

Have A Frightfully Haunting Halloween!

# KENT CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter Published by Kent County Levy Court for its Employees October 2006



## Employee of the Month *Michael J. Bishop*

The Kent County Employee Council has selected MICHAEL "Mike" J. BISHOP from the Department of Public Safety as the October 2006 Employee of the Month.

Mike, a Kent County employee since October 1991, is a Paramedic II in the Division of Emergency Medical Services responsible for treating patients using advanced emergency care procedures.

Mike is an excellent example of a paramedic committed to high quality patient care and dedicated to community based initiatives for the County. On an incident scene, his situational awareness and sensitive family interaction always results in positive outcomes that others strive to emulate.

Recently Mike was promoted to the rank of Field Training Officer for the 'D' Platoon and he has taken on this new responsibility with great zeal and a determination to better his fellow paramedics.

To encourage excellence, Mike created a Standing Orders contest among his fellow shift mates, which encouraged medics to study and review their protocols, and provided good-natured competition and increased the shift's overall cohesiveness.

Congratulations Mike on a job well done!

### COMING NEXT MONTH:

- > Just how "well" are employees at the County?
- > Retiree benefits on road to becoming permanent
- > United Way campaign races to winner's circle

### IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

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

## Admin. Complex office relocates to get underway

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Levy Court got the ball rolling last month by approving furniture and installation bids totaling \$132,825 needed to accommodate the office relocation project to make room for the Recorder of Deeds and Register of Wills offices in the Kent County Administrative Complex. The state-owned Robert W. O'Brien Building, current home of the two row offices, is scheduled for demolition by the end of the year. The State plans to construct a new court system structure on the site of the County's former administrative office building.

Levy Court agreed to a plan in June developed by County Administrator ROBERT S. McLEOD and affected departments which will relocate the Deeds Office to the Department of Community Services (Parks & Recreation) room near the Complex entrance and the Wills Office will relocate to the current Assessment Office space a short distance away down the main hallway.

Under the plan, the Personnel Office will move to a vacant room next door in Room 213 and the Community Services Department will move upstairs to the former Personnel Office space in Room 214/222. The Assessment office will move upstairs to a large underutilized room (Room 238) adjacent to the County Administrator's Office with public access through Room 215—the current Summer Youth Employment Program office space.

The space reallocation effort is expected to begin this month with the movement of temporary furniture in the future Assessment office currently being used by part-time imaging project staff to the Information Technology office space. Next, the Assessment office is to be relocated so it's former space can be used as a staging area. That move will be followed by the Personnel Office move to Room 213 and then Community Services to Room 222/214.

**(Continued on Page 12)**

# Welcome to Levy Court!



**Name:** SUMMER L. DESAULNIERS



**Job:** Paramedic I

**Date hired:** September 18, 2006

**Education:** Associate in Applied Science

**What I like most about my new job:** The challenge the job brings forth.

**Greatest accomplishment:** Finishing school

**Greatest challenge:** Being a full-time student while being a full-time mom

**I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this:** Sharing quality time with my family

**Family:** Jeff (spouse), Robyn and Morgan (daughters)

**Favorite sport:** Softball

**Favorite meal:** Country-style steak with gravy

**Favorite music:** Country

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

**Who has had the most impact on my life:** My children and my husband

**A dream I have is to:** Visit Alaska

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Build a new house

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Served 8 years Active Duty Air Force

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Joining the military \*\*0610\*\*

## 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. No one from the Public Safety Department came forward to claim their movie ticket in September.

We make it easy for employees to pry a few bucks from the Personnel Director's wallet in the form of a free movie ticket. All you have to do is read your Kent Connections! \*\*2943\*\*



## EOM INSIGHT



**Name:** MIKE BISHOP

**Job:** Paramedic II/Paramedic Field Training Officer

**Years with the County:** 15

**Education:** Lake Forest graduate; Nashville Auto and Diesel College

**What I like most about my job:** Every day brings different challenges

**What I'd most like to change:** Serious illness – cure all cancer

**Family:** Wife, Celeste; son, Ben; daughter, Emily

**After work I enjoy:** Playing with the kids (acting my age)

**Favorite new movie:** "Man on Fire" with Denzel Washington

**Favorite old movie:** Star Wars

**Favorite TV show:** Without a Trace

**Favorite sport:** Baseball

**Favorite meal:** Slow cooked prime rib

**Favorite music:** Southern Rock

**Favorite Kent County restaurant:** Hibachi Japanese Steak house

**Favorite Kent County event:** 4<sup>th</sup> of July

**Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Patton

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

**Pet peeve:** Laziness

**Motto:** Give me solutions, not more problems

**If I've learned one thing in life, it's:** Every dog has its day.

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

**A dream I have is to:** Fly a helicopter

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Fund my children's college education

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Play poker

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Crawl into working house fires

**Two words that describe me:** Honest, fair

## Congratulations

Congratulations to ROCHELLE BOHM, Historic Preservation Planner in the Department of Planning Services and her husband, Jim, on the birth of their second son, Joseph William on September 7, 2006 at 6:47 p.m. weighing 7 lbs. 9 oz. and 20 in. long.

# Annual United Way campaign races ahead Oct. 3

By John McDowell, United Way Campaign Chairman

Kent County's United Way Campaign Kick Off meetings are planned for October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. and 10:45a.m. in Room 220 at the Administrative Complex.



Everyone who works at the Administrative Complex, the O'Brien Building, the Emergency Services Buildings, and at the Library is invited to either meeting.

A third kickoff meeting is scheduled at the Wastewater Treatment Plant on October 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 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 **NASCAR** theme. Free coffee, juice, and donuts will be given away. Attendance at any one of the kickoff meetings will enter you into a drawing for a couple of great **NASCAR** prizes. Make sure you come to learn more about the United Way Campaign and join in the fun and prizes.

The Kent County Levy Court United Way Campaign goal for 2006 is \$14,000. The Campaign Team will unveil an **incentive, which may surprise you**, to help us reach the goal! Make sure that you find out first hand by attending one of the kickoff meetings!

The Campaign Team has also planned some new events for this year's campaign. Favorite recipes are being published in the first edition of the "Kent County Levy Court – United Way Recipe Book". Get in on the fun and send your favorite recipe to **CARISSA ZEITERS**.

There will also be a unique version of "Pass the Hat" which entails having to make a small donation to United Way in order to pass the mystery item along to your favorite coworker. Should be lots of fund. Carissa will provide us with the details as the game starts.

