



# Hello, Hamilton County

E-News for Hamilton County Residents and Staff

*Providing the best and most responsive county government in America.*

June 2005

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



## 2005 Employees of the Year And County Hero



John Hester, Building Inspections



Kim Pennekamp, County Personnel



Kathy Filippi, MRDD



Bonnie Pray, Environmental Services



Bob Gruber, Juvenile Court



Kim Sweney, MRDD



County Hero, Cynthia Gilby, MRDD

### Congratulations 2005 Employees of the Year and County Hero!

John, Kim, Kathy, Bonnie, Bob, and Kim each were recognized by the Commissioners at a public meeting held in May, where they received, on behalf of the county, an "Employee of the Year Certificate" from Board President Phil Heimlich. County Hero Cynthia Gilby was also recognized at the Board meeting and received a certificate as well. The employees were again recognized on Fountain Square as a part of the 2005 Public Service Recognition Celebration, and received a proclamation from Commissioner Todd Portune and Interim County Administrator Suzanne Burke, on behalf of the county, and a plaque from the Public Service Recognition Committee.

The 2005 Employees of the Year were chosen from nominations submitted by departments and agencies throughout the county. Nominations for each of the employees selected told of characteristics true of a dedicated and committed public servant. Employee of the Year one-page nominations are based on the following criteria: outcomes achieved that contribute to agency and county goals; dedication, productivity, quality of service and skill development; attendance record and length of service with the county; community spirit and involvement in community activities. County Hero criteria include: issue/problem/need addressed by nominee; action taken by nominee to address the issue/problem/need; role nominee played in initiating action; what was achieved by nominee's initiative; impact of nominee's achievement; challenges nominee faced.

Each Employee of the Year received two tickets to enjoy a Reds' game from the county's suite, two Riverbend passes, and a 2005 Hamilton County Park District sticker. Each will also receive four Children's Theatre passes for *Frosty*.

Thanks to the selection committee, four of our 2004 Employees of the Year, William Dean, Coroner's Office; John Hoffman, Communication Center; Kevin Holt, JFS; and Chad McEvoy, Environmental Services.

## Hamilton County departments receive 2005 NACIO Awards of Excellence



National Association of County Information Officers (NACIO) recently announced that 12 Awards of Excellence were granted to Hamilton County.

The entries were judged on originality, effectiveness, results, degree of effort and difficulty, overall quality, and strength of impression, and were eligible to win, *Best of Class, Best of Show, Superior, Excellent, or Meritorious* awards. When possible, entries were judged with counties of the same size, more than 500,000 population and less than 500,000 population.

Hamilton County's 2005 NACIO Awards of Excellence winners are:

Laurie Petrie, Job and Family Services  
*Job and Family Services Annual Report* Excellent

Catalina Landivar, Planning Department  
*The Planning Partnership Annual Report* Meritorious

h Dowers, Environmental Services  
*Southwestern Ohio Anti-Idling Campaign* Meritorious

Sharon Booker, County Administration  
*Hello, Hamilton County* – Meritorious

Denise Winkler, Job and Family Services  
*Foster Parent Catalog* – Meritorious

Mike Boehmer, Job and Family Services  
*An Inspiration to Us All* – Meritorious

Jay Springer, Planning Department  
*Hamilton County Budget in Brief Cover Design* – Excellent

Ron Miller, Planning Department  
*Land Use Concept Plan* – Meritorious

Mike Boehmer, Job and Family Services  
*Making A Difference in a Child's Life* Excellent

Ron Miller, Planning Department  
*Hamilton County 2030 Plan and Implementation Framework* – Meritorious

Paul Smiley, Planning Department  
*2030 Plan and Implementation Framework CD* – Excellent

Paul Smiley, Planning Department  
*Hamilton County State of the County CD* Excellent

NACIO, founded in 1966, is a growing organization with several hundred members who work for many of the 3,066 counties, boroughs and parishes across the United States. Some also work for the 44 state associations representing counties in the U.S.

