



Outside help
Family-owned businesses share others' hardship finding workers.
Page 21

Just for kicks
Soccer academy focuses on the fun in addition to skills.
Page 17



columbusbusinessfirst.com

SUPPLYING DEMAND



Floyd Lewis is a welder at Worthington Cylinders, which is continuously searching for more skilled workers like him.

JANET ADAMS | BUSINESS FIRST

Lobbying push starts for Boeing

AN AIR FORCE contract that has meant hundreds of jobs in Licking County is expiring next year. Officials are starting early to make the case for renewal.

BY JEFF BELL | BUSINESS FIRST

There is a sense of deja vu at the Central Ohio Aerospace & Technology Center in Heath as a key military contract comes up for renewal for Boeing Co., the main tenant at the former Newark Air Force Base site.

It was 20 years ago when the Air Force disclosed it wanted to close the base in Heath as a military installation with hopes it could find private contractors interested in continuing its workloads there. The facility maintained and repaired missile guidance systems and aircraft navigation equipment, and was also the Air Force's metrology center, making precise measurements for military equipment.

It was the first time the Air Force had proposed "privatization in place" for one of its installations.

The military's plan sent community officials and work-
SEE **BOEING**, PAGE 42



Ellen Power:
Boeing director in Heath



COURTESY BOEING

Randy Farley is one of about 500 employees at Boeing's operation at the Central Ohio Aerospace & Technology Center.

Closing the skills gap is job No. 1

BY DAN EATON | BUSINESS FIRST

If it comes, who will build it? With many predicting a renaissance in U.S. manufacturing as companies move production back to domestic shores and the government pushes to

double American exports, there remains a significant catch in the plan – the nation's production work force is shrinking.

Why the shortfall? The reasons are mainly the retirement of the current generation of factory workers and young

Americans' unwillingness to enter blue-collar careers in numbers sufficient to make up for the departures. Decades of emphasis on college degrees over skilled apprenticeships can be blamed for that.

SEE **GAP**, PAGE 40

Seizing the day | Cutler Real Estate steps into Prudential Metrix' void. | 5
Downstream growth | Honda suppliers' supplier expands in Grove City. | 6
Mixing it up | American Municipal Power making big bet on hydro. | 9
Nothing new | Battelle already dealing with federal spending cuts. | 10
Berko | IT management provider ServiceNow full of baloney. | 13



REDS: Many of park's suites up for renewal

FROM PAGE 3

Budweiser Bow Tie Bar, above the visitors' bullpen in right field. Complete with a 30-foot-long sign, the bar is named for the shape of Bud's iconic logo and is part of a new multiyear sponsorship with the brewer. It will seat up to 90 patrons, with space for more fans to stand. Bud also gets a 45-foot-long, 7-foot-high sign in right field.

Phil Castellini, the Reds' chief operating officer and son of owner Bob Castellini, said the bar should create new revenue in that section of the 42,300-seat stadium. "And it gives Budweiser another place to connect with fans," he said.

REACTING TO FANS

There are other reasons the Reds spent big on amenities: Great American is 10 years old and many suite holders' leases are up for renewal. Then there's the 2015 All-Star Game, which will put the Reds and their \$290 million stadium in the national spotlight.

Indeed, teams throughout Major League Baseball are doing more to appeal to the most casual of fans.

"The Reds are trying to create more ways to entertain," said Joe Cobb, a sports business professor at Northern Kentucky University. "And broaden the experience."

"The Reds are very entrepreneurial. They really understand their fan base," said Jackie Reau, CEO of Game Day Communications, a marketing firm. "They know they're competing for fans' time, dollars and hearts."

Seattle opened a plaza at its stadium in 2011 that allows up to 3,000 people to drink and mingle. The Mariners boosted food and beverage sales 67 percent in that area.

The San Diego Padres last year opened a Budweiser Patio at their downtown Petco Park that has drawn up to 1,000 patrons at a time. Stadiums in Baltimore, Kansas City and Philadelphia have opened similar areas.

