



CITY OF BLUE ASH 2010 Annual Report




**2010 ...
The Year
In Review**



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February 2011

Honorable Mayor & City Council Members:

It is with great pleasure that Blue Ash’s City Manager and Administrative team present this annual report for calendar year 2010.

Please remember that this report is intended to only *summarize* highlights of major achievements and accomplishments of each department and division of the City during the year. It is not intended to provide a comprehensive listing of all that the City of Blue Ash has to offer to those who live, work, and visit our community.

It truly is a privilege to work for the City of Blue Ash and its City Council. We look forward to continuing efforts associated with the many exciting future opportunities and projects that face our community and its residential and corporate citizens. Thank you for your continued support and leadership.

Respectfully submitted,

BLUE ASH CITY ADMINISTRATION

David Waltz

David Waltz
City Manager

Jim Pfeffer

Jim Pfeffer
Treasurer/Admin. Ser. Director

Chuck Funk

Chuck Funk
Parks & Recreation Director

Mike Duncan

Mike Duncan
Public Works Director

Chris Wallace

Chris Wallace
Police Chief

Rick Brown

Rick Brown
Fire Chief

Sue Bennett

Sue Bennett
Public Information Officer

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▷ BUDGET PRIORITIZATION PROCESS - INVOLVING ALL CITY DEPARTMENTS & DIVISIONS!

In an effort to explore new ways to better blend strategic planning and budgeting, in 2010, the City underwent an extensive Budget Prioritization process with help from local government consultants associated with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) – Jon Johnson and Chris Fabian. This activity included representatives from all City divisions and departments. ICMA is a well-respected, leading organization which is the major professional and educational resource for managers of local governments throughout the world.

To provide brief background, for the past several years, the City Council and Administration have recognized that, like virtually all municipalities across the country, recent economic conditions have had a significant impact on revenues. Blue Ash enjoyed a 20-year double-digit revenue growth period from the late 1970s to the late 1990s, experiencing an average earnings tax growth rate of about 12.7% per year (see chart on the Treasurer's Office page for more information). However, over the past ten years, Blue Ash's revenue stream has leveled out, with Blue Ash experiencing very little growth -- characteristic for a maturing community such as Blue Ash. This impact was intensified by two significant national-level economic downturns during this period: one after the attack on our nation on September 11, 2001, and the ongoing economic recession. It is clear that although Blue Ash has fared better than most communities in the region, we are not immune to national trends and economic downturns, and that we, like other communities, will have to adjust to a "new normal" – one very different than ever experienced.

The Administration and Council have worked hard for years to keep operational expenses in check. In fact, since 2007, such expenses have been held to an average increase of less than 1% each year, despite increasing costs (especially associated with gasoline, energy, health insurance, etc.). If the City had to deal only with the conditions associated with a maturing community, these fiscally-conservative efforts would have been more than sufficient to keep things on track. However, given the severity of the revenue declines since 9-11 and during the recent recession, the impact upon the City's earnings tax collections – the City's greatest source of annual revenue – has been significant, requiring even further adjustments.

With this in mind, help was sought from the ICMA local government advisors in developing a prioritization

process that could be used as one tool within the City's budgetary process. This course of action was intended to help focus the City's decision-making process by basing priorities on outcomes. According to ICMA, addressing current fiscal realities while still meeting the objectives and the expectations of citizens represents the biggest challenge to every organization's long-term fiscal wellness. Prioritization of services creates an objective and transparent decision-making process, one that ensures programs of higher value to citizens -- those that achieve the organization's objectives most effectively -- can be sustained through adequate funding levels, regardless of the economic conditions. Recent information from Moody's (the nation's largest bond rating agency) confirms that prioritization processes, such as what Blue Ash is going through, demonstrate a strategic approach to managing the current fiscal environment. Work began on this budget prioritization process with the ICMA advisors at a January 2010 Council work session, when Mr. Johnson and Mr. Fabian facilitated an exercise to determine the City's "results," or overall objectives and strategic goals. After much discussion, it was determined that the City's overall objectives should be (listed in no particular order):

- Strong and vibrant economic environment
- Attractive and well-maintained community
- A safe community
- Quality and diverse leisure-time activities
- Quality and desirable neighborhoods
- Connected, accessible, & reliable transportation network

Additional work with the Administration and staff during the following weeks took place to further define what each of these objectives means specifically to Blue Ash. Work during this period also involved the creation of an overall "inventory" of City services – the programs and services that Blue Ash offers to its citizens.

A next step in this prioritization process involved the "grading" of the overall City services and programs – specifically grading in terms of how each program or service rates specifically to each of the six overall City objectives listed above. Those programs that contribute significantly to the objectives received higher "grades" than those programs that do not contribute directly. Next, the overall cost of each program was determined.

(Prioritization info continued on next page)

In addition to the internal work described, the City incorporated several other efforts into this process to assure maximum citizen input and involvement. One of these efforts involved the citizen survey which was completed in late April with the assistance of the Institute for Policy Research (IPR) associated with the University of Cincinnati. IPR surveyed over 500 Blue Ash adults (via telephone), and most of the survey questions tied directly to the budget prioritization process, including incorporation of the overall objectives determined earlier in the year. In addition to the citizen survey, the following efforts were also incorporated into the prioritization process:

- Written comments and input received from residents through a station set up at the Rec Center earlier in the year.
- Comments and input received from citizens who attended an Open House held at City Hall.
- Comments and input received from Sycamore High students. The Advisors spent more than half a day in March talking directly with five high school senior level government classes (see picture).
- Comments and input received from business citizen participants through a survey.
- Input received from a survey of Raymond Walters College students.

At the May 27, 2010 Council meeting, the Advisors explained the results of these computations. The results show clearly that the City is in fact spending most of its

ICMA consultants Chris & Jon spent time with Sycamore High seniors to gather their generation's input into the prioritization process



resources on the types of services that contribute most directly to the overall objectives. Mr. Johnson noted at the meeting that “we were very impressed with this outcome since most of the other communities we are assisting through this process have not seen similar results.” He added that “this will present a real challenge to your City, though, as you determine how to proceed.”

Also at the May 27 Council meeting, Dr. Eric Rademacher from UC’s IPR gave a presentation of the citizen survey results. Among other items noted, Dr. Rademacher stated that “it is clear: when it comes to quality of life, the City has very stable numbers” (in comparing recent past citizen survey results). Dr. Rademacher confirmed that “the results show residents continue to have a great deal of satisfaction from living in Blue Ash.”

Another interesting result from the citizen survey in considering the budget prioritization process concurrently underway was that the programs and services Blue Ash citizens found most important to them correlated very highly with those overall objectives determined by Council earlier in the year. Mr. Johnson complimented the City as he indicated that “it is evident that Council and the Administration have their finger on the pulse of Blue Ash citizens in knowing what is important to them in terms of the services and programs offered by the City.”

The local government advisors developed a unique tool that will assist Blue Ash for years to come in its planning and budget process to enhance its decision making.

The tool will be especially valuable in determining what services and programs contribute directly to the City’s overall objectives, including the evaluation of any future new programs or services being considered.



2010 CITY MANAGER’S OFFICE HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to participating in the prioritization activities described above, additional highlights of 2010 City Manager’s staff include:

- Relations & Information Efforts in 2010 - Extensive work continued throughout 2010 towards its public information to enhance communication and overall citizen engagement. Some examples of such efforts include regular news releases and guest columns dis-

seminated to local media (print and otherwise) regarding City activities, projects, and general informational updates; continuation of the City’s printed newsletters; regular electronic newsletters (eBlast! communications) E-mailed to subscribers; regular “tweets” sent via use of the social media tool Twitter; and continuation of the web-based customer service response and Open City Hall systems, providing additional communi-

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ation opportunities for citizens and visitors. The City's promotional video, created in 2009, continues to be used regularly, and is readily available via the City's website, as well as shown in the Municipal & Safety Center's lobby area as well as on video screens at the City's special events. Blue Ash prides itself on always welcoming opinions and thoughts from any Blue Ash citizen on any public issue, and will continue to do so into the future.

●Public Information Officer Sue Bennett was quite humbled and honored to have been selected to receive a regional level Public Administrator of the Year Award (Support Services category), as presented in late April by the Greater Cincinnati Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. The award was the result of a formal written nomination by City Manager David Waltz, and included participation in the GCC-ASPA annual luncheon in April in downtown Cincinnati, as well as recognition during "Public Service Week" in downtown Cincinnati on Fountain Square in early May.



●Administration of the Vet Memorial inscribed brick program is handled through the Public Information Office, with 2010 representing the 20th year. Additional bricks were placed in May, bringing the total number of bricks honoring American veterans to 4,984.

●The residential tree program, coordinated through the Public Information Office, continued in 2010, though was not heavily publicized due to funding issues in this area. In 2010, 65 residents requested tree coupons, and utilized those coupons to plant 28 trees (as compared to over 100 trees being planted in 2009). The number of trees planted through this program since 2002 totals approximately 750.

●The Public Information office, with assistance from Parks & Rec, coordinated efforts for the City's annual Memorial Day parade and ceremonies. 2010 marked our community's 58th annual event. The featured military band was the 100th Army Band based in Fort Knox, Kentucky. Keynote speaker for the event was Major General Harry "A.J." W. Feucht, Assistant Adjutant General for Air & Commander, Ohio Air National Guard.

●The 18th annual Veterans Day activities were held on Nov. 11, coordinated by the all-volunteer Veterans Day Committee, led by Councilman (and veteran) Rick

Bryan. Ceremonies were held at the Vet Memorial, and the annual luncheon was held at the Rec Center. Logistical assistance for both the ceremonies and luncheon is provided by the City (especially via the Public Information Officer, Facilities Supt., and Recreation/Sports Supt./Parks & Rec staff).



●The Public Information Officer coordinated the creation of new corporate limit signs to replace the existing 25-year old former wooden signs. Representatives from the Service Department and Parks & Rec Department, as well as the Assistant to the City Manager, assisted with this project, lending their opinions and expertise in regards to sign and pole material, etc. The new signs were completed late in the year, with installation (to be done by our Service Department) in January. The new signs incorporate the City's newer colors/logos, and both the signs and poles are of materials that should minimize future maintenance requirements.

●The Assistant to the City Manager coordinated the Community Garden project. After last year's successful pilot program, the community garden at the City's Hunt House was expanded in 2010 from 7 to 20 plots, which were tended by 25 gardeners (with some plots being shared). Blue Ash resident Ann Scranton, working with the Assistant to the City Manager, again coordinated this project. New features coordinated this year by Ann included a gardening blog website, along with a home vegetable gardening seminar which attracted over 50 Blue Ash and Montgomery residents. The community garden program will be continued in 2011.



●The Assistant to the City Manager investigated money saving opportunities on the City's electric accounts through a cooperative purchasing effort with the Center for Local Government as well as fixed pricing and guaranteed savings offers by Duke Energy Retail Sales (DERS). After careful consideration, it was determined that the least risky, yet still "profitable" decision, was to contract with DERS for a guaranteed savings of 18% off generation and transmission pricing. It is estimated that the City will save \$140,000 over the contract period of 21 months.

