



Hello Hamilton County

June 2009

E-News for Hamilton County citizens and employees

Quote of the month:

*"In every difficult situation is potential value.
Believe this, then begin looking for it."*

~Norman Vincent Peale

National Foster Care Month Celebrated in May; Need for Foster Parents Continues



Commissioner Greg Hartmann spoke at the Butterflies and Blue Ribbons Event. Job and Family Services Director Moira Weir with foster parent Debra McMullen.

Hamilton County participated in a variety of events to celebrate National Foster Care month in May. County leaders recognized and thanked current foster parents while reaching out to recruit new people to fulfill this important role.

The Board of County Commissioners presented a proclamation recognizing National Foster Care month. Debra McMullen accepted on behalf of Foster Parents, thanking Commissioners for their attention to families and children. Commissioner Hartmann spoke at the Butterflies and Blue Ribbons event, which was a celebration of

Southwest Ohio foster parents. Hartmann explained that his parents were foster parents and that he saw firsthand the impact that foster parents have.

"All children deserve a safe, happy and healthy environment in which to live," said Commissioner Hartmann. "They need compassionate and nurturing adults to support them."

The last weekend in May, the Greater Cincinnati Coalition of Care hosted the "Every Child's Hope" event. Twenty-six churches and parishes worked together to encourage people from Cincinnati to

Dayton to become foster parents. Although Foster Care month has come to an end, the need for foster parents is still critical.

"Hamilton County has a severe shortage of foster parents," says JFS Director Moira Weir. "We're doing what we can to encourage people to step up and fill the need."

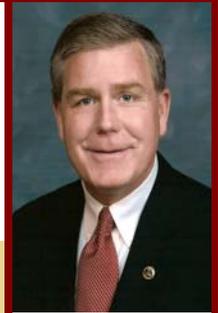
If you would like to learn more about becoming a foster parent or about other ways to support foster children, please visit this link:

<http://www.hcjfs.hamilton-co.org/hckids>



Patrick's Perspective

Share Your Thoughts About Hamilton County's Budget Priorities



**Patrick
Thompson,
Hamilton County
Administrator**

Hamilton County has begun the process of developing the 2010 budget and is inviting Hamilton County residents to share their thoughts about funding priorities.

This year, County Administration is providing an online survey for Hamilton County residents to complete. The survey gives residents a convenient option for sharing their opinions about funding priorities.

Hamilton County residents can complete the survey through June 28, 2009. The survey results will be considered as the 2010 budget is developed. We will post the public survey results on the County website in July.

Hamilton County always welcomes citizen input in the budget process. Previously, the County hosted public hearings throughout the county as a forum for citizens to provide input. Public hearings will continue to be an important component of the budget process. Dates, times, and locations will be announced soon.

As County resources continue to be extremely limited, citizen involvement becomes even more important. When funding is reduced or cut for services that residents use, it is very difficult. It's important that we hear from residents about their preferences regarding spending priorities.

We want to thank those

residents who take the time to complete the online survey. In the first week that the survey was available, over 1,000 residents completed it! Those who are willing to provide contact information will be entered into random drawings for use of the county suites at Great American Ballpark and Paul Brown Stadium.

I strongly encourage Hamilton County citizens to stay involved and participate in the budget process through input into the survey and in budget public hearings. This is your chance to be heard and to make a difference.

**Hamilton County Residents:
Please Complete
the Hamilton County Budget Input Survey Today.**

Please click here to complete the survey:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=8K6aoODcpEAI2Jtdx8oxAw_3d_3d



Hamilton County's Federal Stimulus Dollars Help Local Youth with Summer Employment

Nearly 700 area young people will benefit from federal stimulus money this summer with job training and placement that will prepare them for short-term and long-term success.

Hamilton County's \$2,380,000 in federal stimulus money, received in April, will be devoted to services for 670 young people between the ages of 14 and 24. These funds are intended to both stimulate the local economy and to help youth overcome challenges.

"By making strategic investments in our young people, we secure a better future for Hamilton County," said Commissioner David Pepper. "These programs are designed to foster a strong work ethic and the skills needed for kids to be successful in life."

In Hamilton County, stimulus funds are directed primarily toward youth with one or several of the qualities identified below:

- Youth who are at risk of dropping out of high school;
- Youth who have dropped out of high school and are disengaged from the educational system;
- Youth with a criminal record or court-involvement;
- Current or former foster care youth;



- Youth preparing to transition from high school to post secondary education or employment;
- Youth interested in employment in health care, construction, advanced manufacturing, education, or science/technology/engineering/math.

