

Happy New Year to Kent County Employees and Retirees!

# KENT CONNECTIONS

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



## Employee of the Month *Cyndi Laird*

The Kent County Employee Council has selected CYNTHIA "CYNDI" LAIRD from the Finance Department as the January 2006 Employee of the Month.

Cyndi, a Kent County employee since November 2003, is an Account Analyst responsible for assisting with the preparation of annual budgets and year-end financial statements, assisting auditors, insuring compliance with GASB rules, and State laws and regulations pertaining to the financial activities of sewage treatment plant and other utility related services.

Cyndi came to Levy Court with 26 years experience as an Accountant, formerly employed in New Jersey and City of Wilmington. Cyndi's background, experience, and knowledge with accounts payable, payroll, bank reconciliation, budget analysis, and an array of other accounting skills have accentuated the progress and success of daily activities within the Finance Department.

Cyndi is always willing to go above and beyond for the County, her department and especially the Employee Council. She never hesitates to take action when a challenge arises.

Congratulations Cyndi on a job well done!

## COMING NEXT MONTH:

- > What did the Benefits Study report say?
- > Who is running for Employee Council in 2006?
- > How did the new payroll software transition go?

## 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.*

## Mike Harrington named Employee of the Year

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

It is the top honor for a Kent County employee. One person is selected from among 12 monthly contenders to represent the best qualities embodied in all County employees—excellent customer service, outstanding performance, and exemplary character.

For 2005, MICHAEL W. HARRINGTON was recognized as the Employee of the Year at the annual Employee Holiday Dinner & Dance on December 2. Harrington is an Engineering Technician II in the Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works, responsible for sewer line construction inspection, sewer line locates, and troubleshooting.

Harrington said he was honored by the selection especially in light of the high quality staff in contention for the annual award. He received a plaque and check for \$500.

"I was shocked when my name was called at the dinner/dance," commented Harrington. "I would also like to say that every other County employee deserves a pat on the back because you are a great bunch of people and the County as a whole would not function without each of you."

This year's contenders from January to December 2005 were: JANET L. LLOYD (Deeds Office); GINA M. GLANDEN (Planning Services/Inspections & Enforcement); FLORENCE S. GREENE (Planning Services/Library Services); CAROL A. DILL (Wills Office); KATHY M. SKINNER (Planning Services/Planning); GALE E. MAAS (Administration); J. BRENT MOLLOHAN (Community Services/Recreation); LISA E. COOPER (Tax Office); MICHAEL W. HARRINGTON (Public Works/Engineering); LINDA H. PFEIFFER (Finance); JASON A. MacDONALD (Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services); and MARTY A. HAYES (Clerk of the Peace Office).



# CAT BOX



By Cathleen McLean, Payroll Administrator

Several items will be changing in the upcoming tax year. Here are the few that have direct impact on Kent County Employees:

**IRS Tables**-The one thing that affects all Kent County employees is the change in the IRS Tax Tables. Each bracket of the Tax Tables for 2006 has an increase in the range that is taxable. What this means is that more of your wages will get taxed at a lower rate. Example: Married/10% bracket for 2005 was taxed starting after the first \$8,000 through \$22,600. Now, that bracket goes up to \$22,900. What this means is that there is an increase of \$300 of your annual wages that will be taxed at the 10% rate rather than 15%. To see all of the changes for each bracket go to [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov) and locate the 2006 Tax Tables. Look for Tax Table #7 Annual Payroll Period.

**ICMA**-The new annual limit for 457 deferred compensation has been raised to \$15,000 dollars. This increases the amount that you may defer by \$1,000 from 2005.

**Social Security**-The amount of wages that can be taxed as Social Security wages has been raised to \$94,200. This was an increase of \$4,200 that will now be taxable as Social Security wages.

If you have questions, call me at 744-2387.

## 2006 County Holidays

New Year's Day	Jan. 2	Monday
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Jan. 16	Monday
Presidents Day	Feb. 20	Monday
Good Friday	April 14	Friday
Memorial Day	May 29	Monday
Independence Day	July 4	Tuesday
Labor Day	Sept. 4	Monday
Columbus Day	Oct. 9	Monday
Election Day	Nov. 7	Tuesday
Veterans Day	Nov. 10	Friday
Thanksgiving Day	Nov. 23	Thursday
Day after Thanksgiving	Nov. 24	Friday
Christmas Day	Dec. 25	Monday

## EOM INSIGHT



**Name:** CYNDI LAIRD

**Job:** Account Analyst in Finance Department

**Years with the County:** 2

**Education:** Bachelors in Accounting; Associates in Computer Programming

**What I like most about my job:** The camaraderie and group effort

**Family:** My daughter, Kristina; two dogs, a cat, and one horse

**After work I enjoy:** Working outside and at the farm

**Favorite new movie:** "50 First Dates"

**Favorite old movies:** "Dirty Dancing" and "Pretty Woman"

**Favorite TV shows:** "Survivor" and "CSI"

**Favorite meal:** Salmon filet on the grill

**Favorite Kent County restaurant:** Chicago Uno

**People (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** My mother, father, and sister, whom I miss

**I'm most proud of:** My daughter, Kristina – she has become quite a young woman

**If I've learned one thing in life, it's:** Believe nothing that you hear and only half of what you see.

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

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Ride the Rocky Mountains on horseback

## 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. BARBARA STOUGH of Finance and JEAN FABI of Planning Services found their numbers and claimed their movie tickets in December.



