Plugging the Leaks: Local Ownership and Economic Multipliers

Clinton County, OH

Chris Schock and Taylor Stuckert
Economic Storm Batters Ohio Town

When President Obama spoke of "the winter of our hardship" in his inaugural address, no one in America understood better than the folks 60 Minutes met in Wilmington, Ohio. They're people in the grip of a brutal series of layoffs at DHL, the shipping company. Their experience was part of the news this past week that new claims for unemployment benefits are the highest in 26 years.

Since the economic crash of 2008, taxpayers have committed to more than $1 trillion in various bailouts of Wall Street. But not much of that is reaching families in crisis. On kitchen tables, headlines from Washington and New York lie beside unpaid tuition bills and foreclosure notices. After all the speeches and parties of Inauguration Day, what were the families in Wilmington asking?

"Are we going to lose our home? Are we going to be able to pay our property taxes? What are we gonna do for insurance? What are we gonna do for food? You know, and these are questions that you'd never think that we'd ask yourself. And now they're discussions in the home," says Mike O'Machearely, who is losing the job that helped support four children and a grandson.

"They always say that God closes a door, he opens another one. And we have faith that he will," he adds.

Faith is what sustains Wilmington now. Settled by Quakers 200 years ago, it's a community with such an all-American look that it seems like a movie set. About 12,000 people live there. And many, like O'Machearely, work in the last industry you'd expect in a laid back town.

In 1980, Airborne Express turned Wilmington's abandoned Air Force base into a hub for overnight shipping. Eight thousand people found work at what they call "the air park." Then, in 2003 a German company, DHL, bought Airborne in an effort to win a big piece of the U.S. market. It didn't work. The merger was rocky, there were service disruptions, and customers left in droves. With last fall's economic crash, DHL was losing $6 million a day in the U.S.; layoffs started coming by the hundreds.

People who worked there for decades found themselves in DHL-sponsored meetings learning about unemployment.
SAC Will Arrive in '60...Is Clinton County Ready?

By Tom Hunter

Early in January 1959, a cryptic Associated Press dispatch, datelined Washington, D.C., announced that Clinton County Air Force Base, Wilmington, had been assigned $8,776,000 in President Eisenhowe r's emergency defense program.

Specifications were few. The only explanation was that the funds would be used here for “Alert and de-centralization of Strategic Air Command long range bombers.” Reaction in Clinton County was mingled. Some folks shrugged their shoulders. Their attitude was “so what!” Others smiled tolerantly at the excited ones and said, “We’re used to the stories about the field. That place has had its ups and downs as long as it’s been here. We’ll probably get a story next week that the whole thing has been cancelled.”

The Air Force began a land acquisition program. It was conducted quietly but the word began to seep into the community. And then came notices of bid awards. Heavy equipment moved into the expansion area. There was more land acquisition. A giant crane made its way through the cornfields. Earthmovers began operations. There was continuous predictions that the community might feel the effects if the program materialized.

And then on Aug. 8, 1959, the Air Force dropped its bombshell. The announcement again was typically brief. It said that there would be a $100,000 boost at CCAF’s by mid-1960 and that the base was scheduled to become a home for the Strategic Air Command’s KC-97 tanker planes.

...THE NEWS ROCKETED Wilmington and neighboring communities. Most folks knew only that CCAF’s primary mission was the training of reservists, that there were some 200 civilian workers and some 300 military on the rolls and that the C-133’s roaring overhead were Flying Boxcars.”

Coffee-cup conversation centered on the expansion. Some of the conjectures soared into the wide blue yonder. They were: “Wilmington will be a city of 35,000 population by 1961... Those new planes they’ll send here will be armed with atomic cannon and the whole town will become radioactive...”

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But there was some sober thinking, too. School officials, realizing the impact such a proposed military buildup would have on the school system, went after facts and figures.

They learned that they could expect 1,200 additional families here by mid-1960, that the families included 2,400 children and that 80% of the children would be of school age.

Contacts were made with state and national school officials. “What are we going to do with these children?” the school board wanted to know. “Is there federal money available for new school construction?”

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So the school board kicked out its school population projection, made a survey, using the Air Force figures, and made application. The application called for some $900,000 in federal school construction funds. (It cannot be processed however, until more definitive factory are established).