As an affiliate of the National Association of Counties (NACo), NACIO supports the programs and policies of NACo, and sponsors workshops, programs and other activities at NACo's Annual and Legislative conferences. NACIO also strives to create a better understanding of the duties of county government and to improve the communication skills of NACIO members and all other county officials.

Congratulations Hamilton County!

## Jim Hetzel places 1st in 2005 Roadeo

Jim Hetzel, a Professional Land Surveyor, has been employed with the county for 16 years. Jim obtained his commercial driver's license in 1996, and helps with the Engineer's snow and ice removal.

Jim placed 4th in the county's annual Snow Plow Roadeo in 1999, and 2nd in 2000, 2001, 2003, and 2004. He also placed 2nd at the 2004 Ohio Invitational Roadeo, Local Snow Plow Competition in Cleveland, Ohio.

At the 2005 Ohio Invitational held in Toledo, Jim placed 1st. He competed against drivers from around Ohio and neighboring states.

The Roadeo involves driving a dump truck with an 11' snowplow through an obstacle course. The participants are judged on the ability to maneuver the course in a specified time. They are also required to perform a pre-trip inspection

of the truck finding five problems in under five minutes.

Ron Ripperger, a Highway Maintenance Foreman Working at the Engineer's Western Division, also had a fine showing in the Truck, Backhoe and Loader competitions.

Congratulations to Jim and Ron for representing the Engineer's Office and Hamilton County so well.



1st place winner, Jim Hetzel (l) and County Engineer Bill Brayshaw

## Your Health and Wellness Matters

### The terrible truth about trans fat

Cookies, cakes, and pies! Oh, my! It's hard to resist the overwhelming appeal of junk food, fast food, and comfort food. Sometimes there's nothing better than a big jelly doughnut or a fresh hot order of French fries. Hungry yet? Before you finish off that bag of chips, get the real story on the trans fat demon. It's a proven killer, and you could be its next victim.

### Just what is trans fat and why is it so dangerous?

Trans fat is the nickname for "partially hydrogenated" oils, an artificial fat that the food industry once thought was a cheap and safe alternative to saturated fats like butter or tropical oils. And it's been used in all kinds of foods for decades. Trans fat is actually one part of the complete chemistry of partially hydrogenated oil, but it's the most dangerous part.

Research has found that while both trans fat and saturated fat clog arteries, only trans fat also reduces the good cholesterol that clears arteries. That makes trans fat twice as dangerous as the saturated fat it was designed to replace.

Since trans fat decreases the good cholesterol while increasing the bad, it's a double threat to your heart. One prominent research study estimated that if people replaced trans fat with non-hydrogenated polyunsaturated or monounsaturated oils, as many as 100,000 cardiac deaths a year might be prevented. That's about 15 percent of the total number of cardiac deaths in the United States.

The risks are so serious that the Food and Drug Administration has said there is no healthy level of trans fat for our diets and has ordered food companies to list trans fat amounts on food labels by 2006.

### Giving trans fat the boot

So why don't we just take the trans fat out of our food? Easier said than done. Not only has this liquid killer seeped into many of our foods, but it's also made itself a good houseguest by being so versatile. It stays firm when it needs to, keeps food fresher longer, can take high heat without breaking down, and gives many foods a wonderful taste. Because it's so popular and easy to work with, it's a staple in the restaurant and fast-food industry.

### Be your own trans fat detective

Although you'll be able to see the trans fat totals on anything you buy in the store, it's going to take some time for food companies and restaurants to wipe it out of their systems. It's going to be time-consuming and expensive to find something else that tastes as good and works as well. Check out the following list of foods to avoid to keep this skills at bay.

### Trans fat foods to avoid

cake mixes	energy bars	chips and crackers
dried soups	fast food	frozen entrees
margarine	nondairy creamers	nondairy whipped toppings
packaged cookies	packaged candy	packaged doughnuts
packaged pies	packaged cakes	

Source: September 2004 *Prevention* magazine; Humana's May edition of *Plan Professor*, 2005

## MSD honored by PRSA with 2005 Prism Award

The Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) was honored by the Dayton/Miami Valley Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) at its annual PRISM Awards ceremony. Bob Campbell, MSD Director, accepted the award on behalf of MSD. Julia Johnson, Superintendent and Dennis Madden, Program Manager, were also in attendance.