This year's campaign will again feature an "Early Bird" contribution by awarding a "Day Off" to *(Continued on Page 12)*



Commissioners **Richard Ennis, P. Brooks Banta, Jack Peterman, David Burris, Allan Angel, and Ronald Smith** and County Administrator **Robert McLeod** cut the ribbon formally opening Big Oak Park near Smyrna.

## County's newest park – Big Oak opens to public

By Bret Scott, Public Information Officer

Levy Court celebrated the grand opening of Big Oak County Park with a September ribbon cutting. The event coincided with the opening of the Delaware Aerospace Education Foundation's (DASEF) Observatory also located at the park.

"Offering parks and recreational opportunities to our residents is one of the most satisfying experiences we can offer," says Levy Court Commissioner **ALLAN ANGEL**. "Having families come together at any of our county parks is well worth the effort."

Located on 86 acres of land Big Oak Park features two age appropriate play areas, a nine acre recreational field, a two mile wetland boardwalk and walking trail, a picnic pavilion with 14 tables and four charcoal grills, a restroom and maintenance building, and parking.

"I never thought I would live long to see this park become a reality," says Commissioner **RICHARD ENNIS**. "It truly is a great day for all of Kent County."

Big Oak Park is the third major park to open in Kent County; joining Brecknock in central Kent County and Browns Branch in southern Kent County. Other county parks include Lebanon Landing, Tidbury Creek, and the Hunn Recreational Area which is *(Continued on Page 8)*



## ON THE MOVE . . .

Compiled by Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

**New Hires**

09/05/06 NANCY GLENN, Clerk-Typist, Grade 3, Planning Services/ Inspections & Enforcement  
 09/18/06 SUMMER DESAULNIERS, Paramedic I, Grade 10, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services  
 09/28/06 MATTHEW BUKER, Paramedic Trainee, Grade 7, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services  
 09/28/06 TERESA OAKLEY, Paramedic Trainee, Grade 7, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services

**Promotions**

09/08/06 PATRICK McPHAIL, Maintenance Mechanic I, Grade 6 to Maintenance Mechanic II, Grade 8, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities  
 09/18/06 BONNIE VOSHELL, Permit Technician I, Grade 7 to Planner I, Grade 11, Planning Services/Planning

**Milestones**

09/01/1991 THOMAS "BERT" CROWDER, Paramedic II, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services—15 years  
 09/01/1991 COLIN FAULKNER, Director of Public Safety—15 years  
 09/01/1991 TOBY SITLER, Paramedic III, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services—15 years  
 09/01/1991 JOHN WILLSON, Assistant Director-EMS, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services—15 years  
 09/30/1991 CINDY GRYGO, EMS Administrative Officer, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services — 15 years  
 09/03/1996 RODNEY SMITH, Housing & Community Development Specialist, Planning Services/Planning—10 years  
 09/11/1996 BRENT MOLLOHAN, Recreation Program Supervisor II, Community Services/Recreation—10 years  
 09/04/2001 CRYSTAL YERKES, Deed Clerk II, Recorder of Deeds Office—5 years  
 09/16/2001 CARISSA ZEITERS, Personnel Technician II, Administration/Personnel Office—5 years  
 09/17/2001 PENNY GIBBS, Deed Clerk II, Recorder of Deeds Office—5 years

***High Praise***

**Kudos** to TERRY O'CONNELL, SCOTT TANNER, and SCOTT VAUTARD, all of the Division of Inspections & Enforcement, for successfully completing a 15-hour Delaware approved Manufactured Home Installation Course. *Way to go!*

COUNTY  
BIRTHDAYS**OCTOBER**

01 Jeremy Sheppard, Community Svcs/Recreation  
 04 John deBloois, Public Works/WWF  
 04 Ralph Neil, Public Safety/EMS  
 06 Debbie Everett, Deeds Office  
 07 John Butler, Planning Services/I&E  
 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  
 18 Jayne Zeranski, Public Works  
 19 John Tinger, Public Safety/EMS  
 21 Loretta Wootten, Clerk of the Peace  
 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 Tim Wyatt, Public Safety/EMS  
 05 Bill Ashley, Planning Services/I&E  
 07 Susan Hitchens, Finance  
 08 Connie Butler, Community Services/Libraries  
 09 Charles Wilt, Board of Assessment  
 12 Christina Morton, Planning Svcs./I&E  
 13 John Schulties, Planning Services/I&E  
 14 Marvin Millman, Public Works/WWF  
 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/I&E  
 26 Rochelle Bohm, Planning Services/Planning  
 28 David Mick, Public Safety/EMS  
 29 Randy Staats, Public Safety/Emergency Comm.

***High Praise***

**High Five** to BONNIE VOSHELL, then of the Division of Inspections & Enforcement, for a letter of praise for her help from a company president. *Great!*

## Free Wellness Screening could have healthy result

By Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

Do you consider yourself health conscientious? Do you know your body well enough to take the precautions needed to have a healthy lifestyle? Are you sure you are doing everything to stay fit? Find out at the annual wellness screening provided free of charge to Kent County employees through the Bayhealth Medical Center.



The annual Wellness Screening will be held **Thursday, October 27** beginning at 9:00 a.m. in room 220 at the Kent County Administrative Complex. Employees who sign up for the limited number of screening slots will have a specific 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.

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.

It is important for employees signing up for a screening time slot to show up promptly for the appointment, so the screenings can run smoothly. Also take into consideration that the educators want to be precise and detailed about your results for your best interest. Please consider this when attending the screening and understand that the time limits of each individual may vary.

Contact the Personnel Office at 744-2310 to sign up! Each participant will receive a special gift for participating in the Wellness Screening. Don't miss this great opportunity.

## They're off! And running

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

November 7, 2006 is election day, and while it may not be as exciting to some as the annual Employee Council election, the outcome has a much greater impact on the work lives of County employees.



In this election cycle, four Levy Court Commissioners and three row office positions are up for contention—or at least normally would be. Last month in the Republican Party primary, Eric Buckson upset endorsed candidate Brandon Warfel to win the 4<sup>th</sup> Levy Court District seat being vacated by retiring Commissioner HAROLD "Jack" PETERMAN after 16 years. Peterman lost his bid to be the Republican Party nominee for the 33<sup>rd</sup> District Delaware House of Representatives race. Buckson has no Democratic Party opponent in the general election.

