

# KENT CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter Published by Kent County Levy Court for its Employees October 2005



## Employee of the Month *Linda H. Pfeiffer*

The Kent County Employee Council has selected LINDA H. PFEIFFER from the Department of Finance as the October 2005 Employee of the Month.

Linda, a Kent County employee since June 2002, is a Computer Systems Specialist in the Finance Department responsible for managing the varied computerized components of the assessment office as well as the County's financial services software. She also has responsibility for training office staff in the operation of new or enhanced computerized equipment and software programs.

Supervisors praise Linda for her dedication and willingness to help everyone understand the County's computer programs. She has been particularly adept at finding more efficient ways to use the computerized assessment and mass appraisal software and has been very helpful with the County-wide document imaging project.

Linda's leadership during the many technological challenges faced by the Assessment Office recently, along with her documentation, analytical, and problem-solving skills make her an invaluable asset to Kent County.

Congratulations Linda on a job well done!

### COMING NEXT MONTH:

- > *When & Where for sexual harassment training*
- > *Helping the Hurricane Katrina clean-up effort*
- > *FY2007 budget development gets underway!*

### 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.*

## Consultant to study County health benefits

*By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director*

The ever escalating cost of health insurance motivated the Levy Court to hire a consultant last month to research and recommend alternative funding formats, plan design changes, and other cost containment measures for the County's \$2 million medical benefits program.

Bolton Partners, Inc. of Baltimore will evaluate the County's claims history and determine if the County could save money by self funding the insurance program, remaining fully funded, or piggybacking the State's health insurance program. The lower cost State plan does not cover retirees, so the consultant will also evaluate the probable costs of self or fully funding the County's 65 retirees with benefits.

In addition, the consultant will assist the County in complying with new Medicare regulations related to the Part "D" prescription benefit which starts January 1, 2006. Retirees with the County paid Medicare supplement offered through Mid-Atlantic Health Plan will soon be receiving correspondence informing them if Part "D" is needed—do not sign up for Part D until the County advises you if it is needed. Though not likely, the Consultant could very well recommend that the County drop retiree coverage all together as many private corporations have done in the wake of increasing premiums.

The Technical Evaluation Phase of the study is expected to be completed by the end of October and if self funding is recommended, the Implementation Phase would begin in mid-November with plan design, RFP development and response evaluation. The implementation phase would conclude in February with award of a new health insurance agreement to a third party administrator.

For more information about the County's health insurance program, contact the Personnel Office at 744-2310.

# Welcome to Kent County!



**Name:** JESSE WALLACE



**Job:** Maintenance Mechanic

**Date hired:** August 29, 2005

**Education:** High school diploma and six months of college

**What I like most about my new job:** The benefits, and all the good people I work with

**Greatest accomplishment:** Becoming Assistant Chief for the Frederica Volunteer Fire Company

**Greatest challenge or obstacle:** Getting my license for a small system water operator

**Future goal:** To become Chief of the fire company and to learn more about my job to make me a better employee

**Person/event that most inspired me in my career:** My brother, who told me there is nothing that I can't do if I put my mind to it

**If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently:** Spend more time with my son

**I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this:** Fishing or watching football

**Family:** Is very important to me

**Most recent movie enjoyed:** Daddy Day Care

**Favorite TV show:** Gunsmoke

**Favorite sport:** Football

**Favorite meal:** Steak and potato

**Favorite music:** Country

**Favorite saying or slogan:** "What's happening, buddy?"

**Who has had the most impact on my life:** My mother

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Help my family and buy myself a piece of land and a home

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Have five years experience in water and sewer

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Becoming a firefighter

**Words that describe me:** Easy going, happy, make people laugh \*\*1125\*\* \*\*1651\*\*

## Congratulations

*Congratulations to Michelle and FRED STRAUSS (Parks Worker II) on the birth of their daughter, Savannah Jones Strauss, on September 28, 2005 weighing 6 lbs. 9 oz. and measuring 19 1/2 inches.*

## EOM INSIGHT



**Name:** LINDA PFEIFFER

**Job:** Computer Systems Specialist

**Years with the County:** 20

**Education:** Graduated Milford Senior High and a lot of job-related training

**What I like most about my job:** My co-workers, and County employees that I work with

**Family:** Larry (husband), Heather (daughter), Jason (son), Jessica (daughter-in-law), Caroline (granddaughter), Canice (stepdaughter), and Steve (son-in-law)

**Future goals:** Retire!

**I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this:** Playing with my granddaughter

**After work I enjoy:** Antiquing, cross-stitching, and spending time with family

**Favorite new movie:** "Batman Begins"

**Favorite old movie:** "The Horse Whisperer"

**Favorite TV show:** "24"

**Favorite TV show as a child:** "Jetson's"

**Favorite meal:** Pizza (especially Grotto's)

**Favorite music:** I like pretty much all kinds

**Favorite Kent County restaurant:** Olive Garden

**Favorite Kent County event:** July 4<sup>th</sup> – I love fireworks!

**People (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** My great-grandparents and my mother

**I'm most proud of:** My children

**Motto:** "You can't please everyone all the time."

**If I've learned one thing in life, it's:** Don't take anything for granted.

**A dream I have is to:** Start my own business

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Donate some to charity or research and enjoy the rest with family

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Have three sets of twins throughout my family (two fraternal and one identical)

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Go to Ireland with my daughter

**The most challenging thing I've done:** Stand up in front of County employees and teach software classes.

**Three words that describe me:** Quiet, dependable, caring \*\*0094\*\*

"I would rather sit on a pumpkin and have it all to myself than be crowded on a velvet cushion."

**H. Thoreau**

## Football is theme of 2005 United Way campaign

Kent County's United Way Campaign Kick Off meetings are planned for October 5 at 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. in Administrative Complex Room 220. Everyone who works at the Administrative Complex, the O'Brien Building, the Emergency Services Buildings and the Library is invited to either meeting. A third kickoff meeting is scheduled at the Wastewater Treatment Plant on October 6 at 7 a.m. Everyone is encouraged to attend these informative sessions, but be sure to make arrangements with your supervisor to assure Office coverage.

This year's Kickoff has a FOOTBALL theme. Free coffee, juice, and donuts will be given away. Attendance at any one of the kickoff meetings will automatically enter you into a drawing for a couple of great NFL prizes. In addition to United Way sponsored agencies, a special guest appearance by a well know former football "Great" is planned. Make sure you attend to learn more about the 2005 United Way Campaign and join in the fun and prizes.

