Employee of the Month
Carl Solberg

The Kent County department heads have selected CARL J. SOLBERG from the Department of Community Services as the September 2008 Employee of the Month.

Carl is the Assistant Director of Community Services responsible for the Parks Division and has worked for Kent County since August 1990.

He provides overall supervision for maintenance of the County parks and spends considerable time with project development and oversight for park enhancements, and greenway expansion. Carl also reviews all subdivision plans submitted to the County for compliance with the land development ordinance as it relates to subdivision landscaping.

Over the years, Carl has been very successful capturing grant funding from various State and Federal sources. Those grants have resulted in the recent creation of a wetland habitat within the stormwater retention basin at the Administrative Complex, a superior wetland mitigation site at Big Oak Park, development and construction for Phases I & II of the St. Jones Greenway, and creating the Lebanon Landing boat ramp and fishing pier.

Congratulations Carl on a job well done!

COMING NEXT MONTH:
> Visit the annual health fair and/or get a flu shot!
> Annual United Way campaign launches!
> FY2010 budget development gets underway.

IN THIS MONTH’S ISSUE:
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4 - Birthdays  4 - On The Move
6 - From The Stacks  6 - Recipe of the Month

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 Yvonne Messina. Or, call the Personnel Office at 744-2310.

2 paramedic trainees finish up program
By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

The County’s popular paramedic trainee program is finally starting to bear fruit with the recent graduation of two more students from the Delaware Tech paramedic studies program.

KEVIN IMHOF and MEGAN REEDY are the second and third Kent County paramedic trainees to graduate from the program and seek National and State certification. They follow in the footsteps of MATTHEW BUKER, who graduated last year.

In 1990 after the State Legislature created a statewide paramedic system, Kent County began a rigorous training program with the graduates merging with the former City of Dover paramedics for a September 1, 1991 launch of the County paramedic system.

When the training program ended, Kent County recruited fully trained paramedics from other regions. In this growing and competitive technology, it became progressively more difficult to attract competent paramedics to Kent County, so Levy Court responded in 2006 by authorizing a new paramedic trainee program comparable to that successfully used in Sussex and New Castle counties. After an extensive recruitment effort and comprehensive selection and evaluation process, the first trainee was selected.

On March 12, 2007, Imhof signed on as a Paramedic Trainee, and on July 2, 2007, Reedy came on board. Imhof completed his second year of education for the Associates Degree program, received his National Registry and State certification as a paramedic, and was promoted from Trainee to Paramedic I on August 18, 2008. Reedy completed her second year of education for the Associates Degree program and is completing the testing process for National Registry and State certification as a Paramedic.

Imhoff and Reedy started the paramedic program (Continued on Page 10)
**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. Unfortunately for County employees, no one spotted their number in the August newsletter. It’s easy to win! **8781**

**Kent Co. Employee Obsessions**

Take a minute to visit the display case on the first floor of the Kent County Administrative Complex which features a collection of German related items amassed by DOROTHY MARTIN, Technology Administrator in the I.T. Office. In the second floor display case, check out the campaign memorabilia collected by Recorder of Deeds BETTY LOU McKENNA.

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

**HOW TO BE EXCEPTIONAL**

SAFETY—c. Never have a preventable accident; d. Be regarded as the “go to” person for safety questions and concerns.

WORK HABITS—a. Your personal dress and grooming command respect and exemplify the County. Hygiene is never an issue; b. Reserve accrued leave balances for possible emergencies and never take sick leave unless extremely ill.

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

**Go Green Kent Co!**

*Re-Route your commute.*

If possible, consider walking or biking to work and save money on gas while improving your cardiovascular health and reducing your risk of obesity. GO GREEN!

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**EOM INSIGHT**

**Name:** CARL SOLBERG

**Job:** Assistant Director, Community Services, Parks Division

**Years with the County:** 18

**Education:** BS Psychology, Glassboro State College (now Rowan University)

**My role as a County employee:** Plan and manage the Parks Division for recreation, leisure, and conservation projects.

**What keeps my job interesting:** The latitude to pursue diverse open space and recreation land projects.

**What gives me a sense of accomplishment on the job:** Seeing unique circumstances, including conflicts, as opportunities to achieve the unexpected.

**Professional advice I would like to offer to other County employees:** Draw comfort knowing that the effect of our work is real and often far-reaching.

**Family:** Dolores and Kirsten Solberg

**Civic involvement:** Senate appointee to the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission; Governor’s appointee to the Delaware Natural Areas Advisory Council; Kent County Conservancy Board Member

**After work I enjoy:** Reading, fishing

**Favorite new movie:** WALL-E

**Favorite old movie:** Two for the Road

**Favorite sport:** Gymnastics

**Favorite music:** Sacred Sounds Radio

**Three people (living or dead) I’d invite to dinner:** Walt Whitman, Frederick Law Olmstead, Nelson Mandela

**I’m most proud of:** My daughter’s personal ethics and her success as a physical therapist.

**Pet peeve:** Greed

**If I’ve learned one thing in life, it’s:** I am going to look back and wonder: “What was I thinking?”

**Characteristics and values important to me:** The trust that others generate by their good work and intentions.

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

**Personal goals I have accomplished or would like to accomplish:** Design/build an economical green, single family home

If I could have been in any profession of my Continued on Page 14)
The race is on for the 2008 election

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Although it may not seem like it with all the media attention on the historic race for the U.S. presidency, there are other candidates seeking office on Election Day, November 4, 2008.

In fact, there is a hotly contested September 9 primary for the 3rd District Levy Court seat, with Commissioner ALLAN ANGEL being challenged by the son of a former Commissioner—Sean Lynn. The winner of the democratic primary will face republican David Anderson on Election Day.

In this election cycle, three Levy Court Commissioners and three row office positions are up for contention—or at least normally would be. With the filing deadline past, 1st Levy Court District Commissioner P. BROOKS BANTA is the only incumbent to be unchallenged and handily wins re-election.

In the 5th Levy Court District, Commissioner W.G. EDMANSON is seeking his first full term, since winning his seat in January 2007 to finish the unexpired term of former Commissioner now State Representative Donald Blakey. He is being challenged again by Jody Sweeney.