Most youth will receive a combination of work readiness training and placement with a local employer to practice those work skills. Throughout their participation, youth will be paid an hourly rate of between \$7.35 and \$10.00 an hour for their work or training.

Five local service providers with proven track records were chosen from 17 proposals to receive contracts and deliver these services. They are:

- Easter Seals
- Great Oaks
- Jobs for Cincinnati Graduates
- Arbor Employment and Training
- The Urban League

This stimulus money will pump more than \$2 million into the local economy and provide the added benefit of helping to prepare nearly 700 Hamilton County young people for long-term success, thereby changing their community for the better.

For information about these training and job opportunities, interested youth may click here:

<http://www.superjobs.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=ABg8p8xa3Mw=&tabid=103>



County Commissioners Meetings Accessible to the Public

The Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) tackles many important issues during its regularly scheduled meetings, and the information covered is always easily accessible for members of the public.

Regularly scheduled meetings take place:

- Mondays and Wednesdays
- 9:30 a.m.
- County Administration Building, 6th Floor

The meetings are held bi-weekly between Memorial Day and Labor Day, and weekly throughout the rest of the year. Occasionally the Monday meetings are held in the evening in various Hamilton County communities.

Meeting agendas are available on the County's website, so citizens can see which items will be covered during each meeting. Audio podcasts are also available on the website for those who want to listen to meetings that have already taken place. And the meetings are televised, so anyone with cable access can watch them.

To see BOCC meeting agendas, listen to podcasts, and view the television schedule, please visit this link:
http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hc/bocc_meetings.asp

Monday BOCC Staff Meetings

The Monday meetings are staff meetings. While public, the Monday meetings rarely involve public speakers. Instead they are working sessions for the Board to discuss issues in depth.

Some of the issues covered during BOCC Staff Meetings on Mondays in May included:

- A Banks project briefing. The County's Banks Project Executive explained that construction is on schedule, inclusion goals are being exceeded, the project is below budget, and there has been no lost time due to safety.
- The County Facilities Department informed the BOCC about energy efficiency initiatives that are saving the County money.
- The Office of Budget and Strategic Initiatives demonstrated the Government Accountability in Spending (GASP) portion of the County website, where anyone can view information about how county dollars are being spent.
- The Hamilton County Development Company provided an Economic Development update.

Wednesday BOCC Meetings

The Wednesday meetings are public meetings. Citizens can have the floor for two minutes to address the BOCC. These meetings often include public hearings, during which citizens can comment on issues that the BOCC is considering. The BOCC votes on resolutions and consent items, and each Commissioner has time to comment about issues he would like to address.

Some of the Issues addressed during BOCC meetings on Wednesdays in May included:

- Ex-offenders who have served their time in the criminal justice system spoke. They described the importance of providing job opportunities for ex-offenders who have been rehabilitated.
- The BOCC passed a resolution creating stream corridor protection zones to clean up local streams and rivers.
- The BOCC passed a resolution, introduced by Commissioner Hartmann, supporting the Queensgate Terminal.
- Commissioners Pepper and Portune expressed concerns about the content of the city charter amendment petition designed to require a public vote on every City of Cincinnati rail related expenditure. They shared concerns that the petition is written so broadly that it would impact all transit initiatives involving the city (not just streetcars) and that it could cause several important County initiatives to grind to a halt.



Neighborhood Stabilization Program Funds Improvements



Neighbors watch as a blighted property in North College Hill is demolished, using funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

We all know that it's sad for individuals when they must leave their homes or business locations due to foreclosure. Sometimes we don't realize there is an impact on the community when foreclosures occur, too.

An individual foreclosure can cost the surrounding neighborhood tens of thousands of dollars in property value, along with an increasing backlog of blight and abandonment.

Hamilton County's Neighborhood Stabilization Project (NSP) is dedicating funds to reclaim blighted and foreclosed property. And don't let the bulldozer pictures fool you—NSP is about much more than demolition!

The County has received nearly \$8 Million dollars in NSP funds. Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the NSP provides four options for communities dealing with blight and abandoned buildings:

- Acquisition
- Rehabilitation
- Demolition
- New construction.

“One property at a time, we are using these dollars to improve our community’s safety and quality of

life,” says Commission President David Pepper.

The funds are being used to reinvest in our communities; to remove blight and unsafe properties from our neighborhoods; to replace them with new commercial, residential and greenspace development and to create job opportunities for our citizens.