It's easy to pry open the Personnel Director's wallet and win a Carmike Cinema movie ticket -- just read Kent Connections every month and stay informed about what's going on in Kent County! \*\*0586\*\*

## Levy Court okays window blinds to shade Complex sun

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Sunglasses at work will no longer be necessary for employees performing duties at the Kent County Administrative Complex, thanks to the window shade bid approved by Levy Court last month.



The bright summer sun as well as low horizon winter sunshine has caused at least one employee to resort to wearing sunglasses at her desk, while others have had to use shadows to shade computer screens during the latter part of the workday. In addition, the Complex's large windows have heated up work areas, despite built in ultraviolet light protection.

After polling the managers of the affected offices, Levy Court awarded the \$46,550 bid to JP Associates. The design specifications feature remote controlled mechanical shades for offices on the south side of the building including the Finance Department, Clerk of the Peace Office, the Personnel Office, and the Conference Room (220 A & B). The mechanical design was selected so that the shades will be evenly set across the Complex office windows.

According to Public Works Director HANS MEDLARZ, the new blinds are expected to be installed in late March or early April depending upon when the shades color scheme is selected. Sample blind textures and colors are on display in the Finance Department.

"Our employees are grateful to Levy Court for securing these much needed window shades," commented Finance Director SUSAN DURHAM.

## Fire drill set for new Kent County Complex in January

By J. Allen Methery, Safety Officer

In a concerted effort to improve disaster preparedness in County operations, a fire safety/security program will be initiated beginning this month.

Some time during the month of January, a fire drill will be conducted at the new Kent County Administrative Complex and every employee is expected to leave the building and insure that any customers in the building also vacate. Fire drills will also be conducted in other County facilities over the ensuing months. Afterward, an evaluation will be performed and reports issued about any failures.

Various offices in the Complex will be assigned conference rooms and restrooms to check before departure. If someone is found in a conference room for instance, they should be advised that the fire alarm is sounding and they must leave promptly.

When exiting a building during a fire drill, employees should do so calmly and quickly. Also take notice of the outside weather, and bring along a coat or umbrella as needed. Personal belongings such as purses or wallets should be taken, but other items should remain. The evacuation will be timed and evaluators will be stationed at various points in the building to observe the process.

In order to maintain safety awareness, future fire drills will be conducted without notice. All staff members are expected to treat each drill as though an actual emergency exists and immediately vacate the premises. Employees failing to promptly exit the affected building during a fire drill will be subject to disciplinary action.



## Wastewater Plant receives regional EPA award

By Bret Scott, Communications & Research Assistant

Kent County's Wastewater Treatment Plant is no stranger to receiving awards. For the second time since 1998, the plant received the Environmental Protection Agency Region III Operation and Maintenance Excellence Award. The plant was selected to represent the EPA in its national competition.

Jim Kern, Environmental Engineer for the EPA was on hand to present the award to Levy Court Commissioners ALLAN ANGEL, P. BROOKS BANTA, DONALD BLAKEY, RICHARD ENNIS, HAROLD J. PETERMAN.

"This is a remarkable accomplishment," says Commissioner Peterman. "This award is a testament (Continued on Page 4)



## ON THE MOVE. . .

Compiled by Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II  
 12/02/85 PATTY VIRIDIN, Senior Secretary, Planning Services/Planning - 20 years  
 12/03/90 BRUCE CHILLAS, Paramedic II, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services - 15 years  
 12/31/90 HAROLD "JACK" PETERMAN, Levy Court Commissioner - 15 years  
 12/31/90 RONALD SMITH, Levy Court Commissioner, - 15 years  
 12/05/00 DYLAN CARRAR, Dispatcher II, Public Safety/Emergency Communications - 5 years  
 12/21/00 DENISE CAYZ, Library Supervisor, Community Services/Library Services - 5 years

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



January 2, 2006 - New Years Day holiday!  
 County Offices Closed.

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

January 5, 2006 - Employee Training Session on "How to let go of little things (annoyances)". Sessions will be held at 9 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in room 220 A/B in the Kent County Administrative Complex.

January 11, 2006 - Blood Pressure Checks at Annex at 9 a.m., Kent County Administrative Complex Room 222 from 9:30 - 11 a.m., O'Brien Bldg. from 11-11:30.

January 11, 2006 - L&W Rep. to answer health insurance questions from 1-2 p.m. in Room 214 at the Kent County Administrative Complex.

January 16, 2006 - Martin Luther King's birthday holiday. County offices closed. \*\*0735\*\*

**EPA awards treatment plant**

*(Continued from Page 3)*

to the hard work and dedication of our treatment plant staff. We are honored to be recognized as one of the best."

The award honors the treatment plant staff involved in the day-to-day operations of the facility, and recognizes local officials for their commitment to maintain and protect their community's environment.

EPA reviews mountains of data and inspects the facilities to determine the winners of this award. Award recipients are selected for their performance in complying with wastewater discharge permits, maintenance management, laboratory practices, personnel training, and public awareness needs.