In the contested row office races, Comptroller MARGARET TALLEY has decided not to seek re-election after 16 years. Current Deputy Recorder of Deeds GEORGETTE WILLIAMS has filed for the seat and she is being challenged by Steve Artz of Smyrna, while Clerk of the Peace LORETTA WOOTTEN is being challenged by Terence Burns of Dover and Register of Wills TOM WEYANT is being challenged by John Friedman of Dover.

Whomever is elected will officially take office on January 6, 2009, the first Tuesday in January, when Levy Court will reorganize by electing a President and a Vice-President, adopting rules of procedure and making committee appointments.

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

Comm. Angel selected to serve on NACo committee

By Bret Scott, Public Information Officer

Commissioner ALLAN F. ANGEL was recently appointed Vice Chairman of the National Association of Counties (NACo) Telecommunications and Technology Steering Committee during NACo’s Annual Conference and Exposition in Kansas City, Missouri. The appointment was announced by NACo President Don Stapley.

“On behalf of the nation’s counties, I am pleased and grateful that Commissioner Angel will be helping to shape national policies affecting counties as vice chair of NACo’s Telecommunications Committee,” said Stapley, supervisor, Maricopa County, Ariz.

The Telecommunications and Technology Committee is responsible for developing NACo policy pertaining to telecommunications and technology policy, including, but not limited to, the county role as a telecommunications regulator, service provider and consumer; cable services technology and implementation; information technology development and implementation; information technology innovation; e-governance; and Geospatial data collection and utilization.

NACo’s steering committees annually review and make recommendations to the NACo Board of Directors on public policy issues and federal legislation. The policy development process initiated by the steering committees leads to the publication of the American County Platform, which NACo uses as a guide to deliver the county government message to the administration, Congress and the American public.

Commissioner Angel was also selected to serve as Chairman of the Dental Discount Card Task Force. The Dental Discount Task Force will examine ways county residents can save money on prescription drugs related to Dental Care. The program will mirror the prescription drug discount plan which was introduced to county residents in October.
ON THE MOVE...

Compiled by Yvonne Messina, Personnel Technician I

New Hires
08/19/08 THEORAM BOONE, Paramedic Trainee, Grade 7, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services
08/19/08 NICHOLAS HORN, Paramedic Trainee, Grade 7, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services

Promotions
08/04/08 RICHARD MOSLEY JR., Custodian, Grade 3 to Maintenance Mechanic I, Grade 6, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities
08/11/08 PATRICK QUILLEN, Parks Worker I, Grade 5 to Parks Worker II, Grade 6, Community Services/Parks
08/18/08 KEVIN IMHOF, Paramedic Trainee, Grade 7 to Paramedic I, Grade 10, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services

Transfer
08/04/08 WILLIAM HALL, Custodian, Grade 3, from Wastewater Facilities to Facilities Management

Retirement
08/31/08 ROBERT SAVAGE, Procurement Specialist II, Grade 10, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities

Resignations
08/15/08 RUTH D. SEMANS, Deputy Register of Wills, Grade 8, Register of Wills Office
08/21/08 JENNIFER B. IMMEDIATO, Paramedic II, Grade 11, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services

Milestones
08/12/1998 JUNE GLADDEN, Property Specialist II—10 years
08/13/1998 PATRICIA UHEY, Wills Clerk II—10 years
08/27/1998 MARK HORTON, Paramedic II—10 years
08/31/1998 DOUGLAS PHILLIPS, Field Supervisor—10 years

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

September 1, 2008 - Labor Day Holiday. County offices closed.

September 3, 2008 - Blood Pressure Checks at the Wastewater Facility from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

September 6, 2008 - Emergency Preparedness Day. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Department of Transportation.

September 10, 2008 - L&W Insurance rep. available to answer health insurance questions from 1:00—2:00 p.m., Kent County Administrative Com-

(Continued on Page 10)
New vertical County ID card to be issued by end of month

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Several employees are sporting new County identification cards and soon everyone will. The new ID cards depict an enlarged view of the front door area of the Kent County Administrative Complex building featuring the silver trim and deep blue reflective color of the glass circular structure that houses the Levy Court chamber.

The new ID cards have also been turned to hang vertically rather than horizontally like the former badge which featured a photo of the entire building. The new background photo was taken by GIS Technician Alan Tyson and selected by County Administrator Mike Petit de Mange from several to meet the desired vertical format. The card’s turn was selected in hopes of reducing breakage of the thin strip of plastic securing the card to a clip.

The former cards expired on July 1, but continue to operate the office doors. The new expiration date is July 1, 2015 and is important in order to reduce the chances of former employees or lost cards being utilized to access the building or individual offices after hours or to identify the holder as a County employee.

The Personnel Office intends to complete the printing of all new ID cards by the end of the month.

Employees earn new CPR/AED certification

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Quick! A co-worker gets up from his chair and suddenly slumps to the floor. What do you do?

You could save a life, but like many County employees you have to know how to come to the aid of a co-worker, a friend, a family member, or an ordinary citizen suffering a heart attack or heart stopping injury.

The American Red Cross recently revamped the Cardio-Pulmonary Resusitation procedure, so if you learned the old way, it may well reduce the survivability of your patient. Any employee receiving training from Kent County paramedics before last year, need to get the new training.

So, what do you do when that co-worker collapses?

First make sure the area is safe (this could happen in the middle of a busy crosswalk), next check for a response, if unresponsive yell for help—if someone comes direct him/her to call 9-1-1, point to another person and direct them to get the AED.

With the patient on his back, check for breathing for at least 5 seconds, but no more than 10. Tilt the head back to open the airway and give 2 breaths. Watch for the chest to rise. Open his shirt and give 30 compressions at about 100 per minute, then repeat the 2 breaths, 30 compressions until help arrives to take over or to attach the AED.

County AEDs are located at the security desk at the entrance to the Administrative Complex, in the Finance Department, in the County Administrator’s Office, and in the Fitness Center. AEDs are located at the County library, at Brecknock Park, at the Wastewater Facilities maintenance garage and the Operation’s center.

County staff earning certification last month included: Chris Austin, Glenn Bennett, Ron Bowman, Adam Bradford, Matt Buker,

(Continued on Page 6)
FROM THE STACKS
By Hilary Welliver, Associate Librarian

The Last Lecture
By Randy Pausch

Carnegie Mellon University has a tradition of inviting professors to give a lecture where they pretend that it is their last chance ever to talk to their students. What would you say? What wisdom would you impart? What are your lessons in life?

