permissions for this wiki, copy, move, or delete this wiki.

The **History** tab will show all the versions of this wiki; the previous versions are not lost, which facilitates collaboration between different users on the same wiki article. This tab provides a checkbox for each version and a **Compare Versions** button for the user to compare two versions of the wiki. There is also a **Revert** link on the right-hand side of each version for the user to revert to the previous version.

On the same wiki creation page, the **Incoming Links** tab shows URLs of pages that have a link to this wiki. The **Outgoing Links** tab shows links in this wiki that point to other pages.

Under the **Attachments** tab, there is an **Add Attachments** button; a user can click on this button to add attachments to this wiki. This tab also shows a list of files that are attached to this wiki.

Now, we go back to the **FrontPage**. The **Details** link to the right of the **Edit** link points to the **Details** tab on the wiki creation page, which we have already talked about.

The user can print the wiki by clicking on the **Print** link.

Configuring the Wiki portlet

The **Wiki** portlet can be configured by the portal administrator both in the portlet title bar and in the **Control Panel**.

Configuration in the title bar

The portal administrator can click on the wrench-shaped icon on the portlet title bar and click on **Configuration** to configure the **Wiki** portlet. The following is the configuration screen:
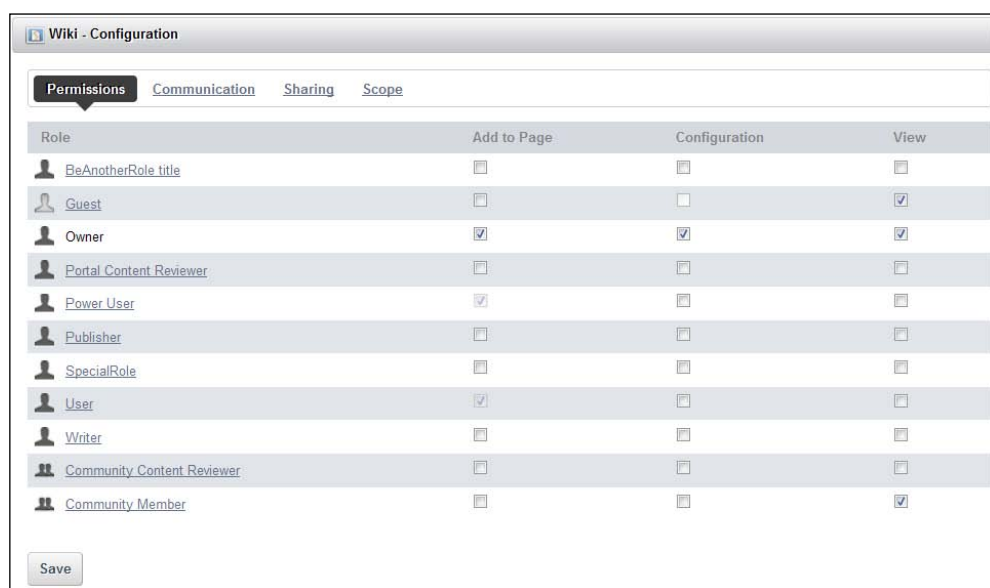
On this screen, there are four tabs:

- ◆ **Permissions**
- ◆ **Communications**
- ◆ **Sharing**
- ◆ **Scope**

The **Permissions** tab shows the privileges for all the regular roles. By default, the **Owner** (that is, the creator of the organization or community, which is the portal administrator in our case) has the following privileges:

- ◆ **Add to Page**—Add the **Wiki** portlet to a page
- ◆ **Configuration**—Configure the **Wiki** portlet
- ◆ **View**

The **Guest** and **Organization Member** roles have the **View** privilege while the **Power User** and **User** roles have the **Add to Page** privilege.

The **Communication** tab shows the render parameters that are used for communication between the portlets. The following parameters are listed:

- ◆ **categoryId**
- ◆ **nodeId**
- ◆ **tag**
- ◆ **title**

How can these parameters be used? Suppose that a **Wiki** portlet, which has a category ID, a node ID, a tag, and a title, is on a portal page. You want to refer to this **Wiki** portlet in a piece of content on another page. You can add a link in that piece of content, whose Uniform Resource Locator (URL) is for the **Wiki** portlet page. In that URL, you also add the **categoryId**, **nodeId**, **tag**, and **title** parameters and their values for that **Wiki** portlet. When a user clicks on that link, he will directly come to the page which the **Wiki** portlet is on. In this way, another piece of content can communicate with the **Wiki** portlet.

The portal administrator can enable a checkbox for a certain parameter in the **Ignore** column and click on the **Save** button. After that, the **Wiki** portlet application will ignore that parameter when it is generating content for the calling request.

The **Sharing** tab shows the following five sub-tabs:

- ◆ **Any Website**
- ◆ **Facebook**
- ◆ **Google Gadget**
- ◆ **Netvibes**
- ◆ **Friends**

This configuration is for sharing the **Wiki** portlet on other web sites. When the **Wiki** portlet is presented on a web page on another site, it is called a **web widget**. A web widget is a standalone application that can be embedded by a user into a page on a separate site, where he has rights of authorship.

The **Any Website** sub-tab shows the following code:

```
<script src="http://neiborhood.cignexc.com/html/js/liferay/widget.js"
type="text/javascript"></script>
<script type="text/javascript">
  Liferay.Widget({ url: 'http://neiborhood.cignexc.com/widget/group/
neighbors-congress/proposed-bills/-/wiki'});
</script>
```

This means that a user on another website can paste the preceding code to a web page on his site. When that web page is loaded, the browser fetches the `widget.js` file at the Neighborhood site. It runs the `Liferay.Widget` function, which is defined in the `widget.js` file. That `Liferay.Widget` function will fire the `http://neiborhood.cignexc.com/widget/group/neighbors-congress/proposed-bills/-/wiki` URL. When the Liferay Portal receives this URL request, it knows that a separate site is asking for the HTML markup for the **Wiki** portlet as a widget. Liferay Portal checks the permission for this widget request. If the permission has been granted, Liferay Portal sends the HTML markup. The browser receives the HTML markup for the widget and renders it on the web page of the other site.

As you can see in the code, the URL serves as an agreement between the Liferay Portal site and the client site. This agreement is like the protocol of Web Service for Remote Portlets (WSRP).

How is the permission granted? The **Any Websites** sub-tab also includes an **Allow users to add Wiki to any website** checkbox. If the portal administrator checks this checkbox and saves the configuration, the permission is granted.

The **Facebook** sub-tab shows an **API Key** input box and a **Canvas Page URL** input box. The portal administrator needs to apply for an API key and a canvas page URL at the Facebook site. Then he can paste both values in the two input boxes respectively and save the settings. After that, a Facebook site user can embed the URL in his Facebook page and access this **Wiki** portlet.

Under the **Google Gadget** sub-tab, a different URL is provided with an **Allow users to add Wiki to iGoogle** checkbox. The portal administrator can check this checkbox and save the configuration to allow this **Wiki** portlet to be accessed at the iGoogle site.

The **Netvibes** sub-tab shows a Netvibes widget URL that can be embedded in a Netvibes web page. The portal administrator can check the **Allow users to add Wiki to Netvibes pages** checkbox and save the settings. After that this wiki portlet can be accessed at the Netvibes site.

Under the **Friends** sub-tab, the portal administrator can check the **Allow users to share Wiki with friends** checkbox and save the settings. In this way he allows the wiki portlet to be shared with friends.

