

# Renowned Economist Speaks in Urbana

By CARRIE DIETZ

**D**r. Martin Regalia, vice president and chief economist for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, talked about economy — the long and the short of it — at a September 17 Southern Frederick County Rotary Club meeting in the Villages of Urbana Community Center.

In the short-term Regalia was encouraged by the current initiatives, including TARP and Federal Stimulus money. “It’s not the most well-crafted plan and it’s the biggest of its type, but it worked,” he told the group of about 50.

Regalia said the balance sheet increase of about 200 percent helped to shore up liquidity at banks, and the bottomed out housing market created a slightly brighter picture in recent months. “We’ve at least stopped the enormous housing sinkhole from getting bigger,” he said.

The economic outlook is not as rosy, according to Regalia, who said it could take five years

to recover from what he called the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. He added that a double-dip recession is not unlikely as well, meaning the economy could improve and then worsen again before the country sees long-term gain.

Talking deficit, Regalis said the outlook for the debt vs. the Gross Domestic Product (GCP) isn’t good. The current deficit of \$5.1 trillion is expected to jump to a whopping \$15 trillion by 2018. “This administration has issued more debt over the next 10 years than any other administration ever,” he said. “These numbers are not sustainable. .... We’ve got a real problem.”

Two things need to happen to get the country back on track, according to Regalia: grow the economy and cut spending.

International trade will help reduce the deficit, and Regalia said while China and India are beginning to have an impact on international trade, the United States needs to strengthen its trade with Western Europe, Canada, Mexico

and Japan to see real progress. “They’re the ones driving the show,” she said.

Regalia predicts the unemployment rate will peak at over 10 percent before coming back down and said the president’s budget shows the country is not moving in the right direction. To do so would require the economy to grow at a rate of at least 3 percent a year and jobs need to increase by 2.5 million a year for the next 10 years, he said. “We’ve never seen that happen before.”

When asked about healthcare, Regalia said he believes taxation is not the answer. Using medical devises as an example, he said in the end it’s the consumer who will pay more for an insulin pump or prosthetic devise. “The manufactures aren’t going to eat that cost, they’ll pass it on,” he said.

Looking ahead, however, Regalia said he’s more optimistic than he was six months ago about the economic future of the country. “You’ll never know how close we were to the abyss,” he said.



Photo | Carrie Dietz

Virgil Gomez, Jose Monrroy, Jamie Schinella and Jesus Garduno with Clearwater Land-scape and Nursery in Ijamsville install a new water feature at the Urbana Regional Library to replace the one vandalized.



Photo | Submitted

The water feature completed.

## FMH Opens in Urbana

By CARRIE DIETZ

**S**outhern Frederick County residents have a new place to go for medical laboratory and radiology needs with the September 8 opening of a Frederick Memorial Hospital (FMH) satellite location in Urbana.

The 5,500-square-foot facility is expected to serve around 100 patients a day with the on-site flebotomist able to accommodate around 50 patients and the radiology lab geared up to handle more than 30 patients daily. In addition, a multi-specialty suite will house MMI Orthopedic Associates of Frederick on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

News of the clinic opening is spreading quickly. “We had people waiting for us this morning,” said Linda Gossweiler, clinical manager of the Urbana facility, on the fifth day. “Residents have stopped in to tell us they’re excited we’re here.”

There are only a few lab and radiology tests not provided at the Urbana location, and Gossweiler said FMH is in the process of hiring a physician, which will allow the site to of-



Photo | Carrie Dietz

Linda Gossweiler, clinical manager at the Frederick Memorial Hospital Urbana satellite clinic, shows off the new radiology equipment.

fer immediate care services. “We’re hoping to have a physician hired by January 1,” she said.

At that time the clinic will open on Saturdays and Sundays for immediate, non-life threatening care.

Gossweiler expects to see patients from the immediate Urbana as well as from places such as Clarksburg, Damascus and New Market. “The next closest outpatient center is Crestwood,” she explained.

The Urbana clinic is the fourth satellite facility for Frederick Memorial Hospital. The other three are located

Crestwood, Mt. Airy and Rose Hill.

Several private practice doctors, including a pediatrician, are eventually expected to occupy other suites of the 22,000-square-foot building on Worthington Parkway as well.

Watching how the clinic meets the demands of the Urbana area, Gossweiler said there’s room to grow. “We would hire more staff if the volume increased. We’re able to meet the demand,” she said. “We’re just really happy to be here.”

Clinic hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

## Destroyed Library Garden Gets Makeover

By CARRIE DIETZ

**V**andals destroyed the community garden and water feature at the Urbana Regional Library in the early hours of August 29, according to Frederick County Public Libraries spokesperson Elizabeth Cromwell, but Clearwater Landscaping in Ijamsville came to the rescue. After learning of the vandalism to the donated garden, the landscaper offered to replace the fountain at his expense, a gesture Cromwell called “very generous.”

“The new fountain is a bit more natural looking, a trickling stone effect, and is hopefully unbreakable,” she said.

Library staff discovered numerous broken bottles and trash in the garden as well as the decorative fountain smashed into several pieces upon arriving at the library the morning of August 29.

In addition a county-owned wooden door that covers the building’s generator was also damaged, according to Cromwell.

The incident was the first of

several that occurred over the next few days at the library. Staff cleaned up broken glass three different times on Monday, August 31 as well. “This was done during the daytime, but no one saw or heard anything,” Cromwell said.

Frederick County Sheriff’s Department spokesperson Cpl. Jennifer Bailey also said the Sheriff’s department Urbana deputy office was painted with graffiti on August 26, a nearby fence was also spraypainted on September 1, and on September 9 graffiti was found on a brick wall at the library. A fire hydrant on the premises was also painted black.

“When we see a crime increase in a certain area we do step up our patrol checks there,” said Bailey.

But for a staff that’s already spread thin, the extra work of monitoring the three floor building and cleaning up dangerous messes is disheartening to Cromwell, and she asked for the community’s help. “If anyone sees anything out of place here at the library, please let us know and we’ll fix it,” she said.