

Kent Connections

A Newsletter Published by Kent County Levy Court for its Employees February 2013

Employee of the Month: *Robert L. Watts*

The Kent County department heads have selected ROBERT L. WATTS from the Department of Public Safety as the February 2013 Employee of the Month.



Robert has been a Kent County employee since October 2002 and holds the position of Dispatcher III in the Emergency Communications Division. His primary duties include dispatching emergency responses for fire services, ambulance services, and paramedics of Kent County. He also maintains the Division's standard operating procedures and trains new dispatch employees on the computer aided dispatch system and protocols of proper procedures.

Robert is praised by supervisors as an outstanding shift supervisor and consistent top performer amongst the 9-1-1 staff, who can be counted on to remain calm and professional in the most demanding and challenging situations.

An example includes the recent plane crash piloted by a local physician. The sketchy details and foggy night time conditions made recovery difficult in the vast acres of farmland and forests along Route 9, but Robert skillfully coordinated emergency communications with 13 responding fire companies until the downed private plane was found. The ability to remain calm against overwhelming odds is not an easy skill to master, but he has done so with the highest degree of professionalism and setting a standard for others to aspire to.

Congratulations Robbie on a job well done!

I	N	S	I	D	E
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Retreat preps Levy Court for FY2014

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

With the County's financial picture continuing to improve, the annual Levy Court Winter Retreat last month offered Commissioners the opportunity to seriously, albeit cautiously, look at long range projects and begin to address immediate needs.

The day-long strategy session with Commissioners reviewed the County's finances along with departmental achievements and goals for the rest of the year. Unlike four years ago, when the retreat focused on more onerous options to help solve the budget crunch—from proposed furloughs to elimination of dental coverage, the 2013 session had a more forward looking tone.

On the financial front, Commissioners learned that revenue trends indicate another positive balance for the budget year ending June 30 due largely to the continuation of cost cutting measures and Sheriff sales of properties in foreclosure, but they remained cautious about the financial impact of the Affordable Care Act and 14.6% workers compensation insurance rate increase approved by the

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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, Cathleen McLean, Yvonne Messina, or Margo Mangiamelo-Orlando. Or call the Personnel Office at (302) 744-2310.

Retreat results

(Continued from Page 1)

Delaware Insurance Commissioner.

Notwithstanding any unforeseen State actions, the upcoming budget will likely include a pay increase for employees, a slightly higher donation to fire companies, and some movement on major capital projects. Good investment performance and static health insurance premiums are expected to slightly reduce pension and retiree benefits fund contributions in the upcoming year.

In Public Safety, staff reported on the ongoing heating and cooling system upgrade project and expansion of the Emergency Services Building parking lot.

In Public Works, Commissioners were updated on the Pickering Beach and East Dover sewer service expansion projects as well as three other potential septic remediation projects. The department is in the early stages of planning an upgrade of nutrient removal and capacity expansion at the wastewater treatment facility, which would include two additional clarifiers, aeration system upgrades, a passive solar expansion project; and outfall improvement. Commissioners were also reminded that the garbage collection contract expires in May 2014.

In Planning Services, the group reported a slight decrease in enforcement cases but some

small growth in the number of permits issued. Planning staff has also made great progress in the development of stormwater management districts and will be drafting enabling legislation, ordinances and a fee structure for Levy Court to consider. Commissioners heard about a proposal to assume plumbing inspection duties from the State and were reminded that the Comprehensive Plan has to be reviewed later this year.

In Community Services, staff advised that library usage continues to grow, but the 10-year-old bookmobile regularly experiences mechanical problems. Staff reported that accepting credit card payments for parks and recreation programs has proven popular and has paid for itself. The group reviewed the ball field shelter projects and parking lot improvements along with goals for the Hunn Conservation Area and Kesselring Farm development.

In Administration, I.T. staff is working to update the County's website and ESRI software. They have also investigated costs associated with credit card processing and the EOC phone system upgrades.

Finally, Commissioners were briefed on the proposed Kent County Sports Complex near Frederica, food innovation districts as a means to promote sustainable economic development, and response time issues in the Milford area by Sussex County paramedics responsible for providing advance live support in that area.

Clock ticks on purchase

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Dog licensing is an important revenue source to help offset the \$827,592 annual dog control expense shifted from the State to the County.



By ordinance, all dogs residing in Kent County must be licensed by March 1. The fee is now paid directly to Kent County Levy Court, instead of the SPCA, which was previously contracted to provide

licensing services. Licenses can be purchased in the County Administrator's Office. Contact

KATHY PHINNEY at 744-2305 for more information.

To help employees and family members comply with the dog licensing procedure, a copy of the application will be uploaded with pay stubs on February 15.

The annual license costs \$8.00 for neutered/spayed dogs, or \$12.00 for unsterilized pets. A three-year license can be purchased for \$20.00 or \$30.00. The application form requires a copy of each dog's current rabies vaccination.

Since this is a County ordinance, all employees are expected to be in full compliance. Failure to properly license your dog could result in disciplinary action.

Comm. Angel to seek national County position

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Last month, Commissioner ALLAN F. ANGEL did not seek re-election to a fourth two-year term as Levy Court Vice-President, so he can focus on his quest for the second vice-president position in the National Association of Counties.

Angel secured an endorsement for his run for the top NACo spot from fellow Commissioners in September and formally filed his candidacy paperwork by the January deadline. If elected, Angel would be elevated to President of the national organization representing over 2,400 member counties in 2015.

“It has been an honor to serve in a leadership role with Kent County,” Angel said. “That experience will prove valuable as I embark upon the challenge of winning a difficult national campaign by highlighting the common sense style of governance we enjoy here in Delaware.”

NACo was founded in 1935 and provides essential services to the nation’s 3,068 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public’s understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money.