To learn more about the NSP, please visit this link:

<http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/ov/commdev/StabilizationProgram.asp>

The County selected 15 jurisdictions to target with NSP funds.
NSP investment communities include:

- Cheviot
- Colerain Township
- Forest Park
- Lincoln Heights
- Mt. Healthy
- Norwood
- Springfield Township
- Woodlawn
- Cleves
- Elmwood Place
- Golf Manor
- Lockland
- North College Hill
- Silverton
- St. Bernard

Other communities will have an opportunity to receive support for demolition of vacant, blighted structures.



Codespear System Informs You About Public Safety or Emergency Situations

Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati are preparing to use an innovative new service to notify residents quickly when an emergency or public safety

situation arises. This reverse 911 system is called Codespear, and it should be active by this autumn.

With Codespear, the Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency (EMA), the City of Cincinnati, or Hamilton County can call residents to provide an automated message when an emergency situation occurs.

“We’re the first in the region that is doing this,” explains EMA Director Mike Snowden. “We’re capturing seven or eight counties with the capability. There are other Reverse 911 systems out there, but nothing to this scale.”

Codespear can be used in a variety of emergency or public safety situations. For example:

- If there is a chemical spill that is potentially hazardous for everyone within a one mile radius, Codespear can quickly call those located within one mile of the spill to provide a message about the hazard and to explain what precautions to take.

- If it’s necessary for residents to go to Point of Distribution (POD) sites to get medicine for a pandemic flu, Codespear could call residents to inform them of the emergency and to provide their POD’s location.
- If there is an Amber alert or an elderly person has wandered from home and is at risk, the system could call people within a certain area to provide a description and to ask them to be on the lookout.

Codespear will use the County’s existing 911 database to access phone numbers. That database includes phone numbers and locations of Cincinnati Bell landline customers who have a 513 or 859 area code. It covers not only Hamilton County, but also Butler, Clermont and Warren Counties in Ohio and parts of Northern Kentucky. There will be an outreach program to encourage people who use other types of phones, such as cell phones or cable company phone lines, to join the Codespear database.

This system is funded through 2012 by Homeland Security dollars. It’s administered jointly by Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati. Hamilton County EMA has primary responsibility for the project. “We’ve been working on this for a long time, and we’re excited about it,” Snowden says.

Volunteer to Help in a Health Emergency

Volunteers are needed to help with Points of Dispensing (POD) in the event of a public health emergency such as a bioterrorism attack or pandemic flu outbreak. A POD is a location where medications or vaccines will be distributed to people who may have been exposed to an

infectious disease.

All volunteers will be among the first to receive antibiotics/vaccines for themselves and their immediate family, without waiting in line at a POD. Each person volunteering at the POD will have a specific and

limited job, such as handling paperwork or answering questions. Volunteers will be trained by Hamilton County Public Health, and the time commitment for training will be minimal. Please follow the instructions below to volunteer. Your help is needed!

Hamilton County Employees:

If you are a Hamilton County employee, please visit the link below to complete a survey. Last month, there was a problem with the survey that prevented employees from volunteering. So please try again if you’re interested! Training for employee volunteers will be offered in June, so please click the following link to complete the survey today!

http://survey.hamiltoncountyhealth.org/surveys/PODS_ER/PODS_Reg.asp?P1=yw4c-t704-kkv

Residents:

If you are a resident of Hamilton County and not a County employee, please call 513-946-7935 to volunteer.



Hamilton County Administration Encourages EcoDriving to Save Money and Help the Environment

May was EcoDriving month nationwide, and Hamilton County Administration took the opportunity to encourage employees under the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to use EcoDriving practices.



“Informing employees about these practices makes sense, because there is the potential to save money,” says County Administrator Patrick Thompson. Experts say using EcoDriving practices can save up to one-third of fuel usage and, therefore, fuel costs.

In 2008, Hamilton County organizations’ fuel expenditures were \$2,200,000. This includes the BOCC and all other Appointing Authorities. If all county employees who drive while conducting business adopt EcoDriving strategies, savings county-wide could be big!

But EcoDriving isn’t just for county employees. Anyone who drives and wants to save money and help the environment can use EcoDriving practices.

EcoDriving is a comprehensive, nationwide effort to save money at the gas pump, reduce fuel use, and cut carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions. EcoDriving involves following tips for increasing the miles you get from each gallon of gas.

Burning gasoline produces carbon dioxide, so saving fuel helps reduce carbon dioxide emissions. This is good for the environment.

Some EcoDriving tips include:

- Avoid rapid starts and stops.
- Navigate to reduce CO2 — combine trips and plan the shortest route to your destination.
- Avoid idling. If you stop for longer than 30—60 seconds, shut off your engine.
- Check your tire pressure monthly. Keeping your tires properly inflated increases fuel efficiency.