If you love football—prove it and show support for United Way by wearing a pro or college jersey or sweatshirt from your favorite team on Friday, October 7.

This year's campaign will feature an "Early Bird" contribution by awarding a "Day Off with Pay" to the winner. To enter you just have to pledge your contribution by October 14. A drawing will be made to select the lucky person to win a day off. More details will be given at the kickoff meetings.

Other United Way events include a silent auction which will be held from October 17—21. Many great items have already been contributed including a Barbeque Rack of Ribs Dinner for two, a crocheted afghan, car washes, a planter, lighted decorative red, white, and blue Eagle in a basket, wine, NASCAR cap, and various baked goods. Silent Auction items are still being accepted. Items and bids can be made in Room 222, near the Personnel Office.

This year's campaign promises to be fun and with your support – successful. See you at the KICK-OFF!!!



## Sofia Culver leads pack in fitness challenge

*It's not too late to earn a tee shirt*

By Bret Scott, Communications & Research Assistant

Have you seen fit to get fit? Take the challenge like Account Specialist SOFIA CULVER of the Finance Department, who is leading the pack of 31 Kent County employees who are up to the "Challenge."

Culver has logged 23 of the required 25 hours in her pursuit of the prized "Property of Kent County Fitness Center" tee shirt in the inaugural Kent County Employee Fitness Challenge. Senior Secretary ANGEL SHORT of the Community Services Department is running a close second with 12 hours completed.

Employees who log 25 hours or more are eligible to win the tee shirt currently on display in the Complex second floor display case. Additionally, the individual with the most hours will be named Kent County's "Fitness Fanatic" and will receive a plaque honoring his/her accomplishments. The Fitness Challenge will continue through November 15 and presentations will be made at a future Levy Court meet-  
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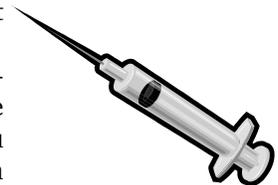


## Shot in arm prevents flu

Flu vaccine should be plentiful this year, so get your shot in the arm to prevent sickness this winter.

Kent County employees and retirees from active service can receive a free flu vaccination administered by a Kent County paramedic on **Friday, October 28** from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the Administrative Complex building in Room 222 or 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the wastewater treatment plant. Family members can receive the injection for \$7 each. First come, first served.

Please sign up by calling 744-2310.





## ON THE MOVE...

Compiled by Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

### New Hires

09/05/05 JAMES DEPTULA, Engineering Project Manager II, Grade 13, Public Works/Engineering

### Resignations

09/02/05 KELLY WILSON, Planning Technician II, Grade 8, Planning Services/Planning

### Milestones

08/21/85 MIKE WEYANT, Building Codes Inspector II, Planning Services/I&E—20 years (*correction*)

08/01/95 REINHOLD BETSCHEL, Plant Superintendent, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities—10 years

09/04/90 PAT PIAZZA, Custodian II, Public Works/Facilities Management—15 years

09/05/95 PAT ORONA, Deed Clerk II, Deeds Office—10 years

09/21/95 DIRK YODER, Paramedic II, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services—10 years

09/28/95 ALLAN THOMAS Plant Operator IV, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities—10 years

09/11/00 LOU COX, Assessment Supervisor, Assessment Office—5 years

09/18/00 J. ALLEN METHENY, Assistant Director of Public Safety/Emergency Management Division—5 years

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



October 5, 2005 - Blood Pressure Checks at the Wastewater Facility from 2-4 p.m.

October 5, 2005 - United Way Kick Off meeting at 9 a.m. & 10 a.m. in Room 220 at the Administrative Complex.

October 5, 2005 - United Way Kick Off meeting at 7 a.m. at Wastewater Facility.

October 10, 2005 - Columbus Day holiday. County offices closed.

October 12, 2005 - Blood Pressure Checks Annex at 9 a.m., Kent County Administrative Complex Room 222 from 9:30 - 11 a.m., O'Brien Bldg. from 11-11:30.

October 12, 2005 - L&W Rep. to answer health insurance questions from 1-2 p.m. in Room 222 at the Kent County Administrative Complex.

October 13, 2005 - Employee Training Session on "Preventing & Defusing Violence". Sessions  
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## COUNTY BIRTHDAYS



### OCTOBER

- 01 Jeremy Sheppard, Community Svcs/Recreation
- 04 Ralph Neil, Public Safety/EMS
- 06 Debbie Everett, Deeds Office
- 07 Tony Tiparod, Public Safety/EMS
- 10 Deborah Moore, Deeds Office
- 10 Elizabeth Perry, Public Works/Facilities Mgmt.
- 12 James Newton, Public Works/Engineering
- 14 Laura Ogden, Planning Services/GIS
- 16 Reinhold Betschel, Public Works/WWF
- 16 Doug Phillips, Public Safety/EMS
- 21 Loretta Wootten, Clerk of the Peace
- 22 Andrew Stinson, Public Works/WWF
- 23 Patty Virdin, Planning Services/Planning
- 26 Shane Dearman, Public Safety/EMS
- 27 Dale Hammond, Planning Services/I&E
- 28 Barbara Miller, Public Works/Engineering
- 29 Janet Lloyd, Deeds Office
- 31 Timothy Cooper, Public Works/WWF
- 31 Jessica Steele, Deeds Office

### NOVEMBER

- 01 Kenneth McKenzie, Public Safety/EMS
- 01 Kevin Sipple, Public Safety/Emergency Comm.
- 04 Jean Fabi, Planning Services/Planning
- 07 Susan Hitchens, Finance
- 08 Connie Butler, Community Services/Library
- 09 Charles Wilt, Board of Assessment
- 12 Christina Morton, Planning Svcs./Insp. & Enfor.
- 13 John Schulties, Planning Services/Insp. & Enfor.
- 14 Marvin Millman, Public Works/WWF
- 14 Matthew Biddle, Community Services/Parks
- 16 Frederick Strauss, Community Services/Parks
- 16 Scott Bundek, Public Safety/Emergency Comm.
- 17 J.R. Short, Public Safety/Emergency Comm.
- 20 Bert Crowder, Public Safety/EMS
- 23 Jack Webb, Public Works/WWF
- 25 Marc St. Jean, Planning Services/Insp. & Enfor.
- 26 Rochelle Bohm, Planning Services/Planning
- 28 David Mick, Public Safety/EMS
- 29 Randy Staats, Public Safety/Emergency Comm.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to ANGELA MOSELEY of the Inspections and Enforcement Division on her marriage to former County employee Jason Woody on September 17, 2005. They were married at Felton Methodist Church at 3:30 p.m. with the reception following the ceremony at Harrington Fire Hall.