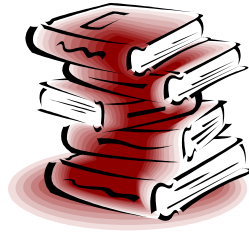
Fifth District Commissioner DONALD A. BLAKEY is seeking mid-term election to the 34<sup>th</sup> Representative District seat being vacated by Rep. Gerald Buckworth.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Levy Court District, Commissioner RONALD D. SMITH is seeking his fifth term on Levy Court and has an opponent for the first time in several races. In the 6<sup>th</sup> Levy Court District, current President DAVID R. BURRIS is seeking his third term on Levy Court and has an opponent again. For the at-large seat, Commissioner RICHARD E. "Dick" ENNIS is seeking a second consecutive (fourth overall) term and also has an opponent.

In the row office races, Sheriff JAMES HIGDON and Receiver of Taxes JOYCE MELVIN are the apparent victors as no opposing Party candidate filed for the positions. Recorder of Deeds BETTY LOU MCKENNA is campaigning County-wide to retain her seat.

Whomever is elected will officially take office on January 2, 2007, the first Tuesday in January, except Commissioner Blakey who would assume office immediately if elected to the State House. A special  
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# FROM THE STACKS



By Bonni Capobianco, Evening Librarian

## Children's Blizzard

By David Laskin

The Children's Blizzard is the gripping true story of heartache and survival of the 1888 storm. The blizzard rolled across the upper American plains so quickly causing the temperature to drop and catch people off guard. Many of the citizens were first generation immigrants, trying to make it on the prairie and make a better life for their children.

Because of the timing of the storm the hardest hit areas coincided with children being trapped between school and home. Teachers were torn with sending children out in the storm to go home or taking the chances of running out of fuel and remaining at school, either decision could be deadly.

Laskin does a good job of researching various individual stories, making the telling of the story more personal and interesting. He also covers the meteorological reasons for the storm and the lack of understanding of the weather changes leading to the tragedy.

The storm would leave physical and emotional scars for all involved. The fall out would lead to a shake up in the Army Signal Corps weather office and would lead to better weather prediction.

Many of the immigrant families affected would return to their homelands, feeling they had been beaten by the land. If you like true stories of natural disasters, this is a must read.

I have also included below some other books on personal stories in the face of disaster below:

The Circus Fire, by Stewart O'Nan

Krakatoa, by Simon Winchester

Isaac's Storm, by Erik Larson

Flu: the story of the great influenza pandemic of 1918..., by Gina Bari Kolata

The worst hard times: the untold story of those who survived the great American dust bowl, by Timothy Egan

A crack in the edge of the world: America and the great California earthquake of 1906, by Simon Winchester \*\*7757\*\*

## Recipe of the Month

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

### PUMPKIN SPICED PANCAKES

#### Recipe Summary:

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 8 minutes

Yield: 2 servings

User Rating: Three-star

#### Pecan syrup:

1 cup maple-flavored pancake syrup

5 tablespoons pecans, toasted and chopped

#### Pancakes:

1 cup buttermilk pancake mix

1 cup cold water

1/3 cup canned pumpkin

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

Nonstick vegetable cooking spray

Butter, room temperature

Pecan syrup preparation: Combine maple syrup and pecans in small microwave-safe bowl. Heat in microwave on high until hot, about 25 seconds. Set pecan syrup aside and keep warm.

Pancake preparation: In a medium bowl, whisk pancake mix, water, pumpkin, cinnamon, and ginger until just blended (do not over mix; mixture should be lumpy).

Spray a heavy griddle with nonstick spray and heat griddle over medium heat. Spoon 2 tablespoons of batter onto griddle to form each pancake. Cook for 2 minutes or until bubbles appear, then turn pancakes over and cook for 2 minutes longer. Transfer pancakes to plates. Top with butter and serve with warm pecan syrup.

Recipe courtesy 2006 Television Food Network;  
Episode #: SH1B06

## ARE YOU BILINGUAL?

The Personnel Office is compiling a list of bilingual County employees willing to use their language skills to speak with customers who are unable to communicate in English at the level necessary to conduct business with County offices. Interested employees should contact the Personnel Office and let them know in which foreign languages they are fluent.

## There is an art to resolving conflicts at work - Learn it

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

The October training session will include the video “The Art of Resolving Conflicts in the Workplace,” including the six essential techniques of I vs. You language, anticipation, meta-talk, self-interest, limit-setting, and using consequences. The sessions will be held on **Wednesday, October 18**, at 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in room 220 A/B in the Kent County Administrative Complex.

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

In September, County employees who received credit for attending the decision-making training session were MARY EISENBREY, JUNE GLADDEN, KATHY GOODEN, EVELYN JOPP, DIANE LOCKERMAN, GAIL MAAS, SHEILA ROSS, LESLIE VASQUEZ, WILLIAM VINCENT, and JAMES WELSH.

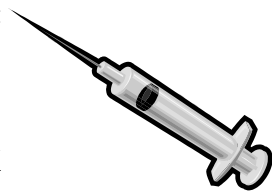
Thank you for your continued interest in voluntary training!

## 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 Registered Nurse on **Thursday, October 27** from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Administrative Complex building in Room 221. Family members can receive the injection for \$7 each. First come, first served.

Please sign up by calling 744-2310.



## NASCAR races generate a few side show observations

By Dave Mick, EMS Operations Support Officer

Everyone knows that race weeks are huge logistical and operational challenges for many agencies. Additional staffing, pre-positioning of equipment and resources, constant monitoring of everything from the weather forecast to law enforcement intelligence reports, and an entire duplicate emergency communications system are just a few of the issues to be managed.

But then there is the side-show of the spectators. With all due respect to the fans and our local residents and not ignoring the huge commercial benefits the races bring to town, there are just some occurrences that make for interesting stories and/or a good laugh.

This year's “Best New Pass-time” award goes to the group in Lot 10 who spent the better part of Friday constructing a 50 foot long wooden bowling alley. This thing has a hardwood floor (laminated plywood), dual gutter, real bowling balls and pins, a lighted canopy, and a foul line. I don't know for sure, but rumor has it that at least one player traveled the lane as a human bowling ball!

The “I Can't Believe You Thought You Could Do That” award went to the guy who walked all the way from the general parking area with a 10 foot flag pole and thought he would be allowed to carry it up into the stands. He was denied access, but there is no truth to the rumor that he was denied only because he had the wrong driver's flag on the pole.