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●The Assistant to the City Manager, along with other members of the Administration team, worked to employ Tax Increment Financing (TIF) upon the development of a new Target store in Blue Ash. Proceeds from the TIF will be used to finance future traffic improvements as described in the City's Reed Hartman/Plainfield Road Corridor study. It is conservatively estimated that the City will receive \$45,000 annually from this TIF for 30 years, all while making the Sycamore Schools 100% whole (they would receive the same amount of revenue that they would have received if the TIF were not in place). Construction on the new Target store began in 2010, with the store expected to open in fall 2011.

●As mentioned within the Budget Prioritization Process described previously, the City contracted with University of Cincinnati's Institute for Policy Research (IPR) for a scientific survey gauging residents satisfaction, as well as opinions regarding priority services and programs. Telephone interviews by IPR were completed in mid to late April, resulting in the interview of 515 Blue Ash adults. The results of the survey show extremely high satisfaction levels, with approximately 97% of those surveyed indicating that they were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the quality of life in Blue Ash. The same survey questions were used for an informal, non-scientific survey of both Blue Ash businesses and UC Raymond Walters College students via SurveyMonkey.

▷ SISTER CITY PROGRESS IN 2010

The Blue Ash-Ilmenau (Germany) Sister City relationship began approximately 11 years ago. Ilmenau is similar to Blue Ash in several respects in that it is a progressive community, has a mix of business and residential development, and is the home of a major university. Ilmenau is about 20 square miles in size and is located in the German state of Thuringia, near the middle of Germany. Ilmenau has a 30-member Council and is viewed positively by Germans as it is a picturesque community extremely rich in culture and history.

The Sister City program was successful and active during 2010, with highlights below:

High School Exchange Activity - In February, a seven-member student exchange between Blue Ash and Ilmenau took place. Five students (three from Ursuline Academy and two from Sycamore), along with two Sycamore High teacher chaperones spent about 10 days in Ilmenau. Ursuline and Sycamore worked with two Ilmenau area high schools – Lindenberg High and the Goethe School – in coordinating the exchange. Students spent the school day in classes, and were able to tour the area during non-school hours when time allowed. In October, seven students and a teacher from Ilmenau's Lindenberg High visited our area in conjunction with an exchange with Sycamore High. The 11th grade German students were hosted by Sycamore students and engaged in school activities as well as extracurricular activities with their host families. They also participated in field trips to Ft. Ancient, the Freedom Center, and the U.S. Air Force Museum. Also, the visit was bookended by trips to Washington DC and

Chicago. It is anticipated that the Sycamore students who hosted will travel to Ilmenau in February 2011.

College Exchange Activity - In August, Raymond Walters College (RWC) German Professor Debbie Page led a college-student exchange between UC/RWC and the Ilmenau Technical University. Students earned college credit for the classes attended during their approximate three-week stay in Ilmenau.

Ilmenau Delegation Visit to Blue Ash - The Ilmenau delegation was in town in late September. Fifteen delegates visited Blue Ash and the Greater Cincinnati area, including representatives from Ilmenau City Council and City Hall, as well as from the Ilmenau business and educational communities. The delegation enjoyed a variety of activities throughout the week to give them a "taste" of our area, with activities summarized below:

- A public reception and "culturalogue" (lecture series) activity at Raymond Walters College, including a presentation by Ilmenau's Mayor, Gerd-Michael Seeber, providing info about the Ilmenau area. This was held jointly with a reception for the new Dean at Raymond Walters College (Dr. Cady Short-Thompson).
- A visit to the Greene Intermediate School where Sycamore students provided a warm welcome and performed two concerts for guests, including orchestra and choral per-



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formances. Two Ilmenau Council representatives also gave a presentation to the students and teachers about the Ilmenau community. The students were very engaged.

- A visit to the Plum St. Temple in downtown Cincinnati, including a tour led by Blue Ash resident Rabbi Lewis Kamrass.
- The delegation members were honored guests at a free Concert in the Park with a performance by the Pete Wagner Band. This con-

cert was open to the public, with hundreds attending the celebration and interacting with our Ilmenau guests. (Thanks to Queen City Sausage for the food donation.)

- The group toured City facilities and attended a Thursday Lunchtime Concert on Towne Square and also placed flowers at the Veterans Memorial, which has become a tradition during each visit. Later that evening, there was a round-table discussion of various national

and local political and economic perspectives by each country.

- The group toured several Blue Ash businesses and several attended a Sycamore High School football game.



PROGRESS ON ISSUE 15 RELATED CAPITAL PROJECTS IN 2010

Golf Course Update

At the Oct. 14, 2010 Council meeting, City Council awarded bids for construction of the new multi-functional golf course clubhouse/banquet center facility. Construction, beginning with demolition of the existing clubhouse, began in early November. Already underway in 2010 was replacement of the course's vintage irrigation system. New cart paths will also be provided, though not yet bid as of late 2010. (It was decided that in order to minimize inconvenience to the golfing public, that all three phases of the course improvements should be done at the same time.) More details of the multi-functional golf course/banquet center project are included in the Golf Course section of this report.

Future 130-Acre Signature Park Near Airport

The next planned project associated with Issue 15 is the development of a 130-acre park near the airport. Since the City of Cincinnati must resolve issues associated with airport operations, Blue Ash is limited as to how it can move forward with park development. While the continuance of the airport operations on the remaining 98 acres retained by the City of Cincinnati was not guaranteed as part of the Issue 15 process, the purchase agreement specified that Cincinnati would apply for FAA funds to reconfigure and redevelop the airport – and to do so by August 2010, with extensions available until August 2012. In early 2010, Cincinnati requested one of those year extensions to allow more time to work with the FAA. Also in 2010, Cincinnati was awarded up to \$500,000 in State of Ohio grant money that it will be applying towards the lead remediation work required (as a small portion of the property

was once used as a shooting range decades ago).

As of late 2010, Cincinnati continues to wait for approval from the FAA as federal funds will be required to reconfigure airport operations. In the meantime, Blue Ash remains committed to the airport and continues to support Cincinnati's efforts to receive FAA funds to keep it operational. However, should that process not prove successful, Blue Ash has a contractual right to match any purchase offer on the remaining 98 acres for non-Airport use, and would go through a due diligence process to determine financial feasibility.

As was shown in the 2009 annual report, regardless of whether the airport remains open or not, Blue Ash will likely begin development of the new park around 2012/13 (depending upon the economy). The City looks forward to development of this wonderful future 130-acre park and believes it will be a source of pride for Blue Ash residents for generations to come.



The Treasurer's Office was involved with many of the efforts shown in other areas of this report. Additional activities performed but not captured in those descriptions are offered below:

- General supervision and support for Finance, Tax, Human Resources, and Technology offices and staff.
- Oversight of the City's risk management functions, including involvement with the 21-member joint self insurance pool, Miami Valley Risk Management Association (MVRMA).
- Support to departments and divisions on real estate and economic development matters, including monitoring the contractual process for the purchase of a portion of the City of Cincinnati's airport property, securing appropriate property tax exemption of the 130 acres acquired, assisting with Blue Ash's efforts to keep the Blue Ash Airport issue in the forefront of the City of Cincinnati's Council and Administration, and assistance with surveys, easements, and other real estate issues.

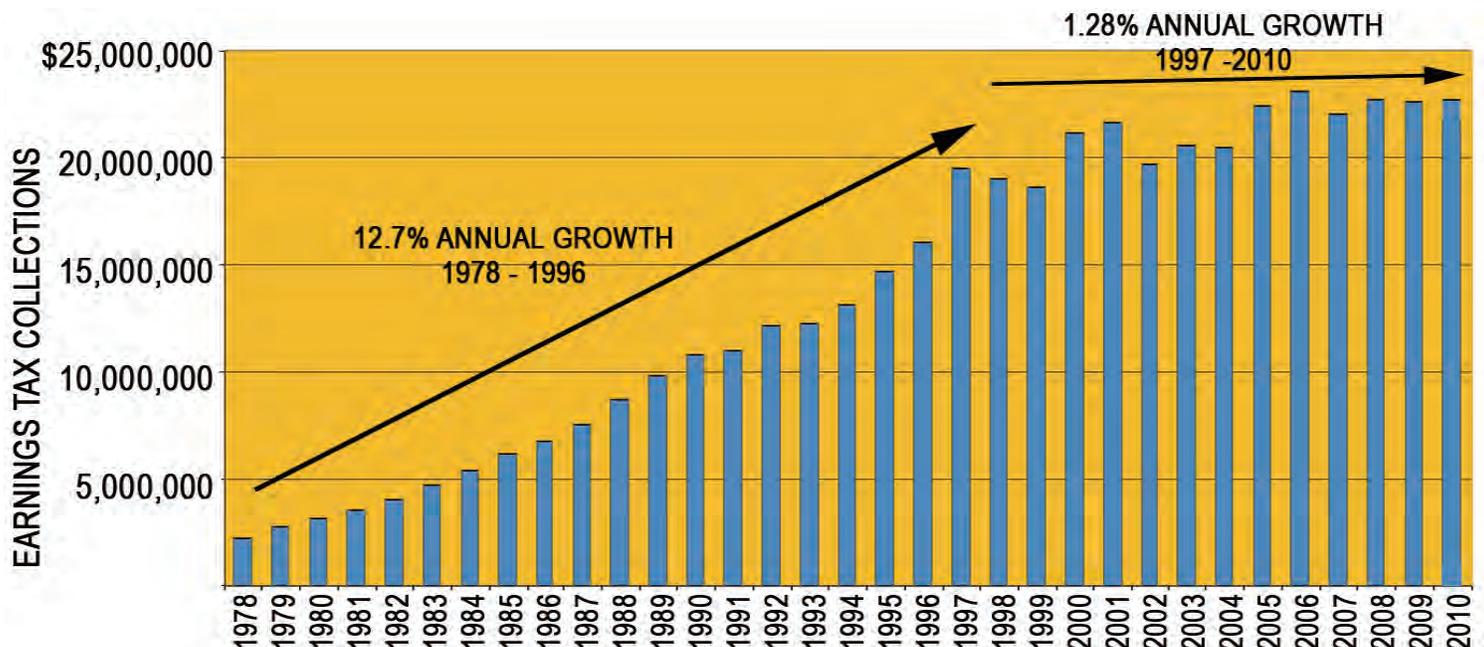
Financial Planning

While many tasks undertaken by the Treasurer's Office are an annual requirement, such as assistance with budgets, asset management, and project financing,

2010 required a continuous focus on short-term financial monitoring and planning. Although the Administration and Council had been working on realigning operating costs with flat income levels for a number of years, the severity of the economic downturn, and its duration, accelerated efforts to streamline operations, reduce costs via efficiency, review all programs/services, and boost investment in economic development.