## County library doubles space with expansion

By Bret Scott, Communications & Research Assistant

Levy Court Commissioners celebrated the expansion of the Kent County Library with a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 20. The expansion adds 2,000 square feet of library space to the current facility located in the North bound lane of Route 13 near the Camden light.

The expansion also marks a significant milestone in the library's history which became a priority of the Levy Court after the Parks and Recreation Divisions vacated the building for the new County Administrative Complex in April of 2005.

"Libraries open up the world," said Levy Court President DAVID R. BURRIS. "They open up the world through words, pictures, and the internet. Our residents can take great pride in their new Kent



County library."

The expansion allowed Kent County to increase the children's juvenile fiction and non-fiction section, provide more open space for library programming, seating for an additional 20 patrons, a new circulation counter, a magazine and newspaper reading area, and new computers with internet capabilities.

Kent County established the Library Services Department and Bookmobile Service in 1989 and went into service just about a year later. The year 1994-95 saw the emergence of the KentNet Automated Catalog system which allows users to access other municipal libraries. In 1999, the library was firmly established in its current location.

In 2004, Kent County unveiled their new bookmobile. Nicknamed "Book Worm Lucy," the smaller, self contained unit replaced the previous bookmobile which was a trailer attached to a Chevrolet Suburban.

## Heartwalkers net over \$2K

By Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

Hundred of walkers from the Dover area gathered bright and early September 17, on a beautiful Saturday morning to support the American Heart Association at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Heart Walk.

This year the Kent County Levy Court team sported white t-shirts with red lettering that read "PUTTING HEART & SOLE INTO HEART WALK 2005". A special thanks to the County Administrator and Levy Court for assisting with the purchase of the team shirts.

Everyone was up for registration at 8 a.m. with music blasting to get us pumped up for the walk. Just before the 9 a.m. step off, the 26 Kent County Levy Court employees, friends and family squeezed under an archway of red and white balloons for a quick team picture. View our Heart Walk 2005 team picture located in the County Complex display case next to facilities management.

Each year the number of walkers seem to grow. The unique K-9 Brigade is a fun spectacle each year, with about half the number of dog walkers as actual people. The County team was accompanied by

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**Cash is always close at hand with the new Wilmington Trust ATM recently installed at the County Administrative Complex. Asst. Finance Director John McDowell demonstrates how easy it is to get some quick cash.**

# FROM THE STACKS

By Bonni Capobianco, Evening Librarian

## Blue Latitudes

by Tony Horwitz



In Blue Latitudes, Tony Horwitz sets off on his own voyage of discovery to follow the paths of Captain James Cook, one of the greatest explorers in history. Captain Cook was an eighteenth century sailor who was the first to explore and map the south Pacific. Cook made 3 voyages in an 11 year span, 1768-1779, ending at the time of his murder in Hawaii.

Horwitz, makes his own adventures as he follows Cook's destinations. In a comical way, Horwitz tells of his exploration of Tahiti, Alaska, and a small nation of Niue.

Tony Horwitz begins his tale with a week journey on a replica of Cook's ship. He spends the week fighting exhaustion and motion sickness. At the end he can't imagine spending 2 or 3 years on one voyage.

Horwitz continuously switches from present day to Cook's time to compare the differences and examine Cook and his motivation. Horwitz comments on how the islands have changed and what remains the same from Cook's time. He also examines Cook and his drive to explore. Cook born of poor parents is a rare example of someone who was able to rise above his upbringing to become a sea captain, unheard of at the time.

Blue Latitudes is an enjoyable read for anyone who likes to travel and to learn about history. The reader learns to appreciate the magnitude of Cook's discoveries and the impact the last two centuries has had on the areas. Horwitz, writes in a easy and entertaining way and you enjoy the history as well as his adventures to seek the truth of this famous explorer. Hope you read this enjoyable and educational book.

## *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. MARI FABRES and MIKE BERRY in the Division of Wastewater Facilities found their numbers and claimed a movie ticket each in September.

## Recipe of the Month



By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

### PUMPKIN BREAD SANDWICH WITH PUMPKIN SEED – CREAM CHEESE FILLING

1 teaspoon butter  
1/3 cup vegetable shortening  
1 cup light brown sugar  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
Pinch nutmeg  
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 eggs  
1 cup pumpkin puree  
1/2 cup buttermilk  
1 cup toasted pecan pieces  
1 cup Cream Cheese Filling, recipe follows  
Shaker of confectioners' sugar  
8 sprigs fresh mint

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Grease a 9x5x3-inch loaf pan with 1 teaspoon of the butter. In the bowl of an electric mixer, combine the shortening and sugar. Cream the mixture until smooth.

Sift the flour, spices, baking soda, baking powder and salt and set aside. Add the eggs, one at a time, to the creamed mixture and mix until incorporated. Add the pumpkin puree and mix until smooth. Add the sifted flour mixture, about 1/2 cup at a time, alternately with the buttermilk until all is incorporated and the batter is smooth. Fold in the pecans.

Pour into the prepared pan and bake for 55-60 minutes or until golden brown and when a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from the oven and cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Slice the bread into 1/2-inch slices. Spread some of the Cream Cheese Filling between 2 slices and form a sandwich. Slice in half diagonally and place against each other on a serving plate. Garnish with confectioners' sugar and a spring of fresh mint.

#### PUMPKIN SEED AND CREAM CHEESE FILLING

4 tablespoons butter, at room temperature  
4 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature  
3 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
1 tablespoon milk  
1/4 cup pumpkin seeds, salted and roasted

With an electric mixer, in a medium mixing bowl, cream the butter and cream cheese until smooth. Add the confectioners' sugar, about 1/2 cup at a time, mixing well after each addition. Add the vanilla and milk and mix well. Fold in the pumpkin seeds. Yield: about 1 cup.

*From Emeril Lagasse, 2000, TV Food Network*

## Learn to defuse violence in the workplace

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

“Preventing and Defusing Violence” will be the topic of October’s training session. We will explore a variety of issues, including the scope of the problem, violence prevention policies, perpetrators and potential victims, stages of violent behavior, warning signs, recommended security measures, intervention options, how to report incidents of workplace violence, and how to help victims cope with what’s happened.

