



Hello Hamilton County

October 2010

E-News for Hamilton County citizens and employees

Quote of the month:

***“The secret to success
is to do common things uncommonly well.”***

~John D. Rockefeller Jr.

Hamilton County Awarded Second Chance Act Funds To Address Jail Overcrowding and Recidivism

Most citizens in Hamilton County know that jail overcrowding is a big issue for the community. Thanks to an effort by County Commissioner David Pepper's office and various community partners, Hamilton County has received grant funding to address the issue.

Hamilton County has been awarded one of the highly competitive Federal Department of Justice Second Chance Act grants in the amount of \$749,793 for the Hamilton County Offender Reentry Initiative project. The Second Chance Act is the result of years of bipartisan work in Congress to help communities deal with the costs of jail overcrowding and unsustainable recidivism.

Hamilton County's application was truly a collaborative effort that involves almost 20 community partners and leveraged \$880,000 in local match (both in kind services and cash donations) to compete for, and ultimately receive, this coveted grant. Based on the award amount, Hamilton County will be able to provide far more robust reentry services--a critical component in addressing the persistent overcrowding and high recidivism situation.

The initiative is a multifaceted



Second Chance Act Funds will enable the County to address overcrowding at the Hamilton County Justice Center, pictured above.

approach to addressing reentry issues within Hamilton County. Specifically, it provides funding for the creation of a Hamilton County Reentry Office and the hiring of a county-wide reentry coordination position. This new reentry coordinator will be responsible for implementing the Hamilton County Reentry Strategic Plan that Ohio Justice Policy Center and

Commissioner Portune are currently working on restructuring with actionable goals and outcomes.

Opening a county reentry office and hiring a full time staffer will be a critical component of doing this work, while addressing both immediate reentry issues and broader, system wide, criminal justice reforms as a whole.

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“In our tough budgets, we clearly have not had the funds--and would not have the funds--to otherwise do this important work, which could result in great cost savings if done properly,” said Commissioner Pepper.

Additionally, the grant provides funding for a pilot demonstration project that will provide wrap around case management services for a selected group of ex-offenders, with the ultimate goal of placing those clients in either a transitional employment track or a traditional employment track. Initially, this pilot project is designed to serve 200 people during its first year. The reentry process will begin within Hamilton County’s correctional

institutions and participants will be given an individualized service plan, tailored to address their own specific needs and barriers to reentry. That plan will guide clients through the reentry process, follow them through their employment track, and will be used to evaluate their progress upon completion of the program. The partners will track the results of these varying case management services and employment programs so the County can determine which employment opportunities and services are most effective, given the specific inmate population.

Talbert House, Easter Seals Work Resource Center and the Urban League serve as three lead agencies for this project. This award would not be possible without their support, as well as the support of

numerous community partners such as US Bank, YWCA, Cincinnati Parks Board, Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Sisters of Charity, Building Value, and many others. Within Hamilton County government, the Sheriff’s Department, Pretrial Services, Probation, and the River City Correctional Facility all offered letters of support on behalf of the project.

“This grant truly demonstrates the importance of working collaboratively to address criminal justice reforms and reentry services in our community,” said Commissioner Pepper. “Thanks to all those who helped put it together — and to Jen Gehring from my office in particular. I look forward to working together to see that it is implemented successfully.”



The Hamilton County Planning Partnership and its partner organizations are offering a series of “Reinventing Our Communities” workshops for elected and appointed officials in Hamilton County, private, public, and civic sector members of the Community.

During this series of workshops, participants will examine data and research findings, participate in critical thinking activities and discussion, and consider ways to take collaborative action to achieve sustainable development in Hamilton County.

The first workshop is on October 22, 2010. Please follow this link to learn more about the series and to register:

www.hamilton-co.org/hcrpc/shc

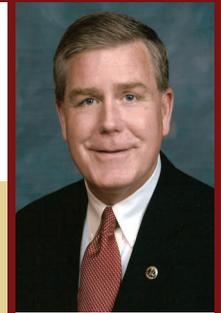
Reinventing Our Communities Series Sessions Include:

- Session I: October 22, 2010
The Built Environment: Retrofitting Cities, Communities, Neighborhoods.
- Session II: November 19, 2010
Trends That Are Changing Our Communities.
- Session III: January 21, 2011
Fiscal sustainability and quality of life of our communities.
- Follow up Forum: March 11, 2011
Sustainable Hamilton County: Making It Happen!