TWO LOCAL BUILDERS announced ambitious development plans, calling for some 700 homes.

Then came a release that said construction of 200 Capehart homes to house part of the military being considered for establishment on base property. An unconfirmed report said the project would cost about $8 million.

Although there has been no official announcement, indications are that contracts on the Capehart homes will be awarded soon.

And the local housing hopper received some more material recently by the announcement by two out-of-town builders that they plan to construct a total of 500 homes to the $11,000 to $13,000 range on Wilmington’s borders. They said ground would be broken on the projects by May 1.

An out-of-town company is building a $500,000 bowling alley-restaurant facility on the 3-C highway near the base. Two other restaurants are also under construction.

The City of Wilmington is working out a sewage treatment plant expansion deal with the government. A sewer line has been installed from the base to the plant.

A MOTEL OWNER reportedly plans to expand his operations. There has been some speculative land buying. Land prices have been affected. Many of the near east Willys have suddenly assumed valuable significance as commercial sites in the minds of the owners.

A few new fronts and face-lifts are showing up in the downtown business scene. Construction worker money is jingling cents in the cash registers in the county.

There is talk but no real move about getting a west town slogan such as the slogan in Wilmington and Union township. The city and township have been dry since pre-World War II days.

Primarily an agricultural community, Wilmington has never experienced a population surge like those of industrial cities during World War II. But its problems are the same as most cities of its size today.

The city’s go-go fund is in the red. Voters will decide on a three-cent (continued on page seven)...
Wealth Inflow
- Income from non-local businesses
- Gov’t $
- Tourists
- New development

Wealth Outflow
- Box big/chain stores
- On-line shopping
- The mall
- Imported Energy
- Imported Food
- ‘Brain Drain’
Plugging the Leaks

Local Business
Buy Local First Clinton County
Local Dollars Supporting Your Community
For every $100 spent:

$68 stays in the local economy when spent at a locally owned business

$43 stays in the local economy when spent at a big box/chain store

Civic Economics, 2008
September Events
from Buy Local First

Romantic Movie Challenge
9/1/2010 - 10/29/2010
Location: Facebook & First Choice Video, 1683 Romback Ave., Wilmington
Romantic Endevors partners with First Choice Video to offer a Romantic Movie Challenge. FREE to play. Join us on Facebook. 18 movies in all - 18 prize packs to win! Answer questions each day to be entered. Watch for bonus questions too.

Community Blood Drive
5/2/2010 | 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Location: Continental Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 620 E. Center St., Blanchester
Upcoming Blood Drive hosted by Continental Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 620 E. Center St., Blanchester. To sign up to give blood, contact Mary Davis or Teressa Pratt at 937-765-6540.

Mud Run
50% off entry to the Mud Run
Offered by the Wilmington Pink Claydough Foundation.

Focal Local
Sams Meats
Follow Us On Facebook | BuyLocalCC.com | Sign Up For Our E-Mails

The Focal Local is brought to you by the Wilmington News Journal, Wilmington High School, and Buy Local First Clinton County.

Introducing...Sams Meats
By MARIBETH URALPH

Wilmington News Journal

CLICK to meet Sherris Mott & learn more about Sams Meats in our "Focal Local" Feature Video

Sherris Sams Collett had worked at Seeger's...
How has it changed?

45% reported that “buying local was important to them 5 years ago...”

96% reported that “buying local is important to them today.”
Plugging the Leaks

Local Food
Clinton County Farmers' Market

MARKET AT THE MURAL
- Expand reach of value-added producers throughout Clinton County.

-Aggregate production in Clinton County to better serve demand for “local produce” regionally.
Plugging the Leaks

Local Visioning
Imagine the bright future of Clinton County, Ohio

A project of

Energize Clinton County

and the

Clinton County Regional Planning Commission

Recent Work

- Clinton County Youth Council Design
- General Denver Micro Brewery Architecture
- Tolliver Fields Planning
- Stuckey Farm Park Architecture, Planning
Preferred Plan
Wilmington Air Park
Clinton County Port/Airport Authority Owned Property
Plugging the Leaks
Local Energy
FOR OWNERS AND RENTERS

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SAVE $40 A MONTH

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Plugging the Leaks

Local People
Clinton Community Fellows Program

Four Years  17 Fellows

Over 6800 Hours

50 Matches