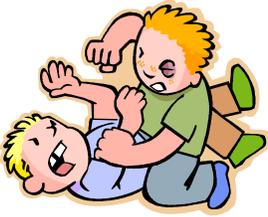
Two sessions will be held on Thursday, October 13, at 9 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in room 220 A/B in the Kent County Administrative Complex. To sign up for one of the sessions, contact me in Personnel at 744-2312, by e-mail (if you have a list), or in person.

In September, Lisa Lonchar, a local physical therapist, conducted a session on anatomy, lifting and back safety, seated postures, and exercise, followed by a field trip to the County’s fitness room to demonstrate exercise posture and various exercises using the County’s fitness equipment. County employees who received credit for this session were ALBERT BIDDLE, KELLY BLANCHIES, SOPHIE DEAR, JUNE GLADDEN, JILL JOHNS, EVELYN JOPP, ANITA LLOYD, GALE MAAS, PATRICIA PIAZZA, RODNEY SMITH, MARTI STANSBURY, PATTY VIRIDIN, and CARISSA ZEITERS.

### *Kent Co. Employee Obsessions*

As a child, Division of Facilities Management Maintenance Worker II JOHN ZISTL admired aviators as opposed to sports figures, which spurred his hobby of collecting vintage flying helmets and flight jackets. Check out his unique collection on display in the first floor display case. Also check out the upstairs display case featuring the eclectic collection of souvenirs from Personnel Director ALLAN KUJALA’s recent trip to Thailand.

Do you collect stuff? Share your obsession! Contact the Personnel Office for more information.



## Beware potential carbon monoxide poisoning hazards

By Dave Mick, EMS Operations Support Officer

Usually at this time of year we start hearing the annual reminders about the potential for carbon monoxide poisoning in the home. We all should have our heating systems checked and serviced. The fireplace or woodstove chimney should be inspected and cleaned. The batteries in CO detectors and smoke alarms should be changed on a regular basis.



Recently in the news we were reminded that carbon monoxide hazards come not only from our heating systems. The tragic loss of five more people... an entire family... was a result of running a generator to make the home livable after the hurricanes. Dangerous levels of this colorless and odorless gas can accumulate in a very few minutes from any source of burning hydrocarbon fuels in a closed space. Warming up your car inside the garage will leave the atmosphere in the garage hazardous. Normally, the good thing is you don’t stay in the garage very long when you leave.

What does carbon monoxide do and how does it do it?

Carbon monoxide interferes with the ability to transport oxygen in the blood. Oxygen is carried throughout the body by the hemoglobin of the red blood cells. Carbon monoxide binds more aggressively to the hemoglobin, leaving no place for oxygen to take the ride. The body cannot use carbon monoxide and it becomes starved for oxygen. The brain is the primary user of oxygen and is the most sensitive to inadequate supply of oxygen. As the brain becomes starved of oxygen the person becomes confused and disoriented. Many people report headaches within a short time of exposure. It becomes difficult to make good judgments and decisions. The person doesn’t realize they are being affected. Drowsiness and weakness soon follow, leaving the person prone to just staying put in the area that is hazardous. Eventually the person loses consciousness and other vital organs become affected. Breathing effort is reduced and the

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## EMPLOYEE COUNCIL NEWS



By Jennifer Graham, Employee Council Secretary

Now that Fall has arrived, the holiday season will be fast approaching! The Employee Council members are busy planning the Annual Employee Holiday Dinner Dance. The festivities are scheduled to take place on Friday, December 2 at the Cheswold Fire Hall. There will be a cocktail hour from 6:30-7:00pm followed by a buffet style dinner. The menu consists of roast beef, oven fried chicken, crab imperial, mashed potatoes w/gravy, California medley, rolls w/butter, jello, pudding, cake, coffee and ice tea. Music will be provided by "Just Kidding Around Entertainment". Tickets for the event will be on sale beginning Monday, October 31 thru Monday, November 14, 2005. As always, tickets will be free of charge for all Kent County employees. Those who would like to bring a guest may purchase a ticket for \$17. We hope everyone makes plans to attend.

Another holiday event that is always a big hit is the Annual Employee Holiday Luncheon. This year the luncheon will be held on Wednesday, December 14 beginning at noon. Look for more details in the November issue of *Kent Connections*.

The Employee Council enjoys sponsoring all of the great social events for the Employees of Kent County, such as the Employee Appreciation Picnic, the Holiday Dinner Dance and Holiday Luncheon. However, these events could not take place without the generous support of the Levy Court and through fund raising activities like the monthly parking space raffle and door prize raffles held at most of the social events. To kick off the fall season, the Employee Council will be hosting two new fund raisers. On Monday, October 31, employees may dress up in "appropriate" Halloween attire by making a small contribution of \$2 to the Employee Council fund. "Fan Friday" will be held on Friday, November 18. Employees may wear "appropriate" shirts or jerseys supporting their favorite pro or college (or high school) athletic team by donating \$1 to the Employee Council fund.

The Employee Council has selected LINDA PFEIFFER of the Department of Finance as the October 2005 Employee of the Month. Linda will receive a paid day off during the month of October, as well as a designated parking space and a \$100 stipend.

## Pennies from Heaven will help area family

By Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

Are pennies in your purse or pocket weighing you down? Lighten your load by donating to a family in need.

For many years Kent County Levy Court has participated in the "Adopt-A-Family" program for the holiday season. Your contributions fulfill the wishes of area families in need.

Under the program a family (families) is selected and the County donates approximately \$100 per child. The funds are used to purchase gift cards, so the family or families can celebrate the holiday season.



This year we thought we would try something new—a Pennies from Heaven competition to raise funds for this worthwhile community project. The object is for each County division to collect as many pennies (other coins or dollar bills work too) as possible in a provided Mason jar. Just empty your pockets or purses every time you see the jar. The division which collects the most money per capita will receive the satisfaction of being a very generous group of coworkers as well as three Domino's pizza for staff to enjoy during the holiday season.

Jars will be distributed on October 5 and collected in mid-November. Gift cards have to be turned in to "Adopt-A-Family" by the end of November. Watch for more information on this good cause in the spirit of the season in next month's newsletter.

## Beware carbon monoxide!!

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heart becomes irritated to the point dysrhythmias and arrest.

So, what to do? First, take heed of the usual warnings (above). Then be aware of the early signs of trouble. If someone in the home becomes confused for no apparent reason or if you seem to get a headache as soon as you get home, find out why this is happening and don't forget about the possibility of carbon monoxide.

