



Hello, Hamilton County

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E-News for Hamilton County Residents and Staff

October 2005



Proclamation

honoring
Suzanne A. Burke

WHEREAS, Suzanne A. Burke has been employed with Hamilton County since 1988 and has served the citizens of Hamilton County as a dedicated professional for the past 17 years; and

WHEREAS, Suzanne has held a variety of important positions within Hamilton County, including Director of the Department of Administrative Services, Director of Job and Family Services (JFS), Assistant and Deputy Director of the Child Support Enforcement Agency through both the Court of Domestic Relations and JFS, and Interim County Administrator; and

WHEREAS, Suzanne has also served as Vice President of the Wyoming Youth Services Board and served on the Board of Trustees for the Public Children Services Association of Ohio; and

WHEREAS, over the years Suzanne has made remarkable achievements and received numerous commendations for her fine work, including receiving the *Top 40 Under 40 Award*, *Public Administrator of the Year – Early Careerist Award*, and most recently the *Talbert House Agnes Seasongood Good Government Award*; and

WHEREAS, Suzanne has taken time out of her personal life to devote to community service and continues to successfully balance her family and career.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Board of County Commissioners of Hamilton County, Ohio, that the minutes and the record of the Commission give due recognition of her dedication and outstanding service to the community, and that it be recorded also, that Suzanne A. Burke has the respect and gratitude of the County Commissioners for the service she has rendered to Hamilton County, and best wishes for good health and happiness in the years ahead.

BY ORDER OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO
Phil Heimlich, President
Pat DeWine
Todd Portune



Suzanne was presented the proclamation by the County Commissioners at their meeting on Wednesday, September 27, 2005.

She is now CEO for the Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio (COA).

For over 30 years, COA has been serving and advocating for programs and services for older adults in southwestern Ohio. COA has a long list of past accomplishments and continues to expand and improve its ability to serve older adults by also providing education and information to increase public awareness and concern about their needs. COA serves Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton and Warren counties. It is one of 12 designated Area Agencies on Aging in Ohio.

Eric Stuckey will serve as Acting County Administrator until a permanent administrator is hired.



Probate Court employees participate in Project Gain

In March of this year, County Commissioners Phil Heimlich, Pat DeWine, and Todd Portune adopted a resolution creating a gain sharing program for the employees of Hamilton County. The Commissioners want to give county employees an opportunity to contribute to the efficient operation of county government, above and beyond their normal scope of duties, and then reward those employees for their contributions.

Probate Court Judge Jim Cissell agrees with the concept of Project Gain, and when IT Chief Chris Moeller suggested developing a software program to do away with the system provided by an outside vendor, Judge Cissell consented. Probate Court staff then submitted the Project Gain paperwork and received approval for implementation.

The court’s gain sharing program is projected to save the county \$150,000 annually. Once that savings is realized, Moeller will receive \$5,000, two programmers will receive \$1,000 each, and 36 other Probate Court employees will get \$800 each.

In addition to Probate Court, the county’s Planning and Zoning Department has implemented a gain sharing program, and County Facilities and Public Works are working together to implement a program. The most recent program approved was submitted by County Personnel.

Planning and Zoning will provide advice for local jurisdictions, upon request. The department projects a savings of \$6,000 to be divided among 27 employees. County Facilities and Public Works have developed an in-house snow removal program for five county sites which they project could save the county \$29,000 per year. County Facilities and Public Works employees will receive \$805 each upon successful implementation of the program. County Personnel has proposed changes that will decrease postage and mailing supply expenses for an annual savings to the county of \$1,458, and an award of \$243 each to three staff members.

Project Gain is a county-wide gain sharing program. If a department is interested in participating and would like information, contact Sharon Booker, 946.4428 or sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org.



Probate Court Judge Jim Cissell and Court IT Chief Chris Moeller.

BRAINSTORMING

1

The amount of baking soda needed to bake two dozen cookies — 1 teaspoon.

Arm & Hammer was selling baking soda by the teaspoon!

Then someone noticed that baking soda absorbs odors.

After a few brainstorming sessions among staff, Arm & Hammer’s odor-absorbing baking soda was sold by the box, not just one measly teaspoon ... and not just one box, but several boxes ... one for the refrigerator, the freezer, car ashtrays, running shoes, the cat’s litter box, golf lockers, as underarm deodorant, as toothpaste ...

Charles “Chic” Thompson
Author of “What A Great Idea!”

“The trouble with most of us is that we would rather be ruined by praise than saved by criticism.”

