

# Hello, Hamilton County



February 2005



E-News for Hamilton County Residents and Staff

[www.hamilton-co.org](http://www.hamilton-co.org)

## Article submission deadlines

March 17 and 31  
April 14 and 28  
May 12 and 26  
June 9 and 23  
July 7 and 21  
August 4 and 18  
September 15 and 29  
October 13 and 27  
November 10 and 24  
December 8 and 22

## Honoring County Heroes

April 10-16 is **National County Government Week**, the perfect time to honor and recognize our employees who serve Hamilton County. The theme this year is "Honoring County Heroes." You will receive information in the next few weeks telling you how you can nominate a hero in your department.

## Quote of the Issue

**If freedom of speech is taken away, then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter.**

~George Washington

## County Welcomes Coroner Dr. O'dell Owens



Dr. O'dell Owens, County Coroner

Hamilton County welcomes Dr. O'dell Owens, elected County Coroner in the 2004 election.

Dr. Owens is a native Cincinnati. Following graduation from Woodward High School, he attended Antioch

College where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Dr. Owens spent his third year of college at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, as a foreign exchange student. He earned his M.D. degree at Yale University Medical School. Dr. Owens continued his studies at Yale as an intern, resident and chief resident in obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN). He received the Irving Friedman Award as Outstanding Chief Resident at Yale.

While serving as a clinical instructor at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Owens was also a Fellow in reproductive endocrinology and infertility for two years.

He returned to Cincinnati in 1982 to establish the first division of reproductive endocrinology in the Department of OB/GYN at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center. During this time, Dr. Owens established an in-vitro fertilization program and achieved Cincinnati's first successful conception and delivery. In November 1988, Dr. Owens announced Cincinnati's first pregnancy from a frozen embryo.

In 1987, the Chinese Medical Society requested Dr. Owens' participation in an international symposium and lecture series on laser surgery in China. In July 1990, the American Laser Society asked that he join a group of physicians touring laser facilities in four major cities in the Soviet Union.

Dr. Owens would like his epitaph to read, "He made a difference."

## Free air quality notification service now available

Hamilton, Butler, Clermont, and Warren counties have been chosen to participate in the launch of EnviroFlash, a new air quality notification service. EnviroFlash is a free service that provides information about air quality in the location of the users choice via a daily e-mail message. It is produced through a partnership between the Environmental Protection Agency and state and local environmental agencies.

In the pilot program, users can choose to receive notifications about air quality action days, such as smog alerts or air quality forecasts for the upcoming days. The program will be implemented nationwide in 2005.

To subscribe to this service visit [www.hcdoes.org](http://www.hcdoes.org) and click on the EnviroFlash link.

We will serve the residents of Hamilton County by providing the best and most responsive county government in America."  
— Hamilton County Vision

## Reds' scoreboard wins three Golden Matrix Awards

The Cincinnati Reds' scoreboard operations department won three Golden Matrix Awards at the annual Image Display and Entertainment Association (IDEA) conference last week in Houston, Texas. First-place awards were won in the categories, *Best Overall Video Display in Baseball*, *Best Overall Matrix Display*, and *Best Overall Video Display*.



Since the Golden Matrix Awards' inception in 1988, the Reds are the first organization to win both the *Best Overall Matrix Display* and the *Best Overall Video Display* categories in the same year.

Submissions were judged on originality, creativity, production quality, entertainment value, and execution. The Reds entered a three-minute video highlighting the layout, design and use of the single-color scoreboard in left center field at Great American Ball Park, and a five-minute compilation reel showcasing the animations, video elements and live production capabilities enjoyed by fans during Reds games.

Go, Reds!

## Employees help tsunami victims

Through the generosity of county employees, \$3,835 was raised during our two-week campaign to help the victims of the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami.

The incredible outpouring of support and compassion speaks volumes about the hearts of our employees. Donated funds will go directly toward helping to ease the suffering, and speed the recovery of those who were stricken by this tragic catastrophe.

Thanks to all who participated or donated to the campaign, and thanks for your expressions of goodwill as we assisted in the relief efforts.

Thanks to Kim Pennekamp for coordinating this effort.

## Mike Trimpe celebrates 25 years of service

Mike Trimpe recently celebrated his 25th year as an Arson/Trace Evidence Examiner for the coroner's crime laboratory. One of Mike's duties is gunshot residue analysis (GSR).