If you really feel that carbon monoxide may be the problem (like you get home and the furnace smells funny and the dog doesn't greet you at the door) get everyone out of the house and call 911.

## Child fantasies come to life at Brecknock trail

By Jeremy Sheppard, Recreation Program Supervisor II

Cooler weather and fantasy football drafts are one way to usher in the Fall. But in the Divisions of Parks and Recreation, gearing up for two of its biggest special events takes center stage.



The 2005 Children's Halloween Fantasy Trail will be held on Saturday, October 15 at Brecknock County Park and will have a little of the

old and a bunch of the new.

Changes for the 2005 Trail include holding the event on a Saturday, all new scenes, and the first ever Pumpkin Painting Pavilion.

The Pumpkin Painting Pavilion will be a huge attraction this year. Each child will be able to pick out their very own pumpkin, paint a face on it, and take it home with them. The good people at the Dover Mall have been kind enough to sponsor the Pavilion this year.

Sponsorship will play a much larger role in this year's trail, which has helped us lower the cost of this event to only \$5 per child. Each scene will be sponsored by a local business who might also be providing some volunteers to wear those big costumes that the kids love so much. Maybe you'll see somebody you know!!

Also included in the fee is a hay ride around the park, and entertainment at the Picadilly Stage by the Community Singers, sponsored by L&W Insurance Agency.

The Trail runs from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. so get there early, tickets will not be sold after 4 p.m. Again, all children, ages 1 - 12 must pay the fee of \$5. Adults escorting the children are FREE. (Limit of 2 adults per paying child. Each additional adult will be charged \$2.)

Call Parks and Recreation at 744-2495 if you have any questions.

## HAVE A GHASTLY GHOULISH TIME AT FRIGHT NIGHT

October 21 & 22 at Brecknock Park

By Brent Mollohan, Recreation Program Supervisor II

For those of you who want to take a nice walk through the beautiful trails of Brecknock Park—better do so before Friday, October 21.

Why? For the simple fact that this wonderful setting will turn into a gruesome, horrifying event known as "Fright Night." Planning is already underway for this two night event which includes the trail of terror, the castle of blood, and the bizarre barn.



The ghoulish Trail of Terror is a ¼ mile trail that contains 18 scenes ranging anywhere from a graveyard to Chucky's House. For those of you who are almost scared to death, do not worry, we have a witch doctor who will gladly cure your ills.

The ghastly Castle of Blood is a maze that has an additional 12 scenes. Once you enter you are on your own to find the exit as you encounter a gorilla, a bug room, and machine gun fire. If for some reason you get lost, the medical doctor performing an operation will gladly help you hack your way out to safety.

Finally, the beastly Bizarre Barn is another small maze that is under the watchful eye of security at this time. I can not tell you much about the barn except that something big is brewing inside.

If you dare, venture out on October 21 and 22 between the haunting hours of 7-10 p.m. and experience the Fright Night of your life. Tickets are only \$10.00 (limit of 1,000 per night).

This event is designed for adults and older children. Parents should use discretion when bringing younger children. If you are interested in volunteering, please call me at 744-2491.

## BENEFIT BLURBS

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

Recently some employees who are planning early for their retirement asked, "What is Medigap?" Medigap is health insurance sold by insurance companies to help fill the "gaps" in the Original Medicare plan. County employees do not enroll in Medigap, even if they are receiving Social Security.

When the employee is retired and reaches age 65 or older, he must enroll in Medicare and Medigap. The County's current Medigap policy, through Mid-Atlantic Health Plan (MAHP), has a deductible schedule that is given to those who are age 65 or older and retiring, and those who are already retired and reach age 65.

For inpatient hospital care, days 1-60, Medigap pays the Medicare Part A deductible; days 61-90, Medigap pays the specified dollar amount of coinsurance; days 91-150, Medigap pays the specified coinsurance for the 60 Lifetime Reserve Days; and for any days in a hospital in excess of 150, Medigap pays nothing.

If treatment for mental or nervous disorders is required in a psychiatric hospital, Medigap pays the Medicare Part A deductible and the daily coinsurance specified in the hospital inpatient days schedule. When the retiree enters a skilled nursing facility (it must be a Medicare-approved facility and meet Medicare criteria), Medicare pays 100 percent of the allowable rate for days 1-20 and pays all (within the allowable) except the specified daily coinsurance for days 21-100, which Medigap will pay. Medigap will not cover services outside of the U.S., blood products, home health care, or hospice care.

For physician and specialist office visits, and many other types of service, Medigap pays the Part B deductible and 20 percent of the allowable charges. For prescription drugs, the current annual maximum is \$2,000 that will be paid by MAHP.

Employees are asking if they can use the Blue Cross/Blue Shield network of providers if their preferred provider is not in our Mid-Atlantic Health Plan network. The answer is, "No." Even though BCBS absorbed MAHP, we (and MAHP) are bound by our MAHP contract until June 30, 2006.

If you have any questions regarding Medigap or any other benefits, please feel free to contact the Personnel Office. \*\*3232\*\* \*\*5090\*\* \*\*7520\*\*

## Welcome to Kent County!



**Name:** JIM DEPTULA



**Job:** Engineering Project Manager II

**Date hired:** September 5, 2005

**Education:** B.A.S. in Engineering Technology, University of DE; A.A.S. in Civil Engineering, DE Technical & Community College

**What I like most about my new job:** The people have been very friendly and co-operative

**Greatest accomplishment:** Making it to 49 years old

**Greatest challenge or obstacle:** Keeping sanity in an insane world

**Future goals:** 50, 51, etc.

**Person/event that most inspired me in my career:** Having children

**If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently:** Finished college earlier

**I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this:** Friday night listening to music or fishing at the beach and not catching any fish

**Family:** Wife and two daughters

**Most recent movie enjoyed:** The first "Matrix" movie, then it got old.

**Favorite TV show:** Football, "Mad Money"

**Favorite sport:** Football

**Favorite meals:** Pizza; crabs; BBQ chicken and steak; or Thanksgiving

**Favorite music:** A variety - classical rock, classical music, oldies

**Favorite saying or slogan:** "Some country, this America."

**Who has had the most impact on my life:** Family

**A dream I have is to:** Get my children through college and retire comfortably

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** See above

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Can say words backwards

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** A "Who's On First?" skit at my daughter's second-grade talent show

**Three words that describe me:** After reading this, "pretty darn boring" \*\*6472\*\* \*\*9363\*\*

## Volunteers needed for Make-A-Difference Day

By Carl Solberg, Parks Division Manager

Kent County Community Services, Kent Conservation District and the First State Resource Conservation Development Council (RC&D) are co-sponsoring Kent County's contribution to the National Make-A-Difference-Day program. Families, individuals, groups, and volunteer organizations are needed to help Kent County and RC&D complete a major environmental restoration project at Big Oak County Park near Smyrna. The Park and parking area for this project is located on Big Oak Road, 6/10 of a mile east of U.S. Route 13.