Patrick's Perspective

Hamilton County Purchasing Department Provides a Model for Shared Services



**Patrick Thompson,
Hamilton County
Administrator**

While many government leaders only talk about shared services, one Hamilton County organization has been walking the talk for years! The Hamilton County Purchasing Department serves as a model for using innovation and shared services to benefit many local governments.

Chances are, you've already heard or read about the innovative things Amy Hoh, Director of Purchasing, and her department are doing to share services. In May, "Hello Hamilton County" published an [article](#) about the Surplus Auction and the many local governments that use it. On August 26, the Cincinnati Enquirer published an article touting the cost savings that Clermont County is achieving through a partnership with Hamilton County Purchasing.

To sum it up, the Purchasing Department finds innovative ways to save money, to generate revenue, and to encourage other local government agencies to participate with Hamilton County Purchasing so they can save money and generate revenue together.

Initiatives include:

- Providing an online surplus auction in which Hamilton County and at least 20 other jurisdictions sell used items to generate revenue; Since 2004, the Surplus Auction has generated over \$1 million in revenue;



**Hamilton County's Top Notch Purchasing Team:
Jill Williams, Gina Richmond, Amy Hoh, and JoAnn Cramer.**

- Inviting other jurisdictions to participate in cooperative buying programs for items like fuel and for services such as document shredding;
- Using an online invitation to bid system that makes it easy for multiple vendors to learn about opportunities, providing more options and savings for the County. This system is available for other local jurisdictions to use, as well.

The Purchasing Department's focus on generating both cost savings and revenue is noteworthy on its own. But combined with Hoh's outreach to other local jurisdictions, it's a model for how shared services can be successfully achieved.

Any time that we look at sharing or consolidating services, two goals must be achieved: It's got to result

in cost savings and service enhancements. We can't go backwards with service delivery, and it's essential that we see savings.

With those goals in mind, Hamilton County continues to explore possibilities for shared services. Right now, the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County are exploring whether consolidating 9-1-1 services is a good option. And the City of Cincinnati is very early in discussions about whether having the City and County Public Health organizations share services would be beneficial. The economy is forcing local governments to achieve cost savings, and exploring shared services is one way to achieve these cost savings. I support sharing and consolidating services — I'm all for it. Taxpayers expect it, and it's a good thing.

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As we move forward with exploring shared services, Hamilton County leaders will stay focused on the need to achieve both goals of saving money and enhancing service delivery with any shared service initiative. If those goals can't

be achieved with any specific service sharing initiative, we won't do it. But in areas where we realize that both goals can be achieved, we will diligently pursue shared services. And we will look to the Hamilton County Purchasing Department's success as a model and a guide.

Hats off to Amy Hoh, the Purchasing Department staff, and to all local jurisdictions involved in the partnership with Purchasing. You're proving that it can be done, and you're paving the way for future shared service initiatives.

Disaster Planning Collaborative Unveils New Disaster Preparedness Plan

After the windstorm in September 2008, many area social service providers recognized a need for a more seamless system of disaster response in support of their "at risk" populations. As a result, Hamilton County founded an Emergency Planning Collaborative Team (EPC), which began working on a disaster preparedness plan.

The Hamilton County General Health District leads the EPC in conjunction with the Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency (EMA). The EPC unveiled its Disaster Emergency Collaborative Plan on September 14.

The plan augments the Hamilton County Emergency Operation Plan in order to meet the needs of vulnerable populations in times of disaster. Many people within vulnerable populations require special services in order to understand the nature of an emergency, respond appropriately, and communicate their needs to the response community. The EPC's plan helps.

The Disaster Emergency Collaborative Plan provides for the coordination between the emergency management system and community based organizations which provide services for vulnerable populations. Specifically, the plan addresses services regarding notification, warning, transportation, and self-care/sheltering.

The EPC also provides educational materials about how citizens can personally prepare for a disaster. The team has created a preparation checklist and is distributing it through the region to assist citizens.