For Randy Pausch, a computer science professor at the University, this was not a hypothetical question. Barely a minute into his “last” lecture, Randy told his audience about the cancer that was rapidly devouring his pancreas. He told the group that the cancer would claim his life in a matter of months.

Randy Pausch, a new father of two children, married late in life to a woman he believed to be his soulmate, was remarkably upbeat, inspiring, energetic, and darkly humorous. His presentation was so full of optimism, clarity, hope, humor, and sincerity that the YouTube video became a phenomenon, and several months later the experience was published as a book.

“The Last Lecture” contains everything that Randy covered in the lecture, “Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams,” plus some other anecdotes and pearls of wisdom from his life and experience. Through it he celebrates the dreams and aspirations that we all strive to realize.

Randy lost his battle to cancer this summer on July 25th.

Yet his legacy will continue to inspire those who read his book, for generations to come. **0983**

Recipe of the Month
By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

SPAGHETTI WITH TOMATOES, BASIL, OLIVES, AND FRESH MOZZARELLA

Ingredients:
- 2 pounds vine-ripened tomatoes (about 6), chopped
- ¾ pound salted fresh mozzarella, cut into ¼-inch cubes, at room temperature
- 1 ¼ cups chopped fresh basil
- ½ cup halved and pitted black olives
- 4 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 ¼ teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon fresh-ground black pepper
- 1 pound spaghetti
- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced

Directions:

In a large glass or stainless-steel bowl, combine the chopped tomatoes with the mozzarella, basil, olives, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper.

In a large pot of boiling, salted water, cook the spaghetti until just done, about 12 minutes. Drain, add to the tomato mixture, and toss.

Heat the oil in a small frying pan over moderately low heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Pour the oil over the pasta and toss again.

Variations: Add some drained capers, chopped red onion, or grated Parmesan to the pasta.

Servings: 4
Recipe source: Food & Wine **3632**

Employees earn new certs
(Continued from Page 5)
JASON COURTNEY, JOHN deBLOOIS, JAMES GERARDI, JENNIFER GRAHAM, DARIN JONES, CHARLES MAST, WAYNE McCARTY, YVONNE MESSINA, JAMES NUNES, JOE O’CONNELL, MARVIN PARKER, KATHY PHINNEY, RALPH POORE, PATRICK QUILLEN, MIKE RIGBY, JACK SCHULTIES, KRIS SPAULDING, FRED STRAUSS, JESSE WALLACE, WILLIAM WOODALL, and WALLACE WOOTTEN.

The CPR/AED classes were taught by Kent County Paramedics MIKE BISHOP, RALPH NEIL, RICK SCHLAUCH, and TIM WYATT.


**Learn how to navigate office politics at Sept. staff training**

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

Politics in the workplace can get brutal – and it’s not the governmental kind. Workplace politics, or how control and authority are managed in an organization, will be a part of your career whether you choose to take part in them or not.

Some workers say they don’t want to be involved in politics at work, but playing the game is crucial to your career success. By not getting involved, your talents may be ignored, your success limited, and you may feel left out of the loop. Politics get mean when an employee is out for personal gain alone. Workplace politics is a game of strategy through which you are able to get the means and influence you need to realize your goals. Most often the winners are those who are diplomatic, respectful and build coalitions with effective people.

During research into this topic, many forms of workplace politics came up: backstabbers and snakes; betrayals and whistle-blowing; brownnosers and sycophants, bullies and bad bosses; climbing the ladder; cliques; coworkers who drive others crazy; quitting and being fired; jealousy, envy, and lust; nepotism and family matters; office princesses, boss’ pet, and halos; power plays; rumors, gossip, and buzz; stealing credit; and toxic workplaces.

“Win at Workplace Politics” will be presented on **Wednesday, September 17, 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 a session, contact me in Personnel at 744-2312, by e-mail (if you have a list), or in person. If you initially forget to sign up and wish to attend, or discover that you will be able to attend on the day of the training session, simply show up and sign in.

Attending the supervisors’ August session, “Effective Workplace Communication,” were BONNI CPOBIANCO, KIM CROUCH, SOPHIE DEAR, CINDI GOLDSBORO, MARY ELLEN GRAY, SUSAN

(Continued on Page 16)

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**TLAER teaches correct way to rescue animals**

By Lt. David Mick, EMS Special Operations Supervisor

How many of you have watched the *Animal Planet* type shows that portray amazing and daring rescues of large animals, most of which involve a helicopter? The scenarios are quite amazing and the end result is always positive. The efforts of the rescuers are commendable. The fact that almost everyone who sees these animals in their plight feels instantly emotionally attached to the poor critter causes people to do things they normally wouldn’t even consider.

Not to take anything away from those who try to rescue animals, but as you might expect, there are right ways and wrong ways to go about intervening with living, breathing, thinking creature that happens to be several times your weight and strength. As it turns out, many of the scenes you see on TV actually have people doing some very dangerous things and some things that are actually making the situation worse.

The concept that people don’t pay attention to the most is that of an animal’s mental state during a rescue. Animals are animals! They don’t have the thinking process to understand that we are trying to help and they should “cooperate”. In the animal world one is either predator or prey. Most of our large pets and service animals are from the prey side of the street. The more stressed the animal is from the situation the more it will revert to its instinctive responses, so if it is a prey animal, the more stressed it becomes the more it thinks everything around it is going to eat it! The humans that normally might be seen as a source of hay and grain on a good day will be seen more like a pack of carnivores circling around “lunch”. Compound this by the fact that many times the rescuers are shouting and running around and pulling and tugging in all directions……….it’s pretty stressful for any animal.

(Continued on Page 14)
EMPLOYEE COUNCIL NEWS

By Michele Lapinski, Employee Council Secretary

Fall is in the air and believe it or not, the holiday season is just around the corner, which means that the annual Employee Holiday Dinner and Dance will be here before you know it. The event will be held at the new Camden-Wyoming Volunteer Fire Company on Saturday, December 6 this year. Stay tuned for more information via email and Kent Connections.

The jackpots just continue to grow in the bi-weekly 50/50 raffles. Your next chances to win are September 5 & 19 and October 3. Good luck!

The Council also has some fun events planned for the next couple of months including the popular Halloween Boo-grams and a fall hot dog sale. We’ll have more information in next month’s newsletter regarding dates, times and prices.