Instead of annually evaluating the City's operational revenue vs. costs, such calculations were done every few months during 2010. As is the case in business, recurring revenues must exceed normal operating costs so that a surplus remains to pay for capital-project related debt (bonds), purchase of replacement capital and infrastructure, and hopefully enhance reserves as well for future major projects.

When revenues drop, as they did in 2009, cost reductions must be implemented so that services can be delivered, capital replaced, and the reserves in the General Fund are not absorbed or depleted. Significant efforts were expended in all areas to accomplish this goal in 2010, and also to look forward to 2011 and beyond given the near-term expectations of the economy.



This chart is helpful in showing the growth experienced from the late 1970s to the late 1990s, representing an annual average growth of 12.7%. Blue Ash's revenue stream has since leveled out -- characteristic for a maturing community such as Blue Ash. This flat or impacted revenue pattern presents great challenges given necessary operating & capital expenses. Council & the Administration have been monitoring this situation for some time, and have focused on operational cost containment, and continued involvement in economic development in recent years.

The Finance Office is responsible for overseeing all areas of financial administration, including revenue recording, investments, expenditure tracking, financial records administration, budgeting, debt financing, auditing, payroll administration, and financial reporting. Highlights of 2010 activity include:

- Prepared and loaded the 2010 Final Budget and payroll accounts; prepared, presented, and delivered to the County the 2011 Tax Budget; and also prepared the 2011 Proposed Budget and related materials, in a modified format similar to 2009 which was necessary due to the intensity of ongoing economic conditions. The Proposed Budget for 2011 was based upon anticipated revenue collections for the latter months of 2010, and reflected an expectation of level earnings tax collections in 2011, as compared to 2010. The initial budget presented to Council included all capital requests, and provided an opportunity for further prioritization and evaluation by the Administration and Council before the Final Budget was presented in early 2011.
- Cooperatively handled the required audit of the 2009 financial year and prepared and submitted the 2009

CITY OF BLUE ASH GENERAL FUND FINANCIALS - 2010

Beginning 2010 Gen. Fund unencumbered balance*	.....\$14,934,661
Add: Revenues in Gen. Fund	.....\$36,073,704
Add: Recovery of health fund transfer	.....\$36,735
= Total Gen. Fund Resources	.....\$51,045,100
Less: Gen. Fund expenses	.....(\$20,591,520)
Less: transfers to other funds:	
Public Works	.....(\$2,929,148)
Parks & Rec	.....(\$ 2,696,333)
“Issue 15” projects	.....(\$ 3,467,725)
Golf operations	.....(\$381,159)
Debt retirement	.....(\$ 2,741,548)
= End of 2009 Gen. Fund balance*	.....\$18,237,667

*Note: includes General & Issue 15 reserve balances

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Late in the year, the City learned that it earned the prestigious Excellence in Financial Reporting Award -- representing the 23rd consecutive year the City has received this award, and the twelfth consecutive for the current Deputy Treasurer/Tax Commissioner. This award is presented by the Government Finance Officer Association of America and represents the highest award and recognition available for governmental reporting.

- The Finance team, working with the Treasurer’s office, finalized

the loading and updating of all fixed assets for utilization in the 2009 CAFR. Efforts continued throughout 2010 on the loading of assets acquired in that year, and those programs will be finalized during the first several months in 2011.

- Historical and current financial information from the Finance Office was instrumental in evaluating the City’s past and projected operational revenues and expenses, providing useful data for long-term strategic planning for the City’s financial strength and welfare.

▷ 2010 TAX OFFICE HIGHLIGHTS

The Blue Ash Tax office is responsible for earnings tax collection and reporting, and enforcement of the City’s Tax Code. 2010 represented the fourth year of the earnings tax rate change from its prior level of 1.0% to 1.25% effective January 1, 2007.

- 2010 gross income tax collections totaled \$28,704,462.32, which represented a 1.38% increase over 2009. Of that amount, \$5,854,963 (or 20.4%) related to net profit collections, while the remaining 79.6% related to withholding collections, which to-

taled \$22,849,499.04. This 20.4% vs. 79.6% scenario exactly matched the 2009 collections.

- Throughout 2010, the Tax Commissioner continued efforts to improve the level of customer service, provided for cross-training and education related to improvements in technology (such as ACH, document scanning, or electronic tax payments), updated tax forms and all letters and communications to citizens, and provided further training related to the upgraded tax computer software installed in late 2008.

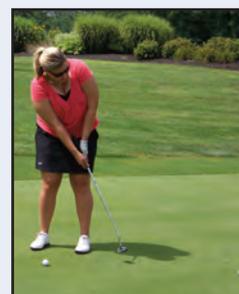
HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources (HR) team has one part-time and two full-time (including the HR Officer) staff members. In addition to the routine internal support functions performed by the HR office on a daily basis for all City departments and divisions, the following offers a summary of 2010 achievements:

- HR teamed up with the Health & Wellness Committee to coordinate several health-related events for the benefit of employees. The Health & Wellness Committee is comprised of 10 employee volunteer representatives from all City departments. Examples include the incentive program (see below); sixth annual health fair; the Healthy Ohioans Walk-N-Lunch event; and monthly Brown Bag Lunch seminars. This year saw the addition of quarterly challenges including the Friends and Family Challenge and the Biggest Loser, which were successful in attracting new participants to the program.
- 2010 marked the third full year for the Health & Wellness Committee's Incentive program. Participation dipped a bit – from 50 participants down to 41 – however those who did participate overall earned more points, so a greater level of activity was achieved by those participating. The objective of the program is to establish employee health and wellness as an important part of employee satisfaction and well-being that is worthy of special recognition.
- 2010 was the third year that the Employee Health Insurance Committee reviewed medical insurance cost savings options for the insurance renewal. This year the City maintained a high-deductible plan with a flexible spending account (FSA) and a health savings account (HSA) option. The City received an overall increase of +/-7% (\$101,000) for the medical insurance renewal this year. The renewal for optical coverage did not increase, nor did the renewal for life insurance, and the dental policy saw a reduction of 1%. This was the first year that the City implemented Health Education Sessions – there were four sessions in all, and employees had to attend in order to receive

any contributions to medical savings accounts. They were very successful in reaching the entire population on our health plan and will be continued in 2011.

- From a safety perspective, the City again made great strides in improving with an overall decrease in employee-related injuries/accidents by almost 18% and a decrease in BWC reportable employee injuries/accidents by almost 21% from 2009.
- HR staff coordinated the periodic blood drives, on-site mammogram van visits (open to the community), and flu shot program.
- The HR office coordinated the annual holiday luncheon in December. City employees raised more than \$1,400 in donations towards the creation of military care packages and made significant donations to “adopted” needy families in Blue Ash.
- An additional employee appreciation event, the annual summer luncheon and golf outing, was held in July. This event is coordinated by the Golf Pro and Golf Maintenance Supt. At this summer outing, the Mayor presented the Parks & Recreation Department with a “resolution of appreciation” for their hard work with the relocated July 4 event, recognizing the complexities in coordinating a successful event at a new location.
- The Police Sergeant's bargaining agreement was settled in October and the negotiation process for both Police Patrol and Service Department employees began/continued in the fall. Negotiations for Police Dispatch, Fire Lieutenants, and Fire Firefighters will begin in the fall/winter of 2011.
- There was one full-time hiring process during 2010 – that of Public Works Director. That process was finalized at the end of 2010 with the start date of the new Director to coincide with the retirement of Mike Duncan in mid January 2011. There were also four retirements in 2010: two employees in the Facilities Maintenance (Dave Constable and Pat Van Horn), one Fire Lieutenant (Robert Taylor), and one Fire Fighter/EMT (Steven Ford).



L to R: Ken Kascosak (Parks) catches a big one; John Getner & Greg Schoenberger in the cornhole tournament; Mayor Weber & Chuck Funk; & Carla Schlake-Huntsinger on the putting green.

TECHNOLOGY & PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICES

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Technology team plays a major support role city-wide, and includes two full-time employees. This office maintains and monitors the City's technology for all employees, including all desktop and laptop computers, copiers, faxes, printers, telephone systems, cell phones, internal and external websites, etc.

Major 2010 accomplishments in the Technology office are summarized:

- The IT office provided some assistance with the City's newest capital project -- construction of the new multi-functional golf course clubhouse/banquet facility. The IT team moved all communications and computer infrastructure to the temporary golf facilities, maintaining seamless operations and communications with the public.
- 2010 represented the first full year of the web-based Customer Service Request program for Blue Ash. This system was first implemented in 2009 in partnership with the

Cincinnati Area Geographical Information System (CAGIS). This is a work request program that allows City departments to document and monitor the progress of a citizen request. Examples of typical requests submitted through the system include leaf pickup, reporting of potholes and other road problems, and property maintenance violations. In addition to citizens' use of the program, various City divisions have expanded use of the CAGIS maps and databases to facilitate internal planning, tracking, and maintenance of roads and both public and private properties.

- The IT Officer continued assistance with the BlueAsh.com general website.
- The IT office assisted the Tax office with their use of integrated document scanners to capture client documents and for attachment to records. This reduces paper and saves time when accessing

records.

- Two multimedia projection systems were added to conference rooms in the Recreation Center. This will provide video projection, DVD, audio, and internet services to visitors for meetings and classes.
- In 2010, the IT office fielded over 1,400 "help desk" calls. This is in addition to the routine, daily calls for assistance received from various departments/divisions.
- As of late 2010, the IT office supports 680 pieces of equipment including PC's, printers, phones, and servers.



PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Highlights of the Project Coordinator's activities in 2010 are below:

- Continued to resolve some post-warranty issues related to the Phase II work associated with the Recreation Center project
- Prepared specs and requirements associated with the bid and award of the 2010 Golf Course Irrigation system replacement. The project was awarded by Council in July.
- Played a key role on the design team associated with the new multi-functional Golf Course clubhouse and banquet facility, including preparation of specifications and requirements

associated with the bid and award of the project. Bids were awarded in October. The Project Coordinator will continue to provide coordination, oversight and administrative support throughout the construction process.

- Coordinated and supervised installation of Municipal and Safety Center Emergency Generator.
- Continued work with the Facilities team regarding required inspections, testing, permitting, licensing and certification related to the City's backflow devices, boilers, fired detection systems, underground storage tanks and elevators and coordinating the required servicing.

- Continued scheduling and tracking of fire alarm, fire sprinkler and suppression system certification and testing and coordinating required maintenance and repairs.
- Continued to serve as a key member of the City's storm water response team and was active through 2010 on a number of private and public drainage issues in residential and business areas.
- Continued assisting other City departments with graphical data and information available through CAGIS (Cincinnati Area Geographic Information System).

POLICE DEPARTMENT



In 2010, the Police Department employed 53 full-time, part-time, and volunteer personnel, 37 of whom are full-time sworn officers.