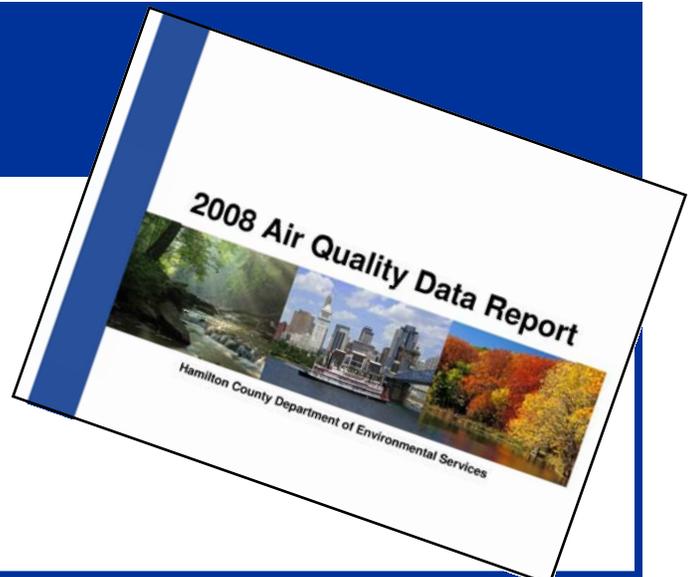
You can see more EcoDriving practices and maintenance strategies at www.ecodrivingusa.com. Just select “educational tools” and “EcoDriver’s Manual.”

Air Quality Improving in the Greater Cincinnati Area

The Department of Environmental Services’ 2008 Air Quality Data report indicates that air quality is improving in the four-county region that includes Hamilton, Butler, Clermont and Warren Counties.

Please visit this link to view the report:

http://www.hcdoes.org/hcdoes_reports.htm





Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District Invites You To Attend a Free Pond Clinic



Date: Wednesday, June 20, 2009
Time: 6 p.m.—8:30 p.m.
Location: Sharon Centre at Sharon Woods
11450 Lebanon Road
Sharonville, Ohio 45241

This year, the Pond Clinic has expanded to cover more topics than ever before. Knowledgeable staff from the Hamilton County and Butler County Soil and Water Conservation Districts will join experts from Jones Fish Hatcheries to share information and answer questions. You can learn about:

- Pond construction
- Fish stocking
- Aquatic weed management
- Pond aeration
- Stormwater detention basins
- Water gardens

The Pond Clinic is sponsored by the Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District, Butler County Soil & Water Conservation District, Hamilton County Park District, and Jones Fish Hatcheries Inc.

**If you would like to attend, please register by calling 513-772-7645.
There is no fee, but registration is required by June 5, 2009.**

To find out more about the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District,
please visit this website: www.hcswcd.org
You can check out the "Conservation Spotlight" newsletter:
<http://www.hcswcd.org/newsltr/spotlite/2009Summer.pdf>



It's Not Too Late to Get Your Hamilton County Dog License



Dogs and their owners participated in the Seventh Annual SPCA Cincinnati Doggie Dash Walk for Kindness on Saturday, May 30. All proceeds benefitted the SPCA Cincinnati.

For more information about the SPCA Cincinnati, please visit www.spcacincinnati.org.

As summer begins, dog owners may be enjoying more outdoor activities with their pets, as did those who participated in the SPCA Doggie Dash Walk for Kindness. So it's a great time for dog owners to get their Hamilton County dog licenses, if they haven't done so yet.

The dog license provides a few important benefits. First, it enables lost dogs to be quickly and easily returned to their

owners. When a lost dog is found and 946-DOGS is called, the dog's license number is matched with the owner's name, address, and phone number. It's that easy to determine where the pet belongs.

Second, the dog license fees support animal control services such as impounding stray dogs. Hamilton County contracts with SPCA Cincinnati to provide these important services.

Third, it's a legal requirement that each dog have a license.

You can start the summer with the peace of mind that comes with making sure your dog has a license. It's easy! Just visit this link, where the Hamilton County Auditor provides information about obtaining dog licenses:

www.hamiltoncountyauditor.org/dogs.asp



Hamilton County Residents Saved over \$13,500 on prescription drugs in April. Were you one of them?

Pick up your free card at any of these locations:

- Branches of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County
- YMCA Branches
- Many social services agencies, such as the FreeStore Foodbank and Talbert House
- Hamilton County Job and Family Services Offices

If you weren't one of the Hamilton County residents who used a Prescription Drug Discount Card in April, get your card today! You can use the card to get a discount on prescription drugs that are not covered by insurance.