The Employee Council would like to congratulate CARL SOLBERG, Parks Division Manager, in the Community Services Department for being selected as Employee of the Month for September. Those of us who work with Carl know what a great job he does on behalf of the County, searching out grant programs and working with homeowner associations and developers to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Kent County.

Your Employee Council members are: BRENTH MOLLOHAN, President; LORI SHORT, Vice-President; JAYNE ZERANSKI, Treasurer; MICHELE LAPINSKI, Secretary; members KIMM DIXON, YVONNE MESSINA, and PAT ORONA. **2163**

Tech Talk

“Locking Your Computer”

By Rob Rebeck, Computer Support Technician I

Recently, one of our own wonderful IT personnel, DOROTHY MARTIN, taught a highly informative class on one of the various keyboard shortcuts that we as users have at our disposal. It was during this class that I received the inspiration for my latest addition to the Tech Talk round-table. So, without further ado, I’d like to take the next few moments to talk a little bit about the benefits of locking your workstation.

This can be accomplished by one of several ways. Those who attended the aforementioned class might recall the first method which is to press the “Windows” key and “L” in immediate succession. This will instantaneously bring up a screen in the center of your display indicating that your system is now securely locked. Another way, for those who like to kick it old school like myself, is the classic “Ctrl”, “Alt”, and “Delete” method. After pressing and holding these three keys in succession, a window will appear which presents you with a handful of options. One of which, is to lock your system. However you choose to do it, the desired result can be obtained, and your system will be firmly locked away from the prying eyes of the rest of the world.

Now then, some of you may be wondering just exactly why you would want to do this in the first place. I mean, let’s face it. It does seem like just one more thing to try and remember when walking away from your system. Not to mention, it gives you yet another task to accomplish once you return to your workstation. Trust me. I know. I was once just like you in that respect. That is…until the incident.

I remember it vividly. I had just graduated from AF Technical school in Biloxi, Mississippi and was enjoying my first week on the job at luxurious SJA-FB in Goldsboro, NC. Like any other young Airman, I was filled with pride, eagerness, and a thirst to prove myself in my new career field. I suppose it was this ambitious attitude that caused me to overlook the fact that during orientation, we were explicitly told that it was AF regulation to lock our workstations each and every time we walked away from them. Now…in my defense, I did pretty well the first few times. But, as tasks began to pile up and the workload increased, remembering to heed this warn-

(Continued on Page 10)
Yoga can have a positive impact on health and wellness

By Sophie Dear, Personnel Technician II

Yoga Month is a grassroots, community-based awareness campaign geared toward education regarding the health benefits of yoga and to inspire a healthy lifestyle.

Costs related to poor health are staggering. More than 70 million Americans suffer from one or more types of cardiovascular disease with an annual cost of nearly $400 billion. Arthritis is the nation’s leading cause of disability; 48 million Americans have doctor-diagnosed arthritis, costing the economy $86 billion a year. According to the American Heart Association, high blood pressure and its complications were expected to cost the U.S. $66.4 billion in 2007. Back pain costs Americans around $15 billion per year in medical care and disability payments. The annual direct health care cost of asthma is approximately $11.5 billion; indirect costs (e.g., lost annual productivity) add another $4.6 billion. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), repetitive strain injuries, including carpal tunnel, are the nation’s most costly occupational health problems, with a price tag of more than $20 billion a year in workers compensation.

The challenge: Obesity. U.S. obesity rates have reached epidemic proportions: 58 million people are overweight; 40 million people are obese; 8 out of 10 adults over age 25 are overweight; 78% of Americans don’t meet basic activity level recommendations; 25% are fully sedentary; there has been a 76% increase in Type II diabetes in adults 30 – 40 years old since 1990; and, in 2001, 25% of all white children and 33% of African American and Hispanic children were overweight. The solution? Vigorous Power, Vinyasa, or Ashtanga Yoga classes done for 90 minutes at least three to five times a week will produce weight loss. Yoga keeps people more in tune with their bodies, making them aware of bad habits such as eating because of stress, boredom, or depression. The first study investigating the effects of yoga on weight was recently conducted by the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle.

The challenge: Hypertension. High blood pressure remains the most general reason for visits to physicians for non-pregnant adults in the U.S. About 72 million people age 20 and older have high blood pressure. Despite its frequency and the complications linked to it, control of the disease is insufficient and hypertension will likely stay the most common risk factor for stroke, heart failure, and kidney disease. The solution? In one study, small but noteworthy reductions in blood pressure were shown in just three weeks of daily yoga. In another study, one hour of daily yoga for 11 weeks revealed that both medication and yoga were useful in controlling hypertension. In one of the best quantitative studies, systolic blood pressure (the top number) decreased from 142 to 126mmHg and diastolic blood pressure (the bottom number) decreased from 86 to 75mmHg after 40 days of a yoga regimen.

The challenge: Heart disease. Heart disease has topped the list of U.S. killer diseases every year since 1918. More than 70 million Americans suffer from one or more types of heart disease. The solution? Several trials have found that yoga can lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and resting heart rates, and help slow the progression of atherosclerosis – all risk factors for heart disease. While almost any exercise is good for the heart, experts speculate yoga’s meditative component may give it a boost by helping to stabilize the lining of the blood vessels that, when irritated, contributes to cardiovascular disease. Since the lining is reactive to stress, and meditation can lower stress hormones, yoga may be causing a flow of events that could reduce your risk of a heart attack or stroke.

The challenge: Breast cancer. Every three minutes a woman in the U.S. is diagnosed with breast cancer. Breast cancer is the leading cancer among white and African American women. African American women are more likely to die from this disease. Breast cancer incidence in women has increased from one in 20 in 1960 to one in eight today. The solution? Women who do yoga during and after treatment feel less physical discomfort and stress. Duke University scientists reported results of a pilot study in which women with metastatic breast cancer attended eight weekly yoga sessions. The doctors found that the women had much less pain and felt more energetic and relaxed.

The challenge: Menopause. Hot flashes, irregular heart beat, mood swings, trouble sleeping, fatigue, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, alarming memory lapses, incontinence, sore joints, muscles and tendons and a host of other conditions are symptoms of menopause. The solution? A preface study at the University of California, San Francisco, found

(Continued on Page 12)
Trainees finish up

(Continued from Page 1)

studies program on their own. As Paramedic Trainees the County provided them pay and benefits along with tuition expenses for their second year.