There is also the **Scope** tab. The scope means the scope of data entered through the **Wiki** portlet. The default scope of the **Wiki** portlet is the community or organization where the portlet is added. This means that, if you add a wiki to the **Wiki** portlet on a page of a community, that wiki will be associated with that community—it belongs to that community. It will not show on a wiki portlet added in another community.

The portal administrator can change the scope to **Current Page** under the **Scope** tab.

Configuration in Control Panel

As we are going to add the **Wiki** portlet on the **Proposed Bills** private page of the **Neighbours Congress** organization, the portal administrator should first go to the **Proposed Bills** page before he configures the **Wiki** portlet in the **Control Panel**.

After the portal administrator goes to the **Control Panel**, he clicks on the **Wiki** link. The configuration items are different for the **Wiki** portlet in the **Control Panel**.

The portal administrator can click on the **Add Wiki** button to create a separate node of wikis. By default, Liferay Portal already has a node of **Main**. The **FrontPage** wiki belongs to the **Main** node. You can add multiple pages and their child pages in the **Main** node. If the portal administrator wants to add a separate wiki node, he can click on the **Add Wiki** button. He can then enter a name and a description of the wiki node. He sets the permissions for this thread and clicks on the **Save** button—a new node is created.

With the **Permissions** button, the portal administrator can grant the following privileges to all the regular roles:

- ◆ **Add Node**—Adds a new thread of wikis
- ◆ **Permissions**—Grants permissions to other users

By default, only the **Owner** has the preceding privileges. The **Owner** is the organization creator, which is the portal administrator in our case.

There is also an **Actions** button for each thread of wikis. If the portal administrator clicks on the **Actions** button, the following action links will show up:

◆ **Edit**—Changes the name and description of the thread.

◆ **Permissions**—Grants permissions to all regular roles. The permissions include **Add Attachment**, **Add Page**, **Delete**, **Import**, **Permissions**, **Subscribe**, **Update**, and **View**.

◆ **Import Pages**—Imports your wikis from other sites. Your wikis must be in a file of MediaWiki format.

◆ **RSS (Opens New Window)**—Adds this wiki node to your browser as a feed so that it will be updated automatically in the browser.

◆ **Subscribe**—After you subscribe, you will be notified by e-mail of any change in the wiki node.

◆ **Delete**—Deletes the wiki node.

The portal administrator can also click on the link of the node name to see the **All Pages** view, as we have talked about in the last section.

The default view of the wiki in the **Control Panel** also shows a wrench-shaped icon in the portlet title bar. When the portal administrator clicks on the icon, a configuration window will show up, with the following tabs:

◆ **Email From**—Allows the portal administrator to update the name and e-mail of the e-mail sender

◆ **Page Added Email**—This sets the subject, body, and signature of an e-mail sent to a user after a new wiki is added

◆ **Page Updated Email**—This specifies the subject, body, and signature of an e-mail sent to a user after a wiki is updated

◆ **Display Settings**—Wiki ratings, comments, comment ratings, and order of node display

◆ **RSS**—This specifies the maximum items to show for RSS and whether the full content, abstract, or title should be shown in the RSS

Using the Wiki portlet

We will use the **Wiki** portlet for the members of the **Neighbours Congress** organization.

Adding the Wiki portlet to a page

On the Neighborhood site, the **Neighbours Congress** organization has a private page named **Proposed Bills**. This page is for the **Neighbours Congress** members to post bills to be discussed and passed in the **Neighbours Congress**. Once a member creates a bill, other members can read it. They can update it, if they like. They can also add comments to discuss content of the bill. Through this process, it is hoped that the bill will satisfy most of the neighbors.

The **Wiki** portlet is the best application to serve this purpose. We will add the **Wiki** portlet to the **Proposed Bills** page of the **Neighbours Congress** organization.

Time for action – adding the Wiki portlet

Suppose that you have logged in as the portal administrator.

1. Go to the **Proposed Bills** page at `http://neiborhood.cignexc.com/group/neighbors-congress/proposed-bills`.

2. Change its page layout to **1 Column**.

3. Add the **Wiki** portlet onto the page:
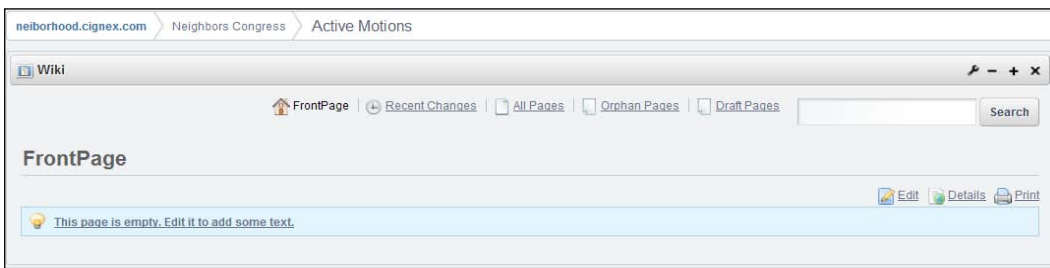
What just happened?

Congratulations! You have just started a platform for the members of the **Neighbours Congress** to create new bills.

The **FrontPage** is the default page of the **Wiki** portlet where you can add the first wiki article. By clicking on the **Edit** link, you can create a proposed bill to be reviewed by the **Neighbours Congress**.

The **Details** link shows the information about the **FrontPage**, including wikitext format, wiki article creator, file conversion options, and other tools.

Writing a wiki article

In our context, a bill is a wiki article. After this wiki article is created, the **Neighbours Congress** members will read, comment, and discuss it. When they think that it is good enough, they can submit the bill to the **Neighbours Congress** for readings.

Time for action – adding the Wiki portlet

Mary Smith is a member of **Neighbours Congress**. Mary Smith has an idea and she wants to create a bill for it. She goes to the Neighborhood site.

Suppose that you are Mary Smith.

1. Log in and go to the **Proposed Bills** page.

2. Click on the **Edit** link—this will lead to a page with a large input box on the left-hand side and the Creole syntax samples on the right-hand side.

3. Enter `==Neighbourhood Irrigation Act of 2011==` as the title of the bill in the input box.

4. Type in the body of the bill and click on **Publish**.

You will be returned to the **Proposed Bills** page, which is similar to the following screenshot:
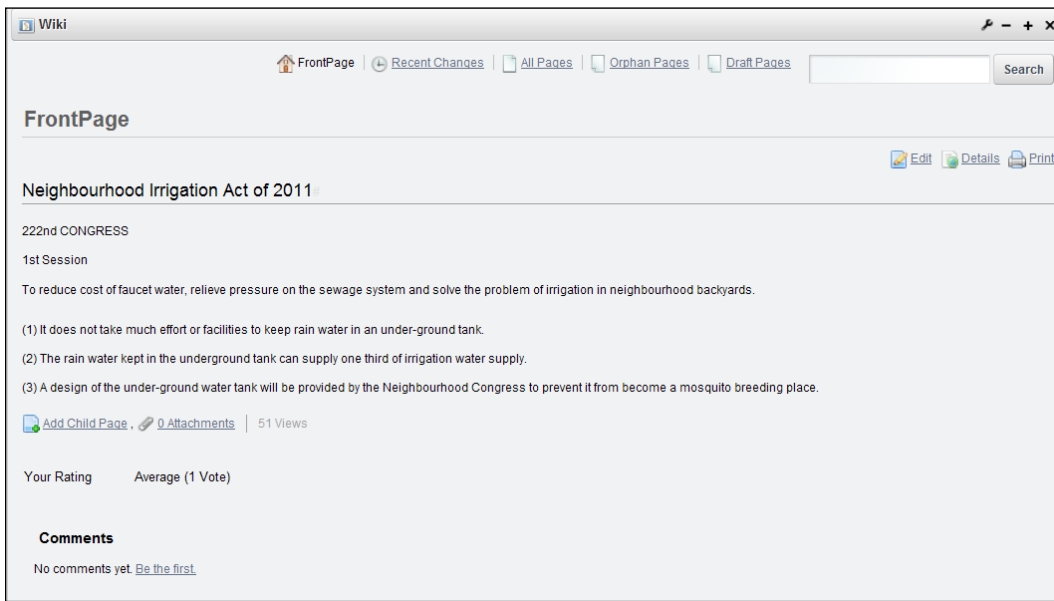
What just happened?

