

# Community Development Newsletter



February 23, 2009

## THOMAS W. BLAINE, EDITOR

**Colleagues: Greetings!** It has been a very busy winter for many of us in CD. This month's newsletter highlights three initiatives from around the state that seem to me to be very innovative in helping people in Ohio deal with some of the challenges we are currently facing. I think that these programs demonstrate just how dynamic Extension is. Our organization has a tremendous capacity for developing resources that educate the public on timely and relevant topics. I hope that all of you will read about the three initiatives described here. Perhaps you will consider adopting portions of some of them as conditions change in your community.

## MESSAGE FROM INTERIM AD, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, JOHN CONGLOSE

As you are all aware OSU Extension is going through a restructuring/reorganization process due to budget cuts in state funding. I would encourage you to continue to read our Director, Keith Smith's Communiqué for details and updates on this process. Plans call for implementation of this reorganization to occur over the next several months.

Two things that we do know at this time as they relate to Community Development are that:

1) Extension programming will be provided from all four program areas - "**Community Development, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 4-H and Family and Consumer Sciences**" in all counties, focusing on the four OSU Extension **Impact Areas** and six **Signature Programs**.

<http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~intranet/story.php?id=1918>

2) The reorganization plan is centered around the creation of **education and research delivery areas**.

As further changes to the organization are implemented, I will keep you posted in this newsletter as to how these changes will impact the CD program area. I also plan to continue to visit with Community Development Educators and Specialists throughout the state to discuss issues. We will also be organizing team development activities for CD Educators as changes are implemented. In the meantime, I would encourage you as CD Educators and Specialists to continue to show the value and impacts of your body of work (teaching, curriculum development and research) to the organization and to clientele.

## NEW YEAR NEW YOU FOR A HEALTHY VAN WERT COUNTY

**New Year New You** is a cross-programmatic initiative led by Ohio State University Extension, Van Wert County, in collaboration with numerous public and private sector sponsors and partners to increase public awareness about how living a healthy lifestyle can reduce health problems and costs related to health care, while improving quality of life. The revised program was launched on January 17<sup>th</sup> with a kickoff event attended by almost 300 people who were motivated by speaker and exercise entertainer, Jim Steffan.

Although weight loss is an important component, the 12 week program primarily emphasizes leading a healthy lifestyle through weekly ½ hour educational sessions held at noon and 6 p.m. on Tuesdays. The sessions, which are free and open to the public, feature local professionals who speak on different health-related subjects. Over 440 people are involved on 56 teams to track points based on making the right choices.

If you would like more information about this program, please contact Nancy Bowen at:  
[nbowen@cfaes.osu.edu](mailto:nbowen@cfaes.osu.edu)

## **DHL CLOSING - OSU EXTENSION ANSWERING LOCAL NEED VIA THE FIVE-COUNTY SOLUTIONS PROJECT**

**Note:** This is an overview of the project that has been going on in Clinton, Fayette, Greene, Highland and Montgomery counties, called "5countysolutions." If you haven't had an opportunity to check out the web site, have a look at it at <http://5countysolutions.osu.edu/> New information is added to the site every day. In coming CD Newsletters, the "five counties" will be sharing what they have been doing individually.

The 2008 closing of DHL in Wilmington, Ohio eliminated 10,000 jobs in southern Ohio. One out of three households in Wilmington and the surrounding area had someone working at the airpark, per a report on *60 Minutes* (January 25, 2009), The DHL severance package of \$260 million will not go far for all of the households affected, especially when the outlook for other businesses/jobs in the area is very poor. A number of "feeder companies" also provided services based on DHL's presence in Wilmington. To compound the problem, many of the former DHL employees have no savings, no backup plan, and little or no experience with any other type of job.