The Department consists of one Chief, two Captains, three Lieutenants, six Sergeants, 25 Patrol and three Auxiliary Officers, five Dispatchers, one Mayor's Court Co-

ordinator, two Mayor's Court Clerks, and five staff personnel. The Department operates under two bureaus: Operations and Administrative. Operations performs all primary police functions, and Administrative performs a variety of functions that support the operation of the Department.

The operating budget for the Department in 2010 was about \$6.4 million, with actual expenses about \$6 million.

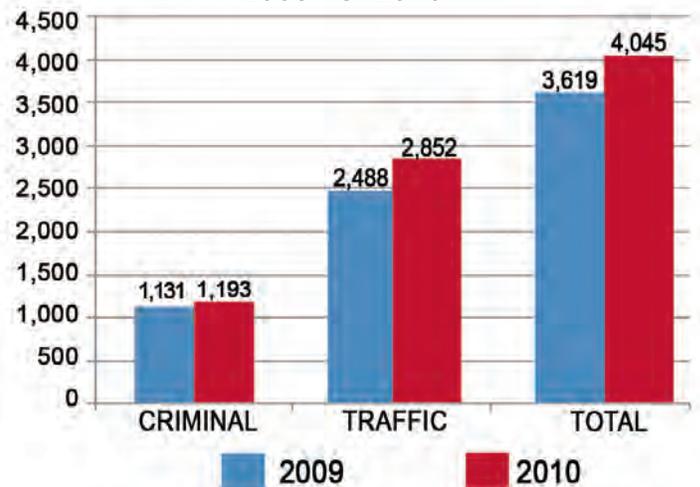
POLICE STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2010:

- In 2010, the Police Department recorded 1,298 criminal and non-criminal reports, compared to 1,171 in 2009. The three largest categories for these reports were theft (26.81%), non-criminal (17.26%), and Drug Offenses (12.56%). Of all reports, the Department successfully cleared 66%. This compares favorably to national statistics as the FBI Uniform Crime Report for 2009 shows that in metropolitan counties nationwide, 52.6% of violent crimes and 18.2% of property crimes were cleared. Blue Ash cleared 63% and 31% respectively in 2010, much higher than those nationwide comps.
- The Department made 1,193 criminal arrests, compared to 1,131 in 2009. Of the 2010 arrests, 96% were adult. The Department's arrest statistics compare favorably to national statistics, as Blue Ash made almost twice the Midwest's average number of arrests (based upon population).
- The Department handled 17,440 calls for service and details in 2010, compared to 19,183 in 2009, a decrease of 9.1%. About 10% of these details were calls to assist the Fire Department.
- The busiest times of day for the Police Department in 2010 were between 11PM and midnight, 3PM to 4PM, 5PM to 6PM, and Midnight to 1AM respectively.

In aggregate, these time periods account for about 24% of total calls.

- Police "arrest" activity in 2010 showed an approximate 12% increase as compared to 2009 levels. "Arrest" activities are divided into criminal vs. traffic, and also into adult vs. juvenile. Traffic "arrests" represent traffic tickets issued. Total criminal arrests in 2010 totaled 1,193 (1,146 of those adult), and total traffic tickets issued were 2,852 (2,802 of those adult). A summary of arrest activity is shown in the chart below.

ARREST STATISTICS - 2009 vs. 2010



AUTO ACCIDENT STATISTICS:

In 2010, the Blue Ash Police Department handled 579 auto accident reports, comparing to 611 in 2009. The number of accidents on public roadways decreased from 492 in 2009 to 471 in 2010. Of the total auto accidents, about 13% involved injuries, 1% were DUI related, and one was fatal. Blue Ash fares well comparatively with these statistics when considering state-wide numbers compiled by the Ohio Department

of Public Safety Accident Reports. Most recent state-wide statistics (2009) show these to be 24.9% involving injuries and 4.31% involving DUI.



▷ MAYOR'S COURT...

Blue Ash's Mayor's Court is allowed to hear only traffic or misdemeanor cases. No DUI, DUS, or felony cases are heard at this level. An officer can base a charge on either Ohio State law, or the Blue Ash Municipal Code. Whether a case is heard in Mayor's Court depends upon how the Officer writes the charge. If based upon Blue Ash Municipal Code, and if it is a misdemeanor or traffic violation, then the case may be sent to Blue Ash. Otherwise, the case must be sent downtown to be heard by the Hamilton County Courts. In 2010, about 48% of the total adult criminal and traffic cases were cited to Blue Ash's Mayor's Court, compared to about 42% in 2009.

Mayor's Court convenes generally two times each month. The total number of Mayor's Court cases in 2010 was 1,942, compared to a total of 1,439 and 1,960 in

2009 and 2008 respectively. Of those 2010 cases, 1,794 were traffic citations and 148 criminal citations, compared to 1,272 and 167 in 2009. Mayor's Court collected \$88,872 in fines in 2010, compared to \$105,872 in 2009.

In 2010, the Administration also continued to monitor potential State legislation which, if passed, could affect the structure of Mayor's Court in the future. Blue Ash is one of the few Ohio communities with the Mayor overseeing Mayor's Court -- most communities have a magistrate. As of late 2010, no changes affecting this structure were made at the State level.



▷ OVERALL DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS & NOTABLE EVENTS:

- Late in the year, the Dept. learned that Lt. Paul Hartinger (pictured above in the Mayor's Court section) was accepted for attendance at the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. Participation is by invite only, with students coming from every state in the nation. Lt. Hartinger will be at the Academy the first quarter of 2011.
- In January 2010, a break-in occurred at the Police impound lot wherein an impounded vehicle was stolen. A suspect was developed, and, after a lengthy investigation involving over 7 search warrants, officers arrested five people and recovered over \$110,000 in stolen property, including four vehicles. In the process, an active Meth lab was uncovered in Cincinnati, and a multi-state theft and burglary ring was broken up.
- In April, a shooting occurred in the parking lot of the Deercross apartments. The incident involved two individuals, one a resident in the complex. The resident who was shot, refused to cooperate with police.
- In June, the first of two armed robberies occurred at a Blue Ash hotel. The victims (guests of the hotel) were targeted after leaving an Indiana casino. Three subjects were arrested and charged with multiple robberies, with the help of evidence collected at the crime scenes.
- In October, the Blue Ash Police Department began its third year as the administering agency for the Hamilton County OVI Task Force. The task force received its operating grant from the Ohio Traffic Safety Office for FY2011 (the monies for the grant come from the federal government's US Department of Transportation). In FY 2010 (which ends 9/30/10), the Hamilton County OVI Task Force made a total of 84 DUI arrests through checkpoints, as well as roving patrols. Of the total DUI arrests, 47 (over half) were made at checkpoints. 2,134 vehicles were stopped by saturation patrol, and 12,859 vehicles traveled through OVI checkpoint zones. Officers worked a total of 2,593 hours during the FY 2010 grant period.
- The Police Department was awarded \$13,341 in forfeitures from arrests and investigations. Mandatory fines from convicted drug offenders amounted to \$845, and mandatory fines for convicted drunk drivers amounted to \$1,040.
- In November, Officers were called to assist in a shooting reported at Raymond Walters College. A suspect, known to the victim, was arrested. The victim later refused to testify in court.
- In December, detectives investigated an alleged drug dealer who was staying in a Blue Ash hotel. Officers arrested a suspect, and seized pills worth over \$10,000 and \$4,000 in cash.
- In September, detectives investigated complaints from neighbors about a drug dealer who recently moved into the Arcadia neighborhood. Officers conducted a search warrant and seized drugs, cash, and guns. Two suspects were arrested, with one admitting he had been receiving and reselling 50 lbs of marijuana every two weeks.

FIRE DEPARTMENT



The Fire Department operates its 24-hour services out of two stations - the North (headquarters) Station at 10647 Kenwood Road, and the South Station at 4343

Cooper Road. Organizationally, the Department offers its scope of services and programs through four operational divisions: Administrative, Fire Prevention & Life Safety, Training, and Fire & EMS Operations.

The department began the year with 30 full-time firefighter/paramedics (including the chief and officers) -- down one full-time person from 2009 levels. In November 2010, two additional full-time members were lost due to retirement, bringing full-time staffing levels to 28

as of the end of the year. As of late 2010, the department has 17 part-time firefighters/paramedics (three part-timers lost during the year for full-time jobs elsewhere). The department also has one full-time secretary. The full-timers who retired include Lt. Robert Taylor, after 36+ years of service, and Firefighter/EMT Steve Ford after 32+ years of service. Both Robert and Steve will be missed, and the department wishes them well in their next adventure.

Blue Ash's fire insurance rating (ISO rating) remained at the prestigious "2" level -- a rating that relatively few communities in Ohio have been able to attain.

FIRE DEPARTMENT STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

In 2010, the Fire Department responded to 2,481 emergency calls -- 887 fire and 1,594 EMS -- averaging nearly 7 runs per day. This is approximately 2%

more when comparing the number of runs in 2009 (2,424 total). Emergency runs per month ranged from a low of 181 in April to a high of 228 in June.

FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2010

Training is an ongoing and continuous priority with the BAFD and is required at federal, state, and regional levels, including the Department of Homeland Security. In 2010, a total of 4,289.5 training hours were provided -- 3,316 to full-time members and 973.5 to part-time members. These hours do not reflect additional training received from an outside source. Examples of 2010 training sessions include:

- In January, all personnel completed a two-day Ice Rescue Technician Course, consisting of six hours of classroom and six hours of practical training hours held in frigid waters at Sharon Woods Lake.
- The BAFD was chosen by University Hospital to participate in a RAMPART seizure patient study, focusing on administration of anti-convulsing medication to patients in the process of having a seizure.
- The Department's work in conjunction with the Greater Cincinnati Hazardous Materials Unit (GCHMU) continued to grow, and BAFD hosted two trainings. All full-time personnel are now certified as Hazardous Material Technicians meeting mass casualty and haz-mat procedures requirements.
- In 2010, all BAFD employees and personnel from other member the Northeast Fire Collaborative (NEFC) departments participated in hands-on hybrid training at Blue Ash's Toyota facility. Training included a close look at Toyota's hybrid vehicles to gain better understanding

of what is required during an auto accident involving a hybrid car.

- All BAFD personnel participated in Rapid Assistance Team Drills (RAT) in March, consisting of equipment overview, PAMS (Pass, Airway, Mask & Straps) overview, carries and drags, bail-out procedures, wide area search, and emergency air bottle exchange. Many fire scenarios were completed encompassing fire attack, RAT evolutions, and fire-ground tactics.
- In April, 32 BAFD personnel participated in self-contained breathing apparatus endurance training.
- Officers completed and were certified in the Blue Card Hazard Zone Management Course, consisting of 50+ hours of online instruction and three days of simulations. The firefighters also began this program and are expected to be complete by April 2011.
- All personnel received required training in Federal Emergency Management System/National Incident Management System (FEMS/NIMS), and all completed the annual 2010 HIPAA update.



