



Kent Connections

A Newsletter Published by Kent County Levy Court for its Employees February 2007



Employee of the Month *Wm. Robert Pierce*

The Kent County Employee Council has selected WILLIAM "Rob" R. PIERCE II from the Department of Public Works as the February 2007 Employee of the Month.

Rob, a Kent County employee since July 2005, is a GIS Technician II in the Division of Engineering responsible for drawing and revising utility maps, maintaining the sewer network based on geographical representation and compiling weekly meter readings from the various sewage pumping stations.

Since he joined the County as an intern from the University of Delaware, Rob has demonstrated a work ethic and level of professionalism uncommon in someone so young. Since day one, according to supervisors, Rob has been an outstanding employee and served as an example to his fellow work mates.

Rob's supervisors marvel at his ability to handle all projects with efficiency and consistent effort, no matter what the task may be, and he does so without complaint. He is also praised for his enthusiasm and dedication to the job. Rob is considered a pleasure to work with by all and an asset to the County.

Congratulations Rob on a job well done!

COMING NEXT MONTH:

- > *Who is driving defensively for the County?*
- > *How does the employee appraisal process work?*
- > *How is the biennial pension valuation progressing?*

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

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Kent Connections is published for the employees and retirees of Kent County Levy Court using Microsoft Publisher® & Microsoft PowerPoint®. Comments, suggestions and story ideas should be addressed to: Kent County Personnel Office, 555 Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901, or given to Allan Kujala, Sophie Dear, Cathleen McLean, or Carissa Zeiters. Or, call the Personnel Office at 744-2310.

W. G. Edmanson elected to finish Blakey's term

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

The voters in the 5th Levy Court District filled a two month old vacancy last month by electing Republican candidate W. G. EDMANSON II to complete the term of former Commissioner DONALD A. BLAKEY, who retired upon his election to the Delaware House of Representatives on November 7, 2006.

Edmanson took the oath of office on January 23, just three days after winning the shortened 2-year seat. He will have to run for a full 4-year term in 2008.



W.G. Edmanson II

Delaware Counties Assn. elects Ennis as President

By Bret Scott, Public Information Officer

Levy Court Commissioner RICHARD E. ENNIS was unanimously elected to serve as President of the Delaware Association of Counties (DAC) during their January 18 quarterly meeting. Commissioner Ennis will serve a one-year term. Leadership of the DAC rotates through the three counties.



Richard E. Ennis

The DAC represents Delaware's three counties before Delaware's General Assembly, state agencies, and the federal government. The DAC meets four times a year to discuss legislative priorities and issues common to the three counties. Membership consists of elected officials from the respective counties.

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: LORI A. CALOWAY



Job: Accountant I

Date hired: January 8, 2007

Education: Caesar Rodney High School, Delaware Technical & Community College

What I like most about my new job: The people

Greatest accomplishment: Raising a great son

Greatest challenge: Raising a great son!

If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Gone to culinary school

I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this: Reading or cooking

Family: Son, age 12

Most recent movie enjoyed: Firewall

Favorite TV show: Grey's Anatomy

Favorite meal: Fried chicken

Favorite music: Rock

Favorite saying or slogan: "Attitude is everything."

A dream I have is to: Travel the country in an RV

If I won a million dollars, I would: Donate to charity

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Camping in a tent

Three words that describe me: Happy, upbeat, trustworthy

Kent Co. Employee Obsessions

The display case on the main floor of the Kent County Administrative Complex features a unique arrangement of Willow Tree Angels collected over many years by Deed Clerk CRYSTAL YERKES.

In the second floor display case, Associate Librarian HILARY WELLIVER has captured the lore of love just in time for St. Valentine's Day.

Got an interesting hobby or like to collect limited edition baubles? How about a collection of trinkets from far-away lands? Then show off your talent for amassing things—it may interest others as well.

We are in need of new items for the display cases in April/May and future months. Please contact the Personnel Office for more information and share your obsession! **0983**

EOM INSIGHT



Name: ROB PIERCE

Job: GIS Technician II

Time with the County: 1.5 years

Education: B.A. Geography, minored in Geology (University of Delaware)

What I like most about my job: Creating spatial data for the county

What I'd most like to change: Nothing

Family: Fiancé, Jenn; parents, Bob and Peggy; sister, Mary

After work I enjoy: Playing sports and spending time with Jenn

Favorite new movie: Da Vinci Code

Favorite old movies: Kelly's Heroes

Favorite TV show: Flyers, Sixers, Eagles, Phillies games

Favorite TV show as a child: Scooby-Doo

Favorite sport: Soccer

Favorite meal: Bacon Cheeseburger Pizza

Favorite music: Rock, Alternative

Favorite Kent County restaurant: Genova's

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: John Stockton, Greg Maddux, Pele

I'm most proud of: The choices I've made in life

Pet peeves: Laziness and arrogance

Motto: Good things happen to those who do good things.

If I've learned one thing in life, it's: Good things do not happen to those who do good things.

Who has had the most impact on my life: My Dad

A dream I have is to: Attend a game at all Major League Baseball Stadiums (21 of 30 so far)

If I won a million dollars, I would: Buy a house, invest the rest.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Enjoy hiking and camping

The most adventurous thing I've ever done: While hiking in the Appalachians, came within about 10 yards of a full grown black bear.

Three words that describe me: Determined, dependable, honest **3416**

The truth is that there is nothing noble in being superior to somebody else. The only real nobility is in being superior to your former self.

Whitney Young (Civil Rights Leader)

Defensive driving courses ready to go

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Annual defensive driving classes have been scheduled to maintain compliance with Kent County Levy Court Policy 4-6, which requires County employees regularly driving a County-owned vehicle to achieve and maintain driving certification.

All employees are eligible to participate in the County-sponsored defensive driving training up to the maximum number permitted in the class. However, priority will be given to those employees who regularly operate County-owned vehicles.

The costs associated with the required defensive driving course and re-certification will be paid by the County for those employees who regularly operate a County-owned vehicle. Other interested employees or retirees must pay the entire cost of the course. If room is available family members may also take the course.

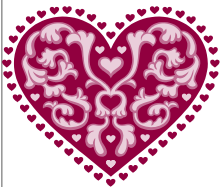
The classes will be held on Friday, February 23, for the Basic course from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for \$25.00 and the Advanced (refresher) course will be held on Tuesday, February 27, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. for \$20.00 in Room 220. If interested in a driving course please contact the Personnel Office on or before February 20.