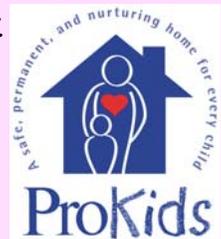
Mike teaches GSR by scanning electron microscopy (SEM) to other forensic scientists all over the country. He completed a research project comparing firework residues to gunshot residues, and was visited by a team of scientists from the Netherlands to consult on a case. This summer Mike will speak at the South American Microanalysts meeting in Brazil. He will also conduct an international symposium on GSR by SEM this summer at the FBI lab in Quantico, Virginia.

Also recognized for service years were Tim Tanner — 5 years, Tom Tanner — 5 years, and Nicole Wagner — 10 years.

Congratulations, Mike, Tim, Tom, and Nicole.

## ProKids receives grant

ProKids of Cincinnati was recently awarded a \$7,000 grant from Jewelers For Children (JFC), the leading charity of the U.S. jewelry industry. These funds will be used to continue advocacy for abused and neglected children in Hamilton County.



Local contributors to the charity include James Schwartz of Robin James Jewelers, Lee Kromholz of Kromholz Jewelers, and Barry Hudepohl of Don Hudepohl Jewelers, Inc.

Since 1981, the mission of ProKids has been to ensure a safe, permanent and nurturing home for every child. ProKids Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) have provided an independent voice in the county's court system for children who have been abused and/or neglected severely enough that they have been removed from their home.

Over the last five years, JFC has donated nearly \$15 million to specific programs benefiting children whose lives have been devastated either by catastrophic illness or abuse and neglect.

In addition to the National CASA, JFC's charity partners include, the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Make-A-Wish International, and the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation/Glaser Pediatric Research Network.

**Adoption**  
**For Information Call**  
**513.632.6366**

**Selina**

**born: February 8, 1990**



Selina loves dogs, and especially puppies. If it is soft and cuddly, she can't resist. This active, intelligent young girl loves to read and draw. The *Harry Potter* series are her favorite books. She also loves to sketch her favorite cartoon characters, the *Power Puff Girls*.

After school and on the weekends, Selina rides her bike or roller-blades in her neighborhood. She also enjoys playing with her Barbie dolls and watching movies and cartoons.

Selina likes school but she struggles. She makes good grades despite her difficulties.

Selina needs a stable family that can help her with her schoolwork and support her in therapy.

**Help enrich the life of a child in need.**

**911 operators honored for inspiring others**

A tri-state man is lucky to be alive, and the 911 dispatcher who helped save his life was recognized for her valiant effort.

Dawn Koking led a five hour search to find Mike Wilson. In December, Mike was driving home from work when he started losing consciousness — a side effect of his diabetes. Mike was quoted saying, "It's almost like being in a bad dream. You just can't wake up from it. And you just want to come out of it, because you want to call off the search and say, hey, I'm okay."

Mike managed to call his girlfriend, Leigh Ann, who called 911. Dawn answered and knew someone had to find Mike right away. Dawn started with Mike's cell phone. She went through his wireless provider to track his cell phone signal. That didn't work. When Dawn's shift ended at 2:00 a.m., she met Leigh Ann and they started searching the streets together. Leigh Ann stayed on the phone with Mike, who managed to tell her a phone number on the side of a nearby building. He also said he saw something about fish. Police used a reverse directory and found Mike at Crazy Jim's Fishboat on Beekman Street.

Dawn and her counterparts at the Communication Center were honored for their ingenuity and dedication that night. The Ohio chapters of the National Emergency Number Association and the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials International chose Dawn and her coworkers on the third shift for the 2004 Gold Star Award. The award acknowledged the 911 dispatchers not just for professional excellence, but for their inspiration.

Great job Dawn!

**Presidents' Day**

What does it mean?

According to the Gregorian calendar, George Washington was born on February 22, 1732 (the date was February 11 until 1752 when the new calendar added eleven days to the old date to bring the calendar year into step with the astronomical year). Some Americans celebrated Washington's birthday on February 11 and some on February 22.

Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12. Both presidents were deserving of a special day of recognition. A federal law passed in 1968, effective in 1971, and adopted by individual states, declared one single federal public holiday — Presidents' Day — to be observed the 3rd Monday of February, honoring all past presidents of the United States.

## Customer Service – Income Maintenance Month theme

Customer service is the theme as the county's Job and Family Services celebrates Income Maintenance Month. Income Maintenance administers the major federal and state programs that provide basic support for children, families, pregnant women, elderly and disabled persons. These programs include cash assistance (Ohio Works First), food stamps (Ohio Direction Card), and Medicaid (Healthy Start/Healthy Families).