Angel has earned a well respected reputation in the organization as a champion of the Prescription Discount and Dental Discount programs available to all residents of member counties. He won the Caremark/NACo Outstanding Program Champion Awards for continued efforts



Commissioner Allan Angel displays the NACo Champion Award presented to him at the 2012 NACo conference in Pittsburgh, PA.

to encourage participation in the discount card program by neighboring counties.

In addition, he serves or has served on several NACo committees including Membership, Telecommunications & Technology, and Program & Services among others.

Angel won accolades in 2010 when he drove for three days and 2,800 miles from Delaware to Reno, Nevada to attend the annual conference.

Election nixed, 4 file for Employee Council

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

By the deadline last month, only four employees tossed their collective hats into the ring for the 2013 race, so no election is necessary this year to fill the four expiring terms on the 7-member Employee Council.

Nominations closed January 25 and only four employees agreed to serve. The Council by-laws permit the cancelling of the election proc-

ess annually held in February if there are no contested seats.

The Employee Council nominees elected without opposition include: current members DANIELLE LAMBORN, GIS Specialist in the Planning Services Department and PATRICIA ORONA, Deed Clerk II in the Recorder of Deeds office and new members BEVERLY HAY, Account Specialist II in the Comptroller’s office,
(Continued on Next Page)

KENT COUNTY STAFF ON THE MOVE...

New Hire



HAROLD K. BRODE
Register of Wills
Elected
Office of Kent County
Register of Wills
01/08/2013

Milestones continued



AMY L. MINNER
5 years
Permit Technician III
Department of Planning Services
Division of Inspections & Enforcement
01/22/2008

End of Term

NANCY COOK
Register of Wills
Elected
Office of Kent County
Register of Wills
01/07/2013



Employee Council

(Continued from Page 3)

and DAVID WHITNEY, Projects & Training Coordinator in the Department of Public Works

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 current President TRUDENA HORSEY, Accountant II in the Finance Department; Treasurer YVONNE MESSINA, Personnel Technician II in the Administration Department, and member MARTI STANSBURY, Zoning Inspector II in the Planning Services Department, each of whom have one year remaining on their terms.



Beverly Hay

Retiring from Employee Council this year are current Council Secretary DOROTHY CHEATHAM, Technology Administrator in the Department of Administration, and long time member AUDREY STANFORD, Property Specialist II in the Department of Finance.



Danielle Lamborn

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



Pat Orona

Various Employee Council events fund the social activities.



David Whitney

Promotion



TAMATHA EDWARDS
Appraisal Systems Administrator, G11
from Computer Support Technician II
Department of Finance
Assessment Office
01/13/2013

Milestones

MARIBELL FABRES
15 years
Secretary
Department of Public Works
Division of Wastewater Facilities
01/12/1998



BETTY LOU MCKENNA
10 years
Recorder of Deeds
Office of Kent County
Recorder of Deeds
01/07/2003

RICHARD MOSLEY
5 years
Maintenance Mechanic II
Department of Public Works
Wastewater Facilities Division
01/14/2008



Beloved co-worker passes unexpectedly

By Mary Ellen Gray, Asst. Director of Planning Services

One of our colleagues, Joel KELLY CRUMPLEY, a 15-year veteran of the Planning Services Department, passed away suddenly at age 61 on January 14, 2013. He is survived by his wife, Jan, the love and light of his life, with whom he would have celebrated his 25th wedding anniversary this year, his step-son Chris, his Mother and Brothers Mark and Pat of Norman, Oklahoma and Rob of Colorado.

Kelly was born in Kansas and was raised in Oklahoma, son of B.K. Crumpley and Gwen (McCann) Crumpley. He graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a B.A. degree in Political Science and a J.D. in Law. While there at the University he played varsity Tennis. He practiced law in Oklahoma for several years, and then followed the love of his life, his wife Jan, to Boston, Mass. Kelly and Jan eventually settled in Dover where Kelly started his career as a Planner with Kent County Levy Court.

During his 15 years of dedicated service to Kent County Levy Court, Kelly was a planner with a heart and vision. Kelly was steadfast in his willingness and patience to help members of the public as well as fellow employees. His gentle manner and kind ways could quell the most onerous members of the public. His planning vision and institutional knowledge made a invaluable contribution to the Planning Division and oftentimes made for a vigorous discussion on Planning issues.

Kelly was an achieved and talented musician and an accomplished multi-instrumentalist. Kelly was equally at home with many styles of music, including acoustic blues and celtic music, Kelly was a sought-after guitar, fiddle, mandolin, bodhran, flute and whistle player, and had served as a side man for many recordings and

performances. He was a long-time volunteer and member of the Delaware Friends of Folk and was serving as President of the organization prior to his untimely death. Kelly spent much of his time involved in other philanthropic endeavors helping others on housing issues through serving as the Vice Chair of the Diamond State Community Land Trust which promotes affordable home ownership opportunities. He also served as Vice-Chairman of the Pension Review Committee, representing all Kent County employees since 2006.



Kelly was a Renaissance man. He was an achieved athlete, lawyer, certified planner, an accomplished musician, philanthropist, a friend to many and beloved husband. He was a man who was ahead and before his time. He was a man of great intellect and talent and shared freely of both. He had a passion for music and helping others.

For those of you that were fortunate to have known or worked with Kelly, knew of his quick wit, often colorful and poetic oratory, willingness to help members of the public and staff, gentle manner, optimistic outlook and kind ways. He leaves a hole in our Planning Services Department and in our heart. He will be truly missed.

FIND THE

Stay informed and earn the chance to win a free movie ticket compliments of Employee Council by reading Kent Connections every month. Look for the last four digits of your Social Security number somewhere in the current newsletter and be the first or second to contact the Personnel Office at 744-2310. No one called in last month. It is easy to win, just read the Kent Connections! **4367** **1964**

NUMBERS

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH—INSIGHT

Name: ROBERT L. WATTS

Job: Dispatcher III

Years with the County: 10 years, 4 months

Education: Some college.