The “I'll Never Give Up Award” was secured by the fan who demonstrated unwavering determination to ride a mini-scooter. When the rider first tumbled the small scooter by missing the edge of the pavement and meeting the grass, they righted the bike and attempted to negotiate the ditch between roadways. Failing this by laying the bike on its side, the rider reset the bike only to fail in an attempt to ride the bike out of the ditch. Not to be defeated, the rider once again straddled the ungainly machine and, hav-

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## EMPLOYEE COUNCIL NEWS



By Michele Lapinski, Employee Council Secretary

Fall is in the air and just in time for the cooler weather, the Employee Council would like to invite the savvy cooks of Kent County to participate in a **Chili Cook Off on Friday, October 20!** This fun and tasty event will pit *home-made* chili recipes against one another with fellow employees choosing an over-all winner.

How it works: Interested cooks sign up to participate and then whip up a batch of their coveted recipe for tasting. Interested tasters can buy a \$2.00 ticket which will entitle them to a sample of each entry and a ballot to vote for their favorite. Pretty simple, huh?

If you would like to enter as a contestant, please contact MICHELE LAPINSKI in Parks & Recreation by phone (744-2484) or email on or before October 9 to register. The Cook Off will be held in the main administration building.

Rather taste than cook? No problem, you can purchase a ticket from KATHY SKINNER in Planning Services beginning October 11 or pay at the door. We know that there are a lot of great cooks in the County, so show us your stuff! (Half of the proceeds from the Cook Off will be donated to the United Way fund drive.)

The Council would like to congratulate MICHAEL BISHOP, Emergency Medical Services, who was selected as Employee of the Month for October. In addition to a day off with pay, Mike will also receive a \$100 stipend, and a reserved parking space in the administrative complex parking lot.

If you know of a co-worker who deserves to be recognized for going "above and beyond" in the performance of their daily job duties, then nominate them for Employee of the Month. Nomination forms can be found in the mailroom and also in the "forms" folder on v: drive. All Employee of the Month selectees are also eligible for consideration for the Employee of the Year Award which will be announced in December at the Holiday Dinner and Dance.

Your Employee Council includes: President JASON MILLER, Vice-President KATHY SKINNER, Secretary MICHELE LAPINSKI, Treasurer CYNDI LAIRD, and members MARY EISENBREY, KATHY PHINNEY, and MELISSA STANLEY. \*\*2419\*\*

## Tech Talk



By Tami Edwards, Micro Computer Specialist

### Installing Windows Updates

Windows Update offers an easy, efficient way to keep Microsoft® Windows current. When you visit the Windows Update Web site (<http://update.microsoft.com>), it analyzes your system, tailoring its recommendations to the Microsoft software installed on your PC.

These include:

- High-priority updates that are critical to the security of your computer such as boosters for system security and reliability. Without these security updates, your computer may be more vulnerable to attack from cyber crooks and malicious software.
- Optional updates that help keep your computer running smoothly or simply make using it more fun with, for example, the latest versions of Windows Media Player or Windows MovieMaker. You can get these updates only by clicking the Custom button in Microsoft or Windows Update.

The County computers are set to download the updates automatically but you must choose when to install them. You will get a message in the notification area when there are downloaded updates to be installed. The best way to install them is when you do a shut down select the option "install updates then shutdown", this will keep you from losing any work as some updates cause the machine to reboot after installation.

Updates are important for security as well as keeping the systems running smoothly. If you suspect that your system is not updating please contact the helpdesk at ext. 2458 so that it can be configured.

## County opens newest park

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currently in development.

Forty acres of Big Oak Park are leased to DASEF for the construction of their Innovation, Technology, and Exploration Center (ITEC) and the Delaware Aerospace Academy.

For more information on the Big Oak Park please visit the County website or contact the Department of Community Services at (302) 744-2495.



# Unleash Your Inner Writer during NoWriMo

By Michele Lapinski, Account Specialist II



Every year during the month of November when most people are getting a start on the upcoming holiday season, tens of thousands across the U.S. and Canada are also participating in National Novel Writing Month.

NoWriMo (for short) is a free, fun, occasionally frustrating, but ultimately rewarding experience where the goal is to write a 50,000 word novel in thirty days. If you've ever aspired to be a writer or had a great idea for a story, NaNoWriMo is a great way to test yourself.

Because of the limited writing window, the ONLY thing that matters in NaNoWriMo is output – quantity versus quality. You more than likely won't write the great American novel, but that's okay; the real goal is to be creative, have fun and bask in the glow of the personal satisfaction at having accomplished something that might have seemed out of your grasp previously.

In 2005, over 44,000 people participated with nearly 7000 of them making it to the 50,000 word mark by the deadline. (In case you were wondering, I fell short by a little less than 18,000 words; but I *will* make the 50,000 word mark this year!)

If you're shy about someone else reading or judging your novel, don't worry. Since the goal is purely on the word count, NaNoWriMo's electronic word counter will scan your story and then delete it from their database once the count has been verified. Those who reach the required 50,000 word mark by the deadline receive a certificate for their achievement.

If you'd like more information on National Novel Writing Month, or would like to sign up for the 2006 project, visit their website: [www.nanowrimo.org](http://www.nanowrimo.org) Registration begins October 1.

\* \* \*

*There is only one thing about which I am certain, and that is that there very little about which one can be certain.*

**Sommerset Maugham**

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



October 3, 2006 -

United Way Kick Off meeting at 10:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. in Room 220 at the Administrative Complex.

October 4, 2006 - Blood Pressure Checks at the Wastewater Facility from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

October 5, 2006 - United Way Kick Off meeting at 7:00 a.m. at Wastewater Facility.

October 9, 2006 - Columbus Day Holiday. County offices closed.

October 11, 2006 - Blood Pressure Checks at Annex at 9:00 a.m., County Administrative Complex Room 215 from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m., O'Brien Bldg., 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

October 12, 2006 - "Am I on the Right Track for Retirement" by Rosemary Knapp, ICMA-RC representative, 10:00 a.m. County Administrative Complex Room 220. Individual appointments also available.

October 12, 2006 - L&W Insurance Rep. available to answer health insurance questions from 1:00-2:00 p.m. in Room 214 at the County Administrative Complex.

October 13, 2006 - (Deadline Extension) Last day to submit entrees for United Way Campaign "recipe book" fundraiser. Recipe to be sent to Carissa Zeiters in the Personnel Office.