"I believe we have two sets of customers in Income Maintenance – our employees and the people they serve," Assistant Director Rick Roberts said.

Income Maintenance has embarked on a number of exciting projects.

- Merging intake and ongoing operations to allow same-day service.
- Hiring/recruiting new staff with customer service backgrounds.
- Holding smaller new-employee training classes more quickly to keep staff vacancy rates low.
- Forming a team of veteran and newer employees to brainstorm workplace improvement ideas for management.
- Having section chiefs and supervisors conduct in-person surveys with clients to get feedback and keep in touch.

For more information about Income Maintenance, visit [www.hcjfs.org](http://www.hcjfs.org).

## Honoring the father of Black History Month

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the father of black history month, didn't graduate from high school until he was almost 22 years old. Then in 1912, he received his Ph.D. from Harvard, becoming the second African American to do so. In 1915, Dr. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. He realized the need for special research into the black American's life and history. The association began pressing for a "Negro History Week" as a way to explore the contributions of African Americans. This dream became reality in 1926. In 1976, the renamed Association for the Study of Afro American Life and History expanded Black History Week into Black History Month during the month of February.

## Communication Center Welcomes International Visitors



The Communication Center was selected by the United States International Visitors Program to host a group of public safety officials visiting the United States to learn about and share information related to advances in technology and communications innovations.

Included in the group were representatives from the Cambodian National Police in Phnom Penh, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Ottawa, the Ghana Police Services in Accra, the Netherlands Antilles Police Force in Curacao, and the Stockholm County Police in Sweden. The visitors were given a briefing by Communication Center Director William Hinkle, then spent the remainder of the afternoon touring the Communication Center and asking questions.

The county's Communication Center is nationally recognized as one of the finest consolidated public safety communications systems in the country, and has helped set the standard for several state and national programs.

Congratulations to Bill Hinkle and the Communication Center staff.

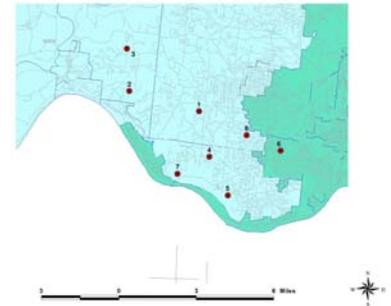


## Airport Noise

The County Commissioners have scheduled a special meeting to discuss the Airport Noise Consultant Report. The meeting will convene at 7:00 p.m. on March 3, 2005, at the Delhi Township Senior Center, 647 Neeb Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45233.

The Commissioners entered an agreement with Fidell Associates in June, 2004 to represent the interests of the citizens of Hamilton County in the analysis of airport noise related to the development of flight patterns by the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG).

In September and early October 2004, Fidell measured aircraft noise at eight sites in the western portion of the county (locations shown on map). While monitoring aircraft noise, Fidell also conducted a social survey modeled after other surveys on which the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) bases its land use compatibility recommendations. The survey was conducted in an effort to assist CVG in their planning exercises by providing information about aircraft noise and its effects on county residents. More than 1,700 residents were drawn, at random from an exhaustive sample of households directly north of two of the airport's runways and in other areas overflown by CVG air traffic.



Major findings of the survey include,

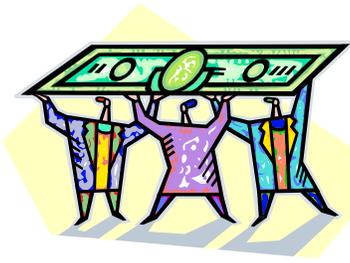
-  18 percent of the respondents were highly annoyed by aircraft noise, 35 percent were awakened by aircraft noise, and 38 percent said aircraft noise interfered with their speech.
-  CVG's "present conditions" noise modeling misses its prediction of population level aircraft noise impacts in the western portion of the county.
-  More than two-thirds of respondents were unaware that CVG operates a noise complaint telephone number. One-third of the respondents refrained from lodging a complaint because they thought doing so would not accomplish anything.
-  Among the 6 percent of respondents who did lodge complaints, 62 percent did not believe the airport provided them with prompt and complete information about their complaint, and 80 percent were not satisfied with the information the airport eventually provided about their complaint.

Almost 50 percent of the survey respondents believed Hamilton County should attempt to discourage the growth of nighttime flights at CVG.

CVG's 2004 Annual Report states a total of 1,138 complaint calls were received in 2004 regarding aircraft noise, 28 complained of feeling vibrations from aircraft, and 709 suffered from a lack of sleep due to aircraft noise.