Mary Smith has just successfully created a bill about improving the irrigation system in the neighborhood. Now, other members of the **Neighbours Congress** organization can read this bill, update it, rate it, and add comments to it.

Pop quiz – multiple choice

Which of the following statements are true about the **Wiki** portlet?

    a.   You can search for a wiki article in the wiki portlet

    b.   The wiki portlet is managed through the Control Panel

    c.   A wiki article can be converted into a PDF file

    d.   All of the above

Have a go hero – doing more with the thing

A user with proper permissions can edit other people's wiki articles, which is a feature of the **Wiki** portlet.

Suppose that you are Henry Jones, who is a member of the **Neighbours Congress** organization. Log in and add the following content at the end of Section 3 of the Neighbourhood Irrigation Act:

(3) A design of the underground water tank will be provided by the **Neighbourhood Congress** to prevent it from becoming a mosquito breeding place.

Suppose that you would further suggest a specific solution to the mosquito problem. Add a child page to the Neighborhood Irrigation Act wiki. Name this child wiki as `Mosquito Prevention Act`.

Now you need to create a new bill for the **Neighbours Congress**. Try to add a separate wiki page on the **Wiki** portlet.

Introducing the Message Boards portlet

The **Message Boards** portlet allows a user to create a message. The message can be a technical question, a proposal, or an idea. Other users read this message. They comment on it. They may either support it or object to it. They may also try to add content to that message. In this way, they work collectively on the issue. The **Message Boards** portlet starts an online forum.

The default view of the **Message Boards** portlet for a portal administrator is as follows:
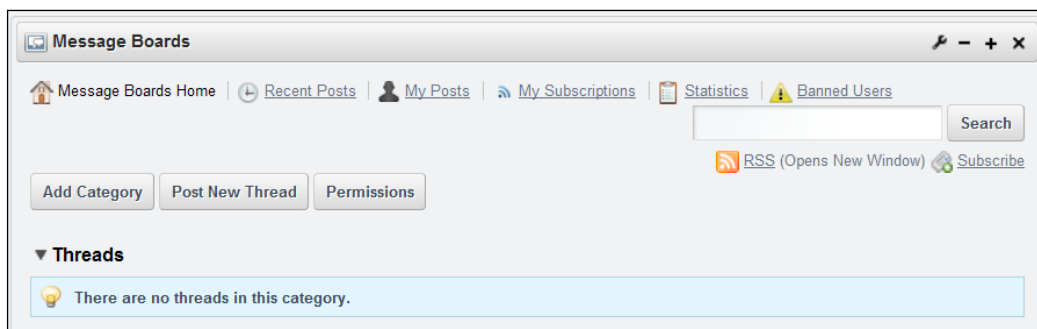
Crawling the Message Boards portlet

On the default view of the **Message Boards** portlet for the portal administrator, there are the following links:

- **Message Boards Home**—This is the default view. It is the interface for a user to add categories, post a message, or set up permissions.

- **Recent Posts**—This shows a list of the recently posted messages.

- **My Posts**—This displays a list of messages added by the logged-in user.

- **My Subscriptions**—This shows the categories and messages that the logged-in user has subscribed to.

- **Statistics**—This shows the number of categories, posts, and participating users.

- **Banned Users**—This displays a list of users that have been banned from using the **Message Boards** portlet.

- **RSS**—RSS means Really Simple Syndication. This link is used to add the **Message Boards** portlet to the browser as a feed.

- **Subscribe**—When a logged-in user clicks on this link, he subscribes to the forum. He will be notified by e-mail of any change in this forum later.

There are also the following buttons on the default view of the **Message Boards** portlet:

- **Add Category**—Adds categories and sub-categories for grouping posted messages.

- **Post New Thread**—Creates a message.

- **Permissions**—Sets up permissions for regular roles. The permissions include **Add File**, **Add Message**, **Add Sub-category**, **Delete**, **Lock Thread**, **Move Thread**, **Permissions**, **Reply to Message**, **Subscribe**, **Update**, **Update Thread Priority**, and **View**.

◆ **Search**—Searches the title and body of the messages for keywords entered by a user.

Configuring the Message Boards portlet

The **Message Boards** portlet can be configured in two places: the portlet title bar and the **Control Panel**. The items for configuration in the **Control Panel** are the same as those in the **Message Boards** portlet.

When the portal administrator clicks on the wrench-shaped icon on the portlet title bar, he sees a pop-up window for configuration. It shows the following tabs:

◆ **Setup**

◆ **Permissions**

◆ **Sharing**

◆ **Scope**

The **Setup** tab contains the following sub-tabs:

◆ **General**—By default, anonymous posting, message flagging, and message ratings are enabled.

◆ **Email From**—This tab specifies the name and e-mail address of the e-mail sender, which are used in the e-mails to a forum user that notifies him of forum changes.

◆ **Message Added Email**—This tab is for configuring the subject, body, and signature of e-mails to a subscribed user of new messages.

◆ **Message Updated Email**—This tab is for setting up the subject, body, and signature of e-mails to a subscribed user of message updates.

◆ **Thread Priorities**—This tab is for changing the priority-level definition for the posted messages. By default, there are three priority levels: **Urgent**, **Sticky**, and **Announcement**.

◆ **User Ranks**—This tab contains user rank definitions related to the number of user posts. A new user is a youngling while a user with 25 posts is a Padawan.

◆ **RSS**—This tab is for specifying the maximum RSS items to display, the display style, and the RSS format.

The portal administrator uses the **Permissions** tab to grant the following privileges to regular roles in the portal:

◆ **Access in Control Panel**—Allows a user with this role to see the **Message Boards** portlet in the **Control Panel**.

◆ **Add to Page**—Allows a user with this role to add the **Message Boards** portlet to a page.

◆ **Configuration**—Allows a user with this role to see the configuration icon in the portlet title bar.

◆ **View**

The **Sharing** tab has the following sub-tabs:

◆ **Any Website**—This tab provides a snippet of code, which can be pasted to a web page of any other website. In this way, a user on that site can access the **Message Boards** portlet running on our site, provided that the portal administrator has enabled the **Allow users to add Message Boards to any website** checkbox and saved the settings.

◆ **Facebook**—The portal administrator needs to get an API key and a canvas page URL on the Facebook site to allow this **Message Boards** portlet to be accessible on the Facebook site).

◆ **Google Gadget**—The portal administrator needs to enable the **Allow users to add Message Boards to iGoogle** checkbox and save the configuration. After that, a user can paste the Google Gadget URL provided under this tab on a page of the iGoogle site and then access the **Message Boards** portlet there.