## COUNTY BIRTHDAYS

**JANUARY**

02 Ana Iturriaga, Public Works/Facilities Mgt.  
 03 Crystal Yerkes, Deeds Office  
 04 Mark Jacobs, Planning Services/Planning  
 04 Harold Venable, Public Works/WWF  
 06 Betty Lou McKenna, Recorder of Deeds  
 07 Shannon Morris, Planning Services/I & E  
 08 James Smith, Public Works/WWF  
 09 Kenneth Eckard, Public Works/WWF  
 14 Allen Metheny, Public Safety/Emergency Mgt.  
 15 Mike Ward, Planning Services  
 17 Allan Angel, Levy Court Commissioner  
 18 Debbie Cline, Deeds Office  
 18 Denise Cayz, Community Services/Library Svcs.  
 18 Jason Berry, Planning Services/Planning  
 18 Sabrina Fite, Planning Services/Planning  
 20 Richard Ennis, Levy Court Commissioner  
 20 David Henderson, Sheriff's Office  
 20 Colin Faulkner, Public Safety Director  
 20 Edward Semans, Public Safety/Emer. Comm.  
 21 Carol Dill, Wills Office  
 22 Brian Hall, Public Works/Engineering  
 22 Kathy Skinner, Planning Services/Planning  
 23 Merritt Savage, Planning Services/Planning  
 25 James Brown, Community Services/Parks  
 25 John Naylor, Public Safety/EMS  
 26 Jim Higdon, Sheriff  
 27 Chuck Hurd, Public Safety/EMS  
 27 Hans Medlarz, Public Works Director  
 28 Tom Weyant, Register of Wills  
 28 Leslie Persans, Planning Services/I & E  
 29 John Witzke, Public Safety/EMS  
 30 John Foley, Sheriff's Office  
 30 Kathy Phinney, Administration  
 31 Dexter Kollie, Planning Services/Planning

**FEBRUARY**

05 Donald A. Blakey, Levy Court Commissioner  
 05 Toby Sitler, Public Safety/EMS  
 06 Margaret Talley, Comptroller  
 08 Diane Lockerman, Assessment Office  
 09 Albert Porecca, Public Works/Engineering  
 09 Bret Scott, Administration  
 11 Brian Costa, Planning Services/Planning  
 11 Mark Kennedy, Administration  
 11 Lorri Tanaka, Administration  
 12 Susan Durham, Finance Director  
 12 Jesse Wallace, Public Works/WWF  
 15 Jerri Thompson, Public Safety/EMS  
 17 Florence Greene, Comm. Services/Library Svcs.

*(Continued on Page 10)*

## Pennies from heaven effort a big success for adopted family

By Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

County employees reached deep in their pockets and pulled through for a needy family last month with a grand total of \$1,100 collected from the “Pennies from Heaven” jars located in the various Kent County offices.



The family assigned to the County through the Adopt-A-Family program included a single mother of four girls ages 12, 14, 15, and 17. The family received well over the requested \$400 after 59 days of loose change donations including everything from pennies to \$10 bills (euro, Canadian, and transit coins were excluded from the count).

The family assigned to the County was considered “high priority” by the volunteer agency, since the mother was hospitalized often throughout the preceding year and has a serious physical illness. The ailments made it impossible for her to provide a nice Christmas for her children.

The coins were converted to cash and then used to purchase gift cards from the following stores on the family’s wish list: Target \$50, Food Lion \$200, Wal-Mart \$550, Shore Stop \$200, and Shoe Show \$100.

The Division/Row Office that raised the most money per capita was the Clerk of the Peace Office, as a result they received a pizza party compliments of the Personnel Director. Close behind were the Personnel Office and Planning Division.

All divisions and offices deserve a round of applause for making this a memorable Christmas for our adopted family. It further proves that Kent County employees really care about our community.

### High Praise



Kudos to the Kent County DISPATCHERS for collecting 18 frozen turkeys and donating them to the Shepherd’s Place homeless shelter last month. *Great!*

Congrats to LAURA OGDEN and SABRINA FITE in the GIS section of the Planning Services Department for Constituent Comment Cards praising their excellent customer service. *Outstanding!!!*

## Employee wage (W-2) forms out by Jan. 31

By Cathleen McLean, Payroll Administrator

It’s that time of year again.

Some employees love tax time—anticipating that big tax refund check. Then there are those of us who cringe at the sound of the word “W-2”.

As required by law, your W-2 statement will be distributed by January 31, 2006, but much has to be done before then.

Fortunately, we have received the last paycheck of the calendar year (2005). From those calculations, any necessary changes that need to be reflected on the W-2 are made. Those changes come from the verification sheet that was sent to each department last month.

If we have third-party disability participants, which we do, we are required to prepare a manual W-2 from the provider report which usually arrives the second week in January. Then, imputed income  
(Continued on Page 6)



## Dental max reset Jan. 1

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

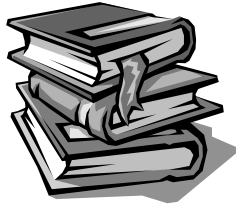
Have you been putting off that much-needed visit to the dentist because you maxed out the annual benefit? Don’t wait a minute longer, the annual (calendar year) \$1,000 maximum cost allowed under the County’s dental plan reset on January 1.

Delta Dental is the third-party administrator for the County’s self-insured dental program. The plan pays 100% in-network of the cost for preventative procedures (including x-rays), 80% for restorative, and 50% for most other procedures of reasonable and customary fees up to a maximum County expense of \$1,000 per calendar year.

