



Clermont County On The Move

a newsletter for citizens

October 2005

Commissioners: Bob Proud, Mary Walker, and Scott Crowell

Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina and the Cincinnati Styrene Leak

Reflecting on the local and national evacuations, resulting from the Cincinnati styrene leak and the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, Clermont County Emergency Management Agency Director Beth Nevel says that it is more important than ever before for all of us to maintain and practice family and business continuity plans.

“We’ve learned from these situations it is best to plan for the worst possible scenario,” says Nevel. She cautions that when events happen, they happen quickly, such as the hurricane moving in, triggering a massive levee break in New Orleans, wiping out the entire infrastructure of the area.

“It is important for citizens to have some control over their lives, even in the worst of times,” adds Nevel. “I can’t stress enough the importance of every family putting together a kit of water, non perishable food, flashlights, batteries, needed medication and other comfort items to last a minimum of three days.”



It is also critical to have a business continuity plan in place. For several years, Clermont County has been working on and practicing their response to disasters ranging from tornadoes to earthquakes to biohazards. The Department of Homeland Security stresses that the best weapon against terrorism or natural disasters is a prepared citizenry.

Department of Homeland Security stresses that the best weapon against terrorism or natural disasters is a prepared citizenry.

“Mother Nature is a very unpredictable force, even with all of our technology projecting the path of hurricanes and tornadoes,” said Nevel. She says that many years from now, emergency response personnel will still be dissecting what went wrong in

New Orleans, from how evacuations were handled to how food and supplies were delivered to those impacted. “I believe that there was an initial breakdown in communications

between the local, state, and federal agencies. The communications follow a bottom-up approach, meaning it is up to local officials to let regional and national officials know what resources are needed where, and to enforce the situational needs.”

Federal emergency management officials say they didn’t know for days about the thousands of people hungry, thirsty, and camped out at the New Orleans convention center. The New Orleans mayor’s office has said that with phone service and cellular service knocked out, first responders had a difficult time communicating with each other.

“As part of the Hurricane Andrew response team in Florida a few years ago, it took 9-10 months to rebuild some of the businesses and homes,” said Nevel. “Reality here is that many in Louisiana and surrounding states will never be able to return home.”

For more information on putting together a shelter-in-place kit for your family or business, check the FEMA website at www.ready.gov and the American Red Cross website at cincinnatiaredcross.org.



County Raises Money for Hurricane Victims

By: Jenni Hendricks, Auditor's Office

The employees of the Clermont County Auditor's Office, as everyone else, were impacted by the tragedy in New Orleans and wanted to come up with a way to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina. We decided that we would "dress down" during September and October at \$1 per day.



Vicky Stegg from DJFS enjoys a hotdog lunch

In addition, we sent out a county-wide e-mail inviting all county employees to come to our office, have lunch, and make a donation to the Red Cross. We asked our employees to bake cookies and cakes and have a bake sale on the same day. When we came in on the morning of September 8, our office was overflowing with baked goods from employees throughout

Clermont County! We had so many cakes and pies that we sold raffle tickets. All in all, we raised \$1,334 from the hot dog and bake sale and another \$500 so far from the "dress down," all of which will go to the Red Cross for the hurricane relief effort.

We want to thank all the people that baked as well as all the people



Clerk of Courts (Common Pleas) Barb Wiedenbein waits on her hot dog, grilled by Phil Brown (Auditor's Office)

who came and donated to this worthy cause. Also a big thank you goes out to Husman's for donating the chips, Butternut for donating the buns, Dennis Clepper for donating the hot dogs and Matt Van Sant from the Auditor's Office for donating bottled water.



So many choices ...



Native Americans called pumpkins "isqoutm squash."

Rally to Support our Troops



On Thursday, September 22, around 150 Clermont County citizens gathered in Batavia for an evening Support our Troops Rally organized by Clermont County Commissioner Bob Proud.

In addition to patriotic music, the rally featured presentations by Pearl Harbor veteran Joe Whitt

and Mia Supe with the Military Support Connection group.

Special recognition was given to service personnel who have served, or are currently serving in the war against terrorism.



October Commissioner Sessions

Thursday, October 6	1:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 12	1:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 19	1:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 26	1:00 p.m.

All regular sessions are held in the third floor session room of the Clermont County Administration Building, 101 East Main Street in Batavia, Ohio. For agenda information, contact the BCC offices at (513) 732-7300.

Baby Contest Benefits Allergy Network

By: Carrie Davin, Auditor's Office

During the week of August 22, 2005, the Clermont County Auditor's Office held a *Name that Baby Contest*. The staff submitted baby pictures of themselves, and coworkers were invited to guess the identities. Ballots were sold for \$1 each and the proceeds benefited the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN). FAAN is a national nonprofit organization established to increase public awareness about food allergies and anaphylaxis (a severe, life-threatening reaction), provide education, and advance research on behalf of all those impacted by food allergies. The Employee Action Committee chose FAAN because an employee's son has a peanut allergy and she wanted to raise food allergy awareness.



Did you know...

1. Approximately 11 million Americans have a food allergy.
2. Eight foods account for 90% of all allergic reactions to food: peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, pecans, etc.), fish, shellfish (lobster, shrimp, etc.), eggs, milk, soy, and wheat.
3. It is estimated that between 150-200 people die each year from food-allergy induced anaphylaxis, a severe allergic reaction.
4. Food allergy is the leading cause of anaphylaxis outside the hospital setting, accounting for an estimated 30,000 emergency room visits each year.
5. There is no cure for a food allergy. Avoidance of the allergy-causing food is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction to food.