◆ **Netvibes**—The settings can enable access of the **Message Boards** portlet on the Netvibes site.

◆ **Friends**—This setting can be used to share the **Message Boards** portlet with friends.

The **Scope** tab is used to configure the scope of the data entered in the **Message Boards** portlet. The default scope is **Community** or **Organization**. The portal administrator can change it to **Current Page**, which means that the data entered through the **Message Boards** portlet on this page are only accessible on this page.

Using the Message Boards portlet

You can start a topic with the **Message Boards** portlet. After that, other users follow and provide answers or comments.

If you are a member of an organization, you can use the **Message Boards** portlet to do the following things:

◆ View recent posts

◆ Check your posts

◆ View the messages that you have subscribed to

◆ Check the statistics of the posts and categories

◆ View the message board categories

◆ Post a thread in a category and reply to a thread or post

◆ Search the **Message Boards** portlet for posts

Adding the Message Boards portlet to a page

When you add the **Message Boards** portlet onto a page, it will be scoped to that community or organization which the page belongs to. All the data generated with the **Message Boards** portlet will be scoped to that community or organization.

Time for action – adding the Message Boards portlet

Imagine that you are a member of the administrator role of Liferay Portal.

1. Log in and go to the **Your Opinions** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com/ group/neighbors-congress/your-opinions`.

2. Change the page layout to **2 Columns (70/30)**.

3. Add the **Message Boards** portlet onto the page.

4. You will see a portlet similar to the one shown in the following screenshot:
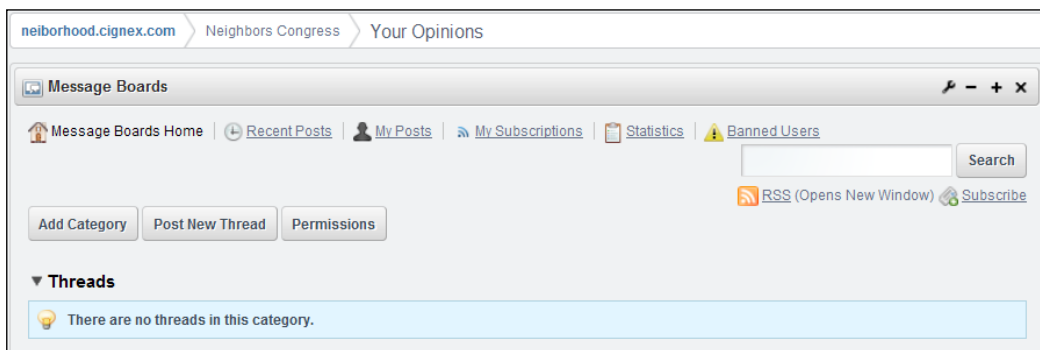
What just happened?

We set up a forum for the **Neighbours Congress** members to discuss neighborhood issues, share their worries, and receive advice and comfort.

Changing the configuration

We need to customize the configuration to allow the **Message Boards** portlet to serve as an organizational application. The change of configuration is done in the **Control Panel**.

Time for action – configuring the Message Boards portlet

Let us say that you are the portal administrator. To configure the **Message Boards** portlet:

1. Log in and go to the **Your Opinions** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com/ group/neighbors-congress/your-opinions`.

2. Go to the **Control Panel**.

3. Click on **Message Boards**.

4. Click on the **Permission** button.

5. Check **Add Message and Reply to Message** for **Organization Member**.

6. Click on the **Save** button.

Neighbors Congress

Role	Add Category	Add File	Add Message	Ban User	Move Thread	Lock Thread	Permissions	Reply to Message	Subscribe	Update Thread Priority
👤 BeAnotherRole title	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👤 Guest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👤 Owner	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
👤 Portal Content Reviewer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👤 Power User	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👤 Publisher	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👤 SpecialRole	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👤 User	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👤 Writer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👥 Organization Content Reviewer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
👥 Organization Member	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐

Save

What just happened?

You have just given a member of the **Neighbours Congress** permission to post a new thread and reply to an existing thread.
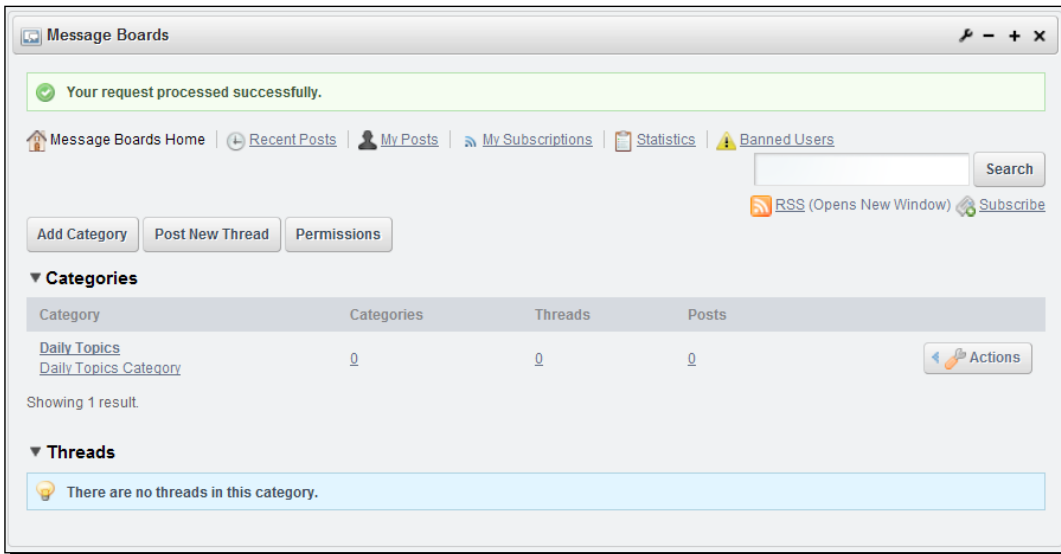
Adding a category of discussion

It is a good practice to organize discussion topics into categories. The **Message Boards** portlet has an **Add Category** button for this purpose.

Time for action – adding a category

Imagine that you are the portal administrator.

1. Log in and go to the **Your Opinions** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com/ group/neighbors-congress/your-opinions`.

2. Click on **Add Category**.

3. Input **Daily Topics** in the **Name** field.

4. Accept the default permission for **Organization Members**.

5. Click on the **Save button.**

You will see a page similar to the following screenshot:

What just happened?

You have just created a category for neighbors to talk about daily topics. From now on, we will put all our discussion threads in this category. If the neighbors ask for another field of discussion in the future, the portal administrator can add another category in the same way.

Starting a topic

If a user in the neighborhood wants to tell other people his concern, he can log in and come to the **Your Opinions** page. He can create a post, which is called a thread, in the **Daily Topics** category.

Time for action – creating a thread

Imagine that you are Cecelia Smith, a member of the **Neighbours Congress**. You have the permission to add a discussion topic and reply to an existing discussion topic on the **Message Boards** home page and in a discussion topic. Now, you want to talk about the noises made by birds in the neighborhood. You can use the following procedure to express yourself at the Neighborhood site:

1. Log in and to to the **Your Opinions** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com/group/neighbors-congress/your-opinions`.

2. Click on the **Daily Topics** link.

3. Click on **Post New Thread**.

4. Enter `Cocks Crow – Very Annoying` in the **Subject** input box.

5. Enter the content of the thread in the **Body** input box.

6. Select all the content in the **Body** input box.

7. Click on the **Size** drop-down selection box and choose font **6**.

8. Type in **Pets** in the **Tags** input box and click **Add**.

9. Accept the default view permission.

10. Click on **Publish**.

What just happened?