## **OSU EXTENSION - PROVIDING RESOURCES**

OSU Extension has been able to address local concerns with job losses caused by the DHL and related business closings in Wilmington. When it became known in May 2008 that DHL in Wilmington, Ohio would be closing, the OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Educators in the five most-affected counties in the area (Clinton, Greene, Fayette, Montgomery, and Highland) agreed to collaborate to develop resources and educational materials and make these tools available to their communities. The other program areas of OSU Extension are assisting with these efforts. OSU Extension is also collaborating with a number of educational and other entities in the area.

OSU Extension Educators started reaching the general public via newspaper articles with basic resource information. Residents and local bankers provided feedback that the educators were "right on target" with the information they provided. The educators also attended a meeting of education providers that was sponsored by the Ohio Board of Regents, which was pleased with the actions that were already initiated by this "five-county group."

The next step was establishing an OSU Extension URL to provide a site for collecting/providing resources. The nature of the workforce at DHL and ABX (Airborne Express) calls for around-the-clock accessibility. Through links on this Web site, individuals are able to access and use resources to make informed financial decisions. Comments from affected workers indicate that the worksheets have helped them focus their attention on the most critical factors that are impacting their financial decisions.

The <http://5countysolutions.osu.edu/> site contains:

- A home page that describes the objective to provide resources and help for individuals and families.
- A link to each county's social agencies such as food banks, utility assistance, Community Action partnerships, and foreclosure help.
- Tools for financial planning.
- Tips for avoiding scams (i.e. financial predators).
- Tools - resume hints and tips; links to starting your own small business, Ohionline resources, food preservation, making your own "green" home cleaners, and a home study course on managing your money.

The site went live in early fall 2008. Since tracking started on November 30, there have been 508 visits to the site. To date, the most frequent hits have come via the <http://www.myabx.com/> site. The web site is being marketed in a variety of ways - i.e. bookmarks with the URL and OSU Extension logo have been distributed at employment agencies, ABX and DHL Transition Centers, county Department of Job and Family Services offices, and benefit banks. At least one podcast has been developed - focusing on practical advice for working with creditors.

If you have questions about Extension's involvement in this project, please contact Susan Holliday at: [holladay.5@osu.edu](mailto:holladay.5@osu.edu)

## **INTERESTED IN SOCIAL MEDIA?**

Julie Fox and Rob Leeds presented a session on Social Media Marketing at the North American Farm Direct Markets Association (NAFDMA) annual conference. They are working on some educational resources for entrepreneurs and other educators. If you're involved with Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Blogs, and other social media communication tools, let them know. They are gathering examples, lessons learned, and resources to share with others. Here is Julie's email address: [fox.264@osu.edu](mailto:fox.264@osu.edu)

## **KUDOS:**

Civittolo, D. & Davis, G.A. (2008). *Formal Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Survey Program*. In D. Nizalov, L. Reese, H. Ockman and O. Nizalova (Eds.), *Municipal Economic Development Tools*. An online book written in English, Ukrainian, Russian, and Spanish at: [http://led.net.ua/UserFiles/File/PDF/Civittolo&Davis\\_EN.pdf](http://led.net.ua/UserFiles/File/PDF/Civittolo&Davis_EN.pdf)

Civittolo, D. and Davis, G. (2008). Ohio Township Trustees' Land Use Planning and Knowledge and Practices: A Statewide Survey to Better Target Programmatic Resources. *Journal of Extension*, August 2008, an electronic publication. Blind reviewed by three members of the JOE Editorial Committee.

Greg Davis and David Civittolo had an article in the Jan/Feb 2009 "Ohio Trustees Association" magazine titled, Understanding Ohioans' Perceptions of Local Leadership.

Bond-Zielinski, C. & Moss, M., *Using the Logic Model to Develop Family and Consumer Sciences Programming*. To be published in the next issue of The Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences.

## **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:**

NACDEP Conference - April 20 - 22, 2009 in San Diego, CA. " **Creating Sustainable Communities in a Changing America**" <http://www.nacdep.net/>

Community Development Society 41st Annual International Conference - July 26-29, 2009 in Memphis, TN, "*Celebrating Community: Creating Hope in Uncertain Times*" <http://www.comm-dev.org/>