~ “Positive Thinking” author Norman Vincent Peale

County employees in the news

Cheryl Phipps
Superintendent
Board of Mental Retardation
and Developmental Disabilities



Cheryl was recently elected president of the Ohio Superintendents of County Boards of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD).

Superintendents of MR/DD boards from across Ohio comprise the association which works closely with the Ohio Association of County Boards of MR/DD to impact change in laws, rules, and state policy that benefit people with MR/DD. Cheryl's term is for two years, effective January 2006.

Cheryl has been superintendent of the county's Board of MR/DD, the third largest in the state, since 2000. She has held a variety of leadership positions locally, regionally, and state-wide throughout the more than 30 years of her career.

She earned a law degree from Capital University prior to joining the county and served as superintendent of the Licking County MR/DD for 13 years. Two years ago, Cheryl served on Governor Taft's Victims of Crime Task Force resulting in Senate Bill 178. Cheryl's career includes several other positions and memberships.

Lois Reynolds
Deputy Director
Department of
Administrative Services



Lois was selected President-Elect of the Ohio Government Finance Officers Association (OGFOA) at the organization's annual conference in Cleveland. The term is September 2006 through September 2007.

OGFOA has almost 1,000 members with a mission to promote the exchange of information among finance officers of all local governments (cities/villages, counties, townships, school districts, special districts). OGFOA works to meet the challenges of the ever-evolving profession of government finance and fosters increased cooperation among governments and private financial institutions. OGFOA was the first organization formed in Ohio with the capacity to act as a conduit for the flow of information among all local governments.

Lois has been a member of OGFOA for 12 years, and was elected to two terms on the Board and served an additional term as an ex-officio board member. She has been active in Government Finance for 20 years and served on the Executive Board of the Government Finance Officers of the United States and Canada. Lois is a co-founder of the Greater Cincinnati Finance Officers Association founded in 1986. Lois has been employed with the county since 1990. Prior employment includes Finance Director for the City of Forest Park.

Bernice Walker
Director
Small Business Development



The members of the Cincinnati Chapter of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) elected Bernice as their president on September 15. NFBPA, founded in 1983, is a professional membership organization dedicated to the advancement of Black leadership in the public sector.

The Cincinnati Chapter was incorporated in 1988 and its members represent various local and state agencies, including, but not limited to, the cities of Cincinnati and Springdale, Hamilton County, the Metropolitan Sewer District, the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency, Cincinnati Public Schools, the University of Cincinnati, and the Ohio State University. Bernice hopes to grow the chapter's membership by providing meaningful activities that will attract more administrators and executives working in the academic, federal, and corporate arenas.

Bernice joined NFBPA in 2000, the same year she became Director of Small Business Development, a division of the County's Department of Administrative Services. She was chairperson of the local chapter's Bylaws Committee, and serves on the Program Development Committee. She is a past president of the Black Lawyers Association of Cincinnati, and is serving her second one-year term as chairperson of the Government Lawyers Division of the National Bar Association.



Annual Benefits Enrollment for County employees

By Cheryl Keller, County Benefits Manager, County Personnel

On September 21, 2005, the County Commissioners approved a resolution authorizing a contract with Anthem for medical benefits beginning January 1, 2006. After such a long relationship with our current vendor, it is understandable that employees will have questions about why this change is occurring.

THE PROCESS

In June of 2005, a Request for Proposal (RFP) to provide Hamilton County's medical benefits for 2006 was distributed with the assistance of a consultant. At the same time claims, utilization and premium information was sent to an independent actuary for review. Responses were received from Humana, Anthem, and United Healthcare. Because each insurance company approaches plan design in slightly different ways, we worked to get the plans of the two top bidders to be as close as possible in order to make fair comparisons. Additionally, we asked each carrier to provide us with benefit modifications that would reduce the premiums quoted but that would keep the plan designs competitive. Anthem's bid results in a 4.38% increase with the plan modifications, and is the lowest bid.

THE NEW PLANS

- Two new plans will replace the three currently offered: Anthem Blue Preferred and Anthem Blue Access.
- The modified plan for Anthem's HMO (called Blue Preferred and comparable to NewHealth and Primary Access) includes a \$5 increase in the office visit co-payment for primary care physicians and a \$5 decrease in the office visit co-payment for specialists. The emergency room co-payment will remain \$110. Anthem's Blue Access, a PPO (similar to Co-Choice), includes an office visit co-payment of \$15 and a specialty physician co-payment of \$25. Emergency room co-payments under this plan will increase to \$150. Diagnostic benefits for each plan are improved.
- With these plan changes, the county's medical plan continues to offer highly competitive benefit levels in the local, Midwest and national markets.
- By increasing co-payments for certain services, only the members who use these services incur the cost increase. Affordable employee contribution levels are then maintained, and increased cost to the County reduced.