Imhof said he’s really happy with what he’s doing – “This is one of the first jobs I’ve really enjoyed. The County gave me lots of help when the Marine Corps tried to recall me and everybody went to bat for me – Chief Faulkner and the Commissioners. I thought the program was great, and I learned so much in such a short period of time. It was definitely stressful, but with my military background, it was not that bad. The instructors were great and helped you everywhere they can.”

According to Reedy, “The program itself at Del Tech was very rewarding and very hard, but at the end it was rewarding to come out finished. It was very time-consuming and stressful, and I’m glad to be done. The instructors were awesome, they were always willing to go the extra mile to give you the help you needed. So far, I love working for the County, it’s very fulfilling to have such a rewarding job.”

Chief COLIN FAULKNER is glad to have them on board. According to Faulkner, “They just completed an aggressive course of study and we’re happy to have them on board. They’re going to be excellent medics and have graduated from a Delaware school that we support. Both are outstanding individuals and will do outstanding jobs for the County.”

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

(Continued from Page 4)

September 10, 2008 - Blood Pressure Checks at Library at 9:00 a.m., Kent County Administrative Complex, Room 257 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

September 13, 2008 - Heart Walk in Dover beginning at 9 a.m. at Mirror Lake. Join the County’s team of volunteer walkers. Contact Kathy Phinney or Yvonne Messina.

September 17, 2008 - Staff Development Session will be held at 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in Room 220 A/B in the Kent County Administrative Complex.

High Praise

Kudos to DEXTER KOLLIE, GIS Division, for a Constituent Comment Card praising him for his helpfulness and honesty by calling the customer when he left money on the counter. Outstanding!

Tech Talk

(Continued from Page 8)

Anyway (to make a long story short) as I left for lunch that day, some of my more seasoned co-workers noticed my folly and decided to have a little fun with it. So, when an hour later I returned, my belly full of the five dollar magic that only Burger King can provide, I was greeted by a terrifying sight. As I moved my mouse to release the screen saver, I was brought face to face with something so horrifying, that it pains me to talk about it even now. The standard issue blue of my windows background had been maliciously replaced with a rather humorous picture of a shirtless Scott Baio, bearing the merry heading: “Hey Baby!” across the top of it. Now then, I could say many things about that little prank I now refer to as “the incident”, but I think the most appropriate would be this: “lesson learned”. What happened to me that day is something that has stuck with even till this day. Sure…no fault, no foul. Right? I mean, it was just a silly way to learn a lesson. But, as you can tell from this diatribe, it was a one which most definitely stuck with me. Sadly, I can’t watch an episode of “Charles in Charge” or even “Happy Days” for that matter anymore without thinking about it. Yep, I guess some wounds just never fully heal.

Anyway, all joking aside, I think the point I am trying to make here is this. My experience (albeit a humorous one) was another example of how just about anyone can do pretty much whatever they please to a system that is left unsecured. Where I do not believe that any of our fine County employees would ever be quite so malevolent, the fact of the matter is that you never know just who might walk into this building; and, their intentions might not be as harmless as that of my former shop-mates. It is, after all, a public building. Therefore, to make sure that your email remains unread, you files are unaltered, and well...let’s face it...your dignity stays intact; it is always good to lock your computer when you leave your desk. Because...well...you never can tell. There are a lot of washed up teen sensations out there just waiting to be used against you. **3012**

Congratulations

Congratulations to RODNEY WYATT (WWF Plant Operator II) on his marriage to Rhonda R. Street on August 2, 2008 at the Cannon Mennonite Church in Bridgeville, DE. They spent a week in Maui, Hawaii for their honeymoon.
Volunteers can make a difference Oct. 25

By Carl Solberg, Asst. Director of Community Services/Parks

Kent County will once again mark National Make-A-Difference Day organizing volunteers to help with habitat restoration at the Shirley Hunn Conservation Area on Saturday, October 25, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (No “Rain” Date).

The Kent County Parks Division needs your help to complete the 2008 Phase of Wildlife Habitat Restoration at the new Shirley Hunn Conservation Area along the St. Jones River. The Conservation Area is located on Sorghum Mill Road near Lebanon Landing – 1/2 mile south of State Route 10.

Please help us begin a new section of tidal and freshwater habitat planting that will restore marsh and shorebird habitat along the St. Jones River. Be prepared to visit a remote and fascinating area of the St. Jones River that has not previously been open to the Public.

Kent County is completing its third year of remediation and habitat restoration activities at this former Superfund Landfill. Earlier work by Kent County residents, (some of them taking a good soaking at last year’s Make-A-Difference Day) has produced the first signs of a recovering ecosystem. An upland buffer shrub habitat planting survived yet another hot, dry summer. Tree Swallows abound having occupied the nest boxes we installed - intended for Eastern Blue Birds. Wood ducks, egrets, Great Blue and Green Herons, Owls, and perching birds are very evident throughout the Conservation Area. By mid October, we hope that the final seeding of the 16-acre Meadow Restoration Project will be completed.

Grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Delaware Land and Water Conservation Trust Fund, Kent Conservation District, and the First State Area Resource, Conservation, & Development Program are being used to re-establish wetlands and wetland buffers with native wetland grasses, shrubs, and flowering herbs. The Parks Division is engaging in the wholesale conversion of a degraded place to one that will support native wetland and upland plant communities. A major element of the over-all plan is the eradication of non-native Phragmites australis (Common Reed) with a diverse wetland grass, sedge and Spartina community. With the completion of three years of aerial herbicidal spraying, Parks staff are hand spraying the last remaining clusters of this towering invasive wetland species.

We can report that many acres of tidal wetland where spraying has been successful, instead of a dense monoculture of Phragmites, you can now observe colonization by a diversely native plant system. The duty ahead for us is to plant native species in areas that will reproduce and spread their seeds into the balance of the tidal wetland system, now that it has been released from the 40-year monoculture of Common Reed.

If you are volunteering; please bring work gloves, hard-soled, lace-up shoes or boots and a round point shovel. Rubber boots are a necessity for wetland shrub and plant areas. Dress for autumn outdoor work! Hot dogs, hot chocolate, coffee, donuts, and cold drinks will be provided to all volunteers. All participants under the age of 14 years must be accompanied by an adult volunteer. Due to the planting conditions, this activity is not appropriate for children under 10 years of age.

