



The Delaware Gazette

191ST year
Volume No. 140

Delaware County's only daily newspaper

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FORECAST PAGE 2



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In relationships, don't look for perfection. Page 7.



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ONLINE POLL

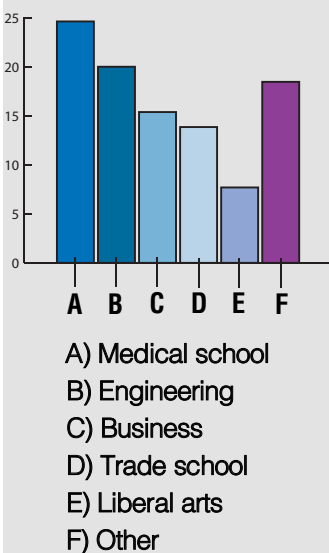
Liberty Township is considering using its own funds to pay for an increased sheriff deputy presence. Do you think individual townships should be responsible for funding additional deputy patrols in their communities?

- ▶ A. Yes
- ▶ B. No
- ▶ C. Undecided

VOTE & COMMENT at delgazette.com

Comments may appear on the Gazette's editorial page in the coming week.

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS: If you were a member of the 2010 high school graduating class, what career would you pursue?



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Gazette Melissa Mackey

Helping hands

Buckeye Valley Middle School seventh-grader Grace Fischer waters flowers Wednesday at Delaware County Habitat for Humanity at 305 Curtis St. Grace and about eight other seventh- and eighth-graders were participating in a service project as part of Delaware's Old Stone Presbyterian Church vacation Bible school.

County unemployment rate plummets

▶ Experts say economy is improving and job creation may follow

BRYAN BULLOCK
Staff Writer

Delaware County's unemployment rate has dropped sharply for the second straight month, a sign local officials and economic experts say could indicate the economy is starting to rebound.

The county's jobless rate sunk 0.7 percent in May, bringing it to 7.2 percent, according to the most recent estimates released by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

Comparable rates decreased in 86 of 88 Ohio counties last month, which is not unusual this time of year since the data does not take into account seasonal fluctuations.

Delaware County's unemployment rate, however, is falling faster than many other counties. Its rate has now dropped 1.2 percent since March, the largest two-month dip the county has seen since 1997.

"This is indicating that we are starting to dig ourselves out of our hole," said Jim Newton, chief economic advisor to Commerce National Bank and Delaware resident.

He said the county still has a long way to go on the road to economic recovery.

"Certainly compared with the state we are just doing marvelously," Newton said. "But in a sense that is like saying one sinking ship

is better than another."

Delaware County continues to have a jobless rate lower than the state and any other county in it. Ohio's equivalent unemployment rate was 10.1 percent in May, down from 10.7 percent April. The national rate decreased from 9.5 percent in April to 9.3 percent.

Newton said because Delaware County has been more insulated from the impacts of the recession than other areas, it will likely recover faster too.

The nation's economic downturn has ended and a very gradual recovery is underway, according to Robert Gitter, Ohio Wesleyan

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Commissioners reviewing administrator applications

ANDREW TOBIAS
Staff Writer

Delaware County's human resources department has recommended 18 candidates as meeting the basic qualifications for a vacant Delaware County administrator position.

Those 18 candidates were selected from a pool of 46, following an application deadline last Friday.

Commissioners received copies of all 46 applications this morning in a closed-door executive session, and are now reviewing them, including director of administrative services Lisa Iannotta's recommendations.

Iannotta said she has advised commissioners to identify finalists by sometime next week so the county can start scheduling interviews. She said ideally, commissioners will complete interviews in July in time to make a hire in August.

"If we can keep this moving along, obviously that's better for everybody," Iannotta said.

The advertised annual salary range for the position is between \$77,736 and \$104,171.

Whoever commissioners hire will take the reins from interim administrator Debbie Martin. When they hired Martin in May, com-

“

If we can keep this moving along, obviously that's better for everybody

— Lisa Iannotta,
Director of administration services

”

missioners planned for her to only hold the position for three months. Martin, 61, is retired and has said she is not interested in taking the job full-time.