Make A Difference Day is a national day of helping others -- a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors. Created by USA WEEKEND Magazine, Make A Difference Day is an annual event that takes place on the fourth Saturday of every October.

Work previously performed at Big Oak County Park by the Kent Conservation District includes a major constructed wetland complex and the re-excavation of a natural flood plain with the use of heavy equipment. This newly-restored flood plain is the location to be re-vegetated with native trees and shrubs by Volunteers on Make-A-Difference Day. Please help us plant 100 trees and shrubs in this newly-constructed wetland and forest buffer at the Park. This Kent County ecological restoration project requires a major community effort for success.

The plant materials selected for this restoration project were chosen from naturally-occurring indigenous shrubs and trees found in Kent County riparian buffers and wildlife habitats. They include flowering and seed-producing species such as Winterberry, Spice Bush, Elderberry, Dogwood, Sweet Pepperbush, Viburnums, Sweet Bay Magnolia, Chokeberry, and native Oak species.

Please bring work gloves, hard-soled, lace-up shoes or boots (no sneakers, please), and a round-point shovel. Be sure to dress appropriately for outdoor work. A restroom and hot and cold drinks will be provided to all volunteers.

All participants under the age of 14 years must be accompanied by a pre-registered adult volunteer.

Volunteers may also register on the day of the event at the project site in Big Oak County Park. All registered volunteers will receive a certificate of appreciation and possibly other appreciation gifts (sponsors pending and welcomed).

Conserve, protect, enjoy and celebrate Kent



**The photo was taken during the re-construction of the natural geometry of the floodplain at Big Oak Park in July, 2005. The excavated area in the photo is being planted with native shrubs and trees on Make-A-Difference Day.**

County's natural resources. Please Join Kent County Community Services on Make-A-Difference Day at Big Oak County Park.

For More Information about National Make-A-Difference Day go to: <http://usaweekend.com/diffday/index.html> For more information about conservation and habitat projects in Kent County contact the Parks Division at 744-2495

## NBP Third Party Audit in Oct.

By Jim Newton, Environmental Program Manager

The National Biosolids Partnership (NBP) auditors (KEMA) will be at the treatment plant the week of October 18-21, 2005 to conduct the final phase of the NBP third party certification program. This is the final phase of the audit. Once the plant passes the audit, the Kent County Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility will become the tenth such organization nationally to be so certified. Other organizations currently certified include Denver, CO, Los Angeles, CA, Ft. Worth, TX and Washington, DC. To date more than 80 facilities are participating in the program.

Late in November, the same organization will conduct registration audits under the ISO 14001:2004 and OHSAS 18001 standards. When these certifications are obtained, the KCRWTF will become the first facility in the nation to obtain all three.

Anyone interested in participating in the NBP audit or observing the audit should contact Jim Newton at the plant or via email.

## Out & About



By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

Dennis Duerr, formerly an Engineering Project Manager II in Public Works/Engineering Administration, sends greetings from Qatar, and reports that the desert is as hot as you read about – this summer it was 130 degrees by 10:00 a.m. – and working outside most of the day drains you. Such is the life of a construction engineer.

Get well wishes go out to retiree LAURA BELLE WILSON, formerly our Receiver of Taxes, who has been hospitalized following a fall in her home. Mrs. Wilson said that she still thinks of everyone at the County and wishes them well.

Personnel Director ALLAN KUJALA was honored by Kiwanis of Dover as their “Kiwanian of the Year” on September 28, for participating in every project and fund-raiser for the past year, plus having the distinction as Past President of the organization.

Adrienne Johnston, daughter of JERRY JOHNSTON (Utilities Construction Coordinator), a Senior at Lake Forest High School, is a member of the varsity cheerleading squad (she’s the one who gets flipped from the top of the pyramid). Adrienne and another member of the squad attended the Professional All-Star Training Camp in Ocean City, MD, and each earned a spot in the prestigious New Year’s Day Parade in London. Each student is raising funds on their own for the trip (each needs \$3,000), and they have a November deadline. If you’re interested donating to their fund, please contact Jerry or send donations payable to Lake Forest High School, mailed to the attention of All-Star London Trip, 5407 Killens Pond Road, Felton, DE 19943.

## Culver leads pack

(Continued from Page 3)

ing. The “Challenge” will run continuously throughout the year.

The Kent County Employee Fitness Challenge kicked off July 15 and employees who would like to participate may still do so.

Simply sign in to the fitness center located on the second floor of the County Administrative Complex and work out on your favorite pieces of equipment. No strenuous workout is required and no special sign-up is necessary.

Keep fit and stay healthy. \*\*6751\*\* \*0666\*



## Welcome to Kent County!



**Name:** PAT McPHAIL

**Job:** Maintenance Mechanic I

**Date hired:** September 8, 2005

**Education:** Graduated from Caesar Rodney High School and Ohio Auto Diesel Tech

**What I like most about my new job:** Meeting new people and learning new things.

**Greatest accomplishment:** My kids

**Greatest challenge or obstacle:** Dealing with my wife

**Future goal:** To see my sons grow up happy and healthy

**Person/event that most inspired me in my career:** My father and brothers

**If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently:** Get better grades in school

**I’m most relaxed and happy when I’m doing this:** Spending time with family and friends

**Family:** Wife, Paula; sons Connor (2 years old) and Quinn (6 weeks old)

**Most recent movie enjoyed:** Matrix

**Favorite TV show:** West Wing

**Favorite sports:** Wrestling, football

**Favorite meal:** Veal parmesan

**Favorite music:** Country

**Favorite saying or slogan:** Practice doesn’t make perfect. Perfect practice makes perfect.

**Who has had the most impact on my life:** My family

**A dream I have is to:** Have a clean garage

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Not change very much

**You’d be surprised to learn that I:** Watch Desperate Housewives

**The most adventurous thing I’ve ever done is:** Go whitewater rafting and paintballing in the Poconos \*\*1125\*\* \*\*1651\*\*



## Congratulations

Congratulations to Liz and DAVID NESBIT II (Paramedic II) on the birth of their son, David Luis Nesbit III, on September 14, 2005 at 9:38 p.m. weighing 3lbs. 13 oz. and 16 inches. Big brother, Dalton and sister, Nia were excited about his arrival.

