

gehlmann gregory a
 Form 4
 February 27, 2009

FORM 4

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
 Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
 gehlmann gregory a

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
 FIRST FINANCIAL BANCORP /OH/ [FFBC]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)
 4000 SMITH RD., SUITE 400
 (Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)
 02/14/2009

____ Director _____ 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) _____ Other (specify below)
 SVP/Corporate General Counsel

CINCINNATI, OH 45209

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
 Form filed by One Reporting Person
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V Amount (A) or (D) Price			
Common Stock	02/14/2009		J ⁽¹⁾	1,125 D \$ 7.99	10,575	I	Restricted
Common Stock	02/14/2009		J ⁽¹⁾	1,125 A \$ 7.99	4,025	D	
Common Stock					781.55	I	401k

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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number.

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)	8. Price of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)	
				Code	V (A) (D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares
2005 (ISO) Stock Option	\$ 18.63					06/21/2006	06/21/2016	Common Stock	5,367
2005 (NQ) Stock Option	\$ 18.63					06/21/2006	06/21/2016	Common Stock	6,033
2006 (ISO) Stock Option	\$ 16.02					04/24/2007	04/24/2016	Common Stock	6,242
2006 (NQ) Stock Option	\$ 16.02					04/24/2007	04/24/2016	Common Stock	10,258
2007 (ISO) Stock Option	\$ 14.9					04/30/2008	04/30/2017	Common Stock	6,711
2007 (NQ) Stock Option	\$ 14.9					04/30/2008	04/30/2017	Common Stock	12,889
2008 (ISO) Stock Option	\$ 11.64					02/14/2009	02/14/2018	Common Stock	8,591
	\$ 11.64					02/14/2009	02/14/2018		43,909

2008
 (NQ)
 Stock
 Option

Common
 Stock

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
gehlmann gregory a 4000 SMITH RD. SUITE 400 CINCINNATI, OH 45209			SVP/Corporate General Counsel	

Signatures

/s/Terri J
 Ziepfel, POA

02/27/2009

**Signature of
 Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 4(b)(v).
 - ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) Vesting of Restricted Stock Award

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.