OVERALL 2010 DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS, ADMINISTRATION & EVENTS

Northeast Fire Collaborative - The Northeast Fire Collaborative (NEFC) has continued their joint efforts to provide the best services, in the most fiscally responsible way to all communities. The members are now saving taxpayer dollars by training together and bulk purchasing of uniforms, turnout gear, training supplies, emergency medical supplies, and other fire equipment. They have combined efforts for annual testing on fire apparatus including ladder testing and pump testing. The NEFC responds to emergencies and operates under the same Standard Operating Guidelines. This progressive thinking provides cost savings to each community, as well as provides additional needed staffing on a fire emergency scene. The City of Mason represents the newest member of the NEFC, joining Blue Ash, Sharonville, Sycamore Township, Symmes Township, and Loveland.

Honor Guard - The Fire Department's Honor Guard consists of four full-time members. It was so unfortunate that the Honor Guard was called to render that respect and honor to one of their own. In September, Firefighter/Paramedic Donald Morrison lost his son Scottie in Afghanistan. All hearts were heavy in supporting Don and his family in this great loss. The Blue Ash Fire Department Honor Guard was joined by the NEFC Honor Guard, and USA Army Honor Guard to bestow this tribute and distinction to

Scott for his ultimate sacrifice for his country. See more information about this event within the Parks & Recreation section of this report (as Scottie was a former employee of the Recreation Center).

New Personal Protective Equipment - Additional sets of new turnout gear (coats and pants) were acquired in 2010. This gives each member of the department a new set of turnout gear, thus complying with the NFPA 1710 standards and providing a higher level of safety and protection for our firefighters.

Open House - Another successful open house took place on October 9th during Fire Prevention Week, with this year's theme being "Beep, Beep -- Smoke Alarms: A Sound We Can Live With." Many thanks to Skyline Chili in Fairfield, Ohio for donating the food for this event (the franchise owner is the brother of Blue Ash Firefighter/paramedic Eric Simon). The event included a live burn and other demos and educational opportunities.

EMS Billing - Nov. 2010 began the City's seventh year with Medicount Management to handle EMS transport billing. The fees collected do not result in out-of-pocket expenses to any Blue Ash resident, but offset a portion of the cost to the City. In 2010, the City collected in excess of \$350,000.

LIFE SAFETY DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2010

The goal of this division, overseen by Asst. Chief Greg Preece, is to increase awareness and prevention. 2010 highlights include:

- Completed 2,593 inspections, representing 100% of Blue Ash occupancies (excluding one- and two-family dwellings) and 1,647 re-inspections (to verify compliance). Also, 668 preplans were reviewed -- a requirement for our ISO rating.

- Reviewed 336 sets of plans (compared to 236 in 2009), including fire alarm, sprinkler systems, building construction, or renovation/permit applications.
- Reviewed 758 third-party fire protection system inspection reports and followed up with compliance issues.
- 197 acceptance tests were conducted on new or modified fire pro-

tections systems and permit applications.

- 51 consultations with business owners were conducted to answer fire-related safety questions.
- 19 additional Knox Boxes were installed, which minimize unnecessary damage to businesses and out-of-service time on scenes waiting for a key holder.

2010 FIRE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

The BAFD offered 83 public education classes in 2010, including over 3,000 participants. Examples of these efforts include tours of the fire station; CPR classes; fire extinguisher training; "what to do before the squad arrives"; fire safe house; and special education classes such as fire safety talks, tornado safety training, fire gear demos, neighborhood block party participation,

truck/squad visits to schools, and school/business fire drills. Free home fire inspections were also continued for residents, and CPR classes are offered by the BAFD every month (free for residents). Also in 2010, 142 car seats were installed, 47 carbon monoxide detectors were sold, 36 smoke detectors were installed, and 10 batteries replaced.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Progress continued in the economic and community development arenas in 2010. This office is staffed with four full-time employees and one part-time Administra-

tive Clerk. Activity highlights are summarized on these pages.



EXPANSION AND ATTRACTION HIGHLIGHTS

Vora Technologies purchased the 10290 Alliance Road facility, formerly the U.S. Financial offices. The building will house the Vora Technology Innovation Center and will be occupied by multiple IT firms in the Vora Group. These firms include Ascendum, located in Blue Ash on Lake Forest Drive; a company in Connecticut; a downtown Cincinnati company; as well as a search engine company, Zakta, started by a Blue Ash resident (in which Vora was the first major investor). The facility will be occupied in the second quarter of 2011 and is projected to house over 225 employees by 2012.

Sunny Delight, an international beverage company, moved from 24,000 square feet to 30,000 square feet at Pfeiffer Woods to accommodate their needs for additional space. They have 90 employees and plan to grow to at least 120 employees by 2014.

Woolpert Engineering firm's architects, engineers and geospatial professionals moved to Blue Ash in May 2010. The company has a considerable Cincinnati presence. Their 50 employees now call the fourth floor at 9987 Carver Road their new business home (within the "Landings" building adjacent to Citigroup's office).

ThinkVine, a software company that has created programs to help consumer product companies gauge the

success of marketing their products on new media, moved to a 10,000 square foot facility in the Blue Ash Design Center on Millington Court.

Fusion Alliance, a local IT firm, has decided to add 95 additional jobs and retain 27 current jobs. The company was evaluating incentive packages from Indiana and Ohio to determine the best location to expand their operations. Indianapolis, the location of their headquarters, or in Blue Ash were their top options.

BNI Engineering, a full service consulting engineering firm of 42 engineering and design professionals, moved to Blue Ash at 4225 Malsbary Road. They plan to add 45 employees over the next three years.

Datalliance (previously on Carver Road) moved to Duke's Remington Office Park just off Malsbary. They employ 30 IT professionals and specialize in vendor managed logistics software. Their revenues are growing by 20% annually which prompted the move to larger offices.

Hong-Kong based **Global BioChem** established their North American offices in Blue Ash. The firm is in the corn processing business, and they have purchased a building on Carver Road.

LIFE SCIENCES COLLABORATIVE

On April 9th, the Blue Ash Life Science Collaborative hosted a Breakfast Briefing for local businesses on Compensation Trends for Life Science professionals with an Atlanta-based management recruiter.

Blue Ash was also a co-sponsor of a reception with BioOhio at the international Bio2010 conference in Chicago, Illinois on May 5th. The event drew over 200 life science professionals from national and international organizations. In addition to the reception, Blue Ash participated in meetings with companies which have products that have been approved by the FDA. Also of note, several of our Blue Ash firms attended and/or exhibited at this event.

In November, the Blue Ash Life Science Collaborative produced the third Blue Ash Fall symposium. The event

(pictured below) attracted 85 professionals that came to glean insight from presenters who addressed the topic, Strategic Partnerships that Drive Life Science Success. The evaluations for the event rated the program a 4.5 on a 5 point scale. Presenters included representatives from BioOhio, Ethicon Endo-Surgery, Procter & Gamble, CTI Clinical Trials, and Amilyn.

These events are produced to position Blue Ash and our companies as leaders in the regional life science community.



BLUE ASH BUSINESS OUTREACH

Blue Ash Ambassadors Committee

Research has indicated that over 65-80% of new jobs are created through the expansion of existing firms. The Ambassadors Committee assists the city on developing stronger relationships with current Blue Ash companies through visiting with business leaders and con-



Row 1, L to R: John Prather, Furniture Solutions; Brad Ruther, Cinti Commer. Realtors; Todd Pease, Duke Realty, & Rich Dole (CD). Row 2: Judy Clark, ED; Barb Griffin, Parks & Rec; Catherine Fitzgerald, HCDC; & Brad Daniels, PNC Bank.

ducting a brief survey. The committee completed 142 surveys in 2010. The information gathered from these sessions will provide insight for ways the city can become more competitive and uncover barriers to expanding in Blue Ash.

Business Appreciation Luncheons

Blue Ash continues to invite local business people to lunch to personally thank them for their investment in our community. The program hosted 55 local professionals who were honored to be a part of these small gatherings of City of Blue Ash and business leaders.

REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION

Cincinnati USA Regional Partnership -

Blue Ash is an investor with the Cincinnati USA Regional Partnership, the leading economic development organization in the 15-county, tri-state region.

Other Regional Participation - Members of Community and Economic Development have served as panelists and presenters at regional economic development programs.

They also serve on committees including Hamilton County Development Corporation Board and the County's Economic Development Steering Committee and CIC, Greater Cincinnati Foundation, and Cincinnati USA Regional Partnership.

International Activity with the Chamber - A highlight of the City's international economic development marketing

efforts in 2010 included the City Manager's participation with the Chamber's delegation of 30 regional business leaders to Israel in November. Israel has an amazing track record of entrepreneurialism and technological advancement. This initial trip lays the foundation for long-term relationships and business connections.

Pictured L to R: Ellen van der Horst, President & CEO, Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber; Mayor of Arad, Israel; & Gary Heiman, President/CEO of Standard Textile (has an office in Cincinnati and Arad) & member of the Board of Trustees of the Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati.



LARGEST EMPLOYERS IN BLUE ASH IN 2010

Below is the most recently published list of Blue Ash's largest employers, with estimated numbers of employees (full-time equivalents):

Procter & Gamble.....	1,750	University of Cincinnati	532
Ethicon Endo-Surgery	1,235	Ingersoll Rand/Steelcraft.....	512
Kroger.....	1,224	RDI Marketing Services	500
Time Warner Cable	684	Mercy Health Systems	500
Wornick Co.....	534	Belcan Engineering Services	469

DOWNTOWN BLUE ASH

The City was notified in 2006 that it would receive a Congestion Management/Air quality (CMAQ) grant to partially fund an upgrade to LED traffic signal lights in downtown (with those funds to be available in 2010). Bids were solicited and a bid award was made in May 2010 for replacement of the six traffic signals in the downtown area on Kenwood Road, from the Kenwood/Cooper intersection to the Kenwood/YMCA Drive intersection and the Cooper/Hunt intersection. The new signals will be en-

ergy-saving LED signals and will be "coordinated" to provide a smooth flow of traffic on Kenwood Road during heavy traffic periods. New traffic signal poles will be installed at all intersections, as well as battery back-up systems to allow the continued operation of signals during power outages. Additionally, crosswalks will be enhanced to provide safer crossings for pedestrians. This project began in late summer and is expected to be complete in summer 2011.

BLUE ASH BUSINESSES MAKE THE LISTS!

Businesses in Blue Ash continue to “make the lists” in the region! The following offers a summary of those appearing within the *Cincinnati Business Courier*:

Largest Tri-State Accounting firms, ranked by local CPA's 1-25: # 5 - VonLehman & Co., Inc.; & #11 – Cassady Schiller & Associates.

Largest Tri-State Accounting firms, ranked by number of local employees 1-25): #8 – VonLehman & Co.; & #12 – Cassady Schiller & Associates.

Region's Largest Accounting firms, ranked 1-10: #5 – VonLehman & Co.

Largest Tri-State Advertising Agencies, ranked by total local staff 1-25: #24 – Welt Branding.