## *Newton to run in marathon to fight pediatric cancer*

The New York City Marathon steps off on November 6, 2005, and Environmental Program Manager JIM NEWTON will again be among the thousands in the famous race.



Newton will run as a member of Fred's Team, an organization that uses marathon runners to raise funds for the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) to fight pediatric cancer. Last year over 400 runners generated over \$1.2 million dollars in donations for MSKCC.

In order to meet his goal of \$4,500, Newton needs the help of friends and coworkers. All donations of any amount will be accepted. A donation of \$25 is equivalent to \$1 per mile.

Employees can donate by writing a check to MSKCC and giving it to Newton at the wastewater treatment plant. He will then mail it to Fred's Team headquarters, or you can donate on line by going to <http://fredsteam.mskcc.org/> and follow the "Make a Donation" pages to donate through his web site.

## ***Sexual Harassment Prevention Training set***

*By Sophie F Dear, Personnel Technician II*

The Personnel Office will present mandatory sexual harassment training in November. The Levy Court is firmly committed to compliance with state and federal laws prohibiting sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace. It is essential that all employees be aware of and comply with the law and the County's Sexual Harassment Policy.

Sexual harassment interferes with and needlessly undermines an otherwise respectful and dignified workplace. It can cause an employee to feel that he or she is unsafe and not respected, potentially causing workplace morale to suffer.

Employees should watch for future training notices with dates, times, and locations of this mandatory training. If you have any questions about this training, please call 744-2312.

## **Nov. wellness event could save your life!**

*By Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II*

Are you health conscientious? Do you know your body well enough to take the precautions needed to have a healthy lifestyle? Kent County Levy Court through the Personnel Office is offering a free wellness screening provided by Bayhealth Medical Center to get you jump started on your health needs.



The Wellness Screening will be held November 16, 2005 beginning at 9 a.m. in Room 220 A/B at the Kent County Administrative Complex. Employees who sign up for the screening will have an allotted time scheduled.

The Wellness Screening will consist of the following procedures:

Cardiovascular screening is done by a simple finger stick for total cholesterol, high density lipoprotein (HDL) and a ratio between the two. Nurse educators will explain the results and give each participant education as well as positive lifestyle changes.

Glucose will be checked by the same finger stick as the cholesterol test. Participants will receive results and information from a Certified Diabetic Educator.

New this year FACE SCREENING! Donna Goldsboro, Clinical Educator for Bayhealth Medical Center urges employees to, "take advantage of Bayhealth Medical Center's Skin (face) Screening and learn if you have damage due to excess sun exposure and what to do about it. Ultraviolet Light from the sun damages skin cells. Damage may cause future skin cancer, premature wrinkling or a leathery appearance. Your face can be analyzed in minutes, painlessly."

These tests are non-fasting screenings. Each participant will receive a copy of their results to take to their physician. The screening and education process takes approximately 20 minutes per person.

Contact the Personnel Office at 744-2310 to sign up! Each participant will receive a FREE Pedometer during the Wellness Screening. Don't miss this great opportunity.

# Welcome to Kent County!



**Name:** BARBARA A. STOUGH

**Job:** Accountant I

**Date hired:** August 22, 2005

**Education:** Bachelors in Accounting and Bachelors in Math

**What I like most about my new job:** Windows! Friendly coworkers

**Greatest accomplishment:** Staying happily married to the same man for 23 years

**Greatest challenge or obstacle:**

See above

**Future goals:** Get my MBA and teach college courses at night

**Person/event that most inspired me in my career:** My previous boss, Bill Walls

**If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently:** Begun camping sooner

**I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this:** Spending weekends with my family in our camping trailer at Holiday Park Campground

**Family:** Husband Ron, sons David, Matthew, and Joshua

**Most recent movie enjoyed:** What About Bob? (OK - I don't see a lot of new releases!)

**Favorite TV show:** House Hunters on HGTV

**Favorite sport:** Football - Go Steelers!

**Favorite meal:** Anything Mexican

**Favorite music:** Gospel

**Favorite saying or slogan:** Everything happens for a reason.

**Who has had the most impact on my life:** My middle son, Matthew

**A dream I have is to:** Retire, sell our house, and go permanent RVing

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Pay off all my family's debt, create a trust for my children, and travel, travel, travel.

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Was a Weather Officer in the US Air Force

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Fly in a T-38, Air Force training jet

**Words that describe me:** Fun-loving, dependable, loyal

**Words that describe me:** Friendly, hard-working



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



(Continued from Page 4)

will be held Tuesday, at 9 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in room 220 A/B in the Kent County Administrative Complex.

**October 17-21, 2005** - United Way Silent Auction. Items in Room 222 at Administrative Complex bidding is held from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**October 21, 2005** - Wilmington Trust Bank-At-Work Banking Services table in the Administrative Complex rotunda from 8-9 a.m.

**October 28, 2005** - Free Flu shots for employees on a first come, first served basis, with priority given to staff working in exposure type situations. Sign up in advance by calling the Personnel Office at 744-2310. (Subject to change)

**October 31, 2005** - Halloween. Employees may wear appropriate costumes to work. For more information contact Employee Council or the Personnel Office.

## Heartwalkers net over \$2K

(Continued from Page 5)

two dogs—Rosco and Carson, and they had a great time. The walk began at Scull Mansion on South State Street and continued through scenic Dover for 3.1 miles. At the end of the walk everyone gathered around the goody table to refuel their energy levels.

Many thanks go out to the following employees for representing Kent County Levy Court by walking in the Heart Walk: ALLAN ANGEL, DARLA DEMPSEY, GINA GLANDEN, WENDY HAYWOOD, EVELYN JOPP, CYNDI LAIRD, MARTHA LEWIS, JANET LLOYD, DIANE LOCKERMAN, GALE MAAS, FRAN MOORE, KATHY PHINNEY, KATHY SKINNER and CARISSA ZEITERS.

Our team had a great time participating in this event. We were elated to have a County Commissioner walk with us this year. We are already anticipating next year's walk. Most importantly, we enjoyed walking for a good cause.