A special dental card is not required with Delta Dental, but most dental offices request that new patients bring in a dental claim form available at the Personnel Office.



## FROM THE STACKS



By Flo Greene, Library Technician

### Still Woman Enough

by Loretta Lynn

Not a new book by any means but as any country music fan will tell you, country music stars last forever, some can even be considered immortal.

In her latest book the Queen of country music takes us beyond the early years as described in the book and film "Coal Miner's Daughter" to explore the later years of her life.

The book's title is taken from her hit song "You Ain't Woman Enough to Take My Man".

She tells of the price she's paid for her stardom and the personal losses she has had. Her story has been an inspiration to countless fans.

Becoming a mother at age 14 and having 4 children by age 18 would stop the aspirations of most women who dropped out of school after the sixth grade but not Loretta Lynn. Enduring bouts of domestic violence at the hands of her hard-drinking husband, the death of an adult son and the stresses of a stormy marriage have all combined to make her what she is.

As a Solo artist her first album became a number one hit. She performed with many of country's greats such as Ernest Tubb and Conway Twitty and many others. \*\*1310\*\* \*\*1783\*\* \*\*3768\*\*

## Employee pay (W-2) forms

(Continued from Page 5)

must be added to those employees who earn over \$50,000 for the value of the extra life insurance provided by the County—it is a taxable benefit over \$50K.

Lastly, all of the fortunate folks who commute in a County-owned vehicle will have an imputed income amount added to their W-2 based on the number of days they drove their vehicle to and from work. When all of this is completed then a magnetic tape is prepared for the IRS and the Delaware Division of Revenue so that your income and the amount of taxes you paid is on file. Now comes the time to print, and invariably something happens when we try to print the first time.

In the end we successfully print and distribute your W-2 by January 31, 2006. Happy New Year!

## Recipe of the Month

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

### MONSTER COOKIES

3 eggs  
 1¼ cups light brown sugar  
 1 cup granulated sugar  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
 1 12-ounce jar creamy peanut butter  
 1 stick butter, softened  
 ½ cup multi-colored chocolate candies  
 ½ cup chocolate chips  
 ¼ cup raisins (optional)  
 2 teaspoons baking soda  
 4½ cups quick-cooking oatmeal (not instant)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper or nonstick baking mats.

In a very large mixing bowl, combine the eggs and sugars. Mix well. Add the salt, vanilla, peanut butter, and butter. Mix well. Stir in the chocolate candies, chocolate chips, raisins (if using), baking soda, and oatmeal. Drop by tablespoons 2 inches apart onto the prepared cookie sheets.

Bake for 8 to 10 minutes. Do not overbake. Let stand for about 3 minutes before transferring to wire racks to cool. When cool, store in large resealable plastic bags.

Recipe courtesy Donna Haney as adapted by Paula Deen for [foodnetwork.com](http://foodnetwork.com)

## Kent Co. Employee Obsessions

With the holiday season upon us, the display case on the main floor of the Kent County Administrative complex features a village of painted ceramic structures decorated for Christmas. The collection of miniature houses from the idyllic town of "Dickensville" belongs to Payroll Administrator CATHLEEN "Cat" McLEAN.

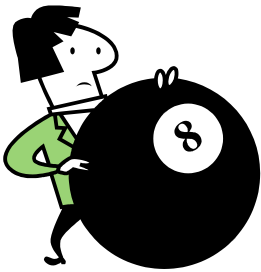
Also check out the upstairs display case featuring the eclectic collection of souvenirs from Personnel Director ALLAN KUJALA's trip to Peru including photos of Machu Picchu, Inca inspired jewelry, native gourd carving, and ceramic candelabra.

Do you collect stuff? Share your obsession! Contact the Personnel Office for more information to show off your unique collection in February/March.

## Learn how to let go of the little things at training session

By Sophie F. Dear, Personnel Technician II

Last month, the training topic was “What Do You Need To Let Go Of?” (via a CareerTrack video), which gave employees a look at how we unknowingly “hold on” to issues that cause us problems, how to differentiate between minor and major problems, and how to let go.



As a follow-up, someone asked if the January training session could include more information on the “how to” of letting go. I’m doing some re-

search to see if I can find enough for a presentation.

Two sessions will be held on Thursday, January 5, 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 one of the sessions, contact me in Personnel at 744-2312, by e-mail (if you have a list), or in person.

In December, County employees who received credit for the training session were KELLY BLANCHIES, KAREN COOPER, LISA COOPER, KIM DIXON, MARY EISENBREY, RUBY FARMER, JUNE GLADDEN, KATHY GOODEN, ANDREA ILLIG, DIANE LOCKERMAN, CHRISTINA MORTON, SHEILA ROSS, LESLIE VASQUEZ, NANCY WELCH, and CARISSA ZEITERS.

Another employee has achieved 15 CEU’s and received a one percent pay increase – **CARISSA ZEITERS**. Congratulations!