Largest Tri-State Market Research Firms, ranked by local employees, 1-25: #6 – MarketVision Research; #9 – Wolf Group; & #10 – Qfact Marketing Research LLC; #12 – StrataMark Dynamic Solutions (RDI Marketing); #16

– Market Inquiry; #20 – Calo Research Services; & #22 – R.L. Repass & Partners.

Largest Tri-State Architectural and Engineering firms, ranked by 2009 local billings 1-25: #1 – CH2M Hill; #2 – Belcan Corp.; #11 – Woolpert; #17 – CDS Associates;

Region's Largest Architectural firms, ranked 1-10: #1 – CH2M Hill; & #2 – Belcan Corp.

Largest Tri-State Commercial Printers, ranked by 2009 local revenue 1-21: #10 – Bramkamp Printing Co.

Largest tri-State Employee Benefits Provider, ranked by local consultants 1-24: #10 – Lang Financial Group Inc.; & #24 – Legacy Benefits Solutions LLC.

Largest Tri-State Environmental Consulting Firms, ranked by 2009 local billings 1-25: #2 - MACTEC Engineering and Consulting; #8 – Payne Firm; #9 – PSARA Technologies; & #17 – Civil and Environmental Consultants Inc.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE ENFORCEMENT IN 2010

The property maintenance area is responsible for stabilizing and maintaining the character of the residential and commercial properties throughout the City. In late May Council passed an ordinance which amended and updated several sections of the property maintenance standards. The changes will allow enhanced enforcement with better clarification to minimize confusion. There were a total of 282 incidents of property maintenance issues. Of those incidents, 43 were high grass violations and 239 residential maintenance issues (54 of which escalated to violations).



Pictured above is a LaBelle Avenue residential property (Hazelwood) which was completely renovated in 2010.

HOME REPAIR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The objective of the City of Blue Ash Home Repair Assistance Program (HRAP) is for people who need financial assistance due to lower income. The program has been updated to include recipient financial obligations and the application includes a more comprehensive

description of services covered through the grants. In 2010, there were seven applications for Blue Ash Home Repair Assistance Program. The total year-to-date amount of purchased orders processed for HRAP is \$17,875.

BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY

In 2010, there were 232 residential and 411 commercial permits totaling 643 permits issued for an estimated construction value of \$66,197,286, showing increased activity in 2010. Recent trends are summarized in the chart to the right.

BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY - 2007-2010				
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Residential Permits	161	126	182	232
Commercial Permits	433	384	302	411
Est. Construction Value	\$51M	\$41M	\$14M	\$66M

SERVICE DEPARTMENT / PUBLIC WORKS

The Service Department is responsible for a variety of major public works functions, including street and drainage maintenance, snow and ice removal, support of City events, administration of refuse collection and recycling, traffic signal maintenance, equipment maintenance, building maintenance support, construction

program management and administration of engineering services. The Service Department attended to these and many other duties during 2010 with 16 full-time (not including the Public Works Director) and two part-time employees. One long-time employee (Elmer Bennett) retired in 2010.

SNOW & ICE CONTROL

Each year, snow and ice removal continues to be one of the most important, and most visible, services provided by the Service Department.

The 2010 snow and ice season was significantly above normal with almost 48 inches of snow in Blue Ash. There were seven snowfalls over 3 inches, significant events that require 24-hour snow removal operations. Many smaller storms required Service Department crews to respond 10 times for anti-icing treatment and snow/ice removal.

Crews applied almost 4,600 tons of salt and 8,250 gallons of "ice-bite," a more environmentally friendly anti-icing and deicing

material using a combination of beet juice and salt brine. This mixture is much less corrosive than the calcium chloride used in prior years. Over 2,500 staff hours were spent treating our roadways and removing snow and ice, driving over 26,000 miles.

SNOW & ICE STATISTICS SEASON				
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009/10
# of response times	29	35	17	17
Inches of snow	20.5	30	23.5	48
Salt used (tons)	2,231	2,600+	2,100+	4,600
Cal. Chloride (gal) (2005-08)	5,908	5,600+	4,500 (geomelt)	8,250 (ice bite)
# hours treating roads	1,729	1,900+	2,000	2,500
Miles driven treating roads	14,153	18,000	17,000	26,000

ROADWAY & STORM DRAINAGE MAINTENANCE

The Service Department maintains 167 lane miles of roadway either with in-house crews or by contract. Responsibilities include the maintenance and repair of pavements, curbs, storm drainage structures, sidewalks, signs, guardrails, traffic signals and street sweeping. In 2010, Service Department staff used 52 tons of asphalt for road repairs, cleaned 2,650 catch basins and repaired/replaced 65 catch basins, in-

stalled/repared over 760 feet of storm pipe, replaced 2,300 feet of damaged curbs, replaced 750 square feet of deteriorated sidewalk, replaced 13 feet of guardrail, striped almost 42 miles of street and six miles of bikepath, installed 9,400 square feet of street stencils (arrows, etc.), and installed or repaired almost 2,550 signs. Additionally, street sweeping crews cleaned over 1,750 miles of pavement.

CURBSIDE LEAF & BRUSH COLLECTION

The City provides curbside leaf collection one day each spring and for two months from mid-October to mid-December. In 2010, Service Department crews spent almost 1,600 hours collecting over 3,400 cubic yards of leaves.

The City also provides curbside brush collection for residential properties. From March through October, Service Department personnel spent over 2,000 hours collecting more than 3,400 cubic yards of brush and 700 cubic yards of wood chips. On Monday and Tuesday of each week each neighborhood was checked for

brush, thus providing residents the weekend to gather brush and place it by the street for pickup.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY UPDATE

In 2010, the City continued its ongoing program to improve connectivity between neighborhoods and businesses to important City resources (such as City Hall, Rec Center, downtown, parks, etc.) by constructing sidewalks and multi-use paths. The goal is to provide a robust network of connecting paths and trails throughout the City for use by pedestrians and bicyclists and to promote non-motorized resident movement around the City. This system of “trails” would improve local transportation options for residents and workers within Blue Ash, and would encourage walking and bicycling that promotes overall health, fitness, safety, and family activities. The goal is to address the general needs of walkers and the “weekend” cyclist and youth cyclists (not professional cyclists). Note, too, that these connectivity projects are targeted for our City’s major thoroughfares, and are not intended to extend the sidewalk system within individual neighborhoods.

These City-financed connectivity improvements began several years ago and are being planned and completed in phases, based on a study done by our City Engineer. In 2010, sidewalks/paths were constructed on Reed Hartman Highway between Glendale-Milford Road and Creek Road and on Cooper Road between Plainfield Road and Reed Hartman Highway.

In 2011, sidewalk is planned for construction on Reed Hartman Highway between Cooper and Malsbary and between Anderson Way/Carver and Glendale-Milford. Design work in 2011 is also planned for the addition of a curb/sidewalk on Carver Road, a bike path on Plainfield between Cooper and Glendale-Milford Roads and a curb/sidewalk on Cooper Road between Plainfield and Waxwing Drive (these last two projects to be partially funded with grant monies). Construction of the Carver Road sidewalk and Plainfield bike path are slated for 2012; however, construction of the Cooper Road path west of Plain-

field is not likely possible before 2013 due to the more extensive design and engineering required to accommodate the road’s existing terrain. In 2012, the City will consider the design & planning for a potential path on Hunt Road between the City’s western corporate boundary (at Reading) and Bluewing Terrace. However, due to the extreme terrain in this area, more extensive engineering analysis will be required, with actual construction on this path not anticipated before 2014/15.



The above graphic was also highlighted on the May page of the 2011 Community Calendar

PAVING PROGRAM & CAPITAL PROJECTS IN 2010

The 2010 Paving Program consisted of pavement rehabilitation in several neighborhoods and reconstructing the parking lot at the Golf Maintenance facility off Mohler Road. The deteriorated pavement on the following streets was replaced using a mill-and-fill operation where the top surface of the street is removed by grinding and new asphalt is installed:

- Cooper Road (from Reed Hartman to Timbers Drive)
- Carpenter's Run (from Plainfield Road to 700' south)
- Brittany Drive
- Bentwood Court

- Carpenter's Ridge
- Cynthia Court
- Elizabeth Place
- Fallen Branch
- Falling Brook
- Leadwell Lane
- Muirfield Lane
- Summit Avenue
- Tillsam Court
- Woodcreek



WASTE DISPOSAL & RECYCLING PROGRAM

The Service Dept. administered the fifth year of the five-year solid waste contract with Rumpke. The cost of the contract for 2010 was almost \$769,000. A new contract was bid in December 2010, and Rumpke was awarded a new contract as a result of that competitive bidding process. The new contract will start on March 1, 2011.

In 2010, Rumpke collected and disposed of more than 3,600 tons of residential solid waste and collected and recycled 1,541 tons of recyclable materials under the residential and community drop-off recycling programs. Blue Ash citizens recycled almost 29% of their household waste as the City exceeded its 2010 goal of a recycle rate of 25% or more. Upon request, residents were pro-

vided a 65-gallon wheeled cart for their recyclables to encourage more recycling of household wastes. As a bonus to the residents' outstanding recycling record, the City received more than \$50,000 from Hamilton County's recycling incentive program and a \$7,000 grant to purchase recycle containers for use at special events. The City also provided a free shredder service for residents during the Neighborhood Clean-up Day events in May and October, with over 140 residents taking advantage of the service to shred their personal documents. The shredded paper was then recycled as part of this program. This service will be offered again in 2011 during Spring Neighborhood Clean-up Day in May.



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE & FREON-CONTAINING APPLIANCE DISPOSAL

The City provides a free service to Blue Ash citizens to properly dispose of hazardous wastes including oil, batteries, paint, antifreeze, tires, etc. The hazardous materials can be dropped off at the Service Garage at 6131 Interstate Circle. In 2010, the City spent approximately \$31,500 to dispose of household hazardous waste. Blue Ash citizens may also drop off freon-con-

taining appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, and air conditioners and the City will dispose of them. Free curbside pick-up is also available from the Service Department for these freon-containing appliances. In 2010, the City disposed of 72 appliances after proper freon removal at a disposal cost of \$1,440.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL UPGRADE PROGRAM

The City is in the fourth year of a continuing program to upgrade major traffic signals from incandescent lighting to Light Emitting Diode (LED) lights. LED traffic signals are brighter, require less maintenance and require significantly less electricity to operate. With LED traffic signals and the reduced electricity demand, battery backup systems can be added to major intersections to provide continuous operation during periods of power outages. New

LED traffic signals and countdown pedestrian signals were installed at the intersections of Reed Hartman Highway/Lake Forest Drive and Pfeiffer Road/Hickory Point Drive. Battery back-up units were installed at Reed Hartman Highway/Lake Forest Drive, Reed Hartman Highway/Creek Road, Reed Hartman Highway/Plainfield Road, Plainfield Road/Hunt Road and Plainfield Road/Ronald Reagan Highway.



