

Kent COUNTY *Detail*

January/February 2012

Information Technology

At the request of Cannon Township, the County put together a special version of the web browser-based program that County employees use to view information from our Geographic Information System (GIS). This is similar to what is displayed in a web browser when the "Get Map" feature on a parcel lookup on the accessKent.com website is used. However, the information available to the public program is limited. The version that Cannon Township uses has access to all information that the County maintains, less certain restricted data.

Because of the success of the GIS viewer at Cannon Township, the program is going to be expanded and offered to all units of government in Kent County. The requirements are fairly simple - some type of high-speed internet connection (cable, DSL, or T1) is needed as well as a PC or Mac with a compatible web browser (most modern browsers work well). Individual users need log-on credentials that are supplied by the County. There is no charge for using the program.

This is NOT a replacement for a full GIS; there are no editing capabilities available, nor can maps or anything other than screen prints be made. However, having built it, the County believes that it is worth making available for use by those who are interested. If you would like additional information, please contact Craig Paull at 616-632-6501, or by e-mail at Craig.Paull@kentcountymi.gov.

Parks

Spring is coming – take advantage of Kent County Parks

The Parks Department is responsible for managing 37 county parks including L.E. Kaufman Golf Course, Wabasis Lake Campground and Kent Trails. Reservations for County Park facilities can now be made up to one year in advance. For reservations, please call (616) 336-PARK, or reserve online at [Parks Reservation System](#).

Millennium Beach & Spray Park Fees (purchase annual pass)

2012 Season Rates			
Day Passes		Annual Passes	
Adults (16-62)	\$4	Family	\$50
Seniors (63+)	\$3	Individual Adult (16-62)	\$40
Children (3-15)	\$2	Individual Senior	\$25
under 3	free	Nonprofit/Agency	\$50

Enclosed Shelter Rates

2012 Season Rates			
Friday, Saturday and Sunday		Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday	
10am-3pm	\$275.00	10am-3pm	\$175.00
5pm-10pm	\$275.00	5pm-10pm	\$175.00
10am-10pm	\$495.00	10am-10pm	\$325.00

Open Shelter Rates

Brewer, Creekside, Dutton, Fallasburg, Johnson, Long Lake, Dwight Lydell, Palmer, Rogue River, Townsend, Wabasis, Wahlfield	Per Day \$140.00
Millennium	Per Day \$160.00

Reservable Picnic Area Rates

Caledonia, Creekside, Dutton, Fallasburg, Gordon, Johnson, Long Lake, Palmer, Townsend, Wabasis Lake or Douglas Walker	Per Day \$60.00
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Geocaching Now Available within Kent County Parks



What is geocaching? Geocaching (pronounced “geocaching”) is a family-friendly activity that uses a handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) unit to locate a hidden “cache.” It’s a world-wide scavenger hunt for adults! Members of the geo-caching community hide and maintain all of the geocaches listed at www.Geocaching.com. You can hide one, too! In Kent County Parks, published coordinates usually bring participants to a starting point such as a parking lot or trail head; then they search for the “cache” by following clues, way finding points or simply the GPS coordinates. The “cache” is a container filled with trinkets, a logbook, coupons and more, often in a game format. The cache container can be anywhere from the size of a film canister to the size of a large Tupperware container; it can be camouflaged, discreetly hidden, or in plain sight.

How does one get started? First visit www.geocaching.com to sign up and start seeking. Then if you want to explore in Kent County Parks, please read the Geocache Placement and Seeking Guidelines.

As Geocaching grows within the Kent County Parks Department, check back to accessKent.com for news, events, and activities including park operating hours, and rules and regulations to follow when visiting a Park.

Kent County Parks Department Geocache Placement & Seeking Guidelines

General Information

Participants must comply with all Geocaching and Michigan Geocaching Organization Guidelines. Visit www.geocaching.com and www.mi-geocaching.org to review guidelines.

Participants must comply with all general Kent County Parks Department [Rules and Regulations](#). These rules and regulations are posted at all parks, and may also be obtained at the Park office.

Kent County Parks Department reserves the right to remove any cache that has not been approved, not been relocated after one season/year, or is not in compliance with placement guidelines.

Remember to “Cache In, Trash Out”!

Kent County Parks Department Seeking Guidelines

1. Participants must adhere to Geocaching.com guidelines for seeking.
2. When seeking a cache, please do not disturb the surrounding environment in any way. This includes digging holes or cutting vegetation.
3. Caches must be placed within 20 feet of either side of an existing trail.
4. Respect the existing trails and DO NOT create any new trails.

Kent County Parks Department Placement Guidelines

To place a cache in any Kent County Park, participants must adhere to geocaching.com guidelines for placement and the following steps:

1. Obtain permission from a Park Manager or Park Office staff for location of the cache.
2. Affix a MiGO sticker to the cache, identifying it as a cache. Stickers can be obtained through www.mi-geocaching.org.
3. Register your cache on Geocaching.com and have it approved.
4. Maintain the cache.