### *Congratulations*

*Congratulations to KRIS CONNELLY of the Planning Division on his marriage to Courtney Booze from Milford on December 17, 2005. They were married at Avenue United Methodist Church with the reception proceeding at the Rehoboth Country Club. They set off on their honeymoon on December 26, 2005 for a week in St. Lucia.*

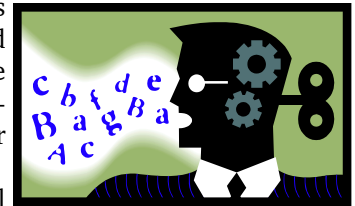
*Congratulations to MARK and Paula KENNEDY, Media Systems Coordinator in the Administration Department, on the birth of daughter, Nalla Briere on December 29, 2005 at 8:55 a.m. She weighed in at 6 lbs, 14 oz, and measured 20 inches long. She joins two older brothers, Jaren (5), Lemuel (4) and sister, Niomi (2).*

## Make a resolution to avoid statements of the obvious

By Dave Mick, EMS Operations Support Officer

Happy New Year!!!!

A New Year’s Resolution: Try to avoid statements that make you sound like professional advertisers or news people.



I think it all started with the “Live on tape” concept. It’s just a joke, right? No one really said that like it was better than “previously recorded”? Or did they?

Recently a local news broadcast had a story about how fast the population in Delaware is growing. I think they said Delaware was the 9<sup>th</sup> fastest growth state in the country. What caught my ear was that they ended the story with the statement: “Most people who are moving to Delaware are coming from other states.” I couldn’t help but wonder who was the first person to move to Delaware from here?

A local radio station ran a bit about the Lewes Dairy and the seasonal egg nog. The only trouble was the broadcaster showed his ignorance of the community by pronouncing the name as “Lews Dairy”.

And just today I heard a news story about a fire at a housing complex. The reporter talked about how well the firefighters had stopped the blaze and prevented it from spreading to adjoining dwellings. Then the report ended “...but they were unable to prevent the damage done before they arrived”. That seems understandable to me.

Next I’m sure we’ll be hearing advertisements in January claiming “The lowest sale prices of the year.” Well, Duh.....that make sense. They’ll surely make liars of themselves later on when in December they make the same claim.

I hope you find these a bit amusing as did I. I like catching them from time to time...I just want to avoid making them myself.

On a serious note: please take time this new year to reflect upon who and what we have lost and who and what we have gained. At least one time during the year a good dose of perspective seems in order.

Happy New Year and Be Safe.

## EMPLOYEE COUNCIL NEWS



By Jennifer Graham, Employee Council Secretary

**H**APPY NEW YEAR!!! Hope everyone enjoyed the holidays! According to many Kent County employees the annual Holiday Dinner Dance proved to be another successful event. Congratulations to all employees who won door prizes and to LESLIE PER-SANS who won the 50/50 raffle. The Employee Council members are already planning next years event which will be held on Saturday, December 16, 2006 at the Duncan Center in Dover.

The Employee Council would like to thank everyone for their help with the Employee Council luncheon. As always, the employees went out of their way to prepare some mouth-watering dishes for all to enjoy. A special thanks to ROBERT SAVAGE of the Wastewater Facilities Division for cooking the turkeys, to the Facilities Management staff for setting up for the event, and all of the Department and Division Managers for donating gifts for door prizes.

During the awards ceremony at the Holiday Dinner Dance, MIKE HARRINGTON of the Department of Public Works, Division of Engineering was revealed as the 2005 Kent County Employee of the Year. Way to go Mike!!!!

The first Kent County Employee of the Month for 2006 is CYNDI LAIRD of the Department of Finance. Cyndi receives a day off during the month of January, as well as a designated parking space and \$100 stipend. If you know of a co-worker who deserves to be recognized for a job well done, why not nominate them as Employee of the Month.

Its hard to believe, but it is Employee Council election time again. Any Employee Council member will accept nominations from Tuesday, January 3 through Friday, January 27, 2006. Voting will take place during the first two weeks of February. Anyone interested in running for Employee Council, please complete a nomination form which will be available in the mailroom at the Complex. Just a reminder – No more than two members of the same department/office can serve on the Council at the same time. Good Luck to all nominees!!!

Your Employee Council members are President JASON MILLER, Secretary JENNIFER GRAHAM, Treasurer KATHY SKINNER, and members CYNDI LAIRD, MICHELLE LAPINSKI, and MELISSA STANLEY. \*\*4366\*\* \*\*5161\*\* \*\*5255\*\*

## Tech Talk



By Joe Kurtyka, Director of Information Technology

### Word and Excel Tips

#### WORD: ENTERING TABS IN A TABLE.

When working in tables, pressing the tab key results in the cursor moving to the next cell of the table. If you want to insert a tab character within a cell, just hold down the CTRL key as you press TAB.

#### WORD: ALLOWING FOR LOGOS, SEALS, LETTERHEADS, ETC.

Many businesses produce documents that have different margins for the first page than for any subsequent pages in the document. For instance, the first page may require a larger top margin than the second page because the first page has a company logo, County seal, or masthead at the top of the page. Allowing for this in Word requires the use of multiple sections in your document. One section would be defined for the first page, and another section for subsequent pages.

To use two different sections in your document, do the following:

- Position the insertion point somewhere in the first page of the document, at the beginning of a paragraph, but not at the beginning of the document.
- Choose the Break option from the Insert menu. You will see the Break dialog box.
- Click on Continuous.
- Click on OK. A section break (a thin, double line) will be inserted into your document.
- Choose the Page Setup option from the File menu and make sure the Margins tab is selected. A Page Setup dialog box appears. Adjust your top margin as you want it to appear
- Make sure This Section appears in the Apply To box.
- Click on OK.