October 17-20, 2006 - United Way Silent Auction. Items in the Personnel Office room 214 at Administrative Complex. Bidding is held from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

October 18, 2006 - Employee Training Session will include the video "The Art of Resolving Conflicts in the Workplace," including the six essential techniques of I vs. You language, anticipation, meta-talk, self-interest, limit-setting, and using consequences. Sessions will be held Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in room 220 A/B in the Kent County Administrative Complex.

October 27, 2006 - Wellness Screening provided by Bayhealth Medical Center. By appointment only (9 a.m. - 1 p.m.) in room 220 at the Administrative Complex.

October 27, 2006 - Flu Shots available to employees from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. who sign up in Room 221 at the Administrative Complex.

## BENEFIT BLURBS

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

The Personnel Office has stacks of the BlueCross BlueShield of Delaware (BCBSD) booklet "Understanding Your Health Insurance." To receive one, please stop by or call the Personnel Office.

In addition, BCBSD has mailed the County's BCBSD benefit booklets to employees and retirees. If you did not receive one, please contact the Personnel Office.

Here are some BCBSD guidelines, based on questions and situations the Personnel Office faced recently:

An *Application for Group Coverage* must be made **within 30 days** of the birth or adoption of a child. BCBS also reserves the right to request a copy of the birth certificate, and to request a copy of a marriage certificate in the case of adding a spouse or stepchildren.

End of student coverage – The end of the month when they cease to be a full-time student, OR December 31 of the year they reach the student age limit; or the last day of the birth month; or the student's birth date; depending on the option chosen by the County.

Enrollees and/or their dependents must apply for coverage **during the month** of the qualifying event. Most of the time, eligibility of new hires and newly added family members can be determined without a Certificate of Coverage (the document proving loss of coverage) from their previous carrier.

Enrollment requests must be received by BCBSD **no later than 10 days** following the requested effective date. Any requests with a Date of Notification that is more than 10 days after the requested effective date will be given an Assigned Effective Date, usually the first of the month following the Requested Effective Date. *EXAMPLE: A spouse's involuntary loss of prior coverage occurs on June 12. The employee signs an Application for Group Coverage on July 10. The requested effective date is August 1. The paperwork is postmarked on August 15. Since the Date of Notification (August 15) is more than 10 days after the requested effective date (August 1), the Date of Notification becomes the earliest possible Assigned Effective Date. However, the earliest possible Assigned Effective Date (August 15) falls outside of the eligibility time period that ended on July 12 (30 days from the eligibility event), so the application will be declined. The employee will need to wait until the Open Enrollment period* (Continued on Page 12)

## CAT BOX



By Cathleen McLean, Payroll Administrator

### CONTACTING ICMA-RC

You make a contribution to your ICMA-RC 457 deferred compensation account each pay day but when was the last time you contacted ICMA-RC to see what is really happening with your funds?

Some would prefer to see the information on a computer screen and others would like to have that information available in an automated telephone system. Good news—both choices are available to you.

To get access to your account information by computer, you need to go to [www.icmarc.org](http://www.icmarc.org). You will have to request an Initial Password using your plan number which is 302223 for Kent County, your Social Security number, date of birth and zip code. Optionally it will request an email address. Once this is set up then you can get to the following areas in the ICMARC website: **1.** Messages, **2.** My Account, **3.** Transaction, **4.** Investments, **5.** Reports, **6.** Planning, and **7.** charts. Each of these areas will have information that is unique to either your account or the Kent County Plan.

For Telephone access call Vantage Line by dialing 1-800-669-7400. You will need your Social Security number and pin (which initially is the last four of you Social Security number.) The first time you access the system it will prompt you to setup a new pin. From this source you can access: **1.** View Account Information, **2.** Make Account Changes, **3.** Hear Share Price and Performance, **4.** Review General Information, **5.** Make Pin, Address Changes, **6** Tips, and **0.** Contact an Investor Services Representative.

We have a brochure in the Personnel Office that gives a full breakdown of these options. Please make sure that you attend the "Planning for Retirement" presentation on **Thursday, October 12** at 10 a.m. being presented by our ICMA representative Rosemary Knapp. She will also be available after the session for individual meetings to answer questions, perform rebalancing, and enroll new participants. If you want to see Rosemary, sign up in the Personnel Office.

If you have been thinking about starting to save for retirement by opening up a 457 retirement account, now is an ideal time to do so. \*\*4740\*\*

## Pennies from Heaven will help area family

By Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

Got a few pennies, coins or bills 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.

Since *Pennies from Heaven* was such a success last year with a grand total of \$1,100 we are continuing 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 employee group as well as three Domino's pizza for staff to enjoy during the holiday season.

Jars will be distributed in early October and collected in mid-November. Watch for more information on this good cause in the spirit of the holiday season in next month's newsletter.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to ERIN MOORE, Permit Technician III in the Department of Planning Services/Division of Inspections & Enforcement and JASON MILLER, Engineering Project Manager I in the Department of Public Works/Division of Engineering who were united in marriage outside by the bay at the Rehoboth Beach Country Club on Sunday, September 10, 2006. A reception immediately followed in the ballroom.

## County group raises more than \$1,500 in annual Heart Walk

By Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual American Heart Walk stepped off to clearing skies on September 25, after a short downpour during early morning registration.

Twenty-one Levy Court employees, family and friends sported light blue t-shirts that read "PUTTING HEART AND SOLE INTO HEART WALK 2006". A special thanks to the County Administrator and Levy Court for assisting with the purchase of the team shirts.



County employees are encouraged to check out the team picture located in the County Complex display case next to the facilities management office. This year a new pooch, Shadow, walked with the team. Levy Court raised \$1,531 falling \$1,128 short of last year's grand total. This was a tough year, but we're looking forward to stepping up our game for next year by developing creative fundraising in advance.

Many thanks go out to the following employees for representing Kent County by walking in the Heart Walk: DARLA DEMPSEY, GINA GLANDEN, EVELYN JOPP, CYNDI LAIRD, MARTHA LEWIS, JANET LLOYD, DIANE LOCKERMAN, GALE MAAS, PATRICK McLOUGHLIN, KATHY PHINNEY, LESLIE VASQUEZ, and CARISSA ZEITERS.

Congratulations to EVELYN JOPP for raising the most money over \$100. She received a gift basket filled with goodies.