To register as a volunteer, contact: Glenn “Wayne” McCarty, Kent County Division of Parks, 302-744-2489 or e-mail him at wayne.mccarty@co.kent.de.us.

You may also register on the day of the event at the site.

Conserve, protect, and celebrate Kent County’s natural resources.
You can use yoga to overcome your health challenges

(Continued from Page 9)
that menopausal women who took two months of a weekly restorative yoga class, which uses props to support the postures, reported a 30% decrease in hot flashes. A four-month study at the University of Illinois found that many women who took a 90-minute lyengar class twice a week boosted both their energy and mood and reported less physical and sexual discomfort and reduced stress and anxiety.

The challenge: Chronic back pain. Mechanical low back pain is one of the most common complaints spoken to U.S. emergency physicians and accounts for more than 6 million cases annually. As a health problem, back pain is the third most costly disorder, after heart disease and cancer. The solution? When doctors at the HMO Group Health Cooperative in Seattle pitted 12 weekly sessions of yoga against therapeutic exercises and a handbook on self-care, they revealed the yoga group not only showed greater improvement but experienced benefits lasting 14 weeks longer. “While many poses are helpful, seated postures or extreme movement in one direction can make back pain worse,” says Gary Kraftsow, author of Yoga for Wellness, who designed the program for the study.

The challenge: Asthma. Asthma is the most common chronic disorder in childhood, affecting an estimated 6.2 million children under 18. The solution? At the Northern Colorado Allergy Asthma Clinic in Fort Collins, a controlled clinical study of university students (19 to 52 years old) with asthma concluded that yoga techniques seem beneficial as an adjunct to the medical management of asthma. Using a set of asanas, pranayama, and meditation, the yoga group practiced three times a week for 16 weeks. Pulmonary functions did not show a significant variance between yoga and control groups, but “analysis of the data showed that the subjects in the yoga group reported a significant degree of relaxation, positive attitude, and better yoga exercise tolerance.” There was also a tendency toward lesser usage of beta adrenergic inhalers.

The challenge: Depression. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, in any given one-year period, 9.5% of the U.S. population, or about 20.9 million adults, suffer from a depressive illness. Pre-schoolers are the fastest-growing market for antidepressants. At least 4% of preschoolers (over a million) are clinically depressed. The rate of increase of depression among children is 23%! 30% of women are depressed. By 2020, depression will be the second largest killer after heart disease, and studies show depression is a contributory factor to fatal coronary disease. Low brain levels of the neurotransmitter GABA are often found in people with depression. The solution? Yoga, it seems, can boost GABA. Preliminary research out of the Boston University School of Medicine and Harvard’s McLean Hospital found that healthy subjects who practiced yoga for one hour had a 27% increase in levels of GABA compared with a control group that simply sat and read for an hour. This supports a growing body of research that’s proving yoga can significantly improve mood and reduce the symptoms of depression and anxiety. “The development of an inexpensive, widely available intervention such as yoga that has no side effects but is effective in alleviating the symptoms of disorders associated with low GABA levels has clear public health advantage,” stated Perry Renshaw, MD, PhD, Director of the Brain Imaging Center, McLean Hospital.

The challenge: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS). CTS affects over eight million Americans and is the #1 reported medical problem, accounting for about 50% of all work-related injuries. About 260,000 carpal tunnel release operations are performed annually. Only 23% of all CTS patients were able to return to their previous professions following surgery. CTS results in the highest number of days lost among all work-related injuries. The Department of Labor has concluded that CTS is the “chief occupational hazard,” disabling workers in epidemic proportions. Women are twice as likely to develop CTS as their male counterparts. The solution? A randomized, single-blind, controlled clinical trial at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine concluded, “In this preliminary study, a yoga-based regimen was more effective than wrist splinting or no treatment in relieving some symptoms and signs of carpal tunnel syndrome.” The study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, also noted that “Subjects in the yoga groups had significant improvement in grip strength and pain reduction, but changes in grip strength and pain were not significant for control subjects.”

The challenge: Arthritis. By 2030, an estimated 67 million Americans aged 18 years or older are projected to have doctor-diagnosed arthritis. The solution? At the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, a yoga-treated group with osteoarthritis of the hands improved significantly more than the control group in “pain during activity, tenderness, and finger range of motion.” The random-
School bus safety—it’s everyone’s responsibility!

By J. Allen Metheny, Sr., Assistant Director of Public Safety/Emergency Management Division

It is that time of the year again when we need to think about school bus safety. Schools in the county have now opened. everyone must take some extra precautions while driving. Parents need to take an active role in bus safety by discussing the school bus safety rules with their children and making sure that their children follow the rules set by their parents and school officials.

As a refresher, some of the pertinent State laws and rules follow:

Drivers

• Drivers traveling in either direction on a two-lane road must stop when a school bus activates its flashing lights and stop sign.
• Drivers traveling in the same direction as a school bus on a four-lane road must stop for a stopped school bus. Drivers traveling in the opposite direction are not required to stop.
• Delaware law requires vehicles to stop even when the bus is stopped to load/unload students on private property.
• Anyone convicted of passing a stopped school bus can be fined as much as $230 for the first offense, and as much as $575 for the second offense. The individual will also have their license suspended for between 1 and 12 months.

Parents

• If your children’s bus stop is not near your home, walk the route to that stop with them until they are familiar with it.
• Make sure your child knows what time the bus is scheduled to arrive and make sure he or she gets to the stop early, so the child can avoid rushing. Children in a rush are less likely to follow safety practices.
• Parents should consider the safety of their children at the bus stop and possibly walk the students to the bus stop and wait for the bus to arrive. Parents may need to be at the bus stop at the end of the day waiting for their children.
• Teach children to follow these common sense practices to make school bus transportation safer.

Children (Parents, please discuss these safety issues with your children)

• Wait for the bus in a safe place. Avoid horseplay that could cause you to fall into the street.
• Never run to or from the bus.
• Don’t push or shove when getting on or off the bus.
• Learn about the “danger zone”. That’s a 10-foot wide area on all sides of the bus, where the driver cannot see you. When you get off the bus, step outside of the danger zone until you can see the driver’s face.
• Only cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you.
• Never run behind the bus, or bend down to pick up an object. The bus driver may think you’ve crossed safely and start to move.
• Do not distract the bus driver so that he/she may get you safely to and from school.