My role as a County employee: D Shift Supervisor, overseeing 911 calls and Fire/EMS dispatching.

What keeps my job interesting: No two shifts are the same. Your next call could be a toothache, or tomorrow's news headlines.

What gives me a sense of accomplishment on the job: Knowing you did something that had a positive effect on someone's life and/or situation.

Professional advice I would like to offer to other County employees: Be positive, learn from and admit your mistakes, do the best you can everyday.

Family: Son Robbie, Fiancé Katie and her son Chase.

Civic involvement: Volunteer Firefighter/EMT at Felton Fire Company

After work I enjoy: Spending time with family, running, being outdoors.

Favorite new movie: Argo

Favorite old movie: Forrest Gump

Favorite TV show: The Big Bang Theory

Favorite sport: Baseball



Favorite music: No one favorite.

Favorite Kent County restaurant: Sambo's

Favorite Kent County event: Safe Summer Day

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: My Mom, Dad, and Fiancé.

I'm most proud of: Being a Father.

Pet peeve: Laziness.

If I've learned one thing in life, it's: To not judge a book by its cover.

Characteristics and values important to me: Honesty, humility, fun.

Who has had the most impact on my life: My Grandparents.

Personal goals I have accomplished or would like to accomplish: Would like to finish my college degree.

If I could have been in any profession of my choosing, I would have been a: Police Officer

If I could have two wishes, they would be: Move to a warmer climate, happiness and good health for all my friends and family.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Worked on a farm for 5 years prior to becoming a Kent County Employee.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Whitewater rafting on the Yellowstone River. **2612** **9652** **4514**

Have a heart and GO RED in February

By Yvonne Messina, Personnel Technician II

Don't Stop, Go Red!! This year marks the 10th anniversary for the American Heart Association's **GO Red For Women** campaign. Heart disease takes more lives than all kinds of cancer combined!

Show your support by wearing red on Friday, February 8 when we will again meet in the down stairs atrium for a group picture of Kent County employees in their red.

Be sure to drive past the Kent County Administrative Complex building after dark to check out the lighted red heart on display. The

heart was made by CHRISTINA MORTON's father and painted by BONNIE VOSHELL, both work in the Planning Services Department.



You can donate to the American Heart Association by purchasing a heart badge holder for \$3 or a Red Dress Pin for \$1, see KATHY PHINNEY or YVONNE MESSINA. We also have the red paper hearts again for \$1 donation, the silver ones for a \$5 donation and the gold for a \$10 donation. Thanks to Employee Council, we will conduct a

50-50 on Friday, February 15 and raffle the Heart-related items shown in the Complex display case at \$3 per ticket (or \$5 for 3 tickets).

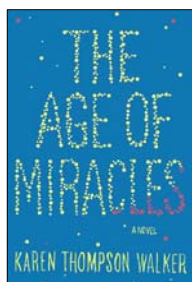
FROM THE STACKS



By Hilary Welliver, County Librarian

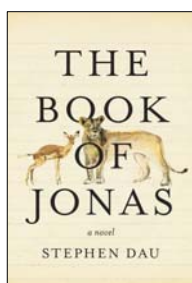
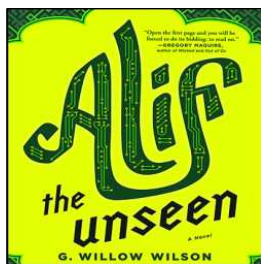
There is "SNOW" better time to read!

Winter is a wonderful time to cozy up to a good read. While snow piles up outside, your reading can take you miles away, across time, and deeply immerse you in a fascinating alternate reality. Here are some excellent choices for a satisfying experience.



The Age of Miracles by Karen Thompson Walker. As the Earth's rotation begins to noticeably slow, the days and nights grow longer and longer, gravity is altered, and the environment changes. Against this background, Julia is coping with the ordinary disasters of growing up: the failure of her parents' marriage, the pangs of first love, and a grandparent immersed in his own conspiracy theories.

Alif the Unseen by G. Willow Wilson. An Arab-Indian hacker, who is known only as Alif (the first letter of the Arabic alphabet), shields the dissidents, outlaws, religious fanatics, and other groups while attempting to stay anonymous, maintain a romantic relationship, and outwit State security before they identify him.



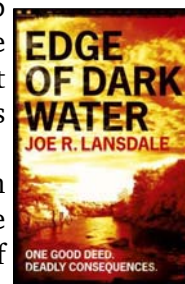
The Book of Jonas by Stephen Dau. Jonas' family is killed during a U.S. military operation in the Middle East, so he is sent to America, where he struggles to fit in. When Jonas meets the mother of the U.S. soldier responsible for saving his life, a shocking and painful secret emerges.

Tell the Wolves I'm Home by Carol Rifka Brunt. In a memorable literary debut, Brunt offers a moving tale of love, grief and renewal as two lonely people become



unlikely friends.

Edge of Dark Water by Joe R. Lansdale. May Lynn is a lovely girl who dreams of becoming a movie star. Instead, her dead body is dredged up from the Sabine River and her best friends set out to take May Lynn's cremated ashes to Hollywood.



That's Not a Feeling by Dan Josefson. Benjamin must navigate his way through a new world of morning meds, earned privileges,



and group therapy after two failed suicide attempts.