In Cincinnati, the Reds have added a tier above the bullpen that will include an outdoor patio. It'll sell that space to groups for games.

The team also is converting half of the patio seating for the Machine Room to make it available for group rentals. Also, it is converting the tavern's wall facing the field into one that can be opened on nice days. The added patios give the Reds more spaces to sell. They boost the stadium's standing room capacity, too.

The team's street-level gift shop includes a new entrance that will face the bars and restaurants that have set up at the Banks riverfront development, improving visibility, particularly on non-game days.

The Reds also are realigning and expanding beyond the gift shop, on the first base side of the stadium's Crosley Terrace, to make it usable for events before and after games. Fans will be able to enter the area without a ticket, opening up possibilities to appeal to a broader audience.

"You'll see us activate that with bands," Castellini said. "We want to make that Crosley Terrace experience more happening."

SWEETENING SUITES

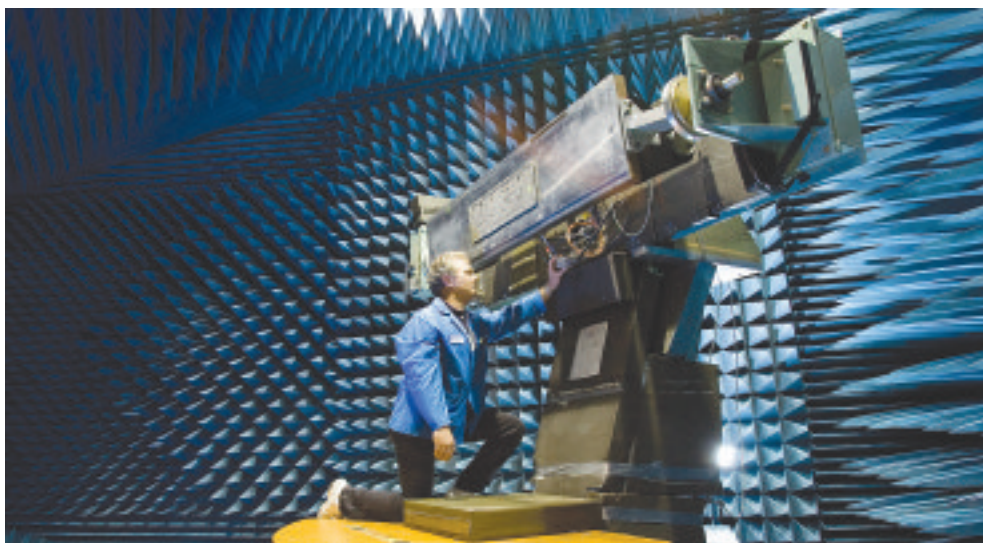
Half of the Reds suites – 27 of the 54 – will be renovated this year. Those changes are mostly cosmetic, Castellini said, involving updated decor and painting. The team will make over the rest next year.

Many Major League ballparks that are 10 to 15 years old are making similar updates, said Pat Tangen, a principal at Kansas City, Mo.-based sports architecture firm Populous, which has designed renovations at the Texas Rangers, Seattle Mariners and Los Angeles Angels stadiums. Populous, once named HOK, was the architect of Great American Ball Park.

Additions such as the Budweiser Bow Tie Bar create an outdoor party atmosphere that caters to twentysomethings, Tangen said.

"It becomes new and lively," he said. "Kind of like getting a new car."

STEVE WATKINS is a reporter for the *Cincinnati Business Courier*, an affiliated newspaper.
swatkins@bizjournals.com | 513-337-9441



COURTESY BOEING

Boeing's Craig Mills helps test radio frequency antennas in an echo-free chamber at the company's Heath campus.

BOEING: Waiting for answers on sequester

FROM PAGE 1

ers scrambling to save the base, which opened in 1962, and the 2,000 civilian and military jobs tied to it at the time. They argued successfully that the facility's skilled work force and unique technical capabilities, including its underground labs and seismic stability needed for precision measurement work, could not be replicated elsewhere.