Over 600 residents saved an average of 20% on the cost of their prescriptions in April, using the discount card. Since January, residents have saved over \$36,000 on the cost of prescriptions. The card is free and is accepted at most pharmacies in Hamilton County. So get your prescription drug discount card today!

For more information, visit
www.hamiltoncountyrx.com

Local Efforts Highlighted During National Bike Month

May was National Bike Month, and on May 14 citizens gathered at Fountain Square to learn more about options for bicycling in Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati.

Commission President David Pepper spoke, sharing information about Hamilton County's efforts to have the County declared a bicycle friendly community. Bicycle friendliness is a proven factor in a region's quality of life and ability to attract new people and new investment.

This bicycle friendly designation is awarded by the League of American Bicyclists. Representatives from the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, local businesses, bike advocacy groups, and local park and recreation boards are working together to complete an application which is due August 1st.

Once completed, the application will

highlight efforts being made locally regarding engineering of bike lanes and paths, educational initiatives to help motorists and bicyclists understand bicycle safety, and encouragement for bicycling activities.

Meanwhile, great bicycling events occur frequently in Hamilton County. People who are interested in bicycling can visit these websites for more information about local bicycling events:

- www.cincybikepac.org
- www.queencitybike.com
- www.cincybikeabouts.blogspot.com





Calling All Teens: Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services Accepting Applications for 2nd Annual Green Team Youth Council

To all you recycling, composting, reusable-water-bottle-toting teens: if you're passionate about going green, the Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services (HCDOES) has a group for you.

Right now, HCDOES is accepting applications for the 2009-2010 "Green Team" Youth Council—a unique group where you can work with local environmental policymakers to express your ideas, get involved in local green events, and make a difference in our local environment.

The program is for high school students between the ages 13-18, who reside in Hamilton, Butler, Clermont and Warren Counties.

The HCDOES "Green Team" provides students with the opportunity to learn more about environmental issues such as air quality and recycling, while also making an impact in their schools and communities. Volunteer opportunities and excursions to environmental sites of interest are also available through the council.

Last year's Youth Council, for example, was recognized by the Cincinnati Bengals and Coach Marvin Lewis as a "Green Team," and invited to Paul Brown Stadium for the Bengals Draft Party. Students also worked on outreach campaign ideas, and took an educational tour of the LEED certified Schott Education Center at the Cincinnati Zoo.

Teens have the potential to make a big difference in our local environment. Join the effort toward a greener community by applying for the HCDOES Youth Council today!



Interested high school students may apply by downloading the application at the HCDOES website: www.hcdoes.org.

Please submit completed applications by Friday, June 5.

Mail:

Department of Environmental Services
Attn: Kristy Kim
250 Wm Howard Taft Rd
Cincinnati, OH 45219

Email: kristy.kim@hamilton-co.org.

Fax: 513-946-7779.