Cecelia Smith has just successfully posted a discussion topic in the **Message Boards** portlet. Now, when other **Neighbours Congress** members come to this page, they will see Cecelia's post. They can reply to her post and also add new posts.

Time for action – replying to a thread

The **Message Boards** portlet is an environment where people can participate in discussion about various topics. A user can follow other people's discussion and post his opinions about a certain topic.

Imagine that you are an instructor of music at an elementary school near the neighborhood. Your name is Betty Lawson and you are a member of the **Neighbours Congress**. You browse the Neighborhood site. Here is what you can do to reply to a thread in the **Message Boards** portlet:

1. Log in and go to the **Your Opinions** page.

2. Click on **Daily Topics**—you will see all the threads in this category.

3. Click on the **Cocks Crow – Very Annoying** link.

4. Click on **Reply** to the left of the thread title.

5. In the **Body** input box, type in the following content:

   ```
   Hi, Cecelia,
   I understand your feeling. That noise also reminds me of my old
   days when my parents forced me to learn violin. The cock crow
   resembles very much the sound that I made with my violin when I
   did not have good control of the instrument.
   ```

6. Accept default values for other fields.

7. Click **Publish**.

What just happened?

Betty Lawson has just added a reply to Cecelia's complaint about the noises made by cocks in the morning in the neighborhood. She has expressed her sympathy with Cecelia. When other members also follow and express their comments about the issue, the **Neighbours Congress** can collect these opinions and decide to do or not to do something about the problem. The **Message Board** portlet serves as a channel for communication between the residents and the community management.

Pop quiz – multiple choice

1. Which statements are true about categories in the **Message Boards** portlet?

    a. By default, only the portal administrator can create a category

    b. The categories can be hierarchical

    c. The permission options for categories are anyone, organization members, and owner

    d. All of the above

2. Which of the following statements are true about the configuration of the message boards portlet?

    a. The **Message Boards** portlet is configured in the **Control Panel** and its own portlet title bar

    b. By default, only the portal administrator can configure the **Message Boards** portlet

    c. The configuration of the **Message Boards** portlet is organization specific

    d. All of the above

3. Which of the following are correct about the **Message Boards** portlet?

    a. The portal administrator can ban a user in the message boards portlet

    b. The portal administrator cannot add more than one message boards portlet on the same page

    c. The message board portlet is one of the most widely used applications of Liferay Portal

    d. All of the above

4. What may happen after you start a topic on the **Message Boards** portlet?

    a. Other members can view your post

    b. A user with proper permission can reply to your post

    c. The number of your posts decides your rank in the message boards portlet in that community or organization

    d. All of the above

Have a go hero

Bill Asher is a member of the **Neighbours Congress** organization. He has the permission to post a thread on the **Message Boards** home page. Now log in as **billasher@neiborhood. cignex.com** and post a thread on the **Message Boards** home page.

A discussion forum needs management. If a user annoys other users on the **Message Boards** portlet, the portal administrator can ban this user. Now, log in as the portal administrator and ban Bill Asher. After that, log out and log in as Bill Asher. See what has changed for Bill Asher on the **Message Boards** portlet.

The portal administrator can lock a thread. Now log in as the portal administrator and lock the **Cocks Crow – Very Annoying** thread. Then log out. Log in as **Cecelia Smith** to see what has happened to that thread.

Introducing the Blogs portlet

The **Blogs** portlet of the Liferay Portal allows a user to write and publish blogs. A blog is an online diary—the blogs are sorted by date in a descending order, with the latest blog as the first one on the list.

When the **Blogs** portlet is added to a user's personal page, it will only show the posts by that user; when it is added to a page of a community or organization, all community or organization members can post their blogs and add comments to other users' blogs.

The default view of the **Blogs** portlet for the portal administrator is as shown in the following screenshot:

Crawling the Blogs portlet

The **Blogs** portlet has the following links:

- **RSS**—Add this **Blogs** portlet as a feed in the browser
- **Subscribe**—The logged-in user subscribes to this **Blogs** portlet

The **Blogs** portlet shows the following buttons:

- **Add Blogs Entry**
- **Permissions**

A user clicks on the **Add Blogs Entry** button to create a blog. Steps for creating a blog are given in the next section.

The portal administrator can use the **Permissions** button to configure the following privileges for the general roles:

- **Add Entry**—Adds a blog
- **Permissions**—Grants privileges
- **Subscribe**—Allows subscription

Configuring the Blogs portlet

When the portal administrator clicks on the wrench-shaped icon on the portlet title bar and clicks on **Configuration**, a window will pop up with the following tabs:

◆ **Setup**

◆ **Permissions**

◆ **Communication**

◆ **Sharing**

◆ **Scope**

The **Setup** tab has the following sub-tabs:

◆ **Email From**—Sets up the name and e-mail address of the notifying e-mail sender

◆ **Entry Added**—Specifies the subject and body of the notifying e-mail after a blog is added

◆ **Entry Updated Email**—Specifies the subject and body of the notifying e-mail when a blog has been updated

◆ **Display Settings**—Specifies the maximum number of blogs to display on a page, the display style, flagging, ratings, comments, and comment ratings

◆ **RSS**—Sets up the maximum items to show in the RSS, the display style, and RSS format

The **Permissions** tab allows the portal administrator to set up the following permissions for the regular roles:

◆ **Access in Control Panel**—Shows the **Blogs** portlet in the **Control Panel** for a role

◆ **Add to Page**—Allows a user with a role to add the **Blogs** portlet to a page

◆ **Configuration**—Allows a user with a role to configure the **Blogs** portlet

◆ **View**

The **Communication** tab shows the public render parameters for other portlets to communicate with the **Blogs** portlet. The following parameters are listed:

◆ **categoryId**

◆ **tag**

If the portal administrator wants the **Blogs** portlet to ignore a parameter sent by another application, he can check the checkbox in the **Ignore** column for that parameter.

The **Sharing** tab shows the following sub-tabs:

- **Any Website**—A snippet of code and a checkbox for permission are provided. A user can paste the snippet of code in a page on another site to access this **Blogs** portlet running on our site.

- **Facebook**—The portal administrator needs an API key and a canvas page URL from the Facebook site to enable the access of this **Blogs** portlet on the Facebook site.

- **Google Gadget**—A Google Gadget URL is provided for pasting to a web page on the iGoogle site. The portal administrator can enable the **Allow users to add Blogs to iGoogle** checkbox to grant permission for the remote access.

- **Netvibe**—A Netvibe widget URL is provided. The portal administrator can enable the **Allow users to add Blogs to Netvibes pages** checkbox to grant permission for remote access.

- **Friends**—The portal administrator can enable the **Allow users to share Blogs with friends** checkbox to enable sharing of this **Blogs** portlet with friends.

Under the **Scope** tab, the portal administrator can change the scope of data entered through this **Blogs** portlet. The default scope is the current community or organization. He can change the scope to **Current Page**.

The items of configuration for the **Blogs** portlet on the **Control Panel** are the same as those on the **Blogs** portlet.

