



# Hello Hamilton County

August 15, 2007

E-News for Hamilton County citizens and employees

Quote of the week: "Live and work with integrity, and everything else is a piece of cake."

~ Pat Salvatore

## Hamilton County Among Best at Landing New Companies



Dr. Rea Waldon (Board Member), Harry Blanton and Barry Strum of the Hamilton County Development Company met with the Board of Commissioners on August 13th to discuss the new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Hamilton County has been one of the most successful in the nation at attracting new businesses over the past eight years, according to a new study by *Expansion Management* magazine and the nonpartisan National Policy Research Council.

The research, published in the May/June 2007 issue of *Expansion Management*, ranked Hamilton County number 16 among mid-sized counties. It was one of just 60 counties recognized out of 3,141 nationwide, based on relocation and expansion data on 19 million companies for the past eight years.

"For the metros and counties that ranked high in this study, it represents the best of all possible validation that their local economies are on the right track," said the article, written by Chief Editor Bill King.

"There's probably not a better vote of confidence than knowing that, when faced with a decision of where in the entire United States to locate a new facility or branch office, the consensus of millions of business executives was to choose these locations for a significant business investment," it continued. "In a very real sense, this is a reflection of the marketplace at work."

The only other Ohio county that made the grade was Franklin, home to Columbus, which ranked number 16 among large counties.

"Hamilton County's ranking is great news," said Board of County Commissioners President Todd Portune. "It speaks to how attractive we are as a community and encourages us to continue with the improvements and enhancements in

our business environment that we are making and that are making Hamilton County a business magnet."

David K. Main, president of Hamilton County Development Company (HCDC) said, "It is gratifying that not only our economic development efforts, but our results are being recognized by a national publication and resource such as *Expansion Management* magazine."

HCDC, a private, nonprofit corporation, administers the programs of Hamilton County's Economic Development Office as well as the SBA 504 and Ohio Regional 166 loan programs. It also operates the largest business incubator in the region.

For more information on HCDC, please visit their website at [www.hcdc.com](http://www.hcdc.com).



## Hamilton County offers citizens a chance for a “Suite Deal” at Paul Brown Stadium

As the Cincinnati Bengals ready themselves for the upcoming season, Hamilton County is again this year offering its citizens an opportunity to watch a Bengals game from the county's Paul Brown Stadium (PBS) suite.

Sixteen winners and their guests will be selected to attend one of two Bengals' games, where they'll enjoy complimentary food and soft drinks.

Commission President Todd Portune shared his pleasure in offering this chance to the citizens of Hamilton County, saying, "Hamilton County residents are great fans. This is an exciting opportunity to open the county's suite for their enjoyment."

"The county's residents generously provided the means to build the stadium," commented Commissioner David Pepper. "It's our privilege to open the county's suite for these games."

"It is only appropriate the taxpayers who paid for the stadium have a chance to use the county suite," stated Commissioner Pat DeWine.

In addition to this opportunity for residents selected through random drawings, the suite at Paul Brown Stadium will be used by groups such as foster families, county volunteers, the county's Employees of the Year, and volunteer instructors in the county's employee training program.

If you need more information, please contact Eric Stuckey, 946-4303, or Amy Nickerson, 946-4304.

The games which residents can register for a chance to attend in the Hamilton County PBS suite are:

### **Monday, October 1 Cincinnati vs. New England**

The drawing for this game will be held on September 19th, following the County Commissioners' meeting. Winners must respond within 48 hours of the drawing.

and

### **Sunday, December 23 Cincinnati vs. Cleveland**

The drawing for this game will be held on December 12th, following the County Commissioners' meeting. Winners must respond within 48 hours of the drawing.

Residents can enter the drawing by visiting the county's website at

[www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov](http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov)

or by leaving a telephone message on the registration hotline, 513-946-4994.

Entries are limited to Hamilton County residents, with one entry per citizen, and they will be accepted until December 5, 2007.