Valentine guess contest

Cupid has dropped off a basket of Valentine's Day treats for one sweet Kent County employee. If you have an eye for chocolate, come to the Personnel office and try to guess the correct number of goodies in the hot pink container.

The employee who has the most accurate guess will receive the basket of Hugs, Kisses and more. Submissions can be made from February 2- February 13. The winner will be announced on Wednesday, February 14, 2007.



Employee Council election cancelled with 4 candidates

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Perhaps it's voter fatigue, but no election will be necessary this year to fill the four expiring terms on the 7-member Employee Council.

Nominations closed January 26 and only four employees agreed to serve on the group. The Committee bylaws permit the cancelling of the election process annually held in February if there are no contested seats.

The Employee Council nominees elected without opposition include: current Council Secretary MICHÈLE LAPINSKI, Account Specialist II in the Department of Community Services; PATRICIA ORONA, Deed Clerk II in the Recorder of Deeds office; LORI SHORT, Permit Technician I in the Division of Inspections & Enforcement; and JAYNE ZERANSKI, Administrative Secretary in the Department of Public Works



Pat Orona



Michele Lapinski

The new Council members serve a two-year term and formally take office in March, when they will elect officers.

The new members will join MARY EISENBREY, Property Specialist II in the Assessment Office, current Treasurer CYNDI LAIRD, Account Analyst in the Department of Finance, and KATHY PHINNEY, Senior Secretary in the Department of Administration, each of whom have one year remaining on their terms.



Jayne Zeranski



Lori Short

In addition to selecting the Employee of the Month, organizing and hosting the annual Employee Picnic, the Employee Holiday Dinner/Dance, and the Holiday Luncheon, the Employee Council regularly provides input to the County Administrator and Personnel Director on employee-related issues.



ON THE MOVE. . .

Compiled by Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

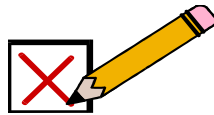
New Hires

01/02/07 HAROLD K. BRODE, Levy Court Commissioner, elected, 6th District
 01/02/07 ERIC L. BUCKSON, Levy Court Commissioner, elected, 4th District
 01/02/07 BRADLEY S. EABY, Levy Court Commissioner, elected, 2nd District
 01/03/07 KATHLEEN "LEE" MULLARKEY, Permit Technician I, Grade 7, Planning Services/Inspections & Enforcement
 01/08/07 LORI A. CALOWAY, Accountant I, Grade 10, Finance
 01/14/07 VAUGHN McCALL, WWF Plant Operator I, Grade 6, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities
 01/16/07 ALAN R. GARDNER, WWF Plant Operator I, Grade 6, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities
 01/16/07 TIMOTHY H. LUND, Paramedic I, Grade 10, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services
 01/23/07 W. G. EDMANSON II, Levy Court Commissioner, elected, 5th District
 01/29/07 JEFFREY OUTTEN, Dispatcher I, Grade 8, Public Safety/Emergency Communications

Milestones

01/26/1987 CAROL DILL, Chief Deputy Register of Wills, Court appointed—20 years
 01/02/1997 P. BROOKS BANTA, Levy Court Commissioner, 1st District—10 years
 01/21/1997 TONY TIPAROD, Paramedic II, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services—10 years
 01/18/2002 JASON COURTNEY, Parks Worker III, Community Services/Parks—5 years

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



February 5, 2007 - CPR/AED Training at the Emergency Services Bldg. from 1-4 p.m.

February 7, 2007 - Blood Pressure Checks at the Wastewater Facility from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

February 14, 2007 - L&W Insurance rep. available to answer health insurance questions from 1:00-2:00 p.m. in Room 213 at the County Administration Complex.

February 14, 2007 - Blood Pressure Checks at Annex at 9:00 a.m., County Administrative Complex Room 257 from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.

February 19, 2007 - Presidents Day holiday. County offices closed.

(Continued on Page 14)

COUNTY BIRTHDAYS



FEBRUARY

05 Toby Sitler, Public Safety/EMS
 06 Bonnie Voshell, Planning Services/Planning
 06 Margaret Talley, Comptroller
 08 Diane Lockerman, Assessment Office
 09 Albert Porecca, Public Works/Engineering
 09 Bret Scott, Administration
 11 Brian Costa, Planning Services/Planning
 11 Mark Kennedy, Administration
 11 Lorri Tanaka, Administration
 12 Susan Durham, Finance Director
 12 Jesse Wallace, Public Works/WWF
 15 Jerri Thompson, Public Safety/EMS
 17 Florence Greene, Comm. Services/Libraries
 20 Richard Krueger, Comm. Services/Libraries
 20 Debbie Palmer, Assessment Office
 20 William Clevenger, Public Safety/Emer. Comm.
 21 Alan Tyson, Planning Services/Planning
 24 Brian Lewis, Public Works/Facilities Mgmt.
 26 John Willson, Public Safety/EMS
 26 Kristina Rinkenber, Comm. Services/Libraries

MARCH

01 Wendy Haywood, Deeds Office
 06 David Melvin, Public Works/WWF
 07 Nyle Callaway, Public Works/WWF
 09 Fran Gunning, Comm. Services/Libraries
 11 Doug Haddad, Public Safety/EMS
 12 Carissa Zeiters, Administration
 14 Judy Allen, Finance
 14 Robert Mock, Public Safety/EMS
 15 Shervina Miller, Public Safety/EMS
 15 Brent Mollohan, Comm. Services/Recreation
 19 Kelly Crumpley, Planning Services/Planning
 20 Bruce Chillias, Public Safety/EMS
 21 Mike Petit de Mange, Planning Services Director
 23 Dennis Clark, Comm. Services/Parks
 23 Ellen Mitchell, Assessment Office
 24 Wilson Branham, Public Works/WWF
 25 DawnMarie Shane, Public Safety/EMS
 25 Georgette Williams, Deputy Recorder of Deeds
 26 Hilary Welliver, Comm. Services/Libraries
 29 Jason Courtney, Comm. Services/Parks
 30 Bill Hall, Public Works/WWF
 30 Allen Kearn, Public Works/WWF

Congratulations

Congratulations to DANIELLE LAMBORN, GIS Technician III, in the Department of Public Works and her husband, Gary, on the birth of their daughter, Gabriella Raye on January 11, 2007 at 2:24 p.m. weighing 6 lb. 10.5 oz. and 19 in. long.