Each year, the PRISM Awards celebrate public communication professionals who reach the pinnacle of PR in the Dayton/Miami Valley area.

This year, MSD was selected for the award in the category of Community Relations for its new Water-In-Basement Customer Service Program which began in 2004.

This unique and innovative program was created to strengthen relations between MSD and the community during wet weather, when sewers sometimes overload and backup into basements of homes and businesses.

Since the program began on January 1, 2004, customers have received rapid response and professional assistance to diagnose the cause of the backup, and basement clean up when caused by system capacity.

Overall customer satisfaction ratings have risen from less than 50 percent to 90 percent since the program began. The success of the WIB Customer Service Program is due to MSD's thorough planning, careful execution, and steadfast reliance on appropriate tools of the trade.

Congratulations, Bob and the entire MSD staff.

## 50% discount on Reds tickets

Hamilton County employees can now access information about purchasing Reds tickets at a 50 percent discounted price by going to the county's Intranet site located at <http://hcnet/xpersonnel> and clicking on the link that is marked "Employee Discounts."

Information pertaining to all county employee discounts is listed at this website.

## Adoption

For Information Call 513.632.6366

### Sakinah

born: August 25, 1994



Sakinah really likes school and makes excellent grades. She is on target academically and would like to be a pediatrician. She is well on her way to achieving her goal, if she continues her good habits in school.

It is not a surprise that she likes to read — fantasy books are her favorite. She also likes playing with and collecting Bratz dolls. She enjoys a good Uno or War card game and like most kids her age, video games are always a favorite past time.

But don't let this good student fool you. Sakinah is very active and athletic. She likes swimming and track, but her goal is to become a cheerleader. It's pretty common to find her riding her bike after school and on the weekends, and she likes to jump rope and play dodge ball at recess.

This bold and bright young girl needs a nurturing family that will support her in therapy, help her cope with her loss and separation issues, and help her reach her potential.

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

## Help HCJFS bring in the money

You can help HCJFS bring in money that provides children with the opportunity for a better life.

Visit the Child Support arrest warrants website to see if you know the whereabouts of any of the parents with warrants for non-payment of child support.

The website contains a database of more than 3,000 people with arrest warrants for non-payment of child support. It's updated daily and it tells how you can submit anonymous tips.

A link to the website was recently added to the Child Support Help page at [www.hcjfs.org](http://www.hcjfs.org). You can access it through Quick Links on the home page, or the Child Support page under the Clients button.

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## HCJFS Spanish fact sheets

Spanish fact sheets about Job and Family Services' programs are just a few clicks away.

Sheets containing information, such as who's eligible, where to apply, and contact telephone numbers have been added to [www.hcjfs.org](http://www.hcjfs.org).

Click on "clients" to learn about:

- Adult services
- Child Care Services
- Children's Services
- 241-KIDS: Q & A
- Child Support Services
- Medicaid
- Employment Services
- 2-Step Skin Testing (TB Control)
- Working with Children's Services

### LANXESS air monitoring data available on web

The Department of Environmental services (HCDUES) has created a link on its website for interested parties to obtain results from the Air Toxics Monitoring being performed at the Hitchens Elementary School in Addyston near the LANXESS Corporation facility. The monitoring data can be accessed by visiting [www.hcdoes.org](http://www.hcdoes.org).

A link has been placed on the HCDUES home page which will take visitors directly to the site showing the dates the air toxic monitoring was conducted and the results of that monitoring. The site will also provide hourly wind direction information during the monitoring and a map showing the location of the monitor.

For individuals who do not have access to the web, a repository of the same information will be available at the Miami Township Branch of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, located in Cleves at 8 North Miami Avenue.