Commissioners fired former longtime administrator Dave Cannon in May for unspecified reasons. He has since moved on to take an administrative position with a county in North Carolina.

The administrator position is the county's top non-elected position, and oversees every employee under the commissioners office. The position also serves as a liaison with other county offices, and plays a central role in setting the Delaware County budget for all county offices.

Commission president Tommy Thompson said Thursday morning that, based on the information he received from human resources, the pool of candidates is a good one.

Of the 18 recommended candidates, five are from out of state, hailing from Kansas, Kentucky, New York, Texas and Florida. Commissioners advertised the position locally as well as on national industry websites.

Among those candidates is Liberty Township Administrator Dave Anderson, who has worked for Liberty Township since June 2007. He was previously the director of safety and public service for the City of Troy from 2002 to 2006.

Former Delaware County Economic Development Director Tim Boland is also on

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Habitat for Humanity's ReStore to expand hours starting in July

MELISSA MACKEY
Staff Writer

Those remodeling their homes will benefit from Delaware County Habitat for Humanity ReStore's expanded hours starting in July.

The ReStore, 305 Curtis St., Delaware, will now be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday and Tuesday and 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday. The store will also keep its 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. hours Thursday through Saturday. The new hours take effect starting July 6.

The current economic times have helped the ReStore, where donations of new and used (in good condition) building materials are accepted and sold for reuse in home improvement projects.

"There's an upturn in the amount of remodeling," ReStore Director Todd Miller said.

This is good for the environment as those updating a home can donate their items and those renovating, instead of finding a new house can benefit from high quality, low-cost items, Miller said. All proceeds benefit the local Habitat cause in helping build houses for eligible partner families who purchase them and pay a no-interest mortgage to the affiliate.

Until recently, people were not purchasing and remodeling homes like they did few years ago, but that customer base has lately started to resurface.

"That is a good sign for the local economy," Miller said. "I think people

are looking more and more for the least expensive ways to fix a home up."

With more donations, that also means that less building materials are making the trip to local landfills, Miller said. He reminds residents that the ReStore isn't a place where low-income people shop for building materials, it's a place for all to shop, he said.

The ReStore, started by Miller in 2004, has grown by leaps and bounds from only a 4-hour time slot on Saturdays for shopping. Over the six years, the customer base has steadily grown with a need for being open six days each week, Miller said. Since last year, sales have increased 13 percent.

Miller has been noticing the higher traffic for awhile now; the occasional person would stop by on a day when

the ReStore was closed, but now, there's a constant stream of people wanting to shop daily, he said.

The weekly e-mail list distributed for the ReStore has been growing as well. It is delivered to nearly 2,000 people with 15 to 20 new people subscribing each week.

The expansion from 34 to 62 hours a week necessitated bringing on a full-time employee, Delaware native Matt Larcom. Larcom found himself out of work and started volunteering at Habitat's ReStore one day each week about eight months ago.

Now, Larcom volunteers about two to three days each week. The extra volunteer time is helpful as Larcom has

Please see RESTORE, Page 3



RESTORE



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Gazette Melissa Mackey

From left, Delaware native Matt Larcom will be the Delaware County Habitat for Humanity's newest employee. He stands next to ReStore Director Todd Miller.

(from p. 1)

been training for his July 6 start date.

Both Miller and Larcom said there will be a transition period with shoppers now inside the store while the truck is unloaded and organized.

"We can't make a disaster of the place like we used to," Miller said.

It's easy to make a disaster with the number of donations coming in from used toilets (priced at \$20), to high-end Kohler products, such as a several hundred dollar sink (priced at \$40). And all mirrors, including a 5-by-9 foot looking glass, are \$5, Miller said.

At some point, Miller noted that he would like to see the ReStore move out of its existing place to a larger location.

While a more visible location will bring in more traffic, the ReStore will have to wait for an affordable, larger building, Miller said.

For now, he is preparing for the new store hours and the hoards of shoppers who will frequent the store.

"I'm excited and nervous," Miller said. "It's going to take some adjusting."