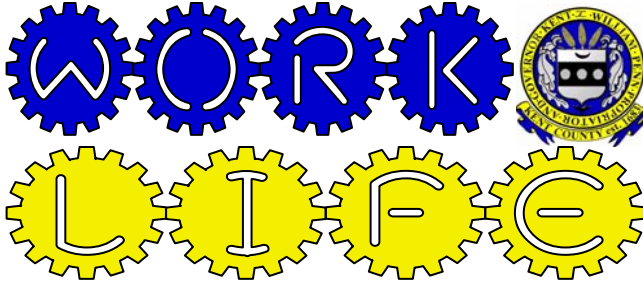
Pure by Julianna Baggott. Pressia barely remembers life Before. In an instant the Detonations turned amusement parks, movie theaters, and birthday parties to dust. Now everyone must be trained as a soldier, or if they are too weak, be used as live targets.



When Captain Flint Was Still a Good Man by Nick Dybeck. To Cal, Alaska is as mythical and tantalizing as Treasure Island and the stories his father, a sailor, tells when he returns are as exciting as the ones he once invented about Captain Flint before he turned pirate. Household tensions rise as Cal must decide if he will follow in his father's footsteps.



And remember! Even if you don't make it to the Kent County Public Library before the next snowstorm, you can still download an eBook or eAudiobook from the online catalog (www.lib.de.us), as long as you know your library card number and PIN.



It can be tough these days working for the government—any government! Many of the people we serve are rallying against the pensions, benefits, and pay of public servants. It can be demoralizing, but it doesn't have to be! Be proud of the work you do and high quality service you provide. Our citizens may not always realize it, but we are saving lives, protecting the environment, making this a better place to live, or facilitating those that do. Share the pride of serving Kent County each work day...

How great is it to work for Kent County? I have had the pleasure of working at the County for almost 5 years and believe me, it really has been a pleasure. During this time, I have had the fortune of interacting with a great number of people and departments within the County. It is not uncommon to see dedicated employees working hard to get the job done. The projects that I.T. has been involved with have been the most interesting in my career. Some are actually fun. I also have developed new friendships here that I will treasure for years to come. Kent County also has a great Employee Council too. It is amazing to me that Employee Council has been able to provide activities including the Holiday socials all via the support of fellow employees. How cool is that. Finally being able to work in the best looking building in Dover, well, it only adds to the prime examples of how great it is to work for Kent County. — DOROTHY CHEATHAM, Technology Administrator



With the state of the economy, anyone who has a job should be happy. Working for Kent County provides more than "just a job". It's not just the benefits, the security, or the retirement, but a place of comfort. Comfort in knowing we can build our personal character and pride in knowing we are providing a service to the citizens of Kent County. This isn't "Just a job"... It's a privilege. :) — DAVID RICHTER, Electronics Supervisor



MARK YOUR CALENDAR



February 1, 2013 - "Sports Team Day" sponsored by Employee Council. For \$1.00 employees can wear a shirt with a favorite team logo.

February 1-14, 2013 - Send a "Cupid Gram" for Valentine's Day to a fellow employee. Purchase grams from Yvonne Messina for \$1.00.

February 7, 2013 - Blood Pressure Checks at the Wastewater Treatment Facility from 2:00 -4:00 p.m.

February 8, 2013 - Go Red for Women's Heart Health Day. Wear Red to Work to show support for the American Heart Association.

February 11 & 12, 2013 - Free informative seminar sponsored by "Stand by Me" providing tips & resources about personal finances. Two sessions: Feb. 11 at 8:30 a.m. and Feb. 12 at 2:00 p.m. in Administrative Complex room 221.

February 12, 2013 - Advanced Defensive Driving Class 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Levy Court Chamber. Must pre-register by February 8.

February 13, 2013 - Blood Pressure Checks at the County Library 9:00 a.m. and at the Administrative Complex in the Personnel Office 9:30-11:30 a.m.

February 13, 2013 - L & W Insurance representative available to answer health insurance questions from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Administrative Complex, Room 213

February 14 & 15, 2013 - Two part Basic Defensive Driving Class 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. each day in Room 220. Must pre-register in the Personnel Office by February 8.

February 15, 2013 - Special 50/50 to benefit "Go Red for Women's Heart Health" and "Love Basket" Raffle sponsored by Employee Council.

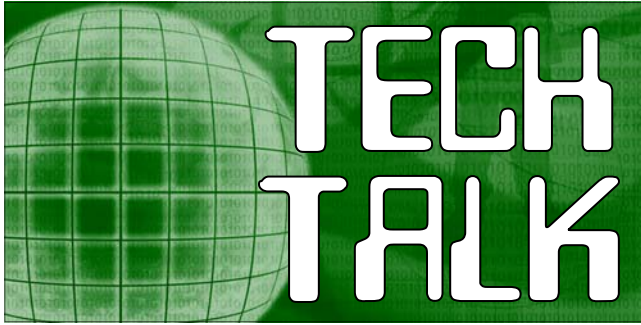
February 18, 2013 - President's Day Holiday. County Offices closed.

February 27, 2013 - Breakfast Social sponsored by Employee Council from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. **7388** **1180** **3511**

Keep an eye on Stealth identity theft

By Mark Kennedy, Media Systems Coordinator

The holidays are over and your credit card and banking statements will soon arrive in a mailbox near you. And with all that frenzied shopping,



you are more likely to miss a fraudulent charge made to your account(s).

There is a current trend of stealth fraudulent charges being made to banking and credit accounts and people are paying them unwittingly. They're being called "stealth" charges because these charges are often for relatively small amounts—usually under \$50. Many customers will overlook a \$10, or \$20 charge if the majority of their legitimate charges are within the same range or higher.

Those making the fraudulent charges are hoping that consumers will not question a small dollar charge in order to avoid the hassle of filing a claim, cancelling a credit or debit card, closing an account, changing passwords, etc. But you should, because these charges will occur again, some weekly, some monthly, and others semi annually. Be sure to go through your statements with a fine tooth comb and always be sure to check your computer for malicious software with a good antivirus program.