For more information, visit [www.hcdoes.org](http://www.hcdoes.org) or call 946.7777.

**We want to hear from you. Send an article telling us what's happening in your department. (Note the deadline dates listed in this newsletter.) Send articles to [sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org](mailto:sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org). We hope to hear from you soon.**

### Free household hazardous waste drop-off sites available to residents

The Solid Waste Management District is currently offering two free household hazardous waste drop-off sites from May 3 through September 30, 2005. This program is for Hamilton County residents only and proof of residency is required.

The locations and times are as follows:

**Environmental Enterprises, Inc.**

4650 Spring Grove Avenue  
Cincinnati, OH 45232

Tuesdays — 3:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Thursdays — 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Saturdays — 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Closed Saturday, July 2nd and Saturday, September 3rd

**Environmental Enterprises, Inc.**

10163 Cincinnati-Dayton Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45241

Wednesdays — 3:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Fridays — 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Acceptable items include, automotive fluids, pesticides/fertilizers, solvents/thinners, lawn/pool chemicals, cleaners, household/auto batteries, paint, prescription drugs, fire extinguishers, and propane tanks.

Unacceptable items include, radioactive materials, medical waste, explosives and ammunition, gun power, heating oil tanks, fuel tanks, tires, yardwaste, smoke alarms, garbage, roofing materials, appliances, and computers/electronics.

Please remember these important points when using this free service,

- drop off items only on the days and during the times listed,
- pack like items together in boxes,
- drop-off sites are available to Hamilton County residents only.

If you have any questions, please call the Solid Waste Management District at 946.7734, or visit [www.hcdoes.org](http://www.hcdoes.org).

### New Article submission deadlines

July 7  
September 15  
November 10

August 4  
October 13  
December 8

## A Celebration of Dreams

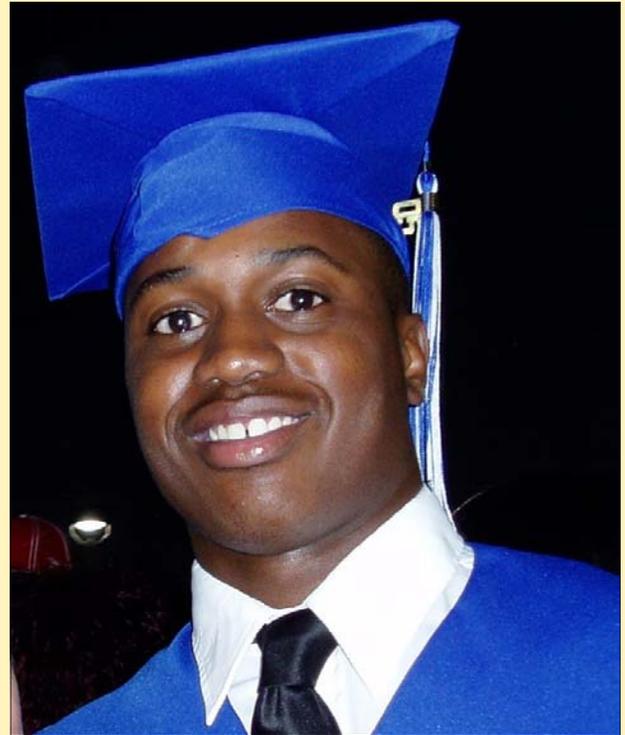
### Event honors foster youth

Among the Class of 2005, one group of graduates has won a hard battle to finish high school. And while their peers count on family support as they move into the next stage of their lives, these teenagers face the intimidating prospect of life on their own.

The students are youth in Hamilton County's foster care system. On June 14, the county's Department of Job and Family Services (HCJFS) honored them with the seventh annual Celebration of Dreams, an event for young men and women in county custody who graduate from high school or complete a GED.

Private donors sponsor the event and provide for duffel bags stuffed with household and school supplies for the graduates. A scholarship fund helps college-bound youth. Major supporters this year include Lighthouse Youth Services, Pressley Ridge, St. Aloysius Orphanage, St. Joseph Orphanage, and the Roe Walker Family Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation. Supporters also include HCJFS staff, businesses, religious and school groups.