Telephone courtesy vital for County communication

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Ring, Ring. “Good Morning, Kent County Personnel Office, Allan speaking” illustrates the proper and professional way to answer telephone calls from the general public and internal customers – your coworkers.

The proper method for answering the telephone is not written in a multi-page policy, it just takes simple professionalism to do it correctly. Every County employee has an obligation to portray the County in the best possible light. Often the first contact a citizen has with their County government is via the telephone. Likewise, it is every employee’s responsibility to treat co-workers with respect and common courtesy.

Whenever a telephone call is made to any place of business, the person calling expects to be reminded where they have called and then they want to know with whom they are speaking. It is also important to greet the caller pleasantly with a “good morning” or “good afternoon”.

Internal calls can be tricky – you may think a friendly co-worker is calling to chat, but they may actually be transferring a citizen or the County Administrator to your desk. Play it safe – answer the phone in the same respectful manner every time.

Proper telephone etiquette demands that professionals answer the telephone within two rings, if possible. You should not rely on support staff to always answer the telephone, if all the incoming call lines are lit up, then you should give your co-worker a hand. Always be pleasant and positive, a grumbling customer service representative is always disconcerting and leaves the caller with a negative vibe. The folks calling the County pay our salaries, so we should show our appreciation and demonstrate that we earn every cent.

Department Heads have been asked to monitor telephone calls to insure that County staff members are greeting all callers in a considerate manner.

* * *

I have not failed. I've found 10,000 ways that won't work.

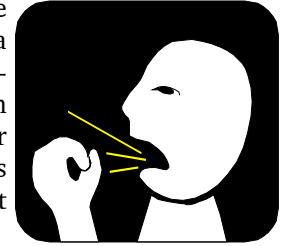
Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931)



Employee health insurance goes out for bid, again

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Last year like Mid-Atlantic Health Plan, the County merged into Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware with a modest 9.24 percent rate increase for employee health insurance and a one-year agreement. So bid packages had to be mailed out again last month.



The other employee insurances—dental and supplemental life, will be entering the second of their three year contracts.

For many years now the County’s health insurer has refused to guarantee coverage or rates for more than one year, so annual bidding has become routine.

While it appears that the dramatic health insurance premium increases of the past several years may be slowing, the competition is not exactly knocking down the door for the County’s business—at least thus far. If another insurance provider can meet the County’s minimum coverage requirements with a competitive rate, the County may switch insurers again.

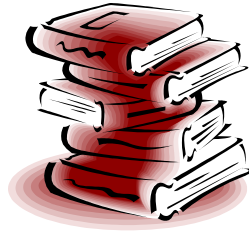
The current contract with Blue Cross includes a monthly individual rate of \$595.70 for Blue Choice PPO option, \$547.63 for the Blue Care High HMO option, and \$509.48 for Blue Care Low HMO option. The Medicaid Medicare supplement for eligible retirees costs the County \$304.05 per month. The County currently pays 100% of the individual rate and contributes 60% per month toward dependent coverage.

The RFP requests interested bidders to offer alternative options to the coverage levels currently provided by the County through Blue Cross. This could include cost sharing, higher deductibles, co-payments, or additional exclusions. It also seeks a bid on adding hearing coverage to the health plan.

The County has the option of piggybacking with the State of Delaware health program. This option is reviewed each year, but has not been seriously considered because the State plan refuses to provide coverage to County retirees.

Ultimately, the Kent County Levy Court will decide on the type and level of coverages as part of the annual budget process.

FROM THE STACKS



By Flo Greene, Library Technician

Mayflower

By Nathaniel Philbrick

The author explores the historical record to understand the true story behind one of our sacred national myths: The voyage of the Mayflower and the founding of Plymouth Colony.

The 102 passengers of the Mayflower endured a cold, miserable 2 month long voyage only to arrive in an apparently deserted land. The landing of the Pilgrim's occurred after disease, spread by European fishermen, devastated the native population and left the Wampanoags vulnerable to their rival tribe in what is now Rhode Island.

Philbrick brings to life the main characters in the Plymouth drama with excerpts from the written record of the era. He reveals the shrewd political maneuvering by the powerful Sachems, the delicate balance of alliances between the tribes and the often unsuspecting settlers.

The events of the 50 years after the founding of Plymouth in 1620 would shape the future of America and define us as a nation. This book is a tribute to the religious conviction of the Pilgrims and the generosity of the Indians, without their help they could not have succeeded. **6615**

New telephone directories to be published in Feb.

Be on the look out for the new Kent County Levy Court Employee Telephone Directory in February. The handy booklets will be lime green in color with many changes including our newly elected Commissioners.



Listings will soon be sent to each division for verification of names and phone numbers. Please return the proof page to CARISSA ZEITERS in the Personnel office when complete. If you have any questions please call the Personnel Office at 744-2310.

Recipe of the Month



By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

HOT SPINACH AND ARTICHOKE DIP

1 cup thawed, chopped frozen spinach
1½ cups thawed, chopped frozen artichoke hearts
6 ounces cream cheese
¼ cup sour cream
¼ cup mayonnaise
1/3 cup grated Parmesan
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon garlic powder

Boil spinach and artichokes in 1 cup of water until tender and drain. Discard liquid. Heat cream cheese in microwave for 1 minute or until hot and soft. Stir in rest of ingredients and serve hot.

Recipe courtesy Alton Brown (2006), foodnetwork.com

High Praise



Congratulations to JOHN BUTLER, TREY HOLLAND, and JOHN SCHULTIES, Building Codes Inspectors in the Inspections & Enforcement Division, for passing the International Code Council's Residential Mechanical Inspector certification exam. *Great Work!!*

Kudos to BILL ASHLEY, Plans Reviewer, in the Inspections & Enforcement Division, for passing the ICC Building Plans Examiner exam. *Way to go!!*

A Monthly Contest

A free movie ticket will be given to the first two employees who find the last four digits of his/her Social Security number in the current issue of Kent Connections and contacts the Personnel Office at 744-2310. WENDY HAYWOOD of the Recorder of Deeds Office and WILLIAM VINCENT of the Division of Wastewater Facilities found their numbers and claimed their movie tickets in January.