If you find or suspect that your personal information has been compromised, follows are some steps you can take to prevent your credit and banking information from being stolen in the future.

According to Javelin Strategy & Research, credit card fraud has risen 87 percent since 2010, resulting in a total loss of \$6 billion. Jim Van Dyke, Javelin's president and founder, states that this is because criminals are rapidly changing

their identity theft methods.

There are steps you can take to protect yourself, though. First, use a credit card as opposed to a debit card. While certainly true that the Internet is a convenient place from which to steal your identity, using a credit card can protect you in the long run. The Identity Theft Resource Center states that "the safest way to shop on the Internet is with a credit card."

If your card number is stolen, you are protected under the federal Fair Credit Billing Act, which limits your liability at \$50. Meanwhile, debit card damages are capped by law at \$500.

Even better than using a credit card is to use a disposable credit card. Disposable credit cards work just like most gift cards. You add a specified dollar amount to the card, and it's good until that is gone. Once it's gone, you can add more, or purchase a new one. And both Visa® and American Express® now offer these cards in varying amounts, so they're easy to get hold of. The bonus is that if the number from a disposable credit card is stolen, it's anonymous, and criminals can't gain access to anything more than the dollar amount that's still available on the card.

"Phishing" is still popular on the web, and now on your mobile phone, where you can be asked to "verify" your personal information for various reasons. Watch out for suspicious emails, phone calls and text messages asking for your account info, which legitimate institutions would never do.

You must verify the online store's security. The variety that's available when shopping online can be dizzying, but it doesn't stop at just the products and prices that are available online. There are also different levels of security that are available online, and you want to be aware of them. Some online web sites don't offer secure shopping. That means that savvy criminals can capture everything that you enter onto a form on those sites, including your personal and credit information. If you're going to shop online, limit yourself to secure sites. You can tell
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if a site is secure by the URL. A secure web site starts with HTTPS:// instead of HTTP://. Secure sites will also have a small lock icon in the lower right corner of the screen.

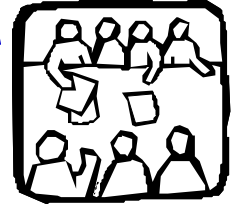
If you plan to do any shopping online, do it at home. At home, you can shop any time and you know who accesses your computer. If you're using a public computer—at the library, at a cyber café, or at work—to do your shopping, you have no control over who might be using that computer as well. You also don't have any control over what kind of spyware or malware might be infecting that computer. So, just don't do it. Shop at home. It's much safer.

Many shopping sites, even the major ones, offer you the ability to save your credit card information on their servers to speed the shopping process. Think Amazon.com's OneClick shopping. It's definitely faster, but there are some risks to maintaining your personal information elsewhere. If a company that you're shopping with has a data breach, your personal information could be put at risk. It takes a little longer, but instead of storing your information on some server that you have no control over, just enter it yourself each time you shop.

Finally, invest in a shredder. Experian® says that sifting through trash is still one of the most popular ways for criminals to obtain your personal information, so shred any document that includes any identifying information.

Price and selection are two of the best benefits to shopping online. But don't let the benefits lull you into complacency. Take the time to shop securely, and use caution with the sites that you choose to shop on. The ease and convenience of online shopping shouldn't be hampered by those with criminal intentions, but it's important to take measures to protect yourself. That way you can shop and save, safely.

EMPLOYEE COUNCIL NEWS



By Dorothy Cheatham, Employee Council Secretary

It's that time of the year. The Super Bowl will be the 1st weekend in February. And I imagine there are some Baltimore Ravens and some 49'ers fans working here. You probably are proud of your team, as you should be.

Employee Council has designated **Friday, February 1** as **Team Sports Day**. For the cost of \$1.00, you can wear your favorite team's sports shirt, even if you don't care for the Ravens or the 49'ers or football for that matter. Maybe you like baseball, basketball, or NASCAR, or even a local school team. Who do you root for? For only \$1.00, you can participate in the fun by wearing your sports team shirt. Someone from Employee Council will be around to collect your \$1.00 when they sell 50/50 raffle tickets.

We will be having a **Breakfast Social** in February. Kent County's own Iron Chef JOHN ZISTL will be helping Employee Council again cook a fabulous breakfast on February 27. You will have a choice of omelet and/or breakfast burrito. Look for the flyers for more details.

Most people try to do something special for their loved ones this month. Well, Employee Council can help you with that. We have put together a "**Love Basket**". The love basket will be filled with special treats, including a \$50 gift certificate to the Georgia House in Milford. I promise you, it's something you'll hope you win. Tickets are \$3 for 1, \$5 for 3, or \$10 for 10. See YVONNE MESSINA, in the Personnel Office to get your chance on the basket. We will draw a winner on February 15, right after the 50/50 drawing.

We will be having **Lollipop Cupid Grams** for sale this year. See Yvonne in Personnel anytime after February 1, to purchase a Lollipop Cupid Gram card for \$1. Your personalized card and lollipop will be delivered to the co-workers on Valentine's Day. **1050** **9302**

Defensive Driving courses ready, & set to go

By Margo Orlando-Mangiamele, Personnel Technician I

How's your driving? You can protect yourself, the County, and earn a 3 point MVR credit by participating in an annual defensive driving class this month offered through AARP.

All employees are eligible to participate in the County-sponsored defensive driving training, but priority will be given to those employees who much maintain compliance with Kent County Levy Court Policy 4-6.

The costs associated with the required defensive driving course and recertification will be paid by the County for employees who regularly operate a County-owned vehicle. Other interested employees or retirees must pay the full costs of the course. Family members may also take the class.

The Advanced class will be held on Tuesday, February 12, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the Levy Court Chambers.