Every year in Kent County, the paramedics and local fire companies and ambulances respond to numerous accidents involving school buses. Many of these accidents are caused by inattentive drivers.

As a driver, you should always anticipate that a school bus in front of you will be stopping to pick up children. Please be alert for the frequent stops.

In addition, the children do not pay attention to what they are doing and may run out in the road while they are waiting at the school bus stop.

If everyone does his or her part, together we can make Kent County first in School Bus Safety. We do not want extra work for our fire companies, paramedics, and police agencies.
Yoga can be beneficial

(Continued from Page 12)

randomized controlled clinical trial, published in the Journal of Rheumatology, concluded, “this yoga-derived program was effective in providing relief in hand osteoarthritis. Further studies are needed to compare this with other treatments and to examine long-term effects.”

Although more funding is being allocated for research, it is clearly not enough to offset the staggering costs of our nation’s poor health. It’s time for each of us to take control of our own health and well-being.

Yoga has been proven to relieve or solve a range of health challenges. With a little basic knowledge, people of all socio-economic backgrounds can improve their health.

Kent County Parks and Recreation will hold “Yoga/Abs and Overall Fitness” at the Harvest Years Senior Center in Camden on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30–9:15 a.m. There will be two sessions, the first from September 4 through October 21, and the second from October 28 through December 18. Participants will practice traditional yoga poses to enhance flexibility, strength, coordination and balance. Interested? Contact Parks and Recreation at 744-2495.

(Yoga information from www.yogamonth.org)

EMS learns animal rescue

(Continued from Page 7)

TLAER is a three day course for animal rescuers that teaches a very deliberate and planned response to animal rescue situations. Rescuers are taught good practices for securing the scene, assessing the dangers and the life threats to both the victim and the rescuers, extrication techniques, and the use of specialized rescue equipment. Six members of the Kent County Technical Rescue Team attended this course last month when it was given at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine at New Bolton Center, Kennett Square, PA. The veterinarians that teach this course have spent more than a decade researching and developing the techniques and equipment necessary to effect safe and efficient animal rescues. They apply their techniques to all sorts of large animals from pigs, horses, and mules to llamas, rhinos, and elephants. With the addition of some specialized equipment to supplement the gear already on hand, the Tech Rescue Team will be able to conduct such rescues with a far better approach and understanding so that everyone, rescuers and animals, will come out safely. **8295** **8501**
Get your library card during September

By Hilary Welliver, Associate Librarian

September is National Library Card Sign-Up Month - a time when Kent County Public Library reminds parents that a library card is the most important school supply of all. No child is too young to have a library card at Kent County Public Library.

To get a library card for your child (and for yourself), come to the front desk with your driver’s license showing a current Delaware address. You can sign up for a card on the Bookmobile, too. (It stops at the Kent County Administration Building each Friday from noon until 1 p.m.)

If you do not have this identification, call 698-6440 and we will tell you what other items are suitable identification. **0735**

Flu season is just around the corner!

Flu season is just around the corner! There are lots of myths surrounding flu shots – check out the facts.

**MYTH:** The flu is just like a bad cold. **FACT:** Influenza (the flu) is much dangerous than a bad cold. It's a disease of the lungs, and can lead to pneumonia. Each year about 114,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized, and about 20,000 people die because of the flu. Most who die are over 65, but small children under 2 are as likely as those over 65 to have to go to the hospital because of the flu.

**MYTH:** The shot can give you the flu. **FACT:** Flu vaccines are made from killed influenza viruses. They cannot give you the flu.

**MYTH:** The vaccine isn’t 100% effective, so I’m better off getting the flu. **FACT:** No vaccine is 100% effective. But, if you get a flu shot but still get the flu, you are likely to be far less sick than you would have been without the protection.

**MYTH:** The side effects are worse than the flu. **FACT:** The worst side effect you’re likely to get is a sore arm. The risk of a rare allergic reaction is far less than the risk of severe complications from influenza.

**MYTH:** Only the very old and sick need the flu shot. **FACT:** Both adults and children who are in good health need a flu shot to stay healthy. Even if you aren’t at high risk for complications, you should get a flu shot to prevent the flu and to protect everyone you live and have contact with.

**TRUE:** “Even if I get a flu shot, I can still get the flu.” This can happen, but the flu shot usually protects most people from the flu. However, it will not protect you from other viruses that can cause illnesses that feel like the flu.

**TRUE:** “Not everyone can take the flu shot.” If you’re allergic to eggs (which are used in making the vaccine), you could become very ill with a high fever. If you’ve had a severe reaction to the vaccine in the past, you might not be able to get this protection. Everyone who receives a flu shot is screened for these (Continued on Page 16)
Flu season coming
(Continued from Page 15)
factors.

A flu shot can be given before or during the flu season. While the best time to get a flu shot is October or November, a flu shot in December or later will still protect you against the flu.

If you have any questions about receiving a County-provided flu shot, please feel free to call the Personnel Office at 744-2312.

Navigate office politics
(Continued from Page 7)

HITCHENS, SHARON IVORY, JOYCE MELVIN, FRAN MOORE, BRET SCOTT, ANGEL SHORT, CARL SOLBERG, and MIKE WARD.

Employees who attended an August session for “Effective Communication” were RON BOWMAN, JUNE GLADDEN, EVELYN JOPP, GALE MAAS, SHEILA ROSS, and JAMES WELSH.

Thank you for your continued interest in employee development!