Those attending the even include foster parents, caseworkers, Juvenile Court magistrates, representatives of the Public Defender's office and ProKids, and others who have helped the students.



Aaron Wallace, one of the event speakers.

A Celebration of Dreams recognizes a group of young people who have succeeded despite many strikes against them. Typically, about half of the graduation-age youth in the county's custody complete high school by age 18 or 19. This year, 49 students will be honored, the second largest group since the event began in 1999. Many of them plan to go on to college or trade school.

In their short lives, most of these teens have seen the worst that life has to offer — domestic violence, drug addiction, sexual abuse, and abandonment. Some are doing better than others, but all have persevered and some have excelled.

The graduates include Aaron Wallace, who graduated from Woodward High School and will attend the University of Cincinnati, despite having lived in more than ten foster homes; and Cannon Hopey, who graduated from Harmony Community School, holds a janitorial job, and wants to attend college to study computer engineering. "The system took care of me and everything," Aaron said. "I don't know where I'd be — in the street somewhere."

Celebration of Dreams sends a message to foster youth that the community cares about them and that finishing school is critically important. The event also provides some assistance to young people preparing to move out on their own. Celebration of Dreams provides a special moment for a group of young people who need to know that they can succeed.

About the 2005 graduates:

- ◆ 22 graduated from traditional high schools; 21 from special schools; six GEDs
- ◆ 23 are in Independent Living; 17 in foster care; seven in group homes; two with relatives
- ◆ Nearly 20 have been involved with the child welfare system for more than ten years; but more than ten have been involved less than two years
- ◆ Eight have significant developmental delays or mental retardation
- ◆ More than half express an interest in attending college or trade school, or are already enrolled or attending

***Congratulations to our 2005 Celebration of Dreams graduates!***



**Come out to the  
3rd annual College Education Fair  
Presented by the  
County Personnel Department and the  
Regional Alliance of Adult Higher Education (RAAHE)**

Have you thought about going to college, but just didn't have the time to gather the information? Or, have you thought about returning to finish your degree?

Then stop by the Hamilton County-RAAHE Education Fair! We want to assist in your effort to go back to college and earn your degree.

At the Education Fair you'll have the unique opportunity to talk with representatives from local colleges and universities about the educational degree programs they offer that interest you. You'll have access to continuing education information. You'll be able to get answers to your questions about scheduling classes, transferring credits, receiving credits for prior work experiences, and financial options.

You'll be able to discuss the county's tuition reimbursement benefits with our County Personnel staff.

- When:** Thursday, July 28
- Where:** 138 E. Court Street, Lobby
- Time:** 11:00 am — 2:00 pm
- Contact:** Kim Pennekamp, 946.4705

**Participating Institutions**

**Cincinnati State**  
**College of Mount St. Joseph**  
**Indiana Wesleyan University**  
**Thomas More College**  
**University of Cincinnati**  
**University of Phoenix**



**Wilberforce University**  
**Wilmington College**  
**Xavier University**

**“Best of the Best!”**

**“It is never too late to be what you might have been.” ~ George Eliot**

**Focus Group Participants Needed**

The County Commissioners would like to implement an Employee Idea Program and a committee has been assigned to the task. In order to develop a workable program, two focus groups will be held to get suggestions from county employees for the creation of the program.

A focus group for managers will be held July 13, 11:30 am—12:30 pm and for non-managers 1:00 —2:00 pm. If you are interested, get permission from your supervisor and send an e-mail to [sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org](mailto:sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org) or call 946.4428 to register.

**Volunteers must register by July 5. Space is limited — 15 participants per group. Only one volunteer per department, please.**

# Project Gain



To participate in Project Gain, all county departments /agencies 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.

To learn more about Project Gain, elected officials/appointed authorities/department heads can schedule a Project Gain seminar for your department by contacting Sharon Booker at 946.4428 or [sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org](mailto:sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org).