The Basic class will be held Thursday and Friday, February 14 and 15, 2013 from 9:00

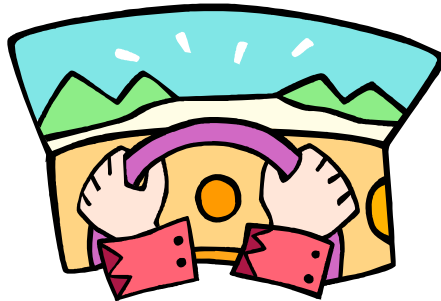
a.m. to 12:00 p.m. each day in Room 220.

Payroll Coordinators have been sent a list of employees required to take either Basic or Advanced Defensive Driving this year. If interested in attending a course, please enroll with the Personnel Office on or before February 8. The fee for those employees not required to take these courses is \$12.00 if you are a member of AARP or \$14.00 if you are not. This fee is payable at the door.

If you plan to attend either of these classes, please arrive early and bring your drivers license, and membership card as they ask that everyone be in their seats and ready to go at

8:45 a.m. Anyone arriving later will not be admitted.

Please contact the Personnel Office if you have questions. The class instructor will not answer any questions concerning point's credits or insurance discounts. Information concerning point credits should be directed to DMV at 302-744-2509. Questions about insurance discounts should be directed to your agent.



2013 tax table changes up withholding

By Cathleen McLean, Payroll Administrator

Are you happy Congress waited to the last possible moment to avert the "fiscal cliff" and maintain the Bush era tax cuts for most of us?

While our elected officials postponed making a decision on the across the board federal budget cuts, they did agree to let the 2% payroll tax holiday (FICA reduction from 6.2% to 4.2%) expire on schedule.

Employers had continued to pay the old "matching" contribution rate of 7.65 percent (6.2 % for Social Security and 1.45% for Medicare).

Many County employees have expressed concern that they may not be having enough income taxes withheld from their biweekly pay-

EXAMPLE—Single person with annual pay of:

Single	But not over	2013 Tax withheld	Of excess over
\$2,200	\$11,125	\$0 plus 10%	\$2,220
\$11,125	\$38,450	\$892.50 plus 15%	\$11,125
\$38,450	\$90,050	\$4,991.25 plus 25%	\$38,450
\$90,050	\$185,450	\$17,891.25 + 28%	\$90,050
\$188,450	\$400,550	\$44,603.25 + 33%	\$185,450
\$400,550	\$402,200	\$115,586.25 + 35%	\$400,550
\$402,200	n/a	\$116,163.75 + 39.6%	\$402,200

check due to the change in withholding tables. The tables did adjust effective January 1 and every employee should consider the potential
(Continued on Next Page)

Tax table changes, 2% FICA tax holiday expires

(Continued from Page 11)

impact. It is especially imperative for individuals with additional income or a working spouse.

A very simplified way to determine the appropriate withholding is to subtract the standard deduction for the tax bracket (single or married) and the amount for each exemption claimed from the total household income. Don't forget to add in all income for the household, such as pensions, second income, spouse's income, interest and dividends, etc. This mathematical exercise will provide an estimated taxable income figure.

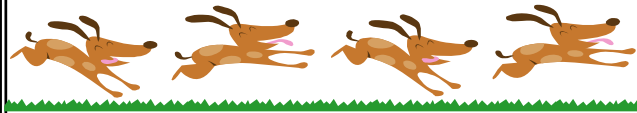
Apply the tax rate to the estimated figure to determine the likely taxes due. Now evaluate if the amount already withheld and future withholdings will be enough to cover what will be needed by the end of the calendar year.

If the estimated income amount of taxes

being withheld does not appear to cover the expected tax figure required, it may be wise to have an additional amount withheld by changing the W-4 form on file in the Personnel Office.

To see all of the changes for each tax bracket go to www.IRS.gov. Look in Publication 15 (2013) Tax Tables, Tax Table #7 Annual Payroll Period. You will need to look at the side of the table that is for your appropriate status either single or married. If you have any questions, contact the Personnel Office at 744-2387.

**Dog Control Problem?
Call Safe Haven at (302) 674-8686**



KENT COUNTY BIRTHDAYS



February

- 01 Kevin Cottle, Public Safety/EMS
- 04 Amy Minner, Planning Services/I&E
- 05 Shirley Thoms, Finance-Assessment
- 05 Toby Sitler, Public Safety/EMS
- 06 Bonnie Voshell, Planning Services/Planning
- 06 Lewis King, Public Safety/EMS
- 08 Diane Lockerman, Finance-Assessment
- 09 Albert Porreca, Public Works/WWF
- 11 Lorri Tanaka, Administration
- 11 Brian Costa, Planning Services/GIS
- 11 Mark Kennedy, Administration-Info. Tech.
- 12 Susan Durham, Finance Director
- 12 Jesse Wallace, Public Works/WWF
- 14 Yvonne Messina, Administration-Personnel
- 14 Pamela Dayton, Public Safety/Emer. Comm.
- 15 Jerri Thompson, Public Safety/EMS
- 15 Terry Pepper, Levy Court Commissioner
- 19 Barbara Dorsey, Public Works/WWF
- 20 Deborah Palmer, Finance-Assessment
- 20 William Clevenger, Public Safety/Em. Comm.
- 21 Alan Tyson, Planning Services/Planning
- 22 Mark Stayton, Public Works/WWF
- 24 Brian Lewis, Public Works/Facilities Mgmt.