Using the Blogs portlet

On the neighborhood site, there is a **Chamber of Commerce** organization, which is a sub-organization of the **Neighbours Congress**. We will use the **Blogs** portlet in the **Chamber of Commerce** organization.
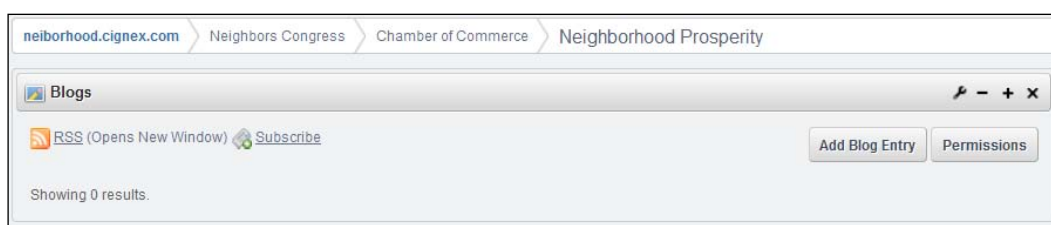
Adding the Blogs portlet onto a page

The **Chamber of Commerce** organization has a public page named **Neighbourhood Prosperity**. This page is intended for users to contribute ideas for **Neighbourhood Prosperity**. To maintain the sustainable development of the neighborhood, we welcome fresh ideas on a daily basis— we need all neighbors to contribute so that we can choose the best ideas. The **Blogs** portlet of the Liferay Portal is the best to serve this purpose. We will add the **Blogs** portlet to the **Neighbourhood Prosperity** page of the **Chamber of Commerce** organization.

Time for action – adding the Blogs portlet onto a page

Suppose that you are the portal administrator.

1. Log in and go to the **Neighbourhood Prosperity** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com/web/chamber-of-commerce/neighborhood-prosperity`.

2. Change page layout to **2 Columns (70/30)**.

3. Add the **Blogs** portlet onto the page.

You will find that the **Blogs** portlet is as shown in the following screenshot:

What just happened?

You have added the **Blogs** portlet onto the **Neighbourhood Prosperity** page. From this point on, we are ready to receive blogs from the neighbors about how to make our community continuously prosperous.

As you can see from the **Blogs** portlet screenshot, the portal administrator can configure the **Blogs** portlet. He can add this portlet as a feed to his browser. He can add a blog here and set up permissions.

What can a regular user do on the **Blogs** portlet, by default? He cannot even add a blog. The portal administrator needs to configure the **Blogs** portlet to allow a regular user to add blogs to the **Blogs** portlet.

Customizing the configuration

We need to allow the members of **Chamber of Commerce** to add blog entries to the **Blogs** portlet because this is going to be an organizational blog site.

Time for action

The portal administrator can configure the **Blogs** portlet in the **Control Panel**.

1. Log in and go to the **Neighbourhood Prosperity** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com/web/chamber-of-commerce/neighborhood-prosperity`.

2. Open the **Control Panel** and click on **Blogs**.

3. Click on the **Permissions** button.

4. Check **Add Entry** and **Subscribe** for **Organization Member**.

5. Click on the **Save** button.

The following is the screenshot of the result:

Blogs

✅ Your request processed successfully.

Chamber of Commerce   «Back

Role	Add Entry	Permissions	Subscribe
BeAnotherRole title	☐	☐	☐
Guest	☐	☐	☐
Owner	☑	☑	☑
Portal Content Reviewer	☐	☐	☐
Power User	☐	☐	☐
Publisher	☐	☐	☐
SpecialRole	☐	☐	☐
User	☐	☐	☐
Writer	☐	☐	☐
Organization Content Reviewer	☐	☐	☐
Organization Member	☑	☐	☑

Save

What just happened?

The portal administrator has granted permissions for a member of the **Chamber of Commerce** to subscribe to the **Blogs** portlet and add blog entries to the **Blogs** portlet.

Creating a blog article

Richard Cunningham is a member of the **Chamber of Commerce** organization. He has some ideas to share with the neighbors. He wants to create a blog about it.

Time for action – Creating a blog article

Suppose that you are Richard Cunningham.

1. Log in and go to the **Neighbourhood Prosperity** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com/web/chamber-of-commerce/neighborhood-prosperity`.

2. Click on **Add Blog Entry**.

3. Enter **Raising Bees** in the **Title** input box.

4. Accept the default value for **Display Date**.

5. In the **Content** input box, which is a WYSIWYG editor, enter the blog text.

6. In the **Tags** input box, enter **Local food** and click on **Add**.

7. Accept the default value for **Permissions**.

8. Click **Publish**.

You will be returned to a page similar to the following screenshot:
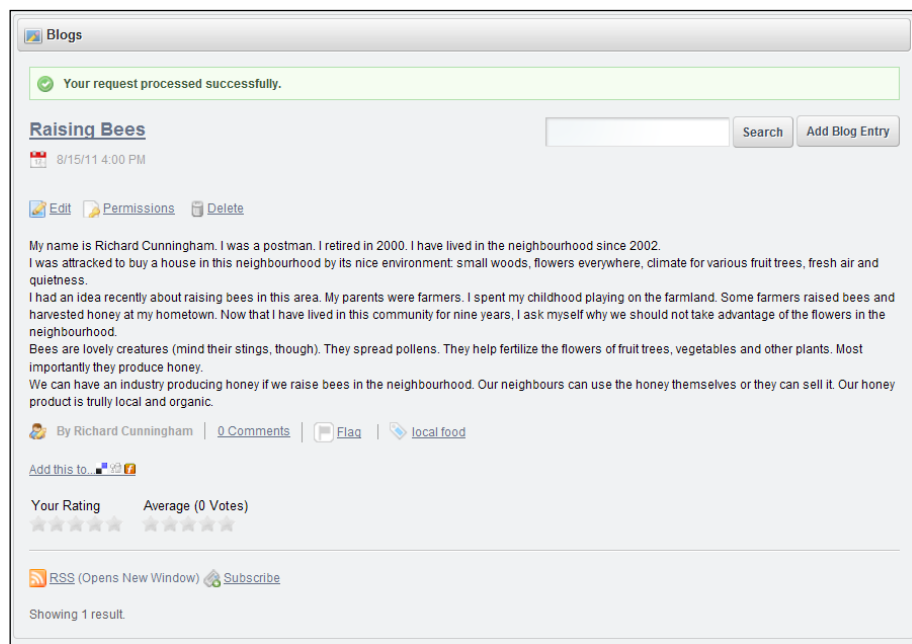
What just happened?

As **Richard Cunningham**, you have successfully added a blog about raising bees in the neighborhood.

You can find an extra **Search** button in the preceding screenshot. There are also links for **Edit**, **Permissions**, and **Delete** for the blog creator.

A **Chamber of Commerce** member can come to this page, read the blog, and write his comments.

Pop quiz – multiple choice

1. Which of the following statements are true about blogs?

    a. Blogs are usually displayed in a reverse-chronological order

    b. Blogs are collaborative

    c. There are personal and corporate blogs

    d. All of the above

2. Which of the following statements are correct about the **Blogs** portlet?

    a. The **Blogs** portlet can be configured to allow blogging by all organization members

    b. The **Blogs** portlet has search, rating, flagging, and tagging features

    c. The portal administrator can set up the blogs portlet so that five blogs maximum will be displayed on a page

    d. All of the above

3. Which of the following is true about blog creation in Liferay Portal?

    a. The creator can specify display date for a blog

    b. A WYSIWYG editor is used to enter the blog content

    c. The creator can allow a guest or organization member to view this blog

    d. All of the above

Have a go hero

The Liferay Portal has a fine-grained permission system. This system also applies to the **Blogs** portlet.