The Hamilton County Communications Center's employees receive 9-1-1 calls 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Watch for the *Hamilton County Innovates* symbol throughout issues of "Hello Hamilton County." It signifies that the article highlights something new that the county is doing to add value for our community!



## Hamilton County Communications Center is the First in the Nation to Test Next Generation 9-1-1.

Picture this: you witness a crime, and as the perpetrator runs away, you take his photo with your cell phone camera. Using your cell phone, you call 911 and send them the photo. They share the photo with the police, and the perpetrator is caught quickly, partially because of the photo. The Hamilton County Communications Center is participating in a pilot program that can make this kind of scenario a reality.

When 9-1-1 was designed, only traditional home and business telephone lines used its services. Since technology is ever changing, with the addition of things like cellular and wireless phones, automatic crash notification (ACN) and Voice Over IP (VOIP) phones, the time has come for networks to handle the current and newer technologies. This need was illustrated, for example, when students at Columbine High School and at Virginia Tech were frustrated that they couldn't communicate with police using text messaging during the attacks at their schools. With the type of technology involved in the pilot program, that could be possible.

The Hamilton County Communications Center has been selected as the first 9-1-1 center in the nation to be a test site for the implementation of the next generation of 9-1-1 Internet Protocol (IP) based technology that will support wireless telephone text messaging, camera, video and other non-traditional forms of location technology. We are pleased to announce that we have completed the first step to implement this new networking technology.

The Hamilton County Communications Center has partnered with Intrado, a leader in national public safety solutions. The first test call was made on Friday July 20th at 10:26 AM. With successful testing, all wireless and VOIP calls will be delivered to the new network. Eventually all calls will arrive on the new network.

Hamilton County recognizes that being able to respond to requests for service from citizens using these types of devices has the potential to save lives, and participating in this pilot program is the first step towards making that possibility a reality.



## Buy Something Great! Place a Bid on the Hamilton County Internet Surplus Auction Site



You can purchase items from Hamilton County's online auction 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! Hamilton County has its own Internet Surplus Auction site with auctions ending on a weekly basis.

Hamilton County established its Surplus Auction site in 2003 to streamline the disposal of obsolete property while producing revenue for Hamilton County. Hamilton County has generated over \$300,000 in revenue since the program started and over \$60,000 in revenue for the City of Blue Ash since the beginning of 2006. Hamilton County had over 3.3 million visitors on the Surplus Auction site in 2006.

Hamilton County is working with other government agencies, including the City of Blue Ash, City of Lockland, Colerain Township, Green Township and Whitewater Township to sell their surplus items through Hamilton County's Auction site. The benefits of bringing together multiple government agencies on the Hamilton County

auction site allows you to view, bid and pay for more auction items in one convenient place (one-stop shopping).

Registration is simple, secure and free, and you can start bidding on items as soon as registration is complete. To register, visit [www.hamiltoncountyohioauction.com](http://www.hamiltoncountyohioauction.com) and follow the easy steps.

Typical items being auctioned include used computers, network equipment, fax machines, printers, office furniture, file cabinets, vehicles, industrial equipment, trailers, wagons and much more!

For more information about our internet surplus auction program, please email [AuctionSurplus@hamilton-co.org](mailto:AuctionSurplus@hamilton-co.org) or contact Shelly Walls at (513) 946-4345.



**Buy it  
from  
Hamilton County!**

Watch for the *Buy it from Hamilton County* symbol in future editions of "Hello Hamilton County." When you see it, you'll get to find out about a great item you can purchase from Hamilton County government!