- 26 Dianne Rager, Deputy Register of Wills
- 26 Kristina Rinkenberg, Comm. Servs/Libraries
- 28 Brandon Olenik, Public Safety/Emer. Comm

MARCH

- 03 Trudena Horsey, Finance-Accounting
- 06 David Melvin, Public Works/WWF
- 07 Nyle Callaway, Public Works/WWF
- 09 Fran Gunning, Community Services/Libraries
- 10 Violet Glanden, Chief Deputy Reg. of Wills
- 11 Douglas Haddad, Public Safety/EMS
- 11 Justin Pippin, Public Safety/EMS
- 15 Shervina Miller, Public Safety/EMS
- 15 Kia Evans, Administration
- 15 Brent Mollohan, Comm. Services/Parks & Rec
- 20 Bruce Chillias, Public Safety/EMS
- 21 Mike Petit de Mange, County Administrator
- 23 Holly Malone, Deputy Recorder of Deeds
- 23 Ellen Mitchell, Finance-Assessment
- 24 Wilson Branham, Public Works/WWF
- 25 Georgette Williams, Comptroller
- 25 Dawnmarie Shane, Public Safety/EMS
- 26 Hilary Welliver, Community Services/Libraries
- 29 Jason Courtney, Comm. Services/Parks & Rec

Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: HAROLD K. BRODE



Job: Register of Wills
Date Hired: January 8, 2013
Education: 1965 Graduate of Harrington High School. 1970 Graduate Delaware State Police Academy.
What I like most about my new job: Working with constituents.

Greatest accomplishment: Getting married and having 3 sons.

Greatest challenge or obstacle: Getting elected to Levy Court in 2006 and Register of Wills in 2012.

Future goals: Continue to make Kent County a better place to live.

Person/event that most 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 & helping family. Going on cruises.

Family: Wife Cindy, Sons Derrick, Kenny, Robbie and 6 grandchildren.

Most recent movie enjoyed: Walking Tall

Favorite TV show: Gunsmoke, Duck Dynasty.

Favorite sport: Bowling

Favorite meal: Chili

Favorite music: 50's and 60's

Favorite saying or slogan: "Fish or Cut Bait"

A dream I have is to: Win a big Lottery.

If I won a million dollars I would: Donate to charity and take care of friends.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: am only 1 of 2 people in the Harrington Fire Co. who has been Chief, President and Ambulance Captain.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Join the Army and go to basic train-

ing.

Three words that describe me: Honest, Conscientious, Compassionate.



Across The Hall

INSIGHT INTO THAT OTHER DEPT/DIV/OFFICE

Computer Advisory Committee

Purpose: to advise Levy Court on matters relating to strategic planning for information technology initiatives, and make recommendations on similar computer technology related matters referred to it by Levy Court.

Meetings: As determined by the Information Technology Director

Supporting Department: Administration

Chairman: KEITH MUMFORD

Members: the 5 County department Directors including SUSAN DURHAM, COLIN FAULKNER, SARAH KEIFER, and HANS MEDLARZ, and three resident representatives from the community serving in a non-voting capacity appointed by Levy Court including Marshall Fletcher, Herb Semans, Dave Walczak, and an alternate of Kurt V. Schwaninger.

Primary supporting staff: KIM CROUCH

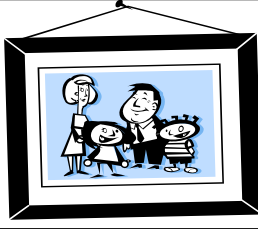
Interesting Facts: The bylaws require Board recommendations to be submitted to the County Administrator for comment and submission to Levy Court. All the resident representatives were appointed in 2000.

IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

- > How did the County's pension fund perform in 2012?
- > Who is driving more defensively?
- > How does the employee appraisal process work?
- > County Website enhancement—Get a Preview!
- > Civil Unions—One Year Later

Bragging Rights

Share your family photos, stories, & more



Thompson helps to lay wreath

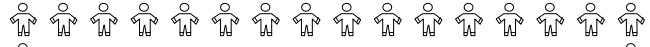
NANCY THOMPSON, Wills Clerk II was honored to hand off a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery just before Veterans Day 2012. She is a member of Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary, the honor Degree of the VFW. Their mission is to care for disabled and hospitalized veterans.

Tanner's son earns PhD from UD

John Tanner, eldest son of SCOTT TANNER, Inspections Administrator, graduated from the University of Delaware on January 4, 2013 with a Doctorate in Education Administration and Policy. He is currently an English Teacher at Apoquinimink High School.

Stanford's God-sister completes book

Lisa K. Lynch, God-sister of AUDREY STANFORD, Property Specialist II, has completed her first book called "Defining Moments". The caption reads "Experiences with God that Discovers your Destiny". Lisa is the Administrative Assistant to Mr. George Krupanski, Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Clubs in Delaware. Audrey is so proud of Lisa and her accomplishments.



HOW TO BE EXCEPTIONAL

COMMUNICATION—f. Use terminology and language that enables everyone to understand even the most elaborate ideas and complex information.

DEVELOPMENT of SELF—a. Attend a wide variety of internal and external training and actively support the organization's training initiatives...

G.A.U.G.E.—Kent Co.'s performance assessment tool



Kent Co. Employee Obsessions

Take a minute to visit the display case on the first floor of the Kent County Administrative Complex featuring heart health information prepared for display by Personnel Technician II YVONNE MESSINA and Senior Secretary KATHY PHINNEY.



Got an interesting hobby or like to collect limited edition baubles? Then show off your talent for amassing things. Contact the Personnel Office.



Monthly statistics from Kent County Department of Public Safety

2012	DEC	NOV	'12 YTD
9-1-1 calls	7,369	6,903	94,831
# calls by Cell Phone	5,222	4,885	65,189
Fire incidents	494	430	5,897
Ambulance incidents	2,013	1,718	23,583
Paramedic incidents	1,118	947	12,685
# Patients to hospital	640	541	7,012
# Patient DOA	23	24	201
# Patient refuses care	33	33	513
# Patient release/BLS	83	81	1,084
# Response cancelled	284	217	3,192

County Polar Bears Take Plunge

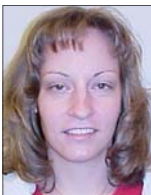
By Margo Orlando-Mangiamele, Personnel Technician I

Would you plunge your body into the freezing Atlantic Ocean for a good cause? At least four of your co-workers are willing to do so and they need your support.