It's easy to win a movie ticket -- just read Kent Connections every month! **4277**



Defensive Driving & AED/CPR push back training

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

There will not be a voluntary training session in February due to opportunities for employees to take Defensive Driving and CPR/AED training. In March, there will be two different voluntary training topics offered: performance appraisals and people skills.

It's performance appraisal time again! For the March voluntary training session, participants will review the GAUGE ("Guide to Achievement, Understanding, Growth, and Excellence") appraisal system and receive some tips for a successful performance appraisal. The annual performance appraisal process is required by Chapter 68: Personnel in the Kent County Code and should be viewed by employees as a meaningful opportunity to discuss areas of improvement and goals for the upcoming year. The training sessions will be held on Wednesday, **March 7, at 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.** in room 220 A/B in the Kent County Administrative Complex.

In today's team-focused workplace, good people skills aren't just nice to have, they're essential to success. In this DVD, "**How to Work With People,**" the speaker shares his insights into what makes exceptional teams. Take the eye-opening SELF Profile to assess your personal style and the styles of other members of your team. Understand why others react the way they do in different situations. See how they judge you. Find out what you can do to get better results with people of each style. It's a valuable experience for every work team that will increase productivity and improve results. The training sessions will be held on Wednesday, **March 21, at 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.** in room 220 A/B in the Kent County Administrative Complex.

To sign up for training, please contact me in Personnel at 744-2312, by e-mail (if you have a list), or in person. If you initially forget to sign up and wish to attend, or discover that you will be able to attend on the day of the training session -- show up and sign in.

(Continued on Page 12)

Tips make use of space heaters safer for home heating

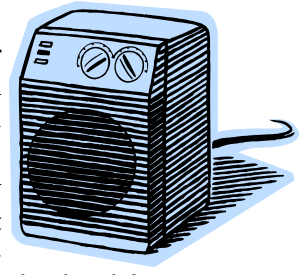
By Dave Mick, EMS Operations Support Officer

The National Fire Protection Association suggests the following for safe heating:

Maintain a 3 feet (or 1 meter) separation between things that can burn and heating equipment.

- When buying a new space heater, make sure it carries the mark of an independent testing laboratory and is legal for use in your community. (Some communities do not permit portable kerosene heaters, for example.)
- Install your stationary (fixed) space heater according to manufacturer's instructions or applicable codes or better yet, have it installed by a professional.
- Plug your electric-powered space heater into an outlet with sufficient capacity and never into an extension cord.
- Use the proper grade of the proper fuel for your liquid-fueled space heater, and never use gasoline in any heater not approved for gasoline use. Refuel only in a well-ventilated area and when the equipment is cool.
- In your fireplace or wood stove, use only dry, seasoned wood to avoid the build-up of creosote, an oily deposit that easily catches fire and accounts for most chimney fires and the largest share of home heating fires generally. Use only paper or kindling wood, not a flammable liquid, to start the fire. Do not use artificial logs in wood stoves.
- Make sure your fireplace has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room. Allow fireplace and woodstove ashes to cool before disposing in a metal container, which is kept a safe distance from your home.
- Turn off space heaters whenever the room they are in is unoccupied or under circumstances when manufacturer's instructions say they should be turned off. Portable space heaters are so easy to knock over in the dark that they should be turned off when you go to bed, but make sure your primary heating equipment for bedrooms is sufficient to avoid risks to resi-

(Continued on Page 12)



EMPLOYEE COUNCIL NEWS



By Michele Lapinski, Employee Council Secretary

With there only being four accepting nominees for the four open seats on the Council, there will be no need to hold an election. JAYNE ZERANSKI, PAT ORONA, LORI SHORT and myself will automatically begin our terms with the March meeting. Welcome aboard!

Who says Valentine's Day has to be just for lovers? Why not make it a day to let a co-worker know what a great person they are, or as a day to say thanks for being a friend by purchasing a Valentine's Day candy gram from the Employee Council for just \$1. Grams will include a Valentine's Day card (which you can personalize) and a sweet treat, both of which will be hand-delivered to your recipient(s) on Valentine's Day. Grams are on sale now until February 9 and may be purchased from KATHY SKINNER in the Planning Services office (room 117) in the main admin building (while supplies last). It's a perfect (and inexpensive) way to brighten someone's day!

The Employee Council selected ROB PIERCE of Engineering as the Employee of the Month for February. In addition to a day off with pay, Rob will also receive a \$100 stipend. Congratulations!

If you know of a co-worker who has excelled and/or gone above and beyond in the performance of their job duties, then nominate them for Employee of the Month. Nomination forms are available in the central mail room and also on the v: drive under forms. Submitted nomination forms are eligible for a three month period and may be re-submitted.

Your current Employee Council: President JASON MILLER, Vice-President KATHY SKINNER, Treasurer CYNDI LAIRD, Secretary MICHELE LAPINSKI, members MARY EISENBREY, KATHY PHINNEY and MELISSA STANLEY. **3334** **0169**

High Praise

Congratulations to JUNE GLADDEN, Property Specialist II in the Assessment Office for receiving a Constituent Comment Card praising her for being "warm and friendly" and making a customer's "wait more pleasant." *You're Great!!*

Tech Talk



By Kevin Curtis, Systems Development Specialist

Get ready for Windows Vista® the new release of the Windows® operating system.

Some of the following information I gathered from the Windows web site. Vista was scheduled to be released for sale January 30 at midnight according to Fox news.

There is an upgrade advisor available from the Windows web site. One of the most important items mentioned on the site is the fact many older PC's will not have the capability to run Vista.

Mentioned in the article are minimum requirements of hardware to run the new OS.

Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor is a downloadable web application that helps Windows XP users identify which edition of Windows Vista meets their needs, whether their PCs are ready for an upgrade to Windows Vista, and which features of Windows Vista will be able to run on their PCs. The end result is a report that explains which edition of Windows Vista to buy and provides suggestions about what, if any, hardware updates may be necessary to install and run the appropriate edition and features of Windows Vista. Running Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor is a great first step for anyone considering whether to install Windows Vista on a PC they already own.

The Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor depends on technology that only runs on computers with editions of Windows XP or Windows Vista installed. If you own a PC running Windows 2000, Windows 98, Windows ME, or Windows 95, you will need to carefully compare its system capabilities to the information available on the Windows Vista site.

In general, PCs purchased within the last two years have a better chance of being able to run Windows Vista as is, or with affordable improvements to the system hardware.