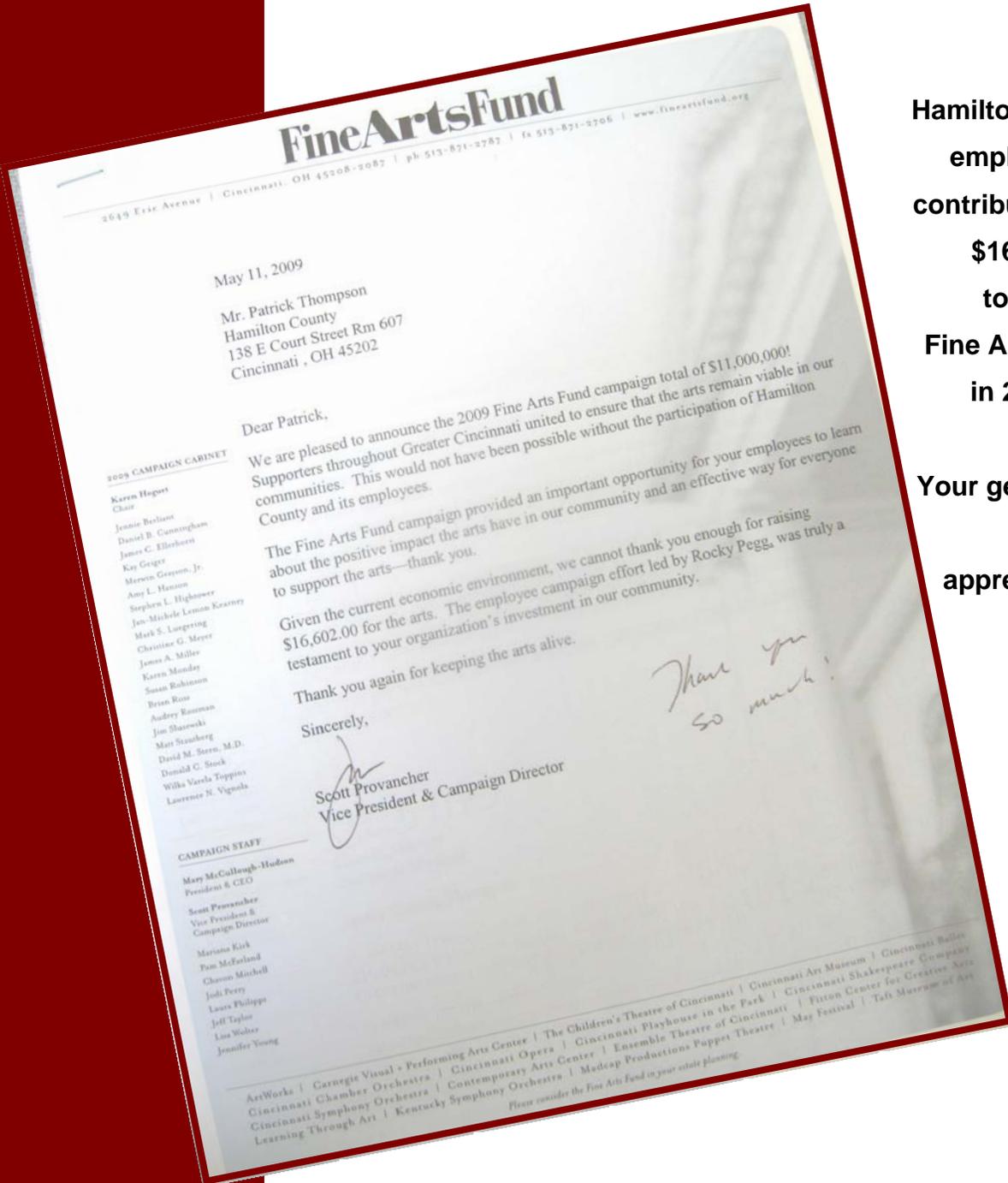
Parents and teachers interested in serving as advisors are invited to call 513-946-7754.



Thank you Hamilton County Employees For Contributing to the Fine Arts Fund!

Hamilton County
employees
contributed over
\$16,000
to the
Fine Arts Fund
in 2009.

Your generosity
is
appreciated!



FineArtsFund

2049 Erie Avenue | Cincinnati, OH 45208-2087 | ph 513-871-2787 | fx 513-871-2706 | www.fineartsfund.org

May 11, 2009
Mr. Patrick Thompson
Hamilton County
138 E Court Street Rm 607
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Patrick,
We are pleased to announce the 2009 Fine Arts Fund campaign total of \$11,000,000! Supporters throughout Greater Cincinnati united to ensure that the arts remain viable in our communities. This would not have been possible without the participation of Hamilton County and its employees.

The Fine Arts Fund campaign provided an important opportunity for your employees to learn about the positive impact the arts have in our community and an effective way for everyone to support the arts—thank you.

Given the current economic environment, we cannot thank you enough for raising \$16,602.00 for the arts. The employee campaign effort led by Rocky Pegg, was truly a testament to your organization's investment in our community.

Thank you again for keeping the arts alive.

Sincerely,

Scott Provancher
Vice President & Campaign Director

*Thank you
so much!*

2009 CAMPAIGN CABINET

- Karen Hegert
Chair
- Jennie Berlion
- Daniel B. Cunningham
- James C. Elshorst
- Kay Geiger
- Merwin Grayson, Jr.
- Amy L. Hanson
- Stephen L. Hightower
- Jan-Michèle Lemon Keeney
- Mark S. Luegerting
- Christine G. Meyer
- James A. Miller
- Karen Munday
- Susan Robinson
- Brian Row
- Audrey Rounton
- Jim Szawski
- Matt Stauchberg
- David M. Stern, M.D.
- Donald C. Stock
- Wilka Varela Toppins
- Lawrence R. Vignola

CAMPAIGN STAFF

- Mary McCullough-Hudson
President & CEO
- Scott Provancher
Vice President & Campaign Director
- Marianna Kirk
- Pam McFarland
- Cherom Mitchell
- Jodi Perry
- Laura Phillips
- Jeff Taylor
- Lisa Walter
- Jennifer Young

ArtWorks | Carnegie Visual + Performing Arts Center | The Children's Theatre of Cincinnati | Cincinnati Art Museum | Cincinnati Bell
Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra | Cincinnati Opera | Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park | Cincinnati Shakespeare Company
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra | Contemporary Arts Center | Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati | Fitton Center for Creative Arts
Learning Through Art | Kentucky Symphony Orchestra | Madcap Productions Puppet Theatre | May Festival | Telt Museum of Art
Please consider the Fine Arts Fund in your estate planning.