In addition to helping special needs populations,

Hamilton County has taken other steps to increase the community's preparedness for a disaster. Steps include:

- Developing partnerships with private merchants, such as The Kroger Company, to get the word out to customers about what emergency preparedness items are important to purchase;
- Enhancing the siren system so it can be heard in all areas of Hamilton County;
- Implementing a reverse 9-1-1 system, so residents can be notified of disasters and emergencies. For more information about the reverse 9-1-1 system, please see p. 5 of this newsletter.

Emergency Planning Collaborative Team

- Captain Tim Sheehan
Cincinnati Chapter of the Salvation Army
- Peter Kaiser
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center
- Suzanne Burke
Council on Aging for SW Ohio
- Commissioner Todd Portune
Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners
- Cheryl Phipps,
Hamilton County Developmental Disabilities Services
- Jim Hellyer,
Hamilton County Developmental Disabilities Services
- Kathy Lordo,
Hamilton County Public Health



Register with Hamilton County EMA's Citizen Early Warning Notification System

Traditionally, if people wanted to learn about a disaster or emergency that might impact them, they had to be watching TV, listening to the radio, or using the internet to find out about it. But now, information about things like natural disasters, man-made disasters, missing children, or public safety emergencies can be sent directly to you.

The Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) provides an Emergency Alert Notification System free of charge for citizens. With this system, citizens can register to receive notices about emergencies in the way that is best suited for them. Options include:

- Telephone
- Cell phone
- Text message

Citizens can register for the Emergency Alert

[Click Here to Register](#)

Citizen Emergency Notification System

To learn more, visit: <https://hamco-oh.smartmsg.com>

Notification System and select the options that they prefer. For example, citizens can decide which

communications methods work best for them and which types of alerts they would like to receive, including:

- Downtown Cincinnati alerts
- Tornado Warning Alerts
- Chemical Spill or Hazard Alerts
- Amber Alerts/Missing Person Alerts.

Citizens can change their service options or cancel the service at any time.

"We hope everyone in Hamilton County takes advantage of this system by registering," said District Chief Ed Dadosky. "In this ever-changing world, we all need to be informed and prepared to act."

To register to use the Emergency Alert Notification System, please visit this link:

<https://hamco-oh.smartmsg.com/>



Hamilton County Job and Family Services Moves to Phone-Based System; Increases Customer Convenience & Efficiency

Director Moira Weir announced that in October, JFS is moving to a phone-based system for public assistance recertification and eligibility determination.

Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services

believe this will make it easier on our consumers, because they will not have to come downtown for certification, spending time waiting in line and money on gas and parking."

The move will also enable JFS employees to conduct interviews more quickly than is possible with in-person interviews.

"Logistically, it makes sense for us," explained Weir. "Right now, about 60,000 people come through our

lobbies each month. We have 150,000 people receiving Medicaid assistance in this county and 132,000 receiving food assistance. That is about one in six county residents for each program. With the tax-paying public demanding that we do more with less, we must take advantage of every opportunity to become more efficient."

Consumers will receive notice about phone interviews in the mail before upcoming appointments.

"This is a significant change in the way we do business," said Weir. "We



Hamilton County Board of Elections Makes Voting Convenient

The Hamilton County Board of Elections makes voting convenient for Hamilton County residents. Prior to Election Day, voters can participate in absentee voting. Early voting (also known "as in-person absentee voting") began September 28 and continues through Monday, November 1. Voters may choose to vote early by absentee ballot through the mail. And, of course, the polls will be open on Election Day — Tuesday, November 2, 2010.



Voter Registration Deadline

Monday, October 4, 2010 is the registration deadline for purposes of voting in this November's election. The Board of Elections offers extended hours on October 4 to provide extra time for citizens to register: 8 a.m.—9 p.m.

Absentee Ballot by Mail

Voters may vote early by absentee ballot through the mail. Please visit www.votehamiltoncounty.org to download an application for absentee ballot. Voters may also get applications at the Board of Elections office.

Absentee ballot applications may be dropped off at the Board of Elections until noon on Saturday, October 30, 2010. Ballots returned by mail to the Board of Elections must be postmarked no later than November 1, 2010 and must be received by the Board no later than 10 days after Election Day.

Early Voting Hours

Early voting, also known as in-person absentee voting, is conducted at the Board of Elections offices at 824 Broadway during the following hours:

- Monday—Friday, September 28—October 15: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Monday, October 4: 8 a.m.—9 p.m.
- Monday—Friday, October 18—October 29: 8 a.m.—8 p.m.
- Saturday, October 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30: 8 a.m.—noon
- Monday, November 1: 8 a.m.—4 p.m.