If you are buying a new PC before Windows Vista is available, look for the computers designated as Windows Vista Capable or Windows Vista Premium Ready.

The website to visit is listed below.<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/getready/upgradeadvisor/faq.mspx> **6144**

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: HAROLD K. BRODE



Job: Levy Court Commissioner
Date hired: January 2, 2007
Education: 1965 graduate, Harrington High School; 1970 graduate, Delaware State Police Academy
What I like most about my new job: Working for fellow Commissioners and constituents.
Greatest accomplishment: Getting married and having three children.

dren.

Greatest challenge: Getting elected to Levy Court.
Future goals: To make Kent County a better place to live.

Person that inspired me in my career: William R. "Ace" Carrow, Franklin Derrickson

If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Nothing

I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this: Cutting grass or babysitting my granddaughter
Family: Wife, Cindy; sons Derrick, Kenny, and Robbie; daughters-in-law, Elizabeth, Tammi, and Anna; grandchildren, Halie and Chase

Most recent movie enjoyed: Walking Tall

Favorite TV show: Gunsmoke

Favorite sports: Bowling, golf

Favorite meal: Chili

Favorite music: Oldies (50's and 60's)

Favorite saying or slogan: "The sun don't shine the same place all the time."

Who has had the greatest impact on my life: "Ace" Carrow and Franklin Derrickson

A dream I have is to: Win a big lottery

If I won a million dollars, I would: Continue to work and serve the people of Kent County.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Along with one other person, have held the offices of President, Chief, and Ambulance Captain in my fire company in the last 10+ years.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Join the military and go to Basic Training

Three words that describe me: Honest, conscientious, compassionate

There are two ways of exerting one's strength: one is pushing down, the other is pulling up.

Booker T. Washington

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: ERIC L. BUCKSON



Job: Levy Court Commissioner
Date hired: January 2, 2007
Education: Bachelors, University of Delaware; Master's, U.S. Sports Academy
What I like most about my new job: The opportunity to make positive change to things that I believe need it.

Greatest accomplishment:

Meeting my wife. There is no place I would rather be than with my family and it all starts with her.

Greatest challenge or obstacle: I have a portion of an e-mail taped to my computer at school from a friend who is battling brain cancer. He was talking about how excited he was to be able to open his eyes and see his son for the first time in nine days. My obstacles and challenges are too few to mention. On a side note, my friend is doing much better.

Future goals: To be better than I was yesterday.

Event that inspired me: Two things happened this summer that motivated me to win the Levy Court seat. My political party did not endorse my candidacy and my opponent placed two large campaign signs next to my own house. When your own team shuns you and your opponent mocks you, you can quit or work harder. I chose to work harder.

If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Nothing comes to mind.

I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this: Spending time with my children, doing things that make them smile.

Family: Wife (Jennifer), daughter (Krisanne, 7), son (Brent, 6), son (Graham, 17 months), one girl on the way!

Most recent movie enjoyed: Cinderella Man (DVD)

Favorite TV show: Sopranos

Favorite sport: Wrestling

Favorite meal: Wife's meatloaf and mashed potatoes

Favorite music: Late 70's Rock and Roll or Country
Favorite saying or slogan: "Get a straw and suck it up."

Who has had the greatest impact on my life: Dad, Mom, wife, and children. Too close to call
(Continued on Page 14)

BENEFIT BLURBS

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

Are you aware that some local pharmacies have a \$4 prescription program? These programs bring more affordable medicines to seniors, working families, and the uninsured. Up to a 30-day supply of generic drugs on the provider's current list of covered drugs at commonly prescribed dosages for \$4 for each prescription fill or refill is offered under these programs. Generic medicines usually cost between 30 percent and 60 percent less than equivalent brand-name products. You can get these prescription drug savings whether or not you have coverage through the County's health plan, Medicare, or any other plan.

The programs include quality generics in these categories: allergy, analgesic, antibiotic, anti-inflammatory, antidepressant, antifungal, antipsychotic, antiviral, anti-anxiety, arthritis, asthma, cancer, cardiac, cholesterol, diabetes, cough/cold, gastrointestinal, gingivitis, glaucoma, hormone, incontinence, Parkinson's, seizure, thyroid, and vitamins. The list of covered generic drugs is subject to change. The Wal-Mart/Sam's Club program includes approximately 331 generic prescriptions, and includes 14 of the top 20 prescribed medications in the U.S. I visited other pharmacy websites and found that Target also has a \$4 drug program; Walgreens, Rite-Aid, and Eckerd do not. Ask your doctor if your branded drug has a generic equivalent, or go to www.bcbsde.com for drug information.

Our Walgreen's Mail Service program is located in Orlando, Florida. Pursuant to Florida pharmacy law, prescriptions written by a physician for a brand-name thyroid medication such as Synthroid or Levoxyl may not be substituted with a generic medication. If you would like to have a Synthroid or Levoxyl prescription filled with a possibly less expensive generic medication, please ask your physician to write a new prescription for **Levothyroxine**, and mail the new prescription to Walgreen's Mail Service. If your physician writes a prescription for one of the brand-name thyroid medications and signs his name on the "Substitution Permitted" line on the prescription form, Walgreen's Mail Service will not accept that as a prescription for a generic medication. Only the generic name is to be written on the prescription form.

If you have any questions regarding the County's health/prescription or dental plans or any other County benefits, please feel free to contact the Personnel Office. **0280** **5203**

CAT BOX



By Cathleen McLean, Payroll Administrator

2007 Tax Year Changes

Employees seem to be having a problem this new year understanding the difference between gross wages and taxable wages as each is listed on the recently distributed W-2 forms and their biweekly direct deposit statements.

It is understandable since our New World payroll system direct deposit statements don't list the two items separately as was done on the old HTE payroll system. An easy way to get taxable wages is to subtract from the gross wages any annual amounts for pretax AFLAC insurances, medical/dental insurance premiums, AFLAC Flexible Spending (medical and dependent care), and ICMA-RC 457. The remaining amount will be your Federal taxable wages.

To determine your Social Security and Medicare taxable wages add back in the ICMA amount. The upper limit for Social Security taxes for 2006 was \$94,200, so if your wages are above that amount the last calculation only works for Medicare wages. Your Social Security amount would be the \$94,200.