Boeing eventually won the missile guidance and aircraft navigation contract and has been doing the work since the base was privatized in October 1996. It has taken on other Air Force and Navy contracts in Heath, but company officials said the missile and aircraft repair contract still accounts for about 60 percent of Boeing's business mix there.

The current 15-year contract expires Oct. 1, 2014, so a group of Licking County business leaders and elected officials will go to Washington, D.C., on March 20 to begin lobbying for renewal of the contract. They plan to make many of the same arguments that helped save the facility 20 years ago, said Rick Platt, CEO of the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority.

"It's the community's job to tell that story," he said, "and make sure the Defense Department doesn't forget. ... Some of their programmers were in grade school when this happened (in the 1990s). They need to hear our story."

Boeing is the anchor at the 350-acre Central Ohio Aerospace & Technology Center, which is owned by the port authority. The center includes the former Air Force buildings that now house Boeing's operations and Bionetics Corp., which manages the metrology center for the Air Force, as well as two new buildings constructed in the past six years. One houses UTC Aerospace Systems, which provides engineering services for inertial guidance systems. The other is home to Samuel Strapping Systems, a manufacturer and supplier of steel and plastic strapping products.

About 775 people work at the

AT HOME IN HEATH

Companies and the work they perform at the Central Ohio Aerospace & Technology Center in Heath:

Boeing Co.: Prime contractor for maintenance and repair of guidance systems on the Minuteman III missile; avionics and navigation systems for most Air Force aircraft; Airborne Warning and Control Systems equipment; and navigation systems for Navy's Trident nuclear submarine fleet.

UTC Aerospace Systems: Provides engineering services for inertial guidance systems and research and development of navigation systems for aerospace navigation systems.

Bionetics Corp.: Manages the Air Force Primary Standards Laboratory for metrology and calibration, providing precision measurements for Air Force equipment.

Samuel Strapping Systems: Manufacturer and supplier of steel and plastic strapping products; operates a facility on the center's south campus.

Source: Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority

Aerospace & Technology Center, including nearly 500 employed by Boeing. The port authority estimates the center has an annual payroll of more than \$60 million and economic impact of \$200 million a year.

Those jobs and capital investments at the former Air Force site prove the community made the right decision to fight for the base's workloads 20 years ago, Platt said.

"A lot of people said, 'Let it go, take our lumps and not get stuck with a white elephant,'" he said. "But privatization has worked, and this community has proven its ability to retain this work."

Renewal of Boeing's guidance repair system contract is important to national defense and critical to Licking County's economy, said County Commissioner Tim Bubb.

"It would be a huge loss for Ohio and this community if this work is not done here," he said. "Our community relies a great deal on Boe-

ing and the other contractors. ... There is nothing more important for us from an economic development standpoint than Boeing staying here."

The expiring contract for the guidance and navigation repair work includes the same Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles and aircraft such as the B-1 and B-52 bombers that the base worked on prior to privatization. The aircraft mix also includes F-15 and F-16 fighters and C-130 transports.

Such so-called legacy equipment remains part of the Air Force's fleet, so the need for maintenance and repairs continues, said Ellen Power, Boeing's director at the Heath center.

"These systems still have to run," she said.

Boeing is also trying to get answers about the impact on its business from the mandatory defense spending cuts that went into effect March 1 because of the federal sequester.

"We're waiting for the government to come back and say where it will make cuts," Power said. "Our customers are not telling us anything. Everybody is pretty much waiting."

Boeing has taken on new workloads in Heath over the years, including radio frequency antenna processors for the Airborne Warning and Control System in 2007 and a new repair line in 2012 for the navigation system used in U.S. Navy Trident submarines.

The company is also pursuing other military contracts such as more radio frequency antenna repairs and upgrades, Navy navigation system maintenance and repairs, upgrades to aerospace support equipment and missile electronics and components.

"We can perform any similar work for other agencies and the private sector," said Boeing spokeswoman Elizabeth Merida in an email. "We have not experienced any issues in the past when bringing in new workloads (to Heath)."

614-220-5456 | jabell@bizjournals.com