PARKS & RECREATION ▶ *Rec, Fitness, Aquatics, Tennis, Etc.*

The Parks & Recreation Department had a busy and exciting 2010 as it continued its tradition of offering an abundance of quality recreational programs and facilities throughout the year. The Parks & Recreation Department is responsible for the operation of the Recreation Center, Towne Square and Veterans Memorial areas, Nature Park, Hunt Park, White Oak Park,

Hazelwood Center, Golf Course, and Sports Center, as well as grounds maintenance throughout the City. The Department also oversees and coordinates the City's many special events and concerts held year-round.



▶ RECREATION & FITNESS CENTER, AQUATICS, TENNIS, SPORTS CENTER, HUNT HOUSE, & HAZELWOOD

Recreation & Fitness Center:



- The Recreation Center remained extremely busy throughout the year. Member/guest check-ins ranged from a low in October of 15,769 to a high in July of 43,472, with a total of 304,166 throughout the year. This represents an average of 25,347 check-ins monthly! July's attendance of 43,472 represented a record -- 10,000 more than in 2009!

- 2010 was the first full year for the Blue Ash Cafe operations, with revenue of \$33,394. The Cafe is open weekdays at lunchtimes, with some limited evening hours which varied depending upon the season.



- Class participation (not counted in the above numbers) also remained busy throughout the year, ranging from a low of 2,496 in February to a high of 6,950 in July, with a total of 39,915 class participants throughout the year. New youth program classes were received with much success, in-

cluding classes such as clowning, young chef's cooking, star glazers pottery, and creative writing.

- League activity remained brisk and included a total of 85,805 participants. Fall is the busiest season for adult leagues, with two men's competitive basketball, one recreational basketball, and one 30+ basketball; racquetball; co-rec volleyball; ultimate frisbee; men's recreational softball and competitive softball.

- The tot room continues to be a valuable service for members, with participation ranging from a low in October of 214 to a high in August of 453.

- Additional treadmills, ellipticals and bicycles were purchased for use in the Fitness Center to accommodate the additional usage after expansion.

- Camp Blue Fish sessions continued to be popular, offered in June, July and August (see photo).



Staff Highlights:

- All supervisory Recreation Center staff received full training with the new Emergency Action Plan.
- A new summer schedule for front desk staff began in June, featuring cost-saving features such as limiting workers to three during busy shifts and office supervisors rotating to work the welcome desk and to take a weekday off.

Aquatics:

2010 was the third season for the Blue Fins recreational swim team, with over 75 swimmers (more than in 2008 & 2009). The team competes in the Tri-State Swim League and is considered very competitive for being a relatively new team. The team hosted a variety of fundraisers (car washes, bake sales, & pizza cards), and now has a healthy balance in their account to purchase items to enhance the program.

Tennis:

- With the warm, dry weather, court usage was high in 2010. Court activity is led by a strong staff with Tony Fanning as the Tennis Pro and Tyler Frasier as the Youth Program Coordinator.
- Youth camps, clinics, and leagues had another successful year. Attendance in the adult clinics was lower than in past years, and the staff will re-evaluate the two sessions planned for next year.

(Continued on next page)

● Teams participating in league play were successful, with the Women's Division I team named the Northeast Tennis League Champs. The boy's Junior team placed second in the Northeast Tennis League, and the Girl's Junior team also did well by placing third in the Northeast Tennis League.

Sports Center

The number of field rentals at the Center in 2010 increased on both the artificial (soccer) field as well as the baseball fields. The goal is to book the fields when the community groups are not using them by offering them to Select soccer and baseball clubs. Field revenues were just over \$13,500. In addition to increas-

ing usage of fields at the Sports Center, renting to outside groups and clubs has helped the concession stand meet its revenue goals. Blue Ash's 37-acre Sports Center continues to be one of Cincinnati's premier and most sought-after sports center locales.

Hazelwood Community Center:

Located in the northern part of the City within the Hazelwood neighborhood, this facility is used as a drop-in center, offers a variety of activities, and is operated on limited hours. The facility is also available to rent for events such as graduation parties, etc., and is used as a voting location for a portion of Ward 2 citizens by the Hamilton County Board of Elections.

Hunt House:

The City's historical Hunt House (pictured below) at 4364 Hunt Road, first open to the public in 2006, was open for tours two times in 2010 - in April for an "Under the Big Top" theme attracting 250 attending and also in conjunction with the Heritage Day Festival in October.



▶ MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR ARMY SPECIALIST SCOTT MORRISON

In late September, the City lost a member of its Blue Ash family to our country's fight against terrorism -- Army Specialist Donald "Scott" Morrison.

Scottie worked for the City at the Rec Center from 2006 until the time he enlisted in 2008. Scott's father, Don, is a full-time firefighter with Blue Ash and Scott's mother, Sue, also worked for the City in the Rec Center office for many years. Scottie's Memorial service was held at the Recreation Center in early October. Coordination of the Memorial Service involved all departments and divisions of the City, particularly the Parks & Recreation, Fire, Police, and Facilities Maintenance areas. The activities that day were extremely respectful and touching, with thousands attending. Scottie grew up in Blue Ash, and graduated from Sycamore High in 2005. He enlisted in the Army as a

Combat Engineer in October 2008, much inspired by his good friend, Branden Haurert, another Blue Ash resident who was killed in service in May 2008. Scott attended Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri and was then assigned to the 584th Mobility Augmentation Company, 20th Engineer Battalion at Fort Hood, Texas. Scott died in Afghanistan while serving his country on September 26, 2010, when his patrol was struck by an improvised explosive device (IED).

The City also paid tribute to Scott, as well as the other two Blue Ash residents (Daniel Jason Freeman and Branden Haurert) who have died in our country's fight against terrorism on the November 2011 page of the 2011 Blue Ash community calendar.

Yellow ribbons were seen throughout the City & many people lined the streets in honor of SPC Scottie Morrison. His Memorial service was held at the Rec Center.



PARKS & RECREATION

Special Events

Year-round special events were continued in quality fashion throughout 2010. Although these events are coordinated and managed through the Parks & Recreation Department, none could be produced without substantial assistance and support provided from staff based within ALL City departments and divisions. The City's special events program is exemplary of the City's

true team spirit as it is illustrative of all departments and divisions working together to produce first-class events and to accomplish major goals for the City as a whole. The City's major (regional level) special events in 2010 included Red, White & Blue Ash and the Taste of Blue Ash (SummerBration was not held). Other smaller special events are also described on these pages.

RED, WHITE & BLUE ASH 2010

Blue Ash's largest one-day event is Red, White & Blue Ash. In 2010, this event was held at a new venue -- at the northwest corner of Glendale-Milford Road and Reed Hartman Highway on Duke Realty property. It was necessary to relocate this event from its former location at the Sports Center for several reasons, including a decrease in space available at the Center for the event, limited parking and challenging ingress/egress for patrons of the event, better security for the fireworks launch site, and wear and tear on the sports fields (limiting turn-around time for tourna-

ments held shortly after the special event). Overall, the new location provided many benefits. Media partners for the 2010 July 4 event included Channel 9 WCPO., WARM 98, WGRR, and 92.5 The Fox -- providing great coverage of the event. An estimated 125,000 attended the event on site on the very sunny and hot July 4 day. National entertainment included Yes and Peter Frampton (pictured). Attendees also enjoyed a traditional family fun area featuring a variety of rides, games, and activities, as well as the



traditional wide variety of food and beverages. Blue Ash's July 4 event fireworks display, produced by Rozzi's Fireworks, was fabulous and continued Blue Ash's reputation as being the best in the Tri-State region.

TASTE OF BLUE ASH - 2010



Blue Ash's largest special event is the Taste of Blue Ash, and 2010 represented the 25th annual Taste! This year's event was held August 27, 28 and 29, with attendance estimated at

150,000. In commemoration of this special anniversary, entertainment by seven national artists was offered. A revised event layout was featured, with 22 restaurants participating, offering a wide variety of fare. Of those restaurants, 12 were Blue Ash eateries.

The national entertainment included Atlanta Rhythm Section and Little River Band on Friday evening; Player, Night Ranger, and The Guess Who on Saturday

evening; and country artists Justin Moore, and Phil Vassar on Sunday evening. In addition to the national level entertainment, the event continues to offer great local entertainment and a family fun area, this year relocated closer to Kenwood Road. Many thanks to the event's generous sponsors, including presenting sponsor Toyota, as well as these others: Cincinnati Catering, Coca Cola, DoubleTree Guest Suites, Miller/Coors, the Ohio State Lottery, 700WLW, Enquirer Media, Cincinnati Family Magazine, Cincy Magazine, Reach Magazine, The Kroger Co., Academy Rentals, and Hills Communities Development.

Pictured L to R: Atlanta Rhythm Section (Friday), Phil Vassar (Sunday), & The Guess Who (Saturday). Note that not all 2010 Taste entertainment is pictured



OTHER EVENTS IN 2010

Though Red, White & Blue Ash and the Taste represent Blue Ash's largest special events, more are offered year-round. Though the following does not represent an exhaustive list, some examples include:

TUESDAY & FRIDAY CONCERT SERIES - The popular Tuesday and Friday evening summer concert series continued their success. In 2010, the Tuesday concerts returned to the Amphitheatre (their original venue) given construction at the Recreation Center was complete, with an estimated attendance at over 8,000 for the season. A highlight of the Tuesday Concert series was the City's naming of the Amphitheatre after long-time volunteer and Blue Ash citizen Tom Stone in late August (pictured with Mayor Weber). Friday evening Concerts on the Square again proved to be a Cincinnati area favorite, with an estimated attendance at nearly 26,000 for the season. The lunchtime Thursday Concerts at the Square were continued in September, with an estimated 1,325 for this shorter concert series.



BUSINESS APPRECIATION OFFICE PARTY The 2nd annual business appreciation office party was held in July, featuring 10 Blue Ash restaurants serving samples of food, as well as 13 businesses/organizations participating by providing representatives to greet guests. This is a fun, after-work networking event targeted towards our corporate citizens, with approximately 300 attendees.

8th ANNUAL LADY DISTANCE CLASSIC - Nearly 1,700 walkers/runners participated in this year's Lady Distance Classic in early August, which also includes a well-attended health awareness festival after the race. This event is held in conjunction with Blue Ash's Fleet Feet retail store.

GERMAN CONCERT IN THE PARK - In conjunction with the Sister City program, a free German concert

was held in September encouraging interaction between our citizens and the Ilmenau delegation who was in town. Free food and music attracted more than 700 participants.

HERITAGE DAY - Weather was beautiful for this year's Heritage Day event, with over 2,500 attendees. Fun family activities, including many hands-on, music, food, and fun were held in the Nature Park. The Hunt House was also open to the public, and attracted approximately 300 visitors.

LABOR DAY WEEKEND WENT TO THE "DOGS"! A weekend full of fun for dog lovers took place over Labor Day weekend, including the Beggin' Bark & Bacon Bash (presented by Purina) on Saturday -- themed around International Bacon Day. This fun event included incredible dog teams performing tricks and dock diving (see picture). Sunday's dog-fun included a "Dog-In" movie in the park, and Monday's fun included the Doggie Doo-Athlon & Dog Swim at the pool, with an estimated 637 participants, including runners, vendors, spectators, and dogs.