Here are the few other items concerning taxes:

IRS Tables—The one thing that affects all Kent County employees is the change in the IRS Tax Tables. Each bracket of the Tax Tables for 2007 has an increase in the range that is taxable. What this means is that more of your wages will get taxed at a lower rate. Example: Married 10% bracket for 2007 is taxed starting after the first \$8,000 thru \$23,350. Married 15% bracket for 2007 is taxed starting after \$23,350 thru \$70,700. Married 25% bracket for 2007 is taxed starting after \$70,700 thru \$133,800. To see all of the changes for each bracket go to www.irs.gov and locate the 2007 Tax Tables. Look for Tax Table #7 Annual Payroll Period.

ICMA—The limit for 457 deferred compensation deposits has been raised to \$15,500. This increases the amount that you may deposit by \$500 from 2006.

Social Security—The amount of wages that can be taxed as Social Security wages has been raised to \$97,500. This is an increase of \$3,300 that will now be taxable as Social Security wages.

If you have any questions please give me a call at 744-2387.

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: BRAD S. EABY



Job: Levy Court Commissioner

Date hired: January 2, 2007

Education: Ephrata, PA High School, 1979; B.A., Shippensburg University, 1984; J.D., Delaware Law School of Widener University, 1989

What I like most about my new job: Working with the Commissioners and the dedicated, professional staff in solving our land use and economic

development issues

Greatest accomplishment: My family; putting myself through college and law school

Greatest challenge or obstacle: Making the best choices for Kent County; balancing my new job with my law practice and my family.

Future goals: One day at a time. Balance my new job with my law practice and my family.

Person/event that inspired me: Working on Amish farms as a boy and working as a masonry laborer in Lancaster County taught me a strong work ethic and how to chew tobacco.

If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Too often I learn from a mistake, so I wouldn't change a thing.

I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this: Hanging out with the family on the beach. Backpacking. Surfing.

Family: Wife – Julie; stepdaughters, Sheridan (7) and Mackenzie (6); and son, Garrison Eaby

Most recent movie enjoyed: Cars (I have three small children.)

Favorite TV show: 24

Favorite sports: To watch – Flyers hockey. To play – tennis and volleyball.

Favorite meal: Don't make me choose! Soft shelled crabs and a cold beer. Mushroom cheeseburger with a chocolate milkshake.

Favorite music: Blues and Rock

Favorite saying or slogan: "Give more than you take."

Who has had the greatest impact on my life: My parents. My second dads – Harlan Zimmerman and John Krick. My wife, Julie.

A dream I have is to: Surf some warm water big waves

If I won a million dollars, I would: Take a little break.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Used to chew tobacco and smoke non-filter cigarettes.

The most adventurous things I've ever done is: Run for office, raise three children, winter surfing.

Three words that describe me: Optimistic. Hopeful. Stubborn, although I like to call it "Focused."

Frequent changes to W-4 withholdings may prompt IRS query

By Cathleen "Cat" McLean, Payroll Administrator

Last year several employees changed their W-4



forms more than one time during the calendar year. And while there is technically no limit to the number of times that you change your W-4, employees need to be aware of some things that may be overlooked.

When a change is made to status or exemptions on a W-4 form, it will typically result in either an increase or decrease in the amount of taxes withheld from each pay period thereafter.

The following are excerpts from the W-4 (2007) form itself:

Purpose. Complete Form W-4 so that your employer can withhold the correct federal income tax from your pay. Because your tax situation may change, you may want to refigure your withholding each year.

Check your withholding. After your Form W-4 takes effect, use Pub. 919 to see how the dollar amount you are having withheld compares to your projected total tax for 2007. See Pub. 919, especially if your earnings exceed \$130,000 (Single) or \$180,000 (Married)."

There is also information on the bottom of the W4 form that everyone needs to be aware of when making a change: "Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service© **Whether you are entitled to claim a certain number of allowances or exemption from withholding is subject to review by the IRS. Your employer may be required to send a copy of this form to the IRS.**"

As the old saying goes a little food for thought.

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: KATHLEEN "LEE" MULLARKEY



Job: Permit Technician I

Date hired: January 3, 2007

Education: High school graduate
(Go CR!)

What I like most about my new job: Everything! I mean, what is there not to like. The staff is great! I feel very welcome.

Greatest accomplishment: Buying my first home

Greatest challenge: Adjusting to

being one of the first group of women being stationed in Atsugi, Japan

Future goals: To further my education

If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Stayed in the Navy and retired

I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this: Working outside in my yard and spending time with my family, especially my two grandkids

Family: My immediate or extended? Too many to mention. RIP Kevin.

Most recent movie enjoyed: The Devil Wears Prada

Favorite TV shows: All the CSI shows and NCIS. Oh, can't forget "Survivor," too.

Favorite sports: Bowling and softball

Favorite meal: Seafood and steak

Favorite music: All types, except opera and rap (except for Will Smith)

Favorite saying or slogan: "Duh, ya think?"

Who has had the most impact on my life: My parents

A dream I have is to: Swim with the dolphins

If I won a million dollars, I would: Be a millionaire, duh! - Seriously, buy a new house and donate to my family and charities.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Love photography and won an award

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Went sledding down Mt. Fuji, Japan

Three words that describe me: Only three - let's see - meticulous, funny, and loyal

The bitterest tears shed over graves are for words left unsaid and deeds left undone.

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: VAUGHN McCALL



Job: WWF Plant Operator I

Date hired: January 16, 2007

Education: High school and U.S. Air Force technical school

Greatest accomplishment: United States Air Force retirement

I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this: Fishing in the Delaware Bay

Family: Wife and four children - two boys and two girls

Most recent movie enjoyed: Spiderman 2

Favorite TV show: ESPN

Favorite sport: Football - Giants

Favorite music: Motown - late 60's to late 70's

Who has had the most impact on my life: My wife

Voluntary training resumes in March

(Continued from Page 7)

In January, County employees who received credit for attending a "How to Get Things Done" training session were JUNE GLADDEN, KATHY GOODEN, MARTY HAYES, EVELYN JOPP, DIANE LOCKERMAN, GALE MAAS, ELLEN MITCHELL, STELLA PADILLA, LINDA PFEIFFER, SHEILA ROSS, ANGEL SHORT, ALAN TYSON, JIM WELSH, and BILL VINCENT.

Thank you for your continued interest in voluntary training!

Space heater safety tips

(Continued from Page 7)

idents from severe cold.

- Do not use your oven to heat your home.