The Commissioners special meeting at 7:00 p.m. on March 3, will include local government officials. Proactive measures to avoid adverse aircraft noise impacts on the development of western portions of the county will be discussed. The County's participation in a short-term planning study conducted by CVG will be reviewed, as well as the County's comments on the airport's longer-term growth plans.

The March 3 meeting is open to the public.



## Project Gain

To participate in Project Gain, all county departments are invited to begin now to brainstorm revenue enhancing and cost saving program ideas. Project Gain fiscal year programs must be submitted to the Evaluation Panel by September 1, 2005, and semi-annual programs by December 31, 2005.

### What is Project Gain

A gainsharing program to provide county employees an opportunity to be rewarded for contributions to the efficient operation of county government, above and beyond the normal scope of duties.

### How does Project Gain work?

Department heads and employees brainstorm ideas to design a program for their department that will increase revenues or produce a cost savings.

### Who can participate in Project Gain?

The program is open to all departments and all eligible employees.

### What are the rules governing Project Gain?

Each department head is provided a copy of the Project Gain Guidelines. There is no single, across-the-board strategy that will work for every department.

### How are Project Gain awards distributed?

- Awards are funded from cost savings in the department or revenue enhancements.
- The pool of funds resulting from savings or enhancements will be shared equally with all employees who actively contributed toward the goal of the department's program.
- Individual employee awards must total \$100.00 per employee per program.
- Individual employee awards may not exceed \$1,000.00 per employee per program.
- Individual employee awards may not exceed \$5,000.00 per employee per fiscal year.

Watch upcoming issues of *Hello, Hamilton County* for more information about Project Gain, or contact Sharon Booker, 946.4428.

## Secret Shopper Program

The Board of County Commissioners and staff want to satisfy our customers. More than ever, our departments are using the county's **Customer Service Toolkit** to measure, track, and assess actual customer experiences. By focusing on practices that work and those that do not work, departments are able to become more customer friendly, build greater customer loyalty, and exceed public expectations.

Secret shopping is an invaluable tool the county uses to monitor customer satisfaction expectations from the beginning to the end of all service experiences.

### Customer Satisfaction Expectations

Availability of services	The degree to which customers can readily and easily contact the department.
Responsiveness of services	Reacting promptly to the customer.
Timeliness of service	Providing services within the customer's timeframe.
Comprehensiveness of services	The degree to which the service is complete.
Pleasantness of service	The degree to which suitable professional behavior and manners are used while working with the customer.
Reliability of services	Whether the organization does what it promises customers it will do.
Overall satisfaction with services	The degree to which the customers are satisfied with the services they received.



### Shopping elements

#### *In-person secret shopper*

Volunteers posing as citizens requesting a county service. Shoppers arrive unannounced and anonymously conduct an in-person shopping assignment. Shoppers assess service delivery by evaluating several customer service factors. Assignments are given with general instruction, with shoppers having the flexibility to script their own assignment. Results are recorded on structured evaluation forms.

#### *Exit interviews*

Volunteers conduct exit interviews of county service users. Exit interviewers arrive unannounced to a county office and solicit information from citizens about their experience requesting a county service. Citizens are requested to evaluate several facets of customer service and their overall satisfaction with the county function. Multiple interviews are conducted at each location with structured evaluation forms used to record results.

#### *Telephone shopping*

Telephone shoppers are volunteers posing as citizens requesting information/service by telephone. Assignments are given with general instruction with shoppers given the flexibility to script their conversation. Structured evaluation forms are used to record customer service results.

Secret shoppers can provide a wealth of information to program managers from the perspective of the customer. A secret shopper review not only helps discover problem areas and provide information on needed improvements, it also highlights areas of excellence. The process is not intended to be complex, nor should it be seen as a "gotcha" review by management. It is a continuous improvement technique and process for improving customer service. It is intended to reinforce training and standards already in place.

General Fund county employees willing to volunteer as a secret shopper can complete the training registration form on page 8 of this newsletter. Citizens who wish to volunteer as a secret shopper should register online by visiting [www.hamilton-co.org](http://www.hamilton-co.org) and clicking on **Secret Shopper Program** or call **946.SHOP**.

**Registration Form  
Hamilton County Secret Shopper Program  
Employee Training Class**



General Fund employees, please complete this form and return it to Sharon Booker by Monday, March 7, 2005. You may fax the form to 946.4444 or send it through interdepartmental mail to CAB-603-85.