By default, an organization member cannot edit other people's blogs. Can you configure the **Blogs** portlet as the portal administrator to allow an organization member to edit other users' blogs?

The **Blogs** portlet, as an interactive application, has quite a few collaborative features.

You may add the **Raising Bees** blog to the Digg site at `http://digg.com/`. Create an account on the Digg site. Come back to the **Neighbourhood Prosperity** page. Click on the **Add this to ...** link and add this **Raising Bees** blog to the Digg site.

Come to the **Raising Bees** blog again. Right now, there are no comments for this blog. Click on the **0 Comments** link and add a comment for this blog.

Introducing the Calendar portlet

Another collaborative application in Liferay Portal is its **Calendar** portlet. People use the **Calendar** portlet to schedule events and send out reminder messages. We can set up appointments, anniversaries, dinners, and wedding ceremonies using the **Calendar** portlet.

The **Calendar** portlet is added to a logged-in user's first private page, by default—it is conveniently used as a personal event-planning tool. After configuration it can also become a shared calendar for a community or organization.

As a shared calendar, the **Calendar** portlet allows users to add, manage, and search for events. All the community or organization members have access to the events. The portal administrator can configure the **Calendar** portlet so that the reminder messages can be sent to the related users by e-mail.

The community or organization **Calendar** portlet has the following features:

- Add events and share them
- Schedule a periodic event such as birthdays
- Add alert messages for the events

The view of the calendar portlet for a portal administrator is as shown in the following screenshot:
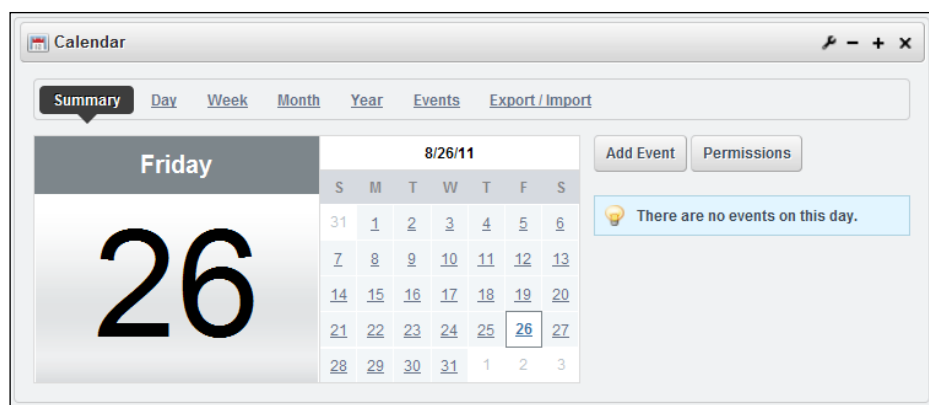
Crawling the Calendar portlet

The **Summary** tab shows the month view of the calendar. Today's date is selected, by default. If you click on the **Add Event** button, you will be allowed to add an event for today's date.

The **Day** tab shows the day view with all the hours in a day. You can set an appointment at a time of your choice.

The **Month** tab shows the calendar for the present month. There is an **Add** button for every date that you can use to create an appointment.

The **Year** tab shows the twelve months of the year.

The **Events** tab shows all the events created in the **Calendar** portlet in the corresponding community or personal site. There is an **Actions** button for every event. This button contains links for you to edit, export, and delete an event. There is also a link for you to set permission for this event.

The **Export / Import** tab allows you to export the calendar into an `.ics` file (iCalendar format file), which you can open with Microsoft Office Outlook. You can later import this calendar with this `.ics` file into another **Calendar** portlet. You can also import another calendar into this **Calendar** portlet with the **Import** button.

The **Add Event** button will lead you to the add-event page. On this page, you can do the following things to the event to be created:

- Specify the start date, including specific time
- Set the length, in time, of the event
- Specify if it is an all-day event
- Enable the **Time Zone Sensitive** option (this input is for the portal to convert the date and time, if one user's time zone is different from another user's)

- Give the event a title
- Add a description
- Choose a type for the event: anniversary, bill payment, breakfast, call, chat, class, and other types
- Specify permissions: whether it is going to be viewed by anyone, community members, or community owner
- Select categories for the event
- Add tags to the event to facilitate searching
- Specify how frequent such an event is to happen—whether it is on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis
- Set the end date, if this event is repeatable
- Set the way a reminder is sent to the creator or community members, which can be by e-mail, SMS, AIM, ICQ, MSN, and YM

> The calendar event types are specified in the `portal-properties` file through a `calendar.event.types` property. They can be changed through the `portal-ext.properties` file. The text of the event name can further be localized through the `content/Language.properties` file.

The **Permissions** button allows a user to set permissions for this **Calendar** portlet. All the portal-wise roles are listed. The user can specify which role can add an event, export all events, and set permissions in this portlet. Since the **Calendar** portlet is by default a personal calendar, the owner gets all the permissions.

Configuring Calendar portlet

The portal administrator can configure the **Calendar** portlet. When the portal administrator clicks on the wrench-shaped configuration button, a configuration pop-up window will show. There are four configuration tabs:

- **Setup**
- **Permissions**
- **Sharing**
- **Scope**

Setup

When an event is created, you set up a reminder to be sent one day before the event. The format and content of that e-mail can be configured here.

The **Setup** tab allows the portal administrator to specify the sender's e-mail address. By default, the portal administrator's e-mail address will be used. The portal administrator can also specify the subject and body of the e-mail. The subject and body of the e-mail can be customized here by a user with proper permissions. The e-mail body will contain the following information:

◆ Start date of the event

◆ Title of the event

◆ Sender's e-mail address

◆ Sender's name

◆ Hostname of the server where the Liferay Portal is running

◆ Name of the application that sends the e-mail, which is `calendar`

◆ Recipient's e-mail address

◆ Recipient's name

Under the **Setup** tab, the portal administrator can also change the user interface of the **Calendar** portlet. He can set the **Default** tab. As you can see in the screenshot of the **Calendar** portlet, the present default tab is the **Summary** tab. The portal administrator can also decide whether the **Summary** tab be shown horizontally or vertically here. By default, the following features are also enabled:

◆ Show mini month—This shows the current month calendar in the **Summary** view

◆ Show today's events

◆ Enable comments

Permissions

The portal administrator configures permissions right on the **Calendar** portlet (instead of in the Control Panel). He can assign the following functionalities to all the regular roles:

◆ **Access in Control Panel**—This allows a logged-in user to see the **Calendar** portlet on the **Control Panel**

◆ **Add to Page**—This allows a logged-in user to access the **Calendar** portlet in the portlet categories in the **Add** drop-down menu

◆ **Configuration**—This gives the role the privilege to see the wrench-shaped icon on the portlet title bar and use it

◆ **View**

Sharing

The sharing option is the sharing of your **Calendar** portlet—you want other users, including your friends to know what events are on your calendar. How can this be done? You allow your **Calendar** portlet to be added to another website that your friend often visits. When your **Calendar** portlet is shown on your friend's website, it is called a web widget on that website.

The portal administrator can allow this **Calendar** portlet to be shared on any website. The following code is provided:

```
<script src="http://neiborhood.cignex.com/html/js/liferay/widget.js"
type="text/javascript"></script>
<script type="text/javascript">
    Liferay.Widget({ url: 'http://neiborhood.cignex.com/widget/web/
neighborhood-exchange/special-days/-/8'});
</script>
```

There is also permission involved, which is why you see an **Allow users to add Calendar to any website** checkbox under the preceding snippet of code. The portal administrator should enable this option and save the configuration to allow the **Calendar** portlet to be consumed as a widget ont any other sites.