Make sure fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside, that the venting is kept clear and unobstructed, and that the exit point is properly sealed around the vent, all of which is to make sure deadly carbon monoxide does not build up in the home. Inspect all heating equipment annually, and clean as necessary. Test smoke alarms monthly; install a carbon monoxide alarm in a central location outside each sleeping area. **9995**

Save your heart—resolve to eat right & exercise

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to eat right and exercise for a healthier you? The American Heart Association (AHA) has joined Discovery Health for its National Body Challenge 2007. The Challenge is a FREE, eight-week, comprehensive fitness and weight-loss opportunity that provides the tools and inspiration, online and on television, to get in shape, shed extra pounds and adopt a healthier lifestyle. Open to individuals, groups and families, it offers the flexibility for participants to make the right choices to meet their personal nutrition and fitness goals. To register any time during the eight weeks, click on www.discoveryhealth.com.

To help you adopt a heart-healthy lifestyle the American Heart Association has programs for you and the whole family:

Go Red For Women is the AHA's nationwide movement that celebrates the passion and power women have to band together and wipe out heart disease, the #1 killer of American women (it is not "someone else's problem"). As a woman, it's your problem. That's where the Go Red Heart CheckUp comes in. This comprehensive evaluation of your heart health can help you now and in the future. By knowing your numbers and assessing your risks, you can work with your doctor to significantly reduce your chances of getting heart disease tomorrow, or 30 years from now! To learn more about the Go Red Heart CheckUp and to join the movement, go to www.americanheart.org and Go Red!

About 12 million (17.1%) of U.S. youth ages 2-19 are overweight. An additional 12 million are at risk of being overweight. It doesn't have to be this way. The AHA and the William J. Clinton Foundation have formed the **Alliance for a Healthier Generation** to combat the spread of childhood obesity and the serious diseases associated with it such as heart disease and diabetes. The Alliance is taking a broad approach to stop the increase in childhood obesity by 2010. Please go to www.healthiergeneration.org/kids



for more information.

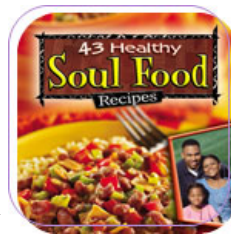
Choose to Move is the AHA's free 12-week physical activity program for women. The program shows women how to *Choose to Move* by being physically active, eating healthfully, loving their body, selecting nutritious foods, and taking time for themselves.

CHOOSE TO MOVE™

Get to the root of your family's health and shape your family history. The AHA's **Power to End Stroke** is a cause to heighten the awareness and impact of stroke in the African-American community. Protect your legacy -- learn how to reduce your risk of stroke and make positive lifestyle changes.

Do you need a new solution to the age-old problem -- how can I get my kids to eat better? From quick dinner ideas to delicious desserts, AHA cookbooks provide lots of ways to make cooking healthier. Visit the AHA website to try a few sample recipes.

"Shop Smart. Live Well. Look for the heart-check mark!" sums up the Food Certification Program's core values. The AHA established its **Food Certification Program** in 1995 to provide consumers an easy, reliable way to identify heart-healthy foods. The program was developed as an outcome of their ongoing efforts with the Food and Drug Administration to help consumers select nutritious foods. Foods displaying the heart-check mark are evaluated to ensure they meet the Program's standards. Now, they're making shopping for heart-healthy food products even easier. Now you can check off each food item bearing the heart-check mark by using the AHA's new online grocery list builder. Search through all the different products and create your printable list. To create your list or learn more about the program, visit the AHA website and click on [Food Certification Program](#).



Go ahead – keep that resolution!

Information from American Heart Association website

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: ALAN R. GARDNER



Job: WWF Plant Operator I
Date hired: January 16, 2007
Education: High school grad, trade school
What I like most about my new job: Security
Greatest accomplishment: Living a decent life
Greatest challenge: Overcoming negativity in life

Future goals: Continue to live a decent life
Person who most inspired me in my career: My father
If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Achieve a greater education
I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this: Working at home in our garden, or with my wife on our jet skis
Family: Wife, children, ancestors
Most recent movie enjoyed: Team America
Favorite TV show: South Park
Favorite sport: Personal watercrafting
Favorite meal: Nourishing and fulfilling
Favorite music: Classical
Favorite saying or slogan: "Oh my God, they killed Kenny"
Who has had the most impact on my life: My parents
A dream I have is to: [See next line]
If I won a million dollars, I would: Probably waste it, but smiling all along
You'd be surprised to learn that I: Sailed on cargo ships for 20 years
The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Perform repairs on a valve in a tankship that had 18 inches of aviation fuel in it.
Three words that describe me: Honorable, honest, hospitable

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: TIM LUND



Job: Paramedic I
Date hired: January 16, 2007
Education: Delaware Technical & Community College
What I like most about my new job: Chance to see lots of interesting things
Greatest accomplishment: Graduating from medic school!
Greatest challenge: Graduating

from medic school
If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Nothing
I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this: Hiking
Favorite sport: Backpacking
Favorite meal: Any
Favorite music: Rock, Blues, Jazz
Who has had the most impact on my life: My friends and family
A dream I have is to: Hike the Appalachian Trail
If I won a million dollars, I would: Travel
You'd be surprised to learn that I: Am a street performer (juggling)
The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Work my way up and down the coast performing.
Three words that describe me: Creative, honest, joyful

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

(Continued from Page 4)

February 23, 2007 - Basic Defensive Driving Course at the Administrative Complex in Room 220 from 9 a.m. - 4p.m.

February 27, 2007 - Advanced Defensive Driving Course at the Administrative Complex in Room 220 from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Welcome to Levy Court—Eric Buckson

(Continued from Page 9)

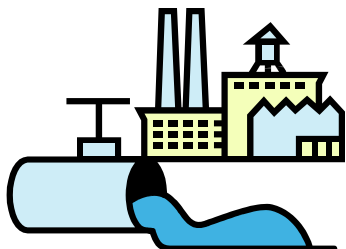
A dream I have is to: Become a professional golfer . . . trust me, it will never happen!
If I won a million dollars, I would: Retire, become a fulltime Dad, and play a lot of golf.
You'd be surprised to learn that I: Am a NAS-

CAR fan
The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Probably run for office. I know it is not dangerous but it sure has opened my world to new adventures of the political kind.
Three words that describe me: Opinionated, sincere, and grateful

County assumes Biosolid production process

By James Newton, Environmental Program Manager

Wastewater treatment includes biosolids handling at the vast majority of treatment facilities in the world, including the Kent County facility near Frederica.