Employee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's signature

**Please register me for Secret Shopper training. I understand the class will be held**

**Monday, March 14, 2005**

**8:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.\***

**County Administration Building, Room 705**

**I understand I must attend the entire class to become a secret shopper.**

\*The class may end earlier than 3:00 p.m. The end-time is still to be determined.



# Hamilton County

Board of County Commissioners

Phil Heimlich, President

Pat DeWine, Vice President

Todd Portune

Dear Hamilton County Employee,

The Board of County Commissioners invites and encourages you to participate in the annual Employee of the Year program. Through this program you have the opportunity to recognize a co-worker or any other county employee who has excelled in his/her service to the people of Hamilton County.

An Employee of the Year nomination form is included in this newsletter on page 10. Nominations must include approval by the employee's supervisor, and be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed no later than Monday, April 4. The nomination process is open to all county employees, not just supervisors.

Hamilton County Employees of the Year will be recognized at the April 27 County Commissioners' meeting. The employees will also be recognized and presented a plaque at the National Public Service Recognition Week celebration the first week in May.

If you have questions about the Employee of the Year program, please contact Sharon Booker, 946.4428.

We hope you will take this opportunity to recognize the achievements and excellent public service of one of your coworkers. Peer recognition, it has been said, is the most meaningful form of acknowledgement.

Commissioner Phil Heimlich, President  
Commissioner Pat DeWine  
Commissioner Todd Portune  
Interim County Administrator Suzanne Burke



## Hamilton County 2005 Employee of the Year Award Nomination Form

Nominee and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Criteria

Please attach a one-page statement about the nominee. The statement may be in any format and should address the following qualifications. Submissions will be judged using the scoring scale provided below.

40	Outcomes achieved that contribute to agency and county goals.
20	Dedication, productivity, quality of service and skill development.
20	Attendance record and length of service with Hamilton County.
20	Community spirit and involvement in community activities.

**The deadline for nominations is 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 4, 2005.** Nomination forms should include the above information and should not be any longer than a one-page statement or one-page e-mail attachment.

If you have questions, contact Sharon Booker, 946.4428.

### Supervisor's Consent

I approve the participation of the above named nominee in the Employee of the Year program. I understand the nominee may be requested to attend two or more awards ceremonies during work time.

Signature (or e-mail address and verification): \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Submittal

Please submit to Sharon Booker.

E-mail:

[Sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org](mailto:Sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org)

Fax:

946.4444

U.S. mail:

603 County Administration Building  
138 E. Court Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202

*Thank you for participating in the Employee of the Year program.*

Recognitions



Bernice Walker, Director of the county's Small Business Development Office will receive the Carrier of the Torch Award from the Salmon P. Chase Law School's Black Law Students Association. The award goes to a Chase graduate who has made a commitment to and has been a voice for the needs and concerns of minorities.

Bernice was also recognized as one of Cincinnati's Community Leaders in the 2005 Edition of Who's Who In Black Cincinnati.

Sharon Booker, Executive Assistant County Administrator was recognized in the 2005 Edition of Who's Who In Black Cincinnati as one of Cincinnati's Professionals.

She manages special projects in the county administrator's office and edits the county's electronic newsletter, Hello, Hamilton County, among other assignments.



Congratulations Bernice and Sharon.

Coroner's Annual Soup Cookoff

The Coroner's office recently held its 3rd Annual Soup Cookoff.

There were seven entries this year. The cost to enter was \$5.00 and the cost to vote was \$5.00. Proceeds are awarded to the charity of the winner's choice.



This year Michelle Griffin and Skip Lawhorn tied for 1st place and designated the St. Vincent DePaul Homeless Shelter as their charity.

Good job, Michelle and Skip.

Word of this issue

Dinkum (DING-kuhm)

True; honest; genuine.

Originated in Australia from English dialect.

To submit a word of this issue, send an e-mail to sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org.

Print and post

Hello, Hamilton County

in your area!

Can't attend the Wednesday public meeting? We would still like to hear from you.



Commissioner Pat DeWine pat.dewine@hamilton-co.org



Commissioner Phil Heimlich phil.heimlich@hamilton-co.org



Commissioner Todd Portune todd.portune@hamilton-co.org

"Got News?" Email sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org. Deadline for next issue: March 17.

If you have questions or suggestions for future editions, please contact Sharon Booker, 946.4428. To subscribe or unsubscribe visit http://www.hamilton-co.org/newsletter/. Thanks to those who contributed to this issue.