IN ADDITION,

- **Cost.** The lowest bid resulted in an increase that is substantially below trend (9.2% - 11.2%). The total premium paid to the insurance carrier is \$1.35M less than if Humana was selected.
- **Value.** The actuary indicates that the value of Anthem's benefit plans is 1/2% to 1% higher than our current plan. Thus the County is getting more for its money.
- **Network.** Employees who currently participate in the New Health plan will benefit from a larger panel of providers.

HOWEVER,

- **Disruption.** A small number of members may find that their physician or facility is no longer in the network. A match was done of 2004 claims processed by Humana and there was a 94.1% match with the current Anthem network. Employees will be able to continue a non-network physician relationship – the plan that offers out-of-network benefits is available to all participants.
- **Plan Administration Differences.** Members will see benefit differences. For example, some drugs may change co-payment tiers, some higher, but more changed lower. Anthem will also implement a mail order pharmacy program that will allow members to receive a three month supply for only two co-payments.
- **Communication.** Changing carriers does require a major communication/education effort for our employees. The County Personnel Department looks forward to your support in the upcoming weeks in allowing your employees to participate in onsite visits by representatives of Anthem and our other insurance vendors. Open enrollment is planned for late October.

In the interim, employees with questions may call a special hotline at 800-887-6055 between 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to speak to an Anthem customer service representative. Callers should choose Members & Policyholders (*Option 1*) when prompted. Then press the # key three times to be directed to a representative. Questions about network providers can also be answered by visiting Anthem's website at www.anthem.com.

DENTAL BENEFITS

Dental benefits for 2006 are covered by the third year of rate guarantees in current contracts. Increases are 7% for Dental Care Plus, 3% for Superior Dental Care and 6% for Aetna DMO. The plan designs for each dental carrier remain unchanged. Minor increases will occur in employee contributions.

LIFE INSURANCE

Employer-paid basic life insurance has been provided by Anthem since 2001, and rates for 2006 will not change because we continue to be covered by a rate guarantee. Employee-paid voluntary life (UNUM) and long-term disability (Liberty Mutual) rates will not change for 2006. However, some employees covered by either one or both of these voluntary benefits may see a biweekly premium increase because they have moved to a different age bracket used in determining individual premiums.

QUESTIONS

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cheryl Keller at cheryl.keller@hamilton-co.org or at 946-4704.

MEDICAL HUMOR ~ A short history of medicine . . .

"Doctor, I have an ear ache."

2000 B.C. — "Here, take this root."

1000 B.C. — "That root is heathen, say this prayer."

1850 A.D. — "Not a prayer, drink this potion."

1940 A.D. — "That potion is snake oil, swallow this pill."

1985 A.D. — "That pill is ineffective, take this antibiotic."

2000 A.D. — "That antibiotic is artificial, take this root."

<http://www.ncpamd.com/mcjokearchive.htm>

Your Health & Wellness

Cold or flu? Know the difference

By Kim Pennekamp

To defend yourself against an opponent, you need to know something about the opponent's strengths and style of fighting. The same rule applies to your defense against the flu. If you recognize the symptoms and understand how the flu differs from a cold, you'll be better equipped to ward off an attack. But your chances of beating the flu are better if you have a good coach — so be sure to talk with your doctor about what's best for you.

The flu (also known as influenza) is much more serious than a bad cold. It usually comes on suddenly, with symptoms like high fever, headache, fatigue, dry cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, and body aches. Some symptoms may be severe, lasting from a few days to several weeks. The flu can lead to bronchitis or pneumonia that may require hospitalization and become life-threatening. The following chart compares typical symptoms and key characteristics of a cold with those of the flu.

	Cold	Flu
Symptoms		
Fever	Rare	Characteristic, high (102-104 °F); lasts 3-4 days
Headache	Rare	Prominent
General aches, pains	Slight	Usual; often severe
Fatigue, weakness	Quite mild	Can last up to 2-3 weeks
Extreme exhaustion	Never	Early and prominent
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe
Complications		
	Sinus Congestion or earache	Bronchitis, pneumonia; can be Life-threatening
Prevention		
	No prescription medications	Annual vaccination; amantadine, oseoltamivir or rimantadine (antiviral drugs)
Treatment		
	Only temporary relief of symptoms	Amantadine, oseoltamivir, zanamivir or rimantadine within 24-48 hours after onset of symptoms

Source: The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, April 2001, published on [WebMD](http://www.webmd.com). Visit www.webmdhealth.com.