Election Day: Tuesday, November 2

Voting at the Board of Elections on Election Day — Tuesday, November 2, 2010 — will only be for registered voters who have changed their address.

Polls open at 6:30 a.m. and remain open until 7:30 p.m. Please check the Board of Elections website to find your polling location: www.votehamiltoncounty.org.

For more information, please contact the Hamilton County Board of Elections, using the contact information below.

Hamilton County Board of Elections
824 Broadway Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
513-632-7039; 513-632-7001; 513-632-7051 www.votehamiltoncounty.org



County Facilities Department Manages Successful Union Terminal Renovation Project

The Hamilton County Facilities Department managed a \$10 million renovation project at the Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, and on September 17, the work was unveiled. Public officials toured areas at Union Terminal to see the completed work, which includes the Union Terminal's Cincinnati Dining Room, Historic Dining Rooms, and installation of the green roof at Cincinnati Museum Center.

This project is the first major project of the total renovation of Union Terminal. Major structural repairs were made for things like roofing, masonry, windows and building systems. Interior finishes and historical murals were restored to their original luster.

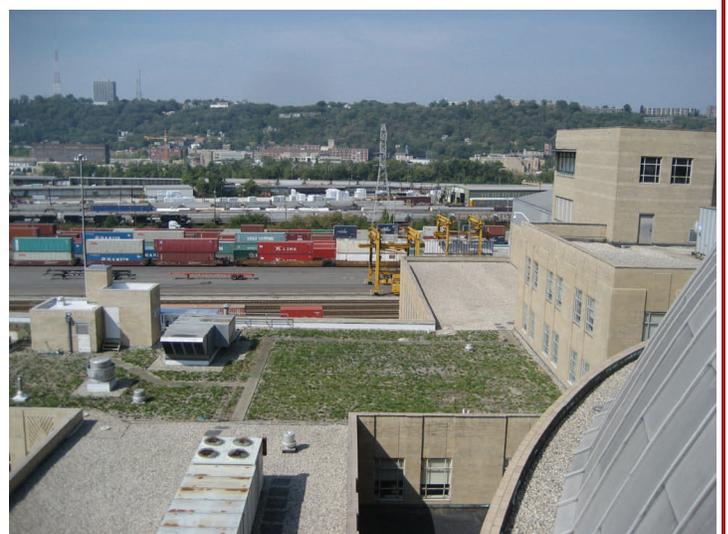
County Facilities' responsibilities included:

- Managing the budget;
- Overseeing processes such as requests for bids and project design;
- Hiring the architects;
- Managing the contractors.

The renovations included the installation of the 7,600 square foot green roof, which is the largest green roof in all of Hamilton County. Green roofs absorb rain-water, provide insulation and help lower urban air temperatures. A green roof was selected because of the environmental benefits and because evidence shows this type of roof lasts longer and stays in better condition than a traditional roof.

John Michel served as County Facilities' Project Manager for the Union Terminal renovation, and he says the most challenging part of the project involved managing the budget. The project was done in phases, because the funding became available in increments. Funding sources included:

- A portion of the 2004 levy approved by Hamilton County voters
- The State of Ohio through the Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission
- The City of Cincinnati
- The Metropolitan Sewer District
- National Endowment for the Arts
- National Parks Service through its Save America's Treasures Grant
- In-Kind donation from Bohlke Veneer Company, in memory of Marc Bohlke
- An anonymous donation.



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“It was difficult because a majority of the funding came from other sources besides the levy,” explained Michel. We had to spend money and get reimbursed. Making sure funding was available really impacted the scheduling.”

Michel says he enjoyed the project, because it was such a historical renovation. Those involved with the

project matched as much as possible to the existing design from the 1930s, including wood paneling, cork walls, and cork floors.

“John has managed a very important project not only for Cincinnati Museum Center but for the citizens of Hamilton County,” said Hamilton County Facilities Director Ralph Linne. “I am very proud of how John managed this effort and ensured that the levy dollars were put to the

best usage given needs at Union Terminal.”