If you would like to learn more about food allergies please visit the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network at www.foodallergy.org.

The staff had a lot of fun guessing and \$33 was raised to support FAAN. Jacquelyn Lyttle was the winner of the contest and received a gift card from the Eastgate Mall.

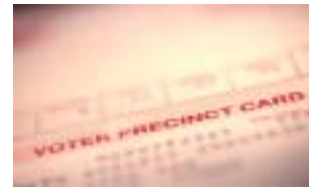


The Clermont 20/20 Master Recycler Composter Program is an opportunity for citizens to learn about reducing solid waste, recycling, pre-cycling and composting. For more information, please visit www.clermont2020.org for a brochure, or call Julie Toren, Clermont 20/20 Clean and Green program coordinator, at (513) 753-9222, or email cleanandgreen@clermont2020.org.

Voting Day Precinct Additions

By: Dan Bare, Board of Elections

The November 8, 2005 General Election will include nine precincts that have been split, thereby increasing the total number of precincts within Clermont County from 191 to 200. Ohio election laws allow a precinct to have a maximum number of 1,400 registered voters. While all nine precincts are not at the maximum level, they are in fast growing areas of the community and have been split in anticipation of continued growth. The board of elections also took the 2004 Presidential Election into consideration and especially those precincts with unusually long lines.



All precincts involved will continue to be located at their previous polling location and will not require the voter to go to a different polling location. All voters that are part of a split will receive a new voter identification card that will indicate their new precinct number. When arriving at the polling location, simply go to the table assigned to your precinct. For a complete list of precinct additions, check the Board of Elections website at www.clermontelections.org.

While the splits should be beneficial, they do create an additional challenge for the Clermont County Board of Elections, finding additional poll workers. If you are interested please call 732-7275 for information.

The largest pumpkin ever grown weighed 1,140 pounds!



Child Support Success

By: Brenda Gilreath, Child Support Enforcement

The month of August proved very successful for Clermont County Child Support Enforcement (CSE), as agencies statewide placed special focus on its efforts during this month. Because of the hard work of the Clermont County Sheriff's Department, 89 child support offenders, with outstanding bench warrants, were apprehended during August. Of these 89 cases, \$12,995.00 was collected, 25 sentences were imposed, 18 payors were booked on criminal non-support charges, 9 were awaiting extradition, and 29 bond hearings were held. Seven of the payors were found to be incarcerated in facilities around the state and one individual decided to pay his arrearage in full, a total of \$3,760.00. There were 134 children affected by the outcomes of the 89 arrests made.



Some of these offenders were highlighted as part of a *Most Wanted* advertisement which was a full page of pictures and information regarding these individuals published in the press Community Newspapers. Other payors were featured on Adelphia Cable Channel 22 which provided the public with the opportunity to phone in tips to the agency to apprehend these individuals. Clermont County's *Most Wanted* posters were distributed locally to businesses and government agencies to promote assistance from the public in obtaining tips regarding the whereabouts of those featured.

In addition, the Clermont County CSE filed 201 administrative liens on cases with arrearages totaling \$2,972,923. An administrative lien allows the agency to place a lien on personal or real property without reducing that arrearage to a

judgment. It also has the added benefit of allowing the agency to collect balances that have accrued after the date the lien was filed.

Extra attention was also placed on the statewide campaign for electronic disbursements entitled, "Have you Heard About the Bird?" In response to this campaign, our local fiscal staff prepared a video to promote the enrollment for electronic disbursements in our County and the video is

being aired on Government Cable Channel 22. In October, all new child support cases will have electronic disbursement in lieu of paper checks. Those who receive child support can obtain those payments through a

direct deposit into a bank account or by disbursement to an E-Quick Pay debit MasterCard, which works like a debit card at any retailer that accepts MasterCard. The program will provide an added convenience to our customers, as well as save the state millions of dollars associated with the distribution of paper checks. Thus far, Clermont County has increased its voluntary enrollment in the electronic disbursement project from 23.10% in June to 39.84% in August.

We would like to thank all the agencies involved in making Child Support Month such a terrific success including, the Sheriff's Department, the Board of County Commissioners, the Domestic and Juvenile Courts, and the child support staff. These efforts have helped greatly to improve the quality of life for the children of this community.

Pumpkins are 90-percent water!



October Signals Electronic Child Support Payments

By: Annette Black, CSE

October 1, 2005 marks the beginning of mandatory electronic disbursements in the State of Ohio. All support payments will be transitioned to electronic disbursement payments in a phased program over the next year, but for Clermont County recipients, this will be in the next several weeks. Clermont County is a pilot for this program, as well as Fairfield, Franklin, Greene, Holmes, and Richland Counties. As of October 2005, all new support orders statewide, meeting specific criteria, will be enrolled in e-Disbursement automatically.

What does this mean to you?

Enrollment forms will be mailed in October to all recipients receiving paper support checks. Failure to make a request for direct deposit will result in automatic enrollment for the Ohio e-QuickPay Debit MasterCard. If you do not want to receive an Ohio e-QuickPay Debit MasterCard in the next several weeks, you need to complete an enrollment form for direct deposit. Enrollment forms and information can be obtained from www.ClermontSupportsKids.org or call the Clermont County Child Support Office at (513) 732-7248.