Welcome to Levy Court!
Name: THEO BOONE
Job: Paramedic Trainee
Date hired: August 19, 2008
Education: In college
What I like most about my new job: The community
Greatest accomplishment: First semester of medic school
Future goals: Run a marathon
Person/event that most inspired me in my career: My older sister
If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Nothing
I’m most relaxed and happy when I’m doing this: Playing with my dog
Family: Five sisters
Most recent movie enjoyed: The Dark Knight
Favorite TV show: Law and Order
Favorite sport: Weight lifting
Favorite meal: Mexican
Favorite music: Any
Favorite saying or slogan: Hindsight is 20/20.
Who has had the most impact on my life: My older sister
A dream I have is to: Hike the Grand Canyon
If I won a million dollars, I would: Take a week off
You’d be surprised to learn that I: Love to cook
The most adventurous thing I’ve ever done is: Moving to Delaware

Welcome to Levy Court!
Name: NICHOLAS HORN
Job: Paramedic Trainee
Date hired: August 19, 2008
Education: In college
What I like most about my new job: The unexpected that comes with each day
Greatest accomplishment: Learned to fly hot air balloons
Future goals: To earn a Master’s Degree
Person/event that most inspired me in my career: My mother
If I had it to do over, I would have done this differently: Nothing
I’m most relaxed and happy when I’m doing this: Hiking
Family: Mother and a brother
Most recent movie enjoyed: Basic
Favorite TV show: American Chopper
Favorite sport: Baseball
Favorite meal: Italian
Favorite music: Gospel
Favorite saying or slogan: Sometimes the hard decisions aren’t the easy ones.
Who has had the most impact on my life: My mother
A dream I have is to: Hike the Alps
If I won a million dollars, I would: Tour Europe and invest what was left
You’d be surprised to learn that I: Enjoy visiting waterfalls and covered bridges
The most adventurous thing I’ve ever done is: Learned to fly gliders
A word that describe me: Motivated
**County Library celebrates summer reading success**

*By Hillary Welliver, Associate Librarian*

Since it first opened its doors, Kent County Library and the Bookmobile have participated in the statewide Summer Reading Program for children. This year, a record 455+ children registered to read for ten hours each! Successful participants received a free paperback book prize, a certificate of accomplishment, and an invitation to the Friends of Kent County Public Library’s Summer Reading Celebration.

The Summer Reading Celebration was held on August 20, at Brecknock Park. The Friends of Kent County Public Library provided a picnic dinner to each of the 199 people who attended. Then participants were treated to a prize drawing, and an exclusive production of “Puss in Boots,” performed by the Rehoboth Summer Children’s Theatre.

Summer Reading programs are important in helping children maintain literacy skills when they are on summer break from school. Studies show that children who participate in such programs maintain or improve their reading skills, while children who do not, often fall behind by as much as half a year!

This summer’s theme was “Catch the Reading Bug @ Your Library!”

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**Help your community at the Heart Walk on Sept. 13**

*By Kathy Phinney, Senior Secretary & Yvonne Messina, Personnel Technician I*

It is not too late to help your community by participating in the annual Heart Walk on Saturday, September 13, 2008 starting at Mirror Lake in Dover. This is the fifth year that Kent County has participated with a team.

KATHY PHINNEY and YVONNE MESSINA have been working hard to recruit walkers and pledges. Don’t forget to recruit friends and family also.

To supplement the pledges, the team is taking cash donations to the American Heart Association. For a $1.00 donation your name will go on a red heart, a silver heart for a $5.00 donation and a gold heart for $10.00 donation. Your name will also be listed on the plasma TV in the Lobby of the Administrative Complex. The “Hearts” will be available at various counters in the Administrative Complex, the Library, the WWF and the Public Safety Building. **All money raised goes toward heart disease research, education for prevention and treatment, and community service programs.**

Last year we raised over $1,700. Help us exceed that total this year. We have already collected $178 from Womens Heart Health week.

The Longaberger Basket raffle in July raised over $100. Congratulations to GALE MAAS, Clerk in the mailroom, for winning the Longaberger® Spring Basket with the liner and protector and thank you to all who participated.
SOME ANSWERS TO THOSE NAGGING QUESTIONS

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Q. Recently a co-worker was sent for a random drug test. I was wondering what would happen if he flunked it?

A. You ask a very complex and complicated questions, but I will do my best to make the process understandable. Substance abuse is considered an illness, so when a person tests positive for drug use, they are sent for a second test to confirm the result. If the second test is negative, it is assumed that the first was a “false positive” and there are no consequences. If the second test confirms illegal drug use, then the employee is afforded the opportunity to seek treatment for the condition. He will be placed on Family & Medical Leave during the treatment process and upon his return would be regularly tested for a period of time to confirm his sobriety. The process is similar for alcohol abuse.

Q. Why doesn’t the County randomly drug test all employees?

A. The courts have ruled that public employees cannot be subjected to random drug testing unless they work in a safety sensitive position. This ruling does not apply to private sector employees. Most Kent County employees do not serve in safety sensitive positions. By federal law, those employees with a commercial driver’s license must be subjected to random drug testing. We also randomly test a County paramedic each month as provided in their union contract.

Q. On at least three occasions I have observed employees being moved from one division to another or even between departments, but the position to which they were transferred was not advertised. How can that happen?

A. In general, the personnel ordinance allows department heads to reassign staff within their department where need is the greatest. Most departments have three divisions, so the department head has a wide array of positions from which to choose. Since these reassignments insure the operating efficiency of the department, no posting is required. Such reassignments can also occur for medical or health reasons. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires employers to accommodate disabled employees if possible and that can include a job transfer if the person is capable of performing the duties of the new position. With regard to inter-departmental transfers, the personnel ordinance permits the Personnel Director to make such transfers for efficiency and compliance reasons, if the person is qualified to perform the duties of the new position.

Q. The Democrats have nominated an African-American for President, but as I look around at my co-workers I notice they are almost all white. What is the County doing to diversify the workforce?

A. The issue is very important to the County and was the subject of a study in 2001. Now seven years later, a team from the University of Delaware is studying the matter again and it is hoped that the final report will provide some concrete recommendations on how to attract qualified diverse applicants and how to retain those we have. Stay tuned.

Q. Why do some people in certain offices get more break/talk time than others? It can be especially annoying when staff is trying to work.

A. Your question is short on details, so it is hard to specifically answer it. But I can say that all supervisors are aware that employees are only entitled to two breaks and a lunch period per day. The courts have ruled that a short trip to the bathroom is not a “break”. Often a good working team includes some chit-chat, to build camaraderie, but the work tasks have to be completed in a timely manner or the employee will likely be the subject of some form of disciplinary counseling.

Q. I recently observed an hourly co-worker grocery shopping in the middle of the afternoon. She had a full basket, so it was obvious she had been there a while. I assumed she had taken the day off or at least a partial day. I learned however she had entered a full days work on her time sheet. I informed her supervisor, but nothing was done about it. What should I do if it happens again?

A. Employees who falsify there timesheet are subject to severe disciplinary action. This amounts to theft. I am surprised that no action was take by the supervisor, and without more details it is impossible to verify. If you see this employee again in a questionable situation, contact the Personnel Office.