Donations raised by walkers representing each of the following Departments and Row Offices include: *Administration* - \$1,513, *Clerk of the Peace* - \$110, *Community Services* - \$58, *Recorder Deeds Office* - \$345, *Finance* - \$105 and *Planning Services* - \$328. **Grand Total \$2,459!**

# Keep an eye out for young ghosts & goblins

By J. Allen Metheny Sr., Assistant Director of Public Safety

Halloween is a favorite holiday for children (and adults) who love to use imagination and creativity. We all need to insure our Halloween “ghosts and goblins” will have a bag of goodies to show for their fun and will not be haunted by unnecessary injuries. It is important that we all try to make Halloween a memorable event for our small ones while at the same time insuring that it is a safe experience for them.

Parents and/or care givers should discuss with the trick-or-treaters the following safety tips:

- Warn children not to eat any treats before an adult has examined them carefully for evidence of tampering. With today’s world situation, this is especially important.
- Always carry and use a flashlight
- Walk, don’t run and always stay on sidewalks if they exist. If no sidewalks, walk on the left side of the road facing traffic
- Obey all traffic signals
- Stay in familiar neighborhoods
- Don’t cut across yards or driveways
- Avoid wearing masks while walking from house to house
- Wear a watch that can be seen in the dark
- Approach only houses that have a light on

When purchasing costumes for our “ghosts and goblins”, always look for the label “FLAME RESISTANT”. This includes the actual costume, masks, beards, wigs, and any props that they may carry. Props such as swords, knives, or forks should always be soft and flexible. Although the label “FLAME RESISTANT” does not mean it won’t burn, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly. To minimize the risk of contact with candles or other fire sources, avoid costumes made of flimsy materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves or billowing skirts. Costumes should have some reflective markings or tape on them so drivers can see them at night. Also, costumes should be short enough so the children won’t trip and fall. If your

child (or you) wears a mask, make sure it fits securely and has eye holes large enough to allow for full vision.

If you are a homeowner, you should “injury proof” your home before Halloween. Here are some ideas for “injury-proofing” your home:

- Make sure your yard is clear of such things as ladders, hoses, dog leashes and flower pots that can trip people
- Use battery powered jack-o-lantern candles rather than open flame candles
- If you do use candles, make sure they are far away from where the “trick-or-treaters” will be walking or standing to avoid any injuries
- Make sure paper or cloth yard decorations won’t be blown into a flaming candle
- Considered “healthy food” alternatives for your visitors such as packages of low-fat crackers with cheese or peanut butter filling, single serve boxes of cereal, packaged fruit rolls, miniboxes of raisins, or single serve packets of low-fat popcorn that can be micro waved later.
- Keep an outside and entry-way light on to let your visitors know that they are welcome.

And finally, for all of us who may be driving on Halloween night, GO SLOW, SLOW, SLOW ALL EVENING. Oh, don’t forget, adult Halloween party goers should have a designated driver so everyone gets home safely and the services of the Department of Public Safety will not be needed.

Have a safe Halloween.



## Trick -or- Treat Candy Guess

Think you know how much candy the average pumpkin bucket can hold?

Submit your guess to the Personnel Office by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 28 and you could win enough treats to satisfy all the ghosts and goblins visiting your house on Halloween.

The submitted guess closest to the actual number of candy pieces without going over wins. Good Luck!



## SOME ANSWERS TO THOSE NAGGING QUESTIONS



By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

**Q.** *I have observed that at least a couple of employees who recently switched to 40-hours per week as opposed to 35, still stop working at 4:30 p.m. and then stand around chatting with 35-hour employees already off the clock. Should they be doing that?*

**A.** No, they should not. The former 35-hour employees were switched to 40-hour employees so more work could get done, not the same amount. This is an important issue since, the Levy Court has signaled its intention to convert all remaining employees to 40-hours beginning in Fiscal Year 2007. If you observe co-workers not working for extended periods of time, you have a responsibility to mention it to your supervisor.

**Q.** *I know the new County complex has all these automatic lights, so I was wondering when I am supposed to turn the lights off?*

**A.** According to Facilities Management Division Manager Dick MacDonald, the rooms with the truly automatic lighting program—such as the bathrooms, have no switches. In most other rooms have been programmed to come on at 8 a.m. and go off at 5:30 p.m. each work day. However, it will save the County money if you turn off the lights when you leave at the end of the day, if you are the last person to leave.

**Q.** *I recently observed a County vehicle with all the County markings speeding toward Dover in the morning hours. I guess he was afraid he might be late for work. Besides it being against the law, I was concerned that others on the road would think the County condones this type of behavior. What should I do?*

**A.** Hopefully, you remember the tag number of the truck. If so, contact the Personnel Office with the number and other information such as the day and time with a vehicle description. We have a record of every tag number and will determine who was driving and he/she will be appropriately disciplined. County policy requires the safe operation of all County vehicles, including personal vehicles being used for County business. Remember, just because we work for the government, does not mean we get special privileges. Actually, because we are public employees we are subject to more scrutiny. Be careful out there, the roadways can be hazardous to your health.

**Q.** *Can we have a bulletin board installed in the County complex kitchen area? This would be great place to hang flyers of upcoming events and communicate other activities to County employees.*

**A.** That's a good idea. With any new building, folks are reluctant to put holes in the new walls. Perhaps someone reading this will put your idea into action.

**Q.** *Recently my supervisor instructed me to meet with her about a pending disciplinary issue, but I refused. She informed me that I was being insubordinate. Is that true? Don't I have a right to refuse to meet with a supervisor?*

**A.** It is true, you were being insubordinate. Employees do not have a right to refuse to follow a supervisor's or superior's directions, unless they are unsafe or unlawful. If this is the case, you must say so. You just can't refuse to follow instructions. Nobody likes to be bossed around, but the plain truth is that everybody answers to somebody.

**Q.** *Okay, I understand that as an employee I must follow the instructions of my supervisors. But since this was a disciplinary issue, I wanted the president of my Union to accompany me to the meeting. What was wrong with that?*

**A.** Unions have layers of redundancy for this very situation. Employees do not get to decide if or when a meeting with the supervisor will occur. Any member or co-worker could have attended, because they are only there as a witness—they are not permitted to speak. Seems crazy, but the courts have ruled that you are entitled to be accompanied, but they have no role in the disciplinary meeting. There is a common union contract tenant that goes "Work Now, Grieve Later."

**Q.** *Which time is correct—the computer or the telephone? I'm not sure if I'm early or late.*

**A.** It seems Kent County time has followed us to the new building. My understanding is the computer has the most accurate time clock. But, efforts are underway to synchronize the phone.