HALLOWEEN WALK IN THE WOODS - This fun, award-winning annual event was held on Sat., October 23rd, with beautiful weather conditions (unlike in 2009). Attendance was estimated at over 1,000 for this Halloween event targeted for kids under ten years old. This event features fun Halloween activities, including trick-or-treating, face painting, and other family-friendly entertainment. Fourteen generous sponsors supplied candy and workers for the doors.

FAMILY MOVIES - Three family movies were held, one in the Nature Park and two on Towne Square.

HOLIDAY JUBILEE - In early December, the Recreation Center was the site for the annual Blue Ash Womans Club Craft Show, with extra fun added through the day, including a holiday concert by the Cincinnati Brass Band and activities for a Family Fun Night. The theme was "celebrating holidays across the cultures," and included a Gingerbread house contest as well as activities at the climbing wall, game room, gyms, and Cafe.

GOLF COURSE ► Programming & Future Clubhouse/Banquet Facility

► GOLF COURSE -- PROGRAMMING & FUTURE GOLF AMENITIES

2010 was an especially exciting year for the Golf Course as it marked the beginning of construction on a new multi-functional clubhouse/banquet facility. As explained in the "Issue 15" portion of this report, Council awarded bids for construction of the new golf course clubhouse/banquet center facility in October, and demolition began in early November. Work started earlier in 2010 to replace the course's irrigation system (also the result of a formal bid process), with new cart paths to be bid in 2011.

Temporary "clubhouse" facilities (including limited food and beverage service) were established just east of the original clubhouse location utilizing a temporary trailer. Construction of a new clubhouse/banquet facility will take at least nine months; however, all golf operations will remain open, as weather permits.

In late 2010, the formal name of the new banquet facility was confirmed: **Cooper Creek Event Center**. (Cooper Creek is the name of the creek that runs through the golf course property, as well as other portions of Blue Ash.) The new, upscale banquet facility will feature "all-inclusive" services, featuring unique menus to the Cooper Creek Event Center. After much research by the Recreation team, proposals were sought in mid 2010 on management services associated with the new banquet center, with Catering Adventures chosen to assist the City with establishment and operation of its new facility. As of late 2010, the Recreation team continues work towards finalization of the details associated with that arrangement, with bookings

and marketing efforts expected to be augmented beginning early in 2011.

Highlights of the new multi-functional facility are summarized below:

- The new two-level facility will function not only as a new golf clubhouse, but will also serve as a banquet facility available for rental.
- The building's main entrance will face Cooper Road, accessing the upper level. Given the nature of the terrain, the second (lower) level will be visible and accessible from the rear (golf course) -- see renderings.
- The main level offers seating for about 150 outdoors, and over 300 indoors. Rentable areas within the upper level will be able to be separated for smaller gatherings/business functions.
- The new facility will take advantage of the beautiful views of the course -- a benefit not only for those renting the facility, but for the golfer and casual user as well.
- The lower level will provide a new and larger pro shop, along with an enhanced golfer reception area.
- Enhanced casual dining opportunities, including an outdoor seating area.
- Parking at the new facility will be increased -- just over 200 spaces are planned.



All graphics are architect's renderings by Steed Hammond Paul. Top row, left to right: Front view of the new clubhouse/banquet facility, facing Cooper Road; back view of the building, from the Golf Course. Bottom row: rendering of casual dining area on the lower level of the facility; expanded pro shop area, also located on the lower level of the facility.

GOLF MAINTENANCE & PARKS MAINTENANCE

▷ GOLF COURSE -- MAINTENANCE

2010 highlights of Golf Maintenance activities include:

In conjunction with major improvements planned for the course, a bid for replacement of the 30+ year old irrigation system was awarded in July. Work began in August and is expected to be complete in spring 2011.

The division provided logistical assistance with the clubhouse/banquet center construction project.

Weather conditions were extreme in 2010, including the snowiest February in history, delaying completion of several projects. Extreme drought was a critical factor during the summer and fall, with our area experiencing six inches below normal in July, August, and September. Much staff time was focused on hand watering greens, tees, and fairways on a daily basis to keep turf alive. Many compliments on course conditions were re-

ceived, especially given the extreme weather conditions experienced.

Examples of some course projects included completion of a drainage project on Hole #7, enlargement of Hole #13 with 2,000 square feet of new green area (sod and soil coming from the removal of the practice green due to clubhouse construction), repair of a significant number of leaks and other maintenance issues related to the antiquated irrigation system, and preparation of the area where a fence will be installed along Hole #12 to delineate the walking path from golf course property.

About 10 trees were removed throughout the course. Nine were unhealthy and one was removed next to #10 tee as it was interfering with play. Some trees were also removed for preparation of the installation of new cart paths (in 2011).

▷ PARK MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES IN 2010

The Parks Maintenance Division is responsible for maintaining all public City-owned grounds, except for the Golf Course. Crews and equipment are based at 6171 Interstate Circle. The Division has seven full-time and approximately 25 part-time employees (most seasonal). Hours were significantly reduced for part-time seasonal staff (working March through November), with most working 200 hours less than in 2009. Parks highlights include:

- 2010 continued the beautiful displays throughout Downtown Blue Ash, including the hanging baskets, wall planters, and large containers. Many compliments from citizens and visitors continue to be received about these extraordinary displays. In 2010, these efforts were recognized by the Cincinnati Horticultural Society with its presentation of its prestigious Gardeners Recognition Award.
- New recycled plastic bike racks, made from 1,950 plastic milk jugs, were purchased and placed throughout the park areas.
- Crews assisted with the creation of 20 garden plots for the City's community garden program based at the historical Hunt House. This represented an increase from seven plots in 2009.
- The Sports Center was extremely busy in 2010 as for the first time, there were no rainouts during the fall baseball and softball season. Rainfall was down eight inches the second half of the year.

- At the Sports Center, new sod was placed around edges of fields 2-7, the Riverfront wall was replaced with chain link fence, and a new irrigation controller and wire was placed on soccer field B and Crosley Field.

- A large part of the Nature Park was cleaned up, with assistance from employees of the Toyota facility. New perennials and trees were planted (see photo).



- Knothole baseball began its season in mid April, concluding with its annual tournament in July.
- The division continued to maintain the median areas of several major roads, and replaced older landscaping in several areas of the Glendale-Milford/Pfeiffer Road median areas.
- The division played an important role in logistics with the new location for the City's Red, White & Blue Ash special event, including prep of the new launch site for the fireworks.



The City receives regular compliments regarding its award-winning downtown flower displays.

▶ FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

The Facilities Maintenance team is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of all City-owned facilities affecting all departments and divisions of the City. In 2010, Facilities had eight full-time employees, and 22 part-time employees, with many of these part-time employees working just a few hours each week or month. The division also had two (of the eight) full-time employees retire in 2010 – Pat Van Horn retired at the end of August, and Dave Constable retired at the end of December. These full-time positions will not be filled at this time.

In 2010, the Facilities crews responded to over 1,482 scheduled and unscheduled maintenance requests city-wide. In addition to normal preventative maintenance tasks performed year round, examples of this division's work include monthly facility checks; annual opening and closing of all parks, restrooms, concessions, pools, and fountains; and assistance at all special events sponsored by the City, including the summertime Friday and Tuesday concerts and other regularly scheduled recreational programs and events. Ongoing effort continued throughout the year towards identifying and implementing cost-savings measures such as labor studies, procedure changes, and green energy-saving fixtures, while successfully maintaining quality of service.

The following paragraphs offer a summary of other 2010 accomplishments of the Facilities team.

Recreation Center - our Facilities Maintenance team worked on fine-tuning their response to the increased supply and demand issues associated with the newly enlarged Recreation Center facility. While performing labor time studies to help with exact labor needs in all areas of janitorial duties, including shift and time changes, the division also incorporated a min/max material inventory system which helps to control cost as well as time efficiencies.

Pool - Facilities Maintenance repaired pool deck areas and aging pipelines, as well as spot welded and spot painted areas of the pool. Team members replaced existing "funbrellas" and added new funbrellas to the pool deck areas.

Municipal & Safety Center - Facilities Maintenance worked cooperatively with other City departments to add a complete building electrical back-up generation system to service the Municipal & Safety Center as well as the south fire station. The division also assisted with the relocation of the Police Department paper retention system.

Golf - Facilities Maintenance assisted in addressing the high voltage needs for the new updated irrigation system being installed at the Golf Course in 2010. Facilities was also instrumental in the pre-engineering work and demolition associated with the new golf clubhouse and banquet facility, which began construction in late 2010.

Hazelwood Center & Oakwood Park – Facilities painted the outside, weathered areas of the building.

Parks & Grounds – Facilities stripped and painted the Nature Park's Amphitheatre stage and seating areas, and also stained the Towne Square/Clock Bell Tower and weathered areas of the main stage, while upgrading the safety and electrical hookups for special events.

Energy and Recycling Programs – Facilities Maintenance collected 2,786 bags of recycled material from City offices, up over 36% from the 2,043 bags collected in 2009. Additional collection containers were placed throughout the City. Also throughout City buildings, Facilities added motion light sensors to reduce lighting where continuous lighting is not needed. The division also added several 5-HP and higher electric phase motors, power factors that reduce our energy cost by 3% to 6% per application based upon the run times, and added staged boilers and chillers to reduce energy costs as well. A new HVAC filter media was added at the Recreation Center to help reduce energy cost due to restriction of air flow and to reduce the media change-out costs. We are showing a 10% decrease in energy cost this December 2010 compared to December 2009 energy costs at the Center. The EPA performed an inspection of all City buildings in 2010 with all buildings passing with little modification necessary to comply with EPA standards. EPA commented that they wished other municipalities were as compliant as Blue Ash.

Streetlights – Facilities repairs and responds to issues associated with City-owned streetlights, including painting or staining light poles when needed as well as repairing outages. There are 1,290 streetlights in Blue Ash, and in 2010, Duke Energy repaired 111 of their lights, and we repaired 26 City-owned lights.



What a great team and a great year!

CITY VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS

BLUE ASH TEAM VISION STATEMENT

WE WILL CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF COMMUNITY LIFE FOR ALL RESIDENTIAL AND BUSINESS CITIZENS TO ENSURE BLUE ASH IS ALWAYS THE "CITY OF CHOICE" THROUGH AN ENLIGHTENED, EFFICIENT, AND DYNAMIC UNIFIED MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.

BLUE ASH TEAM MISSION STATEMENT

TO PROVIDE SUPERIOR SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND ACTIVITIES FOR ALL CITIZENS UTILIZING KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF INTEGRITY, COMPASSION, INNOVATION, PROFESSIONALISM, AND COMMITMENT.



*Blue Ash Municipal & Safety Center
4343 Cooper Road*



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