Regional Crypto Outbreak

Crypto may be spreading through homes; hand washing is best line of defense

Health districts in Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky are investigating an outbreak of Cryptosporidiosis, more commonly known as Crypto. As of the end of September, approximately 742 confirmed and probable cases of Crypto have been identified.

Tim Ingram, Health Commissioner for the county's General Health District and other public health officials in the region recommend the following to help prevent the further spread of Crypto in the home:

- Wash hands after using the bathroom or changing a diaper, playing with animals, sneezing or coughing, touching objects used by others, or exposure to a sick person.
- Bathe young children with diarrheal symptoms separately from other children in the household.
- Disinfect bath tub after each use if a household member has diarrheal symptoms.

What is Crypto?

Crypto is a parasitic disease caused by microscopic parasites of the genus *Cryptosporidium*. Infected individuals develop loose, watery diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea, and a slight fever. Symptoms may begin two to 10 days after becoming infected, with an average of seven days. Most persons with healthy immune systems will recover without treatment and symptoms will usually last about one to two weeks. However, persons with Crypto can continue to shed the organism in their stool for up to two weeks after their diarrhea ceases.

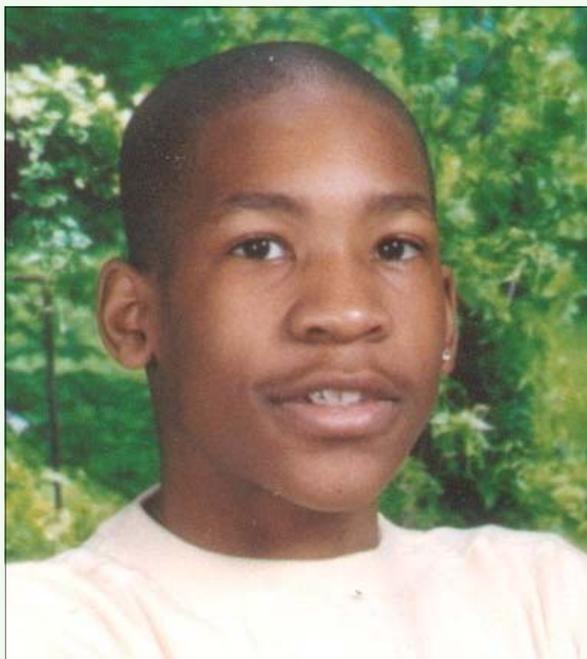
Persons with diarrhea, especially pregnant women and children, should drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. For persons with weakened immune systems, i.e., those undergoing cancer treatment or people with HIV/AIDS, there is an increased risk of Crypto becoming a life-threatening disease.

While Crypto is easily spread by swallowing water, either from swimming or drinking, contaminated by human feces, it can also be transmitted from person to person if proper hand washing and sanitary procedures are not followed. It is also easily spread in settings such as homes and daycare centers where diapers are changed regularly.

Further information about Crypto is available at www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org.

Adoption For Information Call 513.632.6366

Andre
born: March 1991



Soft-spoken, charming and handsome are a few of the words often used to describe Andre. This quiet, articulate young man will surprise you; he wants a career in the military. In fact, he dreams of being a Navy SEAL. Despite his quiet demeanor, his caseworker describes him as a real "go-getter."

He is intrigued by adventure whether it's in books, television or the movies. Walker Texas Ranger is his favorite television show and he most often enjoys action movies. Like most boys his age, he is very active. He loves the outdoors, playing sports, video games and being with his friends.

Andre is developmentally on target and is an average student. He needs a family that can help him process and express his emotions appropriately. He needs a strong male role model and would thrive in a family environment where he is the only or youngest child. This young man has tremendous potential; he just needs a family that can help him realize his dreams.

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

Dear Prospective Adoptive Parent:

Thank you for your interest in adoption. Right now, our agency has more than 100 local children waiting to be adopted.

The majority of children available for adoption through Hamilton County Children's Services are African American, over the age of six or part of a sibling group. All of our children have been abused or neglected or were at risk of abuse or neglect. Currently, they are being cared for by foster parents or live in a group facility.