Continue typing. When your document is long enough that it requires two pages, the second page will be printed with the new margins you entered, but the first page will retain the original margins.

#### EXCEL: SETTING VERTICAL ALIGNMENT.

- One way that Excel allows you to format cells is by adjusting the vertical alignment of the cell's data. In Excel 2003, there are five (5) options

(Continued on Page 10)



## Annual service awards recognize employee commitment

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

The Christmas holidays bring more than just gifts from Santa Claus. The Levy Court Commissioners use the holiday season to recognize employees with multiples of 5 years of service as provided in Kent County Levy Court Policy 2-18.

For 2005, Levy Court recognized 46 employees at the Employee Holiday Dinner/Dance on December 2 or the Employee Christmas Luncheon on December 14. Those employees receiving service awards included: KENNETH KENNEDY, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities - 30 years; HARRY VANSANT, Director of Community Services - 30 years; MICHAEL WARD, Planning Services - 25 years; MICHAEL WEYANT, Planning Services/Inspections & Enforcement - 20 years; NYLE CALLAWAY, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities - 15 years; BRUCE CHILLAS, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services - 15 years; CYNTHIA GOLDSBORO, Sheriff's Office - 15 years; DOUG HADDAD, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services - 15 years; ROBERT McLEOD, County Administrator - 15 years; DEBORAH PALMER, Assessment Office - 15 years; JACK PETERMAN, Levy Court Commissioner - 15 years; PAT PIAZZA, Public Works/Facilities Management - 15 years; DOUG POORE, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services - 15 years; ALAN SHERMAN, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services - 15 years; RONALD D. SMITH, Levy Court Commissioner - 15 years; CARL SOLBERG, Community Services/Parks - 15 years; LORRI TANAKA, Administration - 15 years; EUGENE TUCKER, Public Safety/Emergency Communications - 15 years; REINHOLD BETSCHEL, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities - 10 years; SHANE DEARMAN, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services - 10 years; PATRICIA ORONA, Deeds Office - 10 years; ALLAN THOMAS - Public Works/Wastewater Facilities - 10 years; ANGELA WISE, Comptroller's Office - 10 years; DIRK YODER, Community Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services - 10 years; JUDY ALLEN, Finance - 5 years; SHERRY BARKER, Public Works/Engineering - 5 years; DYLAN CARRAR, Public Safety/Emergency Communications - 5 years; DENISE CAYZ, Community Services/Library Services - 5 years; LOU COX, Assessment Office - 5 years; RUBY FARMER, Tax Office - 5 years; DAVID HENDERSON, Sheriff's Office -

5 years; BONNIE HURD, Wills Office - 5 years; DEXTER KOLLIE, Planning Services/Planning - 5 years; ALLEN METHENY, Public Safety/Emergency Management - 5 years; DEBORAH MOORE, Deeds Office - 5 years; JOE O'CONNELL, Planning Services/Inspections & Enforcement - 5 years; WADE PAUGH, Planning Services/Planning - 5 years; LISA SCHLAUCH, Public Safety/Emergency Medical Services - 5 years; WALTER STUDTE, Board of Assessment - 5 years; ALAN TYSON, Planning Services/Planning - 5 years; SCOTT VAUTARD, Planning Services/Inspections & Enforcement - 5 years; STEVEN WATSON, Planning Services/Inspections & Enforcement - 5 years; JOHN WEBB, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities - 5 years; CHARLES WILT, Board of Assessment - 5 years; WILLIAM WOODALL, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities - 5 years; and WALLACE WOOTTEN, Public Works/Wastewater Facilities - 5 years.



### Employees to take the polar plunge!

By Carissa Zeiters, Personnel Technician II

Kent County Employees love to help a good cause, but at least two are willing to jump into icy waters to prove it.

Deed Clerk II JESSICA STEELE and Wastewater Plant Operator III JAMES NUNES will be participating in the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual 2006 Lewes Polar Bear Plunge on February 5, at 1 p.m. in Rehoboth Beach.



According to the Special Olympics web page, the Lewes Polar Bear Plunge for Special Olympics raised \$395,000 last year. There were 2,115 participants brave enough to plunge into 36 degree waters of the Atlantic Ocean and fight the bitter cold 43 degree air temperature. More than 10,000 spectators covered the beach and boardwalk to support participants.

Jessica is participating in her second Polar Bear Plunge, while James has participated in Special Olympics Delaware for 13 years. "I do this for the children to raise money for their activities and Special Olympic Games," said Nunes.

If you would like to help Jessica or James, donations can be made payable to Special Olympics Delaware. Better yet, if you would like to become a polar bear, registration forms are available in the Personnel Office.

## Employees to be rewarded for perfect attendance

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

Levy Court will recognize 65 employees at its meeting on January 31 for achieving perfect attendance during Calendar year 2005, - a 14 percent increase from last year's 57. Each recognized employee receives an extra vacation day, a certificate, and a navy blue stadium blanket featuring a full color Kent County logo.