For more information about the Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, please visit this link:

<http://www.cincymuseum.org/>



Provide Input on the 15 Year Solid Waste Management Plan

One of the integral functions of the Hamilton County Solid Waste District (District) is writing and implementing a 15 Year Solid Waste Management Plan. The Plan is updated every five years. The District is currently updating the Plan so a draft can be submitted to the Ohio EPA by October 10, 2011. As this update occurs, there are many ways for residents, businesses and community leaders to provide input.



The District’s Policy Committee oversees the writing of the plan. The Plan provides the District with the opportunity to comprehensively review its programs to ensure the programs are achieving the state-mandated goals and are meeting the needs of the District’s stakeholders.

In late 2009, the Policy Committee determined that key areas on which to focus in the updated plan are:

- Organics Diversion
- Social Marketing
- Multi-Family Recycling
- Economic Incentives
- Alternative Waste Management Technologies

Anyone can access issue papers on each of these key areas at this link:

<http://www.hcdoes.org/SWMD/WhoWeAre/Plan.html>

Residents, businesses, and community leaders are invited to provide input on the Plan. There are multiple venues available for providing input, including:

- Participate in the upcoming public information sessions:

- Tuesday, October 19, 5:30 p.m.—7 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 20, 10 a.m.—11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, October 20, 1:30 p.m.—3 p.m.

- All three sessions will be held at:
The Department of Environmental Services’ Office
250 Wm Howard Taft Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

- Speak at a Policy Committee meeting
- Submit comments during the public comment period
- Submit a comment via website
- Call or email the District at 513-946-7734
- Request a presentation by District staff.

For more information, please visit the District’s website at this link:

<http://www.hcdoes.org/SWMD/WhoWeAre/Plan.html>



Hamilton County Law Library Presents “You and the Legal System: Immigration” Seminar

As a public service, the Hamilton County Law Library, in conjunction with the Cincinnati Bar Association’s Lawyer Referral Service, will present the following seminar:



You and the Legal System: Immigration

Friday, October 22, 2010

12:00 noon

at the Hamilton County Law Library

Hamilton County Courthouse

1000 Main St., Room 601

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

This program is free to the public and is designed for the non-lawyer citizen. It will last one hour with time for questions. Cincinnati attorney [Thomas Geygan, Jr.](#) will discuss a variety of topics related to immigration, including:

- Basic terminology;
- Family-based issues like the quota system; residency and forms;
- The Process and consular processing;
- Employment-related issues; and
- Citizenship.

Questions about green cards, deportation, extension of visas, eligibility for citizenship, immigrants and the workplace, and more will be welcome.

Please call the Hamilton County Law Library at 513-946-5300 for more information or to reserve a seat. Walk-ins will be accommodated as space permits. For directions to the Hamilton County Law Library, please see <http://www.hamilton-co.org/cinlawlib/about/findus.html>

Become a Higher Education Mentoring Initiative Mentor! Informational Sessions Available

The Higher Education Mentoring Initiative (HEMI) needs volunteer mentors to work with Hamilton County foster youth who are attending high school. As a HEMI mentor, you could help students focus on their education — especially on their options for post-secondary education.



Each session takes place from 5:30 p.m.—6:30 p.m. at the County Administration Building Room 603 138 E. Court St., Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

To learn more about becoming a HEMI mentor, please plan to attend one of the upcoming information sessions:

- Wednesday, October 27 or
- Tuesday, November 9 or
- Tuesday, November 16

To learn more about HEMI, please see the [article](#) on p. 7 of the September 2010 edition of “Hello Hamilton County,” visit <http://www.uc.edu/cechpass/hemi.html> or call Commissioner Greg Hartmann’s office at 513-946-4405.



Ten Tips for Keeping Children Safe

Do you ever wonder what you could do to help prevent child abuse and neglect?

The Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services gives you some answers in a free e-book called 10 Tips for Keeping Children Safe.

You can access the book at this link:

<http://www.hcifs.hamilton-co.org/Demo/services/childrenservices/10TipsForKeepingChildrenSafeEBook.pdf>



10 Tips for Keeping Children Safe



Their Dream: Staying in Cincinnati

Being Adopted =
Dream Come True

Adoption = Possibilities! visit hckids.org



More than 200 children in the custody of the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services are awaiting adoption. Most are over age 12, and most have been waiting more than a year.