Despite their troubled lives, most of our children laugh and play like other children. They have favorite toys, games and friends. Each one of them has hopes and dreams. For the most part they are normal children but they have not led normal lives. Our children need one or more committed adults who are willing and able to provide a stable, nurturing and loving home.

"Adoption is forever." Adoption of a child through Hamilton County Children's Services is for committed adults willing to help traumatized children cope with their emotions. Adoptive parents must be willing to understand and support a child's attachment to his or her birth family and help that child stay in touch with his or her siblings. If you decide to adopt one of our children, you'll find there are few things in life more challenging or more rewarding. Adoption can not only change a child's life, it can change yours.

As a public agency, Hamilton County Children's Services can help your family throughout the entire adoption process. We provide a full range of adoption services from training to finalization. In addition, support programs and services are available to our families after finalization. If you choose to adopt a child through our agency, the total cost to you is typically under \$200.

The enclosed information is designed to give you a better understanding of adoption. We've included an overview of the process, more information about the children available for adoption and the basic requirements necessary to be an adoptive parent. We hope this information helps you decide whether you are ready to take the next step in the adoption process.

If you are ready to move forward, call 632-6366 and register for the next Open House. Register today. Our children are waiting.

Hamilton County Children's Services
Adoption and Foster Care Unit

Agencies throughout Hamilton County Teamed Up To Assist Katrina Survivors

Agencies throughout the county worked together to assist Katrina survivors in Cincinnati.

- ◆ Access to Red Cross services/benefits.
- ◆ Assistance with FEMA applications.

The center opened at Lunken Airport to provide information about housing, social services, jobs, schools, Social Security, and FEMA assistance.

Project Partners included:

- Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati
- American Red Cross
- Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care for Homeless Agencies
- Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Apartment Association
- Hamilton County Community Action Agency
- Ohio Housing Finance Agency
- Social Security Administration
- The Partnership Center, Ltd.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Services offered include:

- ◆ Expedited applications for Job and Family Services benefits.
- ◆ Expedited voucher transfer for subsidized housing for persons who were previously living in subsidized housing.
- ◆ Free police records check, as needed for housing.
- ◆ Connection to rent/deposit assistance while waiting for FEMA dollars.
- ◆ Connection with ongoing support workers in community agencies.

GENEROSITY

\$2,819

The dollar amount raised by county employees to assist with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

Thanks to Kim Pennekamp, Work Life Benefits Specialist, County Personnel, who organized the county's campaign.

County employees volunteer for Katrina response

Job and Family Services (JFS) mobilized quickly to respond to the needs of Hurricane Katrina survivors arriving in Cincinnati. More than 169 applications were processed, involving approximately 360 people, and JFS participated in Governor Taft's Hurricane Evacuee Assistance Program issuing \$116,000 to survivors.



The response team included Tresa Young, Jim Ashmore, Judy Eschmann, Anne Lieb, Kevin Brewer, Kelly Draggoo, Amy Story, Karen Zahneis, April Barker, Phylise Hill, Mary Wolowicz, and Charles Woode.

Kelly Draggoo and Anne Lieb volunteered to spend a week in Mobile, Alabama with human services workers from other states, participating in a one-stop benefits center. Their job was to issue emergency food stamps. Other JFS employees donated gift certificates and items for families.

Survivors new to the Cincinnati area should visit JFS for help with public assistance (TANF, food stamps, medical). JFS will then make a referral to Red Cross for other services.

A team from the county's Regional Planning Commission (RPC) sponsored a meal during the St. Monica-St. George's Interfaith Hospitality Network hosting week.



The RPC team was profoundly touched by their interaction with the families, and will continue to help in the future.

Pictured (l-r): Lori Adler, Cecelia McKinley, Karen Ambrosius (team coordinator), Sharon Stewart, Becky O'Brien.



SERVICE AWARDS

30 YEARS



Mary Carter began her career with Job and Family Services in the Active Files Department as a File Clerk on September 18, 1975. Mary graduated from Robert A. Taft High School in 1969. She was a homemaker with three children.

From 1976 through 1978, Mary served as a Clerk II in the Auditing Department. She changed positions to become a Clerical Specialist in 1980. Mary was reclassified to an Investigator II position shortly thereafter. In September 1989, Mary became a line supervisor in Child Support, and was there for nine years. In September 1995, Mary became a Child Support Technician.

Mary has served the agency for thirty years in the Child Support Division.

Thank you, Mary and congratulations on your dedicated service to Hamilton County!