## Candidates running for offices

(Continued from Page 5)

election would have to be held to fill his vacant position on Levy Court. Levy Court will also reorganize at the meeting with the election of a President and a Vice-President, committee appointments and adoption of rules of procedures.

Formal oath of office ceremonies usually occur during the month of December.

# Welcome to Levy Court!



**Name:** TERESA "TEEDO" OAKLEY



**Job:** Paramedic Trainee  
**Date hired:** September 28, 2006  
**Education:** Attending paramedic Degree Program at Del Tech  
**What I like most about my new job:** Benefits  
**Greatest accomplishment:** Raising three children  
**Greatest challenge:** Going back to school  
**Future goals:** BSN degree

**Person/event that most inspired me in my career:** Job fair

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

**Family:** Husband, three children, four grandchildren

**Most recent movie enjoyed:** Harry Potter

**Favorite TV show:** The Amazing Race

**Favorite sport:** Lacrosse

**Favorite meal:** Spaghetti

**Favorite music:** All music

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

**A dream I have is to:** Graduate

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Vacation longer

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Have four grandsons

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Taking flying lessons \*\*2163\*\* \*\*7157\*\*

## Complex offices to relocate

*(Continued from Page 1)*

The Deeds Office is expected to follow as existing furniture in the Finance Department and Tax Office is rearranged to accommodate two more work stations. Finally, the Wills office will move into the former Assessment office suite, followed by a few directional signage changes.

The entire project is expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

"The office rearrangement will be a little disruptive to the normal daily office routine, but we have plenty of room in the County Complex and the plan will provide better customer service to our citizens," McLeod said.

## United Way campaign races

*(Continued from Page 3)*

the winner. To enter you just have to pledge your contribution by October 13<sup>th</sup>. 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 events include a silent auction which will be held from October 17<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup>. Many great items have already been contributed including some fantastic baked goods. Silent auction items will be accepted up to the auction start. All items will be available in the Personnel Office room 214. Be sure to stop in and check out all the items and keep you bid current!

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

## BENEFIT BLURBS

*(Continued from Page 10)*

*iod to apply for spousal coverage.*

Individuals eligible for Medicare must apply for and retain **both** Parts A and B of Medicare when they are **first** eligible to do so in order to remain eligible for BCBSD benefits. Do not purchase Part D—the Drug Program, your prescriptions are covered by the County's Medicare supplement.

To appeal a BCBSD decision, contact Customer Service **within 180 calendar days** from the date you received the benefit decision. Please explain why the claim was not paid correctly or why you believe the request for service was inappropriately denied and provide any additional information relevant to the decision. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may be eligible for an independent review. As required by law, you must request an independent review **within 60 days** from the date you received BCBSD's appeal decision.

Dr. H.L. Van Dusen, a former MAHP and BCBSD participating provider, closed his family practice a few months ago. Patient medical records are now housed at 250 Anchormill Road, New Castle, DE 19720. Any employee or retiree who was a patient or who had a dependent who was a patient may call 1-800-422-2221 with questions.

If you have any questions regarding County benefits, please feel free to contact the Personnel Office.

\* \* \*

*Maybe if we did a better job listening, history wouldn't have to repeat itself.*

## Wastewater Facility joins EPA performance program

By Jim Newton, Environmental Program Manager

The Kent County Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility was recently named a member of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Environmental Performance Track program, joining more than 500 U.S. facilities in their commitment to consistently exceed environmental regulation requirements. The facility is only the second publicly owned wastewater facility to be included in the program, joining Eugene, OR.

Launched in June 2000, Performance Track members are leading by example and taking extra steps to reduce and prevent pollution, while improving productivity. Results show that participants have saved enough energy to power approximately 30,000 households for a year, reduced their use of hazardous materials by nearly 18,000 tons, and cut their solid waste by 176,000 tons.

The treatment facility qualified for the program through its past achievements, continuous commitment to environmental compliance, and implementation of a strong Environmental Management System. Additionally, KCRWTF committed to communicating and working with the community. EPA and the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control reviewed the application and verified that KCRWTF has sustained compliance with environmental regulations.

"Performance Track facilities represent a new generation of environmental leaders who have the vision to embrace the strategies that will protect the environment for generations to come," said Dan

## NASCAR side-shows

(Continued from Page 7)

ing toppled three times in the space of fifteen feet, successfully rode off into the sunset.

Race fans come here to enjoy their sport and have a good time. Emergency services help make that possible. The vast majority of patrons have an uneventful weekend. For those whose race week experience may have less than desirable highlights, we will continue to provide prompt and professional care.

Fiorino, director of EPA's Performance Incentives Division.

KCRWTF is being rewarded for its environmental excellence and aims to motivate other companies to achieve similar improvements that complement and exceed existing regulatory requirements.

As part of Performance Track, KCRWTF is eligible for numerous program benefits including EPA recognition, and administrative and regulatory incentives, which cut paperwork, increase flexibility, and help facilities focus on environmental improvement. Members also have access to the Performance Track Network, a partnership with trade associations, membership organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and other government agencies. The Network shares Performance Track benefits and goals with top environmental performers and ensures that all are given the opportunity to apply. In addition, EPA developed a mentoring program, where participating facilities can assist potential members with completing the Performance Track application and improve their environmental performance.

For more information about Performance Track, visit [www.epa.gov/performance-track](http://www.epa.gov/performance-track) or call 1-888-339-PTRK.

## Library offers Free Light Bulbs

By Richard "Dick" Krueger, County Librarian

Flip The Switch is a program that gives away free Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs to the public to encourage energy conservation and at the same time encourage residents to visit their local library.

During the month of October there will be a state-wide advertising campaign and all electric customers will receive a coupon by mail that can be redeemed only at their local library for 1 twin pack or 2 single pack of CFL bulbs.

This program is an opportunity for people to come into the library and sign up for a library card. The library also receives 10 cents per redeemed coupon. The program will run for the entire month of October, so bring your coupon to the Kent County Library on U.S. 13 near Camden.



# Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: NANCY GLENN



**Job:** Clerk Typist  
**Date hired:** September 5, 2006  
**Education:** High school  
**What I like most about my new job:** Friendly atmosphere  
**Greatest accomplishment:** Raising two sons  
**Greatest challenge:** Raising two sons  
**Future goals:** Comfortable retirement

**Person/event that most inspired me in my career:** High school Typing teacher, Mrs. Klein

**If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently:** Furthered my education

**I'm most relaxed and happy when I'm doing this:** Watching TV

**Family:** Two sons, four grandsons, and husband

**Most recent movie enjoyed:** Firewall

**Favorite TV show:** House Hunters (HGTV)

**Favorite sport:** Spectator

**Favorite meal:** Pot roast

**Favorite music:** Varied

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

**A dream I have is to:** Have financial security

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Pay off sons' homes

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Used to smoke

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Hot air balloon ride

**Three words that describe me:** Friendly, happy, loving \*\*3124\*\*

## Discount Movie Tickets

Discount movie tickets to Dover Mall's Carmike Theaters are available for sale in the Personnel Office.

The discount tickets cost \$5.50 each and can be used at any scheduled time, but cannot be used during the first 14 days of any Sony® movie, but all other movie studios allows ticket use at any time.



# Welcome to Levy Court!



Name: MATTHEW BUKER



**Job:** Paramedic Trainee  
**Date hired:** September 28, 2006  
**Education:** BA – University of DE; enrolled – Del Tech Paramedic Program  
**What I like most about my new job:** I can focus on my training and not work nights  
**Greatest accomplishment:** Buying a home  
**Greatest challenge:** Completing

college

**Future goals:** EMS Management

**Person/event that most inspired me in my career:** Sept. 11, 2001 – wanted to be a first responder

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

**Family:** Wouldn't be here without them

**Most recent movie enjoyed:** World Trade Center

**Favorite TV show:** Seinfeld

**Favorite sport:** Football – Go Eagles!

**Favorite meal:** Mexican

**Favorite music:** Everything

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

**A dream I have is to:** Become freer of financial worry

**If I won a million dollars, I would:** Invest it; pay off mortgage

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** Almost became a police officer

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** White-water rafting

**Three words that describe me:** Fun, energetic, confident \*\*4526\*\* \*\*5897\*\*

## In Memoriam

MICHAEL D. ADAMS, a member of the Kent County Personnel Administration Board, passed away on September 10, 2006. Mike previously served as the Personnel Director for Kent County from April 1994 until May 1996.

## County Halloween event merges with Wicked-R-Western to create new "Trail of Terror"

By Brent Mollohan, Recreation Program Supervisor II

Change is in the air... especially for Parks and Recreation's special event known as Fright Night.



What started out as a 6 scene haunted trail at Tidbury Creek Park 15 years ago, evolved into one of Kent County's premiere haunted attractions.

For the past 13 years, county residents have walked our ¼ mile trail at Brecknock Park during evening hours only to have the "yell" scared out of them.

As more and more haunted events were created throughout Kent County, I found it challenging to stay ahead of the "competition". New props were made, a huge maze was created and every idea had a chance on the trail. No matter what we came up with, it seemed to always work. We were hanging on!

No matter how organized this event is, no one can prepare for Mother Nature. The saying, "if you build it, they will come", well...that is not true! Rain will keep people away. With money already allocated for help and contractor services, the numbers were not adding up. We had to make a decision...throw 15 years of Kent County's special event away or revive it in a way where we still carry our name. Decision made—the name will go on.

It has been decided to merge our event with Wicked-R-Western's Wicked Woods, to bring to you "The Horrifying Trail of Terror".

This event will combine a hay wagon ride and a walk through a ½ mile trail that has over 25 scenes. The cost is only \$15.00/person and can be bought on site.

The event will take place on October 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 during the hours of 7:00 p.m. thru 11:00 p.m. at Wicked-R-Western located on 2621 Sandy Bend Rd. in Wyoming.

This event will run rain or shine. Hope to scare everyone there!!!!

## Children's Fantasy Trail adds extra day at Brecknock Park

By Jeremy Sheppard, Recreation Program Supervisor II

As sure as the turning color of fall foliage, comes another installment of the Children's Halloween Fantasy Trail at Brecknock County Park in Camden.

This year's edition will have one major change included: TWO DAYS! Yes, you heard it here first; the Fantasy Trail will entertain and enchant youngsters on both Saturday, October 28th and Sunday, October 29th from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

The Fantasy Trail is designed for children ages 2 to 7, but ages 12 and under are allowed.

This year's Trail will include your favorite cartoon and storybook characters at different scenes along the Nature Trail at Brecknock County Park.

A complimentary trick-or-treat bag will help gather all the delicious snacks along the way. A hay ride at the end of the trail will take you up to the Picadilly Pavilion where you will be entertained with singers on the Stage and other activities.

Tickets are sold on site for \$5

This event will run if sprinkling, but will be cancelled if it rains. Hope to see everyone there!!!!



### ***Kent Co. Employee Obsessions***

The display case on the main floor of the Kent County Administrative Complex features a unique collection of political campaign buttons and badges amassed over the years by Recorder of Deeds BETTY LOU McKENNA.

On the second floor, the campaign season continues with a display of Sussex County Return Day memorabilia collected by Personnel Director ALLAN KUJALA, who also serves as Treasurer of the one-of-a-kind-in-the-nation event.

Got an interesting hobby or like to collect limited edition baubles? Then show off your talent for amassing things—it may interest others as well. Contact the Personnel Office for more information. Share your obsession!

# With care—a healthy smile lasts a lifetime

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

Sponsored annually by the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), National Dental Hygiene Month is a month-long observance of the importance of proper oral hygiene. This year's theme is "A Healthy Smile Lasts a Lifetime." This year, the ADHA has decided to focus upon proper early



childhood oral health care. With science pointing to a link between oral health and systemic disease it is important to start good oral health routines at a young age so they can become part of a daily routine as children get older. Dental decay is the most common chronic disease of childhood. In addition, recent studies show that periodontal disease continues to plague millions of Americans, including children. The best way to ensure that your child does not get cavities or gingivitis is to instill proper oral habits as early as infancy and continued throughout life.

Registered dental hygienists may recommend these tips:

- Before teeth begin to erupt, thoroughly clean your infant's gums after each feeding with a water-soaked infant washcloth or gauze pad to stimulate gum tissue and remove food. When teeth begin to erupt, brush them gently with a small, soft-bristled toothbrush using a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste.
- A small amount of fluoridated toothpaste will help to deter decay. Fluoride is also found in mouth rinses, community water supplies, and in some foods.
- At age two or three, you can begin to teach your child proper brushing techniques. You will need to follow up with brushing and gentle flossing until age seven or eight, when the child has the dexterity to do it alone.
- Schedule regular oral health appointments starting around the first birthday. An oral health professional will check for cavities in the primary teeth, watch for developmental problems, and help to create a positive experience that may alleviate fear at future visits.
- Encourage your child to discuss any fears he

might have about oral health visits, without mentioning the words 'hurt' or 'pain'. Saying "it won't hurt" instills the chance of pain in the child's thought process.