If the portal administrator wants the calendar portlet to be shared on the Facebook site, he needs to first get an API key and a canvas page URL on the Facebook site. After he pastes both the values into the input boxes under the **Facebook** tab, other users can access this **Calendar** portlet on the Facebook site. The API key serves as permission-granting while the canvas page URL serves as the content-delivery protocol.

A special URL is provided for sharing this **Calendar** portlet at the iGoogle site. The portal administrator should enable the **Allow users to add Calendar to iGoogle** checkbox and save the settings.

The similar settings are provided for sharing the **Calendar** portlet on the Netvibes site.

The last **Friends** sub-tab allows the portal administrator to set permissions for the **Calendar** portlet to be shared among your friends.

Scope

The scope means the data scope, as is in other Liferay Portal portlet applications. The default scope of the **Calendar** portlet is the community or organization where it is added. This means that, if you add an event in the **Calendar** portlet on a page of a community, it will show on the **Calendar** portlet on another page of the same community.

The portal administrator can change the scope to **Current Page** under the **Scope** tab.

Using the Calendar portlet

Now that we know the functionalities and configuration of the **Calendar** portlet, we are going to add it to a private page of the **Neighbourhood Exchange** community. We will make this **Calendar** portlet a community calendar accessible to all the neighbors.

Time for action – setting up a community-scoped calendar application

Imagine that you are the portal administrator. Take the following steps to set up a community-scoped calendar application:

1. Log in and go to the **Special Days** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com`.

2. Change the page layout to **2 Columns (70/30)**.

3. Add the **Calendar** portlet to the left-hand side column of the page layout.

4. Click on the **Permissions** button.

5. Check **Add Event** and **Export All Events** for the **Community Member** role.

6. Click on the **Save** button.

Now, every member of the **Neighbourhood Exchange** community has the privilege to add events into this community calendar. He or she can also view the events set up by other neighbors.

Richard Smith has lived in the neighborhood for 25 years. He is going to marry Kate on September 9, 2011. Elizabeth Smith, Richard's mother, wants to invite every neighbor to the wedding ceremony. It is an all-day event.

Time for action – setting up the wedding ceremony invitation

Suppose that you are Elizabeth Smith. You can set up the wedding ceremony invitation as follows:

1. Log in and go to **Special Days** page at `http://neiborhood.cignex.com/ group/neighborhood-exchange/special-days`.

2. Click on the **Add Event** button.

3. Select the **Start Date** as `September 9, 2011`.

4. For **Duration**, check the **All Day Event**.

5. Leave the **Time Zone Sensitive** input enabled.

6. Enter `Richard and Kate Wedding Ceremony` in the **Title** input box.

7. Enter description for the event.

8. Select **Event** for the **Type** input box.

9. Leave **Community Members** value for **Permissions.**

10. For the **Repeat** type, select **Never.**

11. For **Reminders**, select **1 Week** before the event.

12. Select **Email Address** as the reminder type.

**13.** Click on the **Save** button.

Hoc Tran is also a member of the **Neighbourhood Exchange** community. His son, Henry Tran, has just graduated from college. The Trans family want to hold a graduation ceremony on the morning of October 15, 2011.

Time for action – announcing celebration

Suppose that you are Hoc Tran. You can announce such a celebration through the **Calendar** portlet as follows:

1. Log in and go to the **Special Days** page.

2. Click on the **Add Event** button.

3. For the **Start Date**, select `10 am October 15, 2011.`

4. For **Duration**, select `3 hours.`

5. Leave the **Time Zone Sensitive** enabled.

6. In the **Title** input box, enter **Henry's Graduation Ceremony**.

7. Enter a description for the event.

8. For the event type, select **Graduation**.

9. Leave the **Permissions** for **Community Members** as it is.

10. For **Repeat** type, select **Never**.

11. For **Reminders**, select **3 Days** before the event.

12. Select **Email Address** for **Reminders** type.

13. Click on the **Save** button.

In this way, two events have been created. If Hoc Tran clicks on the **Events** tab, he will see the **Calendar** portlet as shown in the following screenshot:
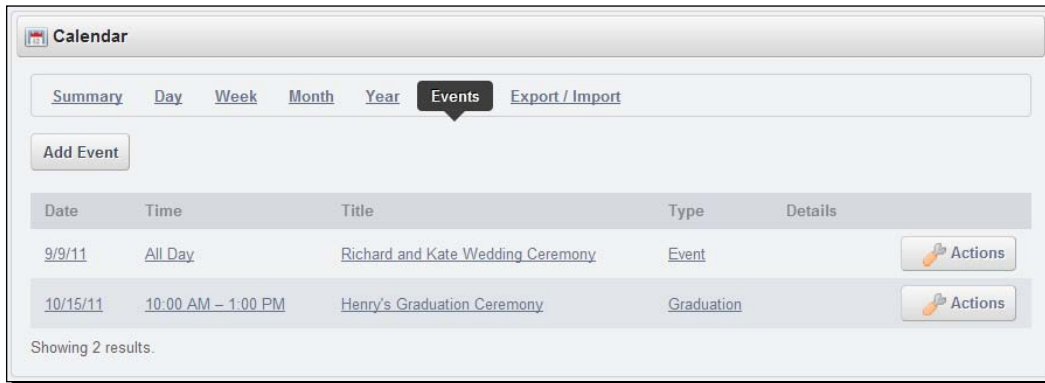
What just happened?

After the portal administrator has configured the **Calendar** portlet to be a community-shared portlet, all the members of the **Neighbourhood Exchange** can add events through the portlet.

Elizabeth Smith added an event for her son's wedding, which is an all-day event. She invited all neighbors to come to the ceremony. On September 9, all neighbors can come to the wedding and bring their blessings.

Hoc has set up an event for his son's graduation celebration. People in the neighborhood will know this celebration and Hoc's friends will come to the party to give their congratulations.

Pop quiz – multiple choice

Which of the following about the **Calendar** portlet is correct?

    a. The **Calendar** portlet provides a personal calendar, by default

    b. If you have the permission, you can export the events on a **Calendar** portlet to another calendar portlet

    c. You can add event types on the Calendar portlet through a `portal-ext.properties` file

    d. All of the above

Have a go hero – customizing the e-mail body

The e-mail body for the reminder message can be customized. Add the following message in the body of the e-mail sent to a **Neighbourhood Exchange** member as a reminder of an event:

```
The message is intended for a logged-in member of the neighbourhood
site. Please ignore it if you are not such a member.
```

Summary

We have learned a lot about social networking in Liferay Portal in this bonus chapter. Specifically, we covered:

◆ Configuration of the **Wiki**, **Message Boards**, **Blogs**, and **Calendar** portlets

◆ Using the **Wiki** portlet for neighbors to discuss neighborhood policies

◆ Employing the **Message Boards** portlet for people in the neighborhood to talk about community noise control

◆ Using the **Blogs** portlet to encourage neighbors to post their idea for community prosperity

◆ Using the **Calendar** portlet for the organization of parties and ceremonies in the neighborhood

To prepare for the parties and ceremonies, we need to buy groceries. Let us explore the online shopping features in the Liferay Portal, which is the topic of *Chapter 9*, *Setting up an Online Shop*.