25 YEARS

Jacqueline Ivery began her employment with Job and Family Services in 1980. Those years have been both a pleasure and a challenge for her. Jacqueline has worked in various units during her tenure: Contracting, Staff Development, Southwest Ohio Regional Training, Human Resources, and Children Services.

Jacqueline was a foster parent, as well as an adoptive parent through Hamilton County. She is the proud parent of her son, Mark and daughter-in-law, Tina, and a proud grandmother of two fine grandsons, Kayin, 5 and Zion, 3. Jacqueline's years really went by fast with the support of co-workers and many friends.

Jacqueline had an Associates degree when she started at the agency. Through tuition reimbursement, she obtained Bachelors and Masters degrees. She anticipates retirement to start the second phase of her career. She is proud of her years as a public service employee. Thank you Jacqueline, and congratulations!



JFS Promotions



Cynthia Smith became Assistant Director in charge of Client Services on October 6.

“I’m excited about such talented and experienced individuals joining the Executive Team. Both are very customer-focused. They’re going to help us accomplish great things as the future unfolds.”

~ Rick Roberts, JFS Director

Jeffrey Startzman, on October 20, will take over as Assistant Director in charge of Child Support.



October calendar

- 2-8 Mental Illness Awareness Week
- 9-15 National Fire Prevention Week
- 10 Columbus Day
- 10 First Quarter Moon
- 16 National Boss’ Day
- 16-22 National Radon Action Week
- 16-22 Teen Read Week
- 17 Full Moon
- 23 Mother-in-Law Day
- 24 United Nations Day
- 25 Last Quarter Moon
- 30 Daylight Saving Time ends
- National Down Syndrome Awareness Month
- National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Let’s Talk Month
- Children’s Health Month
- National Depression and Mental Health Month
- Crime Prevention Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Hunger Awareness Month

Word of the Month

(not found in the dictionary)

phonecrastinate (v): to put off answering the phone until caller ID displays the incoming name and number.

Source: Merriam-Webster Online

Print and post

*Hello,
Hamilton County*

in your area!



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.

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

Visit:
www.hamilton-co.org

Telephone hotline:
946.4626

Next time the noise from an airplane bothers you while you're at home, point your browser to 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.

The Board of County Commissioners



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



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



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

County's Website: www.hamilton-co.org

Hamilton County gets ready for the coming flu season

By Kim Pennekamp



Each winter, millions of people suffer from influenza, a highly contagious infection caused by a variety of flu viruses that infect the nose, throat and lungs, and commonly is called the flu. It spreads easily from person to person mainly when an infected person coughs or sneezes. If the flu virus infects you, you will usually feel symptoms very quickly including headache, chills, dry cough, body aches, fever, stuffy nose, and sore throat. However, the most familiar aspect of the flu is the way it can knock you off your feet as it sweeps through entire communities.

That's why the county and Humana ChoiceCare have teamed up again to help you be flu-free during the 2005-2006 flu season. Following are very important reminders for this year's flu shot program:

- Employees with Humana ChoiceCare medical insurance can receive their vaccine **free of charge** by presenting their NewHealth, Primary Access or CoChoice card to the nurse at any scheduled flu shot site.
- Employees who have declined medical insurance may receive the vaccination for an **\$18 copay**.
- Your spouse and insurance eligible dependents who are 18 years and older may also receive a flu shot. Dependents 17 and younger must go to their primary care physician to receive the vaccine.

Check with your departmental payroll officer for the time and date the flu vaccine will be offered in your location.



For more information on influenza and the flu shot vaccine, visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/> or consult your physician.

If you have questions about the county's flu shot program, contact Kim Pennekamp, County Personnel, 946.4705.

Paul Brown Stadium Suite Drawings

Hamilton County will provide the use of its suite at Paul Brown Stadium for citizens selected through these drawings. The first drawing was held on October 5, and the second drawing will be held on November 30, after the Commissioners' meeting. Sixteen winners and a guest will have the opportunity to see a Bengals game from the suite. The selected games are Sunday, October 23 vs. the Pittsburgh Steelers and Sunday, December 11 vs. the Cleveland Browns. The County will provide food and soft drinks.

Commissioners Phil Heimlich, Pat DeWine, and Todd Portune each share their pleasure in offering this chance to the citizens of Hamilton County.

The deadline to submit an entry is Monday, November 14, 8AM.



"Got News?"

Send an e-mail to sharon.booker@hamilton-co.org.

Deadline for next issue:
October 24.

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.*