Hamilton County Celebrates Public Service Recognition Week, Recognizes Employee of the Year Award Winners



On May 6, which was a rainy Wednesday afternoon, Hamilton County participated in the Greater Cincinnati Public Service Recognition event at Fountain Square. County Administrator Patrick Thompson (left) and Commission President David Pepper (right) introduced each of Hamilton County's Employee of the Year award winners and commended all Hamilton County employees for their public service.

The award-winning employees' accomplishments are described on the next few pages.

Customer Service Excellence Award

W. Chris Porter, Web Developer Regional Planning Commission

If you have found Hamilton County's website helpful, you can thank Chris Porter! Porter exemplifies the best of customer service for Hamilton County. Porter's consistent delivery of outstanding service has created a high level of customer satisfaction for all users of Hamilton County's website.

Porter assists over 40 Hamilton County organizations with the county's website. These organizations frequently update their portions of the county website and, when they do, they work with Porter. He continually balances numerous requests for new web products with varying deadlines and consistently delivers a high quality product to his customers. Porter's nomination included positive comments from many of these customers. One says, "Working with Chris is a joy, and it is wonderful to know that technical support of his caliber is available when needed." Another states, "Chris seems to have a zeal for his job and a genuine care for his customers."

Porter advocates for improvements that enhance customer satisfaction, eliminates barriers for customers, and serves as a role model through positive interactions with customers. His level of service is outstanding!



Chris Porter



Hamilton County Employee of the Year Award Winners

Leadership Award Jim Ashmore, Performance Improvement Section Chief Job & Family Services

Jim Ashmore always looks for innovative ways for Job and Family Services (JFS) to better serve its clients. And he makes sure the ideas are implemented and are successful. If an issue arises, Ashmore is the first one to step in and fix it.

Ashmore has worked in various areas of JFS during his 21 years of service. He often serves as a liaison between the agency, community providers, and state and local officials. He serves on various Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Directors' Association committees. Ashmore was honored with the Association's President's Award in 2008, and the Association stated, "Ashmore is highly respected by his peers and is a tremendous resource to the county job and family services system."

Ashmore successfully helped lead two recent, important initiatives: a collaborative project with the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and JFS' effort to provide emergency assistance in the aftermath of the 2008 windstorm. Jim's hands-on efforts and his great ability to lead helped both initiatives achieve outstanding results.

Ashmore is the type of leader who encourages his employees to do their best, is right there with them every step of the way, and ensures they receive the recognition they deserve.



Jim Ashmore (left) and Mike Boehmer (right).

Innovation Award Mike Boehmer, Public Information Specialist Job & Family Services

Mike Boehmer has helped put Hamilton County's Department of Job & Family Services (JFS) on the map when it comes to using innovative, new media as a communication tool.

JFS has been very aggressive in New Media techniques – blogging, chatting, video, audio casts, and other social media tactics. The organization sees new media as a low-cost way to communicate with and serve strategic audiences.

Boehmer's efforts in this area have led to the agency being recognized as one of the most progressive government users of new media in the country. Boehmer recently received the top honor of the local chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, and he was asked to give a presentation to the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce on his activities so private companies could learn about effective use of new media.

Boehmer ensures that new media, as well as the agency's Intranet and Internet sites, are a way of life at JFS. Boehmer's passion is a driving force. Boehmer is a tremendous asset whose passion and dedication serve as a model to all employees.



Hamilton County Employee of the Year Award Winners

Professional Achievement Award

Michelle Balz, Solid Waste Outreach Coordinator Environmental Services

Michelle Balz is a hard-working, well-respected, dedicated employee. She cultivates and shares her knowledge by participating in numerous professional organizations and workgroups. And she gets great results for Environmental Services!

Balz identifies new programs and practices and uses them to reduce costs. Her new approach to marketing the organization's compost bin sale saved over \$10,000 and attracted a sell-out crowd. She earned a \$100,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for the Recycle Bank Program, which has been successfully implemented in the City of Montgomery. And she has created programs that encourage organizations to reduce their environmental impact, such as the Recycling At Work program and the Go Green Challenge.

Balz's creativity and strong partnerships with communities have resulted in an increase in the recycling tonnages in 2008. And a recent article that Balz wrote was published in a national recycling trade publication which is circulated to over 20,000 peers and colleagues in the solid waste field throughout the country. Her great work is making an impact locally and nationally!