The following employees will be recognized for achieving one calendar year of perfect attendance: DAVID BAKER, Wastewater Facilities Division; RICHARD BAKER, Wastewater Facilities Division; REINHOLD BETSCHEL, Wastewater Facilities Division; ALBERT BIDDLE, Planning Division; MICHAEL BUNDEK, Emergency Communications Division; NYLE CALLAWAY, Wastewater Facilities Division; MICHAEL CLARKE, Emergency Medical Services Division; DEBORAH CLINE, Deeds Office; BRIAN COSTA, Planning Services; SOPHIE DEAR, Administration; WILLIAM DEMPSEY, Emergency Communications Division; COLIN FAULKNER, Public Safety Director; JOHN FOLEY, Deputy Sheriff; JENNIFER GRAHAM, Emergency Medical Services Division; CINDY GRYGO, Emergency Medical Services Division; FRANCES GUNNING, Library Services Division; DALE HAMMOND, Inspections & Enforcement Division; CRAIG HARVEY, Wastewater Facilities Division; WENDY HAYWOOD, Deeds Office; DAVID HENDERSON, Deputy Sheriff; JILL JOHNS, Planning Services; EVELYN JOPP, Administration; SARAH KEIFER, Planning Division; KENNETH KENNEDY, Wastewater Facilities Division; GEORGE KUERNER, Wastewater Facilities Division; ALLAN KUJALA, Personnel Director; DANIELLE LAMBORN, Engineering Division; MARTHA LEWIS, Deeds Office; ANITA LLOYD, Planning Division; DIANE LOCKERMAN, Assessment Office; M. RICHARD MacDONALD, Facilities Management Division; CATHLEEN McLEAN, Administration; ROBERT McLEOD, County Administrator; HANS MEDLARZ, Public Works Director; J. ALLEN METHENY, Emergency Management Division; JANET MORRIS, Administration; CHRISTINA MORTON, Inspections & Enforcement Division; JAMES NUNES, Wastewater Facilities Division; JOE O'CONNELL, Inspections & Enforcement Division; SHAWN O'TOOLE, Wastewater Facilities Division; WILLIAM PENNELL, Wastewater Facilities Division; MICHAEL PETIT de MANGE, Planning Services Director; DOUG

PHILLIPS, Emergency Medical Services Division; DOUG POORE, Emergency Medical Services Division; JAMES PRITCHARD, Deputy Comptroller; ROBERT PROBST, Recreation Division; KATHERINE RIDGWAY, Emergency Communications Division; SHEILA ROSS, Assessment Office; JEREMY SHEPPARD, Recreation Division; ANGEL SHORT, Community Services; ROBERT SKRIPKO, Engineering Division; RODNEY SMITH, Planning Division; LORRI TANAKA, Administration; ALAN THOMAS, Wastewater Facilities Division; TONY TIPAROD, Emergency Medical Services Division; ALAN TYSON, Planning Division; HARRY VANSANT, Community Services Director; NICOLE VAUTARD, Emergency Management Division; SCOTT VAUTARD, Inspections & Enforcement Division; WILLIAM VINCENT, Wastewater Facilities Division; RICHARD WASHINGTON, Wastewater Facilities Division; LARRY WARNER, Deputy Sheriff; MICHAEL WEYANT, Inspections & Enforcement Division; JOHN WILLSON, Emergency Medical Services Division; and JOHN WITZKE, Emergency Medical Services Division. \*\*6738\*\*

## Tech Talk

(Continued from Page 8)

available for this. First you select the cells you want to format. Then you choose CELLS from the FORMAT menu. Select the ALIGNMENT tab and use the vertical drop-down list to make your selection:

- TOP: The information in the cell is situated such that the top of the line of text appears at the top of the cell
- CENTER: Information is centered half-way between the top and bottom borders of the cell.
- BOTTOM: This is the default vertical alignment. Information is aligned at the bottom of the cell.
- JUSTIFY: Text is spread evenly throughout the cell. All information is adjusted to reach the top, bottom, and both sides of the cell.
- DISTRIBUTED: Text is spread evenly between the top and bottom of the cell. \*\*5744\*\*

## COUNTY BIRTHDAYS

(Continued from Page 4)

20 Richard Krueger, Comm. Services/Library Srvs.  
20 Debbie Palmer, Assessment Office  
21 Alan Tyson, Planning Services/Planning  
26 John Willson, Public Safety/EMS

## *Parks Division recognized for Outstanding support*

By Carl Solberg, Assistant Director of Community Services

At a special ceremony last month in the Levy Court chamber, the Kent County Parks Division was recognized with the Mid-Atlantic Association of Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Councils' 2005 Outstanding Supporting Organization award. The Mid-Atlantic RC&D Association is comprised of 30 RC&D Councils from Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

The First State RC&D Council nominated the Division for the award because of the County's unique approach in developing and managing County parks. Most notable is the Parks Division's conservation, recreation, and community engagement work at Big Oak Park.

The park will combine traditional active recreation with passive recreation, education, demonstration conservation projects, and environmental stewardship. This approach enhances wildlife habitat, improves water quality, and maintains open space in an area impacted by rapid development.

Conservation and passive recreation projects completed at Big Oak include:

- A 2,000-foot interpretive walking trail with self-guided environmental explanatory signage,
- A 500-foot wetland boardwalk and stream crossing providing up-close contact with a preserved floodplain habitat and stream corridor,
- Two active recreation, multi-purpose field areas totaling 15 acres of athletic sports turf grass,
- A 60,000 square foot constructed wetland complex with two acres of upland forest buffer plantings,
- 400 linear feet of restored floodplain where the natural geometry of the 100-year floodplain was released by removal of prior fill materials, and replanted with native trees, shrubs and coarse woody materials to restore the organic substrate,
- Two major community outreach events on Earth Day and National Make-A-Difference Day, 2005 involving roughly 200 citizen volunteers,
- Partial establishment of a future ballfield complex with 19,000 cubic yards of subsoil brought from the Delaware State University Blendt Farm pond and the Delaware Aerospace Education Foundation construction sites,
- A 1/3-acre restored prior-converted wetland, and
- A complete highway entrance, internal roadway system and a 60-space parking lot for the Parks

Division constructed by the Delaware Aerospace Education Foundation.