## The Board of County Commissioners' *Fresh Ideas* Program Encourages Employees to Share Ideas that Add Value!

Recognizing that employees are a valuable source of ideas, the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners is pleased to introduce the *Fresh Ideas* program. This employee suggestion program encourages employees to share ideas that can help Hamilton County government best serve our community. Specifically, *Fresh Ideas* rewards individual employees for sharing practical ideas that can help Hamilton county government:

- Improve efficiency
- Enhance service
- Generate savings
- Generate revenue

It is the desire of the Board of County Commissioners that all county departments participate in the *Fresh Ideas* program.

The program provides a great way for employees to make suggestions and share ideas that can be beneficial for the county. Employees who submit a suggestion that meets the criteria of the program will receive a congratulatory item and are eligible for one of two types of awards: An intangible award or a tangible award.

Intangible awards may be given to an employee whose implemented suggestion:

- is expected to produce a savings or revenue enhancement of \$199 or less or
- produces a result for which a precise monetary value can't be determined.

Employees eligible for intangible awards will be entered into a raffle, which makes them eligible for prizes such as tickets to local sporting or arts events or one day of paid leave.

Tangible awards may be awarded to an employee whose implemented idea:

- Has a value that can be precisely determined
- Demonstrates projected annual monetary savings or enhancements in revenue of at least \$200.

In the first six months of 2007, four county departments participated in a pilot of the *Fresh Ideas* program. Six ideas were submitted, and four met the program's criteria. One of the accepted ideas earned a tangible award, and three of the accepted ideas were eligible for intangible awards.

Accepted ideas included saving money on training costs by scheduling everyone at once for a mandatory training session, rather than staggering the training throughout the year. This enabled the department to take advantage of a multiple-registration discount, saving over \$400 annually. Another idea involved improving a form, so it would reveal more needed information. A third idea resulted in converting a paper process to an electronic process, which saved resources and made information more easily accessible for the people receiving it.

Good ideas don't have to have huge results to make a positive difference! Every idea that adds value for the county is beneficial, and employees are encouraged to submit their ideas to the *Fresh Ideas* program for consideration!

For more details regarding the *Fresh Ideas* program, please contact:

Kim Pennekamp  
Hamilton County Personnel  
946-4708 or  
[kim.pennekamp@hamilton-co.org](mailto:kim.pennekamp@hamilton-co.org)

You can also find information about the *Fresh Ideas* program at: <http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/Personnel/BenefitsDivision/FreshIdeas/FreshIdeasHome.asp>



## Environmental Services is Doing It's Share for Cleaner Air with a Hybrid Fleet



The Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services (HCDOES) is doing its share for cleaner air by having seven hybrid vehicles in its fleet of vehicles.

HCDOES has two Honda Insights, four Honda Civic hybrids and one recently-purchased Toyota Prius. As the need arises, the agency evaluates replacing its existing conventional vehicles with new hybrid vehicles.

These hybrids not only support HCDOES' mission of protecting Southwest Ohio's environment, they also reduce the amount of money the agency spends on gas. Over twenty of HCDOES' employees make daily trips into Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren counties to conduct Air Quality Management Division business. Fuel-efficient, low emission hybrids allow HCDOES to reduce air pollution and fuel use.

In a maintenance cost comparison from 2003 to 2006, HCDOES' hybrid vehicles, on average, cost \$140 less annually to maintain than HCDOES' conventional vehicles. The hybrids are also quite fuel efficient, with miles-per-gallon (MPG) aver-

ages ranging from 39 MPG to 55 MPG, depending on the model. By using less gas, these hybrids emit less air pollution while saving money.

The hybrids are so popular at HCDOES that four employees have bought hybrids for use as their personal cars. Holly Christmann, Solid Waste Management District Program Manager, even has two – one Toyota Prius and one Honda Civic hybrid.

Hybrids are an easy way to reduce air pollution, but not all hybrids get the same gas mileage. To compare the fuel efficiency of several different models of hybrids, visit [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov), the U.S. Department of Energy's fuel economy website.

To learn more about HCDOES, air quality and reducing air pollution, go to [www.hcdoes.org](http://www.hcdoes.org).



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

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

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