In recent years wastewater facilities across the nation faced tremendous pressures to privatize the entire wastewater treatment operation. A prime example is the City of Wilmington. Kent County, however, is in the process of reversing this trend.

Since 1994, the Kent County Regional Wastewater Treatment Facilities have relied on a private contractor, K-F Environmental Technologies, Inc., to process the biosolids before they were land applied. The finished product is called Kent-organite and well accepted by local farmers. This unique arrangement allowed Kent County to qualify for the US EPA's Local EMS Initiative for Public Agencies program. As a result of this arrangement, the facility has produced the finest quality biosolids products in the country.

During the Fall 2006, the owners of K-F ap-

proached the Public Works Department about taking over the biosolids operations. These operations included two belt filter presses, lime addition and three (3) thermal dryers which produce the final Kent-organite. The Kent County Levy Court approved the purchase of the equipment late in 2006 and set the transition from private operations to public ownership in motion.

The Department has since been training the wastewater operators on the processes and added four (4) additional Plant Operators. The transition period has been challenging, but the development of standard operating procedures as a part of the plant's award winning Environmental, Health and Safety Management System (EHS-MS) has greatly facilitated the change. The transition period is nearly complete with the recent approval of four new positions in the Division to add to the plant operations staff to incorporate biosolids handling responsibility into the overall treatment program.

There is still much to be done to bring the facility up to Kent County standards. Much of the equipment is old and will be replaced during the coming years. This will not only make the operations safer but more energy efficient and environmentally responsible.

Learn how to save a life at free AED/CPR classes

By Rick Schlauch, Paramedic III

Do you know where the AED is in your work place?



Four AED's are located at the Kent County Administrative Complex in silver trim wall units. The 1st floor units are located under the security desk at the main entrance and the other on the wall on the right inside the entry door to the Finance Department/Tax Office. The 2nd floor units are located in the fitness center and in the County Administrator's office.

In addition, one AED is located on the wall in each of the following locations: the Sheriff's Office in the Kent County Courthouse; the Kent County Library; the Brecknock Park garage; the Wheatley Pond Road Office and Paramedic Substation in Smyrna; the Wastewater Treatment Plant control tower and the garage; and the last location is in the kitchen of the Emergency Services Building.

The County has scheduled two CPR/AED classes for February 5th and March 9th from 1-4pm at the Emergency Services Building. The classes are offered at no cost to County employees.

If you aren't currently certified, ask your department head if you can attend one of these classes. Due to the small fee your department pays from their budget, department head approval is necessary. Certification is good for 2 years.

By attending the class, employees will be certified in CPR for adults, children, and infants. Attendees are also trained in how to use the AED's located throughout the County. Contrary to popular belief when the AED delivers a shock, it is stopping your heart not starting it. The shock allows the heart to reboot, which allows the electrical impulses to flow properly through the heart.

Becoming certified is beneficial to you in the work place and could benefit your family and friends in the event of an emergency situation outside of work. Wouldn't you like to be able to help and maybe save a life?

SOME ANSWERS TO THOSE NAGGING QUESTIONS

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Q. *I thought there was a policy about using the County's e-mail system to broadly solicit co-workers for charitable donations, but I receive such e-mails all the time. Can I use the e-mail system like everyone else does to solicit for my favorite charitable organization?*

A. The County's Computer Network Usage policy does not specifically prohibit solicitations for worthy charities, but limits the ability of employees to distribute "Everyone" e-mails. Specifically the policy requires an employee to limit such e-mails to County-related business and requires supervisor permission. The policy also provides that enforcement of the policy provisions is the responsibility of the each department manager. If however an employee abuses the network or e-mail system the Information Technology Office can block the use of the network by a specific employee(s). The Office would also promptly contact the Department Head and the Personnel Director for remedial action.

Q. *Now that I know I cannot use the e-mail system to solicit for my favorite charity without consent, how do I get permission to do so?*

A. There are hundreds if not thousands of charities and good causes out there and you can imagine that unlimited access to employees through the County network would be problematic. So who chooses who gets access? That responsibility falls to the County Administrator, whom has made clear to managers what charities are supported. The list changes on occasion, but the County's primary vehicle for providing charitable support is through United Way. The annual fundraising campaigns have been very successful and offer employees the opportunity to designate their favorite charity. Since the untimely passing of Clerk of the Peace Edie Hemphill, the American Heart Association has earned his support as well as the annual Swing for Ransom golf tournament organized by Kent County paramedics many years ago. The policy does not prohibit employees from personally supporting charities of their choosing, but only limits use of the County computer network to solicit co-workers for such causes.

Q. *I'm a new County employee and remember being instructed during orientation how to answer the County telephone. But, I have noticed that many of my co-workers fail to identify themselves, are often abrupt and*

sometimes downright discourteous to the public when they call our office. Should I point out the error of their ways?

A. Rather than taking that task upon yourself, I recommend you contact the Personnel Office about the offender. The County Administrator has made it crystal clear to County managers how the County telephones are to be answered. A story is included in this edition of *Kent Connections* as a reminder to staff. I also caution readers that the County Administrator often calls offices at random to check out their telephone courtesy. Believe me, your department head does not relish an e-mail from "M" about telephone courtesy. I also make cold calls and if the employee on the other end fails to dazzle me with their customer service skills, I make a prompt call to their supervisor to complain.

Q. *That sounds like a threat to me. What can you do to me for failing to practice telephone courtesy?*

A. The very first component of the County's annual employee performance appraisal system is Customer Service, including telephone courtesy. You are evaluated for how you do your job and customer service is an important component of every position in the County. We are all public servants paid by County taxpayers. If you have a disgruntled citizen on the phone and they become discourteous, simply offer to transfer them to your supervisor for further assistance.

Q. *Seems many of your Qs are negative, so I just wanted to say how fabulous it is to have an ice machine in the Complex kitchen.*

A. It is great isn't it?!

Q. *I'm starting to dread my performance evaluations. Basically all I hear is "you did a good job this year, you always do a good job, thanks" and my boss wants to end the meeting. How can I get more information than "good job" from him?*

A. I suggest that you complete a self-evaluation using the County's GAUGE system and then compare the scores. This should elicit some discussion. I also think you should tell your supervisor when you meet with him that you really need to know how to improve in specific performance areas.