Projects currently underway include:

- A major picnic pavilion with tables and grills.
- A space and earth science-themed youth playground.
- A public restroom building with a Parks Division maintenance facility.
- Engineering and design for additional parking, roadways, and stormwater management.

These projects were conducted with working, technical, and grant partnerships with the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control-Parks Division Trust Fund Grant Program, the US Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Wildlife and Delaware Estuary Program, the Delaware Department of Agriculture Forest Service, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Delaware Coastal Management Program, the Kent Conservation District, and the First State RC&D Council, Inc.

The Mid-Atlantic Association award acknowledges the County's dedication to environmental stewardship, efforts to increase recreational opportunities for the residents of central Delaware, its actions to promote the wise use of natural resources, improvement and preservation of their quality and value, water quality protection by promoting land conservation and sound water management, and preservation of open space.

The First State RC&D Council works to enhance the environment and standard of living in all of Delaware's communities. The Council seeks to improve the quality of life and encourage the wise use of Delaware's natural resources.



**Levy Court President David Burris, Commissioner Allan Angel, and Parks Division Manager Carl Solberg accept award from First State RC&D Council President Gary Smith, and RC&D Area Coordinator William Bell.**

## SOME ANSWERS TO THOSE NAGGING QUESTIONS

By Allan Kujala, Personnel Director

**Q.** *I have \$3,000 in my division budget for uniforms and all the staff is wanting new jackets, but the Finance Department people will not let me spend it. Who do they think they are and how can they overrule a Levy Court approved budget?*

**A.** A very good question and the timing is great with the budget drafting process now in full swing. A budget is a financial plan for the year. The numbers contained therein are educated guesses based on prior experience and research. Not surprisingly, sometimes the actual costs are over the estimated costs and sometimes they are under. Since it is impossible to be exact, it is the responsibility of the Finance Director and her staff to question expenditures—especially those that appear to be unnecessary. Just because an expense is budgeted, does not mean the cash is actually available to pay for it. Only the Finance folks along with the County Administrator have a County-wide viewpoint of the County's financial picture. They are responsible for insuring that tax dollars are not wasted and funds are available for those unexpected emergencies that always pop up. So, in fact, the money in your budget is not available to be spent as you wish. All expenditures must be justified and critical to our mission to serve the public.

**Q.** *I was recently advised by my supervisor that someone complained about me going home for lunch in a County vehicle. Now, my department head has decided to restrict me from going home for lunch. This whole thing is unfair. Can he really restrict my lunch plans?*

**A.** The use of a County-owned vehicle is a privilege and your department head has full authority to regulate your use of the vehicle. It is not a good use of County resources (gas, etc.) for you to drive from wherever you happen to be at lunch time several miles to your residence—and then drive back to your original location on a daily basis. I'm sure he would have no problem with you occasionally stopping home for lunch if your work route permits. If you feel you must eat lunch at home, you have the option of driving your personal vehicle to work and switching vehicles at lunch time. The commute time back and forth to your car would count as part of your lunch hour, however.

**Q.** *Well, if I can't go home for lunch, can I at least run a few errands in the County vehicle? Can I take my wife to the drugstore?*

**A.** The County's vehicle use policy permits County vehicles to be used for personal trips only to those locations along the work route (during lunch or breaks) or commuting route. You cannot drive a County vehicle out of the way to take care of personal business. You cannot have non-employees in your County vehicle unless you are picking up or dropping off a family member at school, at work or at daycare located on the most direct route to your worksite. If you must use a child safety seat, please do not leave it in the County vehicle. Whenever I see State vehicles with baby seats, I immediately get a negative vibe. Let's always leave taxpayers with a positive feeling about County employees.

**Q.** *I have a co-worker who fails to wear his complete County uniform. Something is always missing or he is just sloppy with the shirt tail hanging out, etc. I think his no-care attitude reflects poorly upon the rest of the County employees. What should I do?*

**A.** I agree with your assessment that an incomplete or sloppily worn uniform impacts the favorable opinion of staff by citizens. County policy mandates that employees wear issued uniforms each and every work day in a complete and appropriate manner. Your co-worker is violating County policy and should be disciplined for it. I suggest you inform the co-worker's supervisor of your observations and if you see no improvement give me a call.

**Q.** *I have noticed this winter that a visit to the restroom with a big coat can prove problematic, because there are no hooks. There is a hook in the handicap stall, but none for the rest of us. Any chance we could get some coat hooks installed in the bathrooms?*

**A.** Perhaps this question will get some well deserved attention from the person(s) responsible for deciding such matters. I hope so.

**Q.** *Is it appropriate for employees to pursue each other during working hours? I mean it has become a little uncomfortable, because you never know where they might be canoodling.*

**A.** While at work, employees should work. Expressions of personal or romantic feelings between co-workers should be conducted after office hours.