Is the water supply that serves your home fluoridated? If not, discuss supplement options with your hygienist.

Also, ask about sealant applications to protect the chewing surfaces of your child's teeth; and about baby bottle tooth decay, which occurs when teeth are frequently exposed to sugar-containing liquids for long periods of time.

Good nutrition and oral hygiene care practiced at home are especially important during the teen years. Proper diet, brushing, and flossing play an important role in maintaining a healthy smile and preserving teeth during these challenging years.

Cavities and periodontal disease can be a threat to teens as well as adults. Recent survey results show bleeding gums were most prevalent among adolescents and that three-fourths of 13-to 17-year-olds had gums that bled.

Registered dental hygienists may recommend these tips:

- Brush thoroughly after meals whenever possible, and floss daily. Busy schedules and activities can encourage snacking. That is why choosing a proper diet will help you to maintain and preserve your teeth.
- If you wear custom-made appliances or braces, pay special attention to keeping spaces between teeth and archwires clean by using floss threaders. Orthodontic toothbrushes are specially designed to make cleaning teeth and braces easier.
- If you participate in contact sports, you may want to inquire about or have a custom-made mouthguard fitted during an oral care visit. Mouthguards assist in providing protection against dental injuries.

For more oral health information from the American Dental Hygienists' Association, you may access their website at [www.adha.org](http://www.adha.org).

The County's dental coverage through **Delta Dental of Delaware** provides two Diagnostic exams per year. These exams are covered at 100 percent of the "reasonable and customary" fee, even if a non-participating provider is used. In the Preventive category, fluoride treatments are available until age 19 and sealants are available to age 14. Delta will pay \$1,000 per year, per person, toward covered dental expenses.

Contact the Personnel Office with any questions regarding the County's dental plan.



# Plan ahead for Trick-or-Treating safety

By J. Allen Metheny, Emergency Management Div. Manager

As Halloween approaches, all of us need to start planning for the many “ghosts and goblins” who will appear at our front doors.



It is time to plan to implement some safety tips since 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.

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.

As 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 microwaved 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.

## Tasty Recipes Needed for Book

Do you hunger for another taste of those famous dishes made by County employees during the annual holiday luncheon? If you have a special recipe, please help support the United Way campaign by contributing it to the “yet to be named Recipe Book (2006 Edition)”.

The book will then be sold for \$5 with proceeds going to the United Way Campaign to help reach our fundraising goal of \$14,000. Submissions must be turned in by October 13, 2006 at 4:30 p.m. to CARISSA ZEITERS in the Personnel Office, preferably as an e-mail attachment.

## SOME ANSWERS TO THOSE NAGGING QUESTIONS

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

**Q.** *Why do employees park to the left of the Administrative Complex entrance right next to the building, when the sign at the entrance clearly indicates that parking to the left is for visitors?*

**A.** You are correct the sign clearly provides parking directions that some employees appear to be ignoring. I agree with you, good customer service dictates that employees leave the primo parking spaces for the citizens and visitors. So you violators, please park to the right of the main entrance in the designated employee parking area—there are plenty of spaces.

**Q.** *Hunting season is right around the corner, but a co-worker told me recently that I cannot leave my shotgun in the gun rack of my pickup truck when I come to work. The Constitution protects my gun rights, so who are you to tell me what I can and can't do with my shotgun?*

**A.** County Policy 8-2 prohibits the possession of firearms and dangerous weapons/instruments on County property, including private vehicles parked on County property. This policy was developed to protect employees from possible workplace violence. While you have a right to bear arms, you do not have the right to do so on County property. If you bring a firearm to work you are subject to disciplinary action, so please keep your weapons locked up at home.

**Q.** *Your response above raises another question. What should I do if a co-worker or a member of the public displays a weapon or threatens to harm me?*

**A.** Call 9-1-1 and inform your supervisor. You do not have to tolerate threats from the public or fellow employees. Employees threatening or intimidating co-workers or the public will be severely disciplined.

**Q.** *I was wondering why you go through the expense of printing off this newsletter instead of just e-mailing it to all the employees. It seems to me the County would save lots of money with an electronic version, wouldn't you?*

**A.** Perhaps, but would anybody read an e-mailed version? Many County employees tell me they receive so much County business related e-mail, they can barely stay on top of it. A printed version of this employee newsletter can be read during breaks or lunch.

This newsletter is the primary method by which the County communicates important information to employees and retirees. We try to include a variety of topics that make the newsletter informational, educational, and fun to read. Also there are a number of County employees without computer or e-mail access. Even more important, employees should be sharing the newsletter with spouses, since important information is often provided on County benefits and services. If a County employee regularly reads the employee newsletter, they will not only be personally informed but able to explain County actions to other interested persons. Incidentally, a color version of the newsletter is available as a .pdf on the County website under the Personnel Office web pages.

**Q.** *My boss recently instructed me to do something on my timesheet that I was uncomfortable doing. He said I could record the overtime hours I worked during a week with a holiday on the timesheet for the following week. I did it, but I think it was dishonest. Was it?*

**A.** Yes it was dishonest and it was falsification of your work record. When you work a few extra hours during a week with a holiday, the extra hours are paid at straight time. Overtime is only earned when you physically work more than 40 hours within the employer's 7-day work week. You need to come to the Personnel Office to amend your time sheet, so the overcompensation can be adjusted out of your next paycheck.

**Q.** *I was a little hungry recently and visited the kitchen/snack machine area in the Administrative Complex and was surprised at the high cost/low quantity of the food items there. Can't we get a different snack provider with a lower cost and bigger quantity?*

**A.** The snack machines are provided to the County through the Division of the Blind, which has a franchise with the State to provide food services to benefit visually impaired Delawareans. The County selected the group due to its willingness to guarantee the Employee Council a share of the proceeds. Each month the Employee Council receives a flat \$125 from the machines, no matter what the actual revenue. According to Facilities Management Division Manager Dick MacDonald, the machine vendor has reported to him that the County is a low volume site, meaning County employees aren't buying enough to cover the fixed costs. It's a vicious cycle!