## 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?

Elected officials/appointed authorities/department heads and employees brainstorm ideas to design a program for their department/agency that will increase revenues or produce a cost savings.

## Who can participate in Project Gain?

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

## What are the rules governing Project Gain?

Each elected official/appointed authority/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/agency.

## How are Project Gain awards distributed?

- Awards are funded from cost savings in the department/agency 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/agency'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.

## Airport Noise



Does it really do any good to complain about noise from airplanes flying in and out of the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport?

**Yes!**

Particularly if you register your complaint on the county's website — [www.hamilton-co.org](http://www.hamilton-co.org).

Hamilton County will forward your complaint, along with those of other county residents, directly to the

airport's Noise Office. The county will also track how promptly and completely the airport furnishes information about the aircraft that bothered you, which runways were used by the airplanes that you complained about, and why aircraft were flying through the airspace near your home at the time of your complaint.

**Does it really do any good to complain?**

**Yes!**

Hamilton County will also ask the airport for additional information that may help to find improved noise mitigation measures, to enforce current preferential runway use plans, and to identify significant noise impacts on county residents.

**Visit:**

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

**Telephone hotline:  
946.4626**

Visit Hamilton County's Internet noise complaint website. You'll find answers to frequently asked questions about noise complaints, as well.

Next time the noise from an airplane bothers you while you're at home, point your browser to [www.hamilton-co.org](http://www.hamilton-co.org) and click on the CVG airport aircraft noise complaints link. If you don't have access to the Internet, you can leave a message on the county's telephone airport noise complaint hotline — 946.4626.

Graphic used with permission of Seattle Council on Airport Affairs.

## Smog Season

As we welcome the warm temperatures and humidity of summer, smog comes with it. Smog is a problem in the Greater Cincinnati region bringing with it negative health and economic impacts.

Smog is formed when sunlight reacts with pollutants in the air, baking those pollutants and turning them into smog. In our area, smog season is typically from April until the end of October.

Smog makes it difficult for lungs to absorb oxygen, limiting the body's ability to breathe. It irritates the lining of the throat and lungs, causing coughing and even choking.

If unhealthy levels of smog concentrations are expected, the Department of Environmental

Services issues a smog alert. It is then recommended that strenuous outdoor activity during the afternoon and early evening hours be limited.

You can help reduce smog formation by:

- Taking the bus
- Carpooling or vanpooling
- Riding a bike or rollerblading
- Using gasoline powered lawn equipment after 6 p.m.
- Maintaining your vehicle
- Combining trips
- Saving electricity
- Spreading the word!

To learn more about smog and air quality, or to sign up to receive *EnviroFlash* alerts, please visit [www.hcdoes.org](http://www.hcdoes.org).

Articles were submitted by Emily Gambrell, DOES Public Affairs Intern and Angela Bucalo, OKI Communications Assistant.

## Recycling



The Probation Department van, used as a part of the county's recycling program caught fire and was totally gutted. The van was used to transport recycled paper from the County Administration Building.

Jeff Aluotto, Manager, Solid Waste District, coordinates the recycling program for the county. Jeff was able to work out a program continuing to use the Probation Department, and eliminating the need for the van.

No one was injured in the fire.

## Word of this issue

oligopsony (oli-GOP-suh-nee) noun

The market condition where a few buyers control the market for a product. (A word from the 2005 Spelling Bee.)

To submit a word, send an e-mail to [sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org](mailto:sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org).

## Quote of the Month

**Everything has it's beauty, but not everyone sees it.**

**– Confucius**

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](mailto:pat.dewine@hamilton-co.org)



Commissioner Phil Heimlich  
[phil.heimlich@hamilton-co.org](mailto:phil.heimlich@hamilton-co.org)



Commissioner Todd Portune  
[todd.portune@hamilton-co.org](mailto:todd.portune@hamilton-co.org)

**"Got News?" Email [sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org](mailto:sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org). Deadline for next issue: July 7.**

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.*