

Union Township public access gets ready go on the air

BY KAREN EICHERT | COMMUNITY PRESS STAFF WRITER

UNION TWP. -- The station isn't even on the air yet, but already the cook's in the kitchen, there's crime prevention coverage, and candidates are doing interviews.

Soon residents of Union Township will be able to see these, and other local efforts on their own public access station. And even more, they'll be able to make their own shows.

"If it's of interest to our residents, we can do it," said Program Coordinator Gina DiMario, who looks forward to moving into the station's new quarters at Clough and Glen-Este Withamsville Road.

The station's studio will be on the third floor of the township's newest fire station; firefighter quarters will be on the second floor and the fire station on the first. An open house is scheduled 4 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 1.

Already in the works are a crime talk show featuring Police Chief Terry Zinser and Officer Jeff Brown, a traffic show for teens, and a cooking show featuring Rita Heikenfeld, who writes a column for The Community Press and teaches classes for department stores.

"We want to set our bar high," DiMario said. "...We've tried to advertise this for our residents as much as we possibly could."

"We're hoping that any local Union Township producers start coming here... We will be the venue for them to show their productions."

Union Township will have the capacity for three channels but start with just one. DiMario said the township hopes to be on the air sometime in August.

"I don't live in Union Township. I live in Goshen Township and I'm extremely jealous," said Nancy Middleton, president of the Clermont County League of Women Voters. "...I think it's a tremendous asset to be able to bring to the community information on events and programs, and people that they would normally not have the opportunity to learn about."

DiMario worked with Middleton's group to film interviews of candidates for its Orpha Gatch Citizenship Award, which recognizes a Clermont County woman for civic service. The award winner will be announced on Aug. 22. (Gatch was a suffragette and the first woman elected to the Milford school board.)

"I'm really excited about this," Middleton said of the new cable station.

DiMario said the station also plans to accept programming from individuals and other outside sources, work with the local job services, Clermont Mercy Hospital, and area seniors.

The township has yet to learn what its channel number will be.

Township trustees last year decided not to renew a contract with Anderson Township for that local collaborative local access station, Anderson-Union Community Television.