Michelle Balz

Administrative/Clerical Support Award

Julie Martin, Administrative Assistant Paul Brown Stadium

Julie Martin has consistently shown initiative, a positive attitude, and a professional demeanor while her job has changed and grown over the past two years.

With other administrative assistant positions vacant at Paul Brown Stadium, Martin voluntarily stepped up and demonstrated her ability to perform the extra tasks necessary to keep the operations running smoothly. When a restructuring of the organization required Martin to assume additional responsibilities in late 2008, she continued her positive approach and developed innovative ways to ensure the work is completed in a manner that's timely and accurate.

Martin takes the initiative to make things better when possible. She saw a need for increased information sharing and created a newsletter for Paul Brown Stadium employees. Martin noticed that food equipment appeared to have been abandoned in some areas of the Stadium and coordinated with the stadium's food vendor and the county's surplus auction to have the items removed and sold at auction. She recommends and implements process improvements. And she documents all current and new procedures so work can easily be completed by others.

Martin's meticulous attention to detail, her willingness to make things better, and her can-do attitude make her an amazing Administrative Assistant.



**Julie Martin, right, and
Mike Robison (left) of
Clerk of Courts**



Hamilton County Employee of the Year Award Winners

County Hero Award (2 winners) Robert Cordray and Brad Teeters, Deputy Criminal Bailiffs Clerk of Courts

Corporal Robert Cordray and Deputy Brad Teeters have served as Criminal Bailiffs for the Clerk of Court's Criminal Bailiff Division for the past six years. Both are dedicated and professional in carrying out their duties for the Municipal Court, as exemplified by a recent situation.

They were out in the field on a cold winter day and noticed a window open at the residence next door to the house where they were serving a warrant. It was unusual for a window to be open on such a cold day, so they checked it out.

They noticed footprints in the snow leading to and from the window. The home had been burglarized, although the homeowner hadn't yet realized it. Cordray and Teeters immediately called the Springfield Township police to respond, and they were careful to preserve the scene. With the scene preserved, the police gathered enough evidence to find the individual who had committed the burglary. He confessed, and charges are pending. While the police did their work, Cordray and Teeters calmed the burglary victim.

Cordray's and Teeters' actions helped a citizen of Hamilton County and also took a burglar off the streets.



Clerk of Courts Patricia Clancy,
Robert Cordray, and Brad Teeters.

Extra Mile Award John Schwind, Probation Officer Adult Probation (Intensive Supervision Unit)

John Schwind serves as a Probation Officer in the Intensive Supervision Unit. Since Price Hill's Probation Substation opened in 2007 under John's leadership, he has assisted the citizens of Price Hill in their efforts to reclaim their community. John's commitment and dedication to Price Hill's safety goes above and beyond.

John's efforts have helped reduce crime and decrease the number of incidents involving repeat offenders. John has assisted Price Hill's Court Watch team by answering questions about defendants, delivering impact statements and helping the team navigate the justice system.

You can often find John on the streets of Price Hill, along with the Safety Community Action Team, performing safety walks and assisting with litter cleanups. John works with local "block clubs" addressing safety concerns and dealing with situations involving probationers living in the area.

John goes the extra mile to make Price Hill a safer, more livable community.



John Schwind



Caring Families are Needed!



Kenneth & Kevin

October 1997 & May 1996

Because of their closeness in age, these two brothers get along famously. Kevin and Kenneth share many of the same interests, yet they are definitely each a unique individual.

The older of the two, Kevin can be a real helping hand around the house – he's not afraid to put away a dish or two, and he enjoys learning how to complete new chores. And even though he has a bold front, he is pretty low key and thrives on having a set routine. He usually prefers to stay home, with one exception - going away to summer camp is something that Kevin looks forward to all year.

Kenneth has an affectionate and loving side hidden beneath his bold exterior. He's a little more social than Kevin when it comes to participating in activities like fishing or going to church; he likes getting out of the house to do things. Like his older brother, Kenneth also counts the days to summer camp each year.

These great boys are a wonderful sibling set who will do well when placed together with a caring family.

**For information on becoming a foster or adoptive parent
call (513) 632-6366 or visit www.hcadopt.org**



Please post "Hello Hamilton County," so everyone can see what's going on!

Hello Hamilton County is published monthly. It is designed to inform citizens and employees about news and events related to Hamilton County government and our community in general. You can find current and archived editions on the County's website. If you have questions, suggestions, or article submissions, please contact Laura Maus.

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