Adoption gives them a sense of permanency. Adoption gives them a room, a home, and a community. Adoption makes their dreams come true.

To learn more about how you can help, please visit www.hckids.org.



Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services Assists Four Schools With Starting Recycling Programs



Local students discuss what's in Ohio's garbage during a classroom discussion about recycling.

With help from the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District's Recycling Assistance Program, four Hamilton County schools are now recycling. The schools include:

- Summit Academy Transition High School (Cincinnati)
- Sharpsburg Elementary (Norwood)
- Dater Montessori (Western Hills)
- Seton High School (Price Hill)

Recycling at all four schools began at the start of the 2010-2011 school year. The recycling programs will allow students, teachers and school visitors to recycle paper. In addition to paper, Seton High School will also be recycling plastic bottles, and Dater Montessori will be recycling plastic bottles and aluminum cans. Students also have the opportunity to learn more

about solid waste issues through classroom presentations and field trips provided by the Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District.

The Recycling Assistance Program is available to any school in Hamilton County in need of technical assistance in order to help create, kick-off, maintain, and improve recycling programs within a school building or a school district.

Schools registered in The Recycling Assistance program are eligible for a variety of free programming, field trips, and other resources.

For more information about the Recycling Assistance Program, please contact Keebler Holley at Keebler.holley@hamilton-co.org or at 946-7736.



Location: Woodlawn Ohio National Guard Training and
Community Center
10050 Woodlawn Blvd., Woodlawn, Ohio 45215

Time: 6:30–7:30 pm

October 5th **Starting a Backyard Compost Pile**
John Duke, Master Composter
*Learn how to reduce your waste and have a free source of natural
fertilizer. Register by 10/4.*

October 12th **Energy Efficiency in Your Home**
Cate McCarthy, Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance
Learn how to save money on your energy bills. Register by 10/7.

October 19th **The Recycling Bin and Beyond**
Michelle Balz, Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District
*Learn what happens to your recyclables after they leave the curb
and get answers to all your recycling questions. Register by 10/14.*

*Although this event is free of charge, registration is required. To register, contact
Susan Schumacher at 946-7734 or email susan.schumacher@hamilton-co.org*



Computer and TV Recycling Drop-Off Offered for Hamilton County Residents in October



Hamilton County residents participating in previous computer and TV recycling drop-offs prevented these materials from ending up in landfills.

The Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District will be collecting obsolete computer equipment and televisions from Hamilton County residents. If you've got some old equipment lying around and aren't sure what to do with it, recycling is a great option!

Program Dates: **October 1—30, 2010**

Days and Hours: **Monday—Friday**
 9 a.m.—4 p.m.

And one Saturday only:
Saturday, October 30,
9 a.m.—2 p.m.

Location: **2trg**
 11085 Kenwood Road
 Blue Ash, OH 45242

Hamilton County residents interested in participating in this free program are welcome to drop-off their unwanted computer equipment and TVs during the program's dates and hours. Residents must bring proof of residency, such as a driver's license or utility bill, in order to participate. This program prohibits the acceptance of computer equipment/TVs from businesses, churches, schools and non-profit organizations.

Acceptable Items Include:

CPUs, hard drives, personal copiers, docking stations, monitors, scanners, printers, cellular telephones, televisions, hard drives, tape and disk drives, VCR and DVD players, circuit boards, cables, mainframes, servers, terminals, fax machines, PDAs, back up batteries, chips, keyboards, mice, modems, computer speakers, CD Rom drives, and laptops.

For more information, please call 946-7766 or visit www.hamiltoncountyrecycles.org.



Caring Families are Needed!



Haley, Born April 8, 2000

Summer is one of this active pre-teen's favorite times of year. Haley loves being outdoors and is truly a free spirit; when she has her choice of activities, she'll usually pick the Zoo or the museum.

During the school year, Haley has a hard time narrowing down her favorite subjects – she really likes them all! When pressed though, she'll admit that one of the best parts of school is when she has time to trade Silly Bandz with her friends! This dynamic young lady wants to someday be a professional dancer and currently practices to the music of Beyonce and Hannah Montana.

Haley gets along well with her foster siblings and loves being a helper around the house. She would do well in a family that likes going swimming and bike riding and just generally spending loving, quality time together.

To learn more about Haley and others available for adoption,
Please 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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Laura.maus@hamilton-co.org