On February 3, thousands of brave “Polar Bears” will plunge into the icy waters at Rehoboth Beach to benefit Special Olympics. In 21 years, The Polar Bear Plunge has grown from 78 participants raising \$7,000 to 3,685 last year raising over \$650,000.00.

Kent County employees will be represented again this year at “The Plunge” by JESSICA DILL, Account Specialist II in the Finance Department; JAMES MACHADO-NUNES, Plant Operator IV in the Department of Public Works/Division of Wastewater Facilities; KEITH MUMFORD, Director of Community Services who will be jumping for the first time with his team Delaware Wrestling Officials; and KATIE RIDGWAY, Dispatcher II in the Department of Public Safety Department/Emergency Communications Division along with her husband and 6-year-old son.



Jessica Dill



James Machado-Nunes

again freezing our fur for a great cause”, but just once he wishes it would snow on the day of the event, that would be awesome. James’ wife Kim is also participating again for her third year. She said “I loved it and besides it’s for a good cause.” James still occasionally drives a bus for the Charlton School and became involved when 30 of the school’s staff decided to participate in the Polar Bear Plunge and he hasn’t stopped yet.



Keith Mumford

“As always, I do this every year for the kids. It’s amazing to see the smiles on their faces and how happy they are to jump in the water along side the other participates,” proclaims Jessica as she begins her 8th year. “This is truly a great organization and I look forward to participating every year.”

Courtney Semans, daughter of Dispatcher II ED SEMANS in the Department of Public Safety Department/Emergency Communications Division, will also be participating as will Holly Conley, daughter of KAREN COOPER, Cashier in the Department of Finance-Tax Office along with son Matthew (Karen’s grandson). It will be the mother-son team’s third year, they hope to raise \$500.00.



Katie Ridgway

For more information about the Lewes Polar Beer Plunge or Delaware Special Olympics visit www.sode.org

In his 20th year, James says “here we go

Board of Assessment slips into Kent’s history

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

The Kent County Board of Assessment quietly slipped into the history books on January 8 when HB169 adopted by the General Assembly in 2011 became effective and replaced the 3-member Commission with a 7-member Board of Assessment Review, which will operate similar to other County boards.



The State law transferred Assessment staff and operational responsibilities to the Finance Department and only gave the new Review Board responsibility for hearing assessment appeals, with no administrative or supervisory duties.

The three former “full-time” Board members retired on December 31, 2012 and all three were reappointed to the new 7-member Board of Assessment Review.

COMMENTS CAN IMPACT FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

Q. What should I do about a co-worker who continuously makes sarcastic comments to or about me? I find it really annoying.

A. Certainly sarcasm can impede productive and cohesive workplace relationships. On the other hand, one person’s sarcasm is another person’s critical review. Depending upon the time, place and circumstance, you could simply ask the commenter “why so critical?” Co-workers are not your teenage children, but if you think about it, you probably spend more time with your co-worker than your teenager. Try this—ask your critical (sarcastic) co-worker for help with the issue that bothers him/her. It won’t be long before the comments come to an end. It works with teens.

Q. What if I try asking for help, but my sarcastic co-worker rebuffs me or keeps it up?

A. Then inform his/her supervisor how the person’s comments make you feel. That critical co-worker just might find himself assigned to be your mentor. Then graciously accept the help.

Q. I consider Kent County a great place to work and feel fortunate to have a job here with a fair wage and great benefits, but several of my fellow employees have some really bad attitudes. They constantly complain about everything. What should I do?

A. Every workplace has one or two people that don’t appreciate what they have. I think there are very few people like that at Kent County, because most of us are committed to the concept of public service. I tell folks not to work for the government if they want to be rich. It just won’t happen. If you need constant praise, government service is not the career for you. You won’t get a pay raise every time you do something great or save the taxpayers hundreds or even millions of dollars. When confronted with negative attitudes, I suggest you just

be happy with your own decision to work for Kent County. I hear from former employees all the time saying how their decision to leave was a big mistake—not so much because of the pay, but because they miss the caring family type atmosphere here.

Q. Levy Court Commissioners often speak of the Kent County family, but I can think of a few occasions where you treated or allowed some former and even current employees to be treated in a manner viewed as less than family friendly.

A. I hear what you’re saying, and reflecting back over the years I would agree that perhaps some personnel decisions may appear callous or uncaring. It is my hope that the specific individual(s) did not always feel that way. For privacy and other reasons, personnel decisions are handled as discreetly as possible, so co-workers would not likely have a complete picture of a situation.

The purpose of Q & A is to educate and encourage work related discourse among staff about County policies, work practices, and employee issues. It is not intended to promote unproductive gossip or speculation about the author of a question. Unless otherwise noted, all questions contained herein have been crafted by Personnel Office staff and may or may not reflect actual questions asked. -Personnel Director

Q. As a supervisor I often give direction to one subordinate about how a task should be completed, but he continues to do the task the same old inferior way. I end up having to “fix” the job and I am becoming resentful. What should I do?

A. If the employee is still on probation, I would likely concur with any recommendation to terminate. If the probationary period is over, I suggest a Performance Improvement Plan. Be specific about what and how the task(s) must be completed. But before that step, it would be valuable to examine if the “how” something is being done is so critical. If the final product meets expectations and deadlines, don’t sweat how it gets done so much—as long it is up to standards. Of course, I am not speaking of paramedics or dispatchers. I want them to perform their job the best way possible every single time—no deviations. Ultimately, if the employee can’t get the job done in the manner necessary, it may be time to talk permanent separation. Give me a call and we can discuss how to proceed.