For additional guidelines and requirements please review this information: <http://www.accesskent.com/CultureLeisureAndTransit/Parks/geocaching.htm> Thank you for participating!

To view more stories about what’s happening in Kent County Parks, visit this link:

<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs068/1106688890250/archive/1107528294336.html>

Health Department

Health Notes

A Service of the Kent County Health Department

Remember to License your Dog!

Michigan law requires all dogs four months of age or older be licensed. A valid certificate of rabies vaccination and proof of spay/neuter for dog(s) must be presented in order to receive a license.

Regular Fees through March 1, 2012:

Spayed/ Neutered \$12.00

Not Sterilized \$26.00

Senior Citizens' Discounted Fees through March 1, 2012:

Spayed/Neutered \$6.00

Not Sterilized \$13.00

***License fees double after March 1, 2012.**

A license tag on a dog will help get it home safely if lost, reduce the chance of theft, show that the dog is vaccinated against rabies, AND spare owners from a \$50 violation fee. Call the Kent County Animal Shelter for hours or more information: 616.632.7300.

American Heart Awareness Month



With Valentine's Day this month, there will be lots of red hearts to remind us of the holiday. February is American Heart Awareness Month and the Kent County Health Department has employees dedicated to making residents 'heart healthy.' Staff will check total cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides, blood pressure and pulse for just \$30.

Clients will receive a 10-year Coronary Heart Disease risk score, an immediate explanation of their results and a follow-up for high risk individuals. The test is quick and painless, and when one walks out, he/she will have a better picture of their overall risk, and what can be done to prevent heart disease. The appointment must be set up in advance, with hours of operation from 7:00-11:00 A.M., and participants must fast 12 hours before the appointment. Upcoming clinics are scheduled for March 1, 2012, at 700 Fuller NE, Grand Rapids, and April 19, 2012 at the Sheldon Complex Clinic located at 121 Franklin SE in Grand Rapids.

Life Skills for Elementary School Students

Growing up today is tough, but kids can make the right choices when someone reaches out to them before peer pressure starts. *Life Skills* is a 12-session course that focuses on improving students' drug resistance skills, personal self-management skills and general social skills to reduce the likelihood they will use or abuse substances. Topics include: alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, effective communication, conflict resolution and how to deal with peer pressure. The Kent County Health Department offers *Life Skills* to any community group (school, church, after school program, etc.) in Kent County. Each session is 45-60 minutes in length and the program is free of charge. Call the Kent County Health Department at 616.632.7100 for more information.

Women's Health Network/Breast & Cervical Cancer Control Program

The Women's Health Network (WHN) offers free mammograms, clinical breast exams, Pap smears and pelvic exams to women who qualify. Follow-up, referrals and treatment are also provided for qualifying WHN participants. Women who qualify must earn less than 250% of the federal poverty guidelines, be uninsured or underinsured. If you have an insurance that does not cover these services, you may qualify. Services include mammograms, pap smears, clinical breast exams, pelvic exams, blood pressure testing, weight, breast self-exam education, breast and cervical health information, referrals to community resources, and medical referrals, if needed. Some follow-up services are also provided. Call (616) 632-7283 or 1-888-515-1300 for more information.



Cooperative Extension

MSU Forms New Center for Regional Food Systems to Enhance Local Food Production and Access

Adapted from MSU's AgBioResearch Newsletter by Kendra Wills, Extension Educator

For more than a century and a half, Michigan State University has been known for its agricultural research, education, and outreach. In an effort to leverage MSU's scholarly eminence in agriculture – specifically in food production, nutrition, and distribution – a new multi-disciplinary center has been created, known as the **Center for Regional Food Systems**, under the leadership of Michael W. Hamm, PhD. The center will position MSU to take a leadership role in studying – and bolstering – regional, community-based food systems, within Michigan and around the world.

The MSU Center for Regional Food Systems will focus on:

1. Partnering across Michigan to advance the goals of the **Michigan Good Food Charter** (available at www.michiganfood.org)
2. **Educating new generations** to lead regional food systems research and practice.
3. Cultivating and supporting **communities of practice** around emerging regional food systems issues and opportunities.
4. Increasing the **visibility of and access to MSU resources** that support regional good food systems.
5. Expanding the **resource base** for regional food systems applied research, education, and outreach.
6. Developing **farmers and farms** for regional food systems.
7. Expanding and coordinating engagement of MSU faculty and staff in **interdisciplinary regional food systems** applied research, education, and outreach.

Regional food systems and locally grown food have direct implications for public health, security, and economies throughout the world. At this time, more than the 45 researchers in several MSU colleges, as well as AgBioResearch and MSU Extension, have become affiliated with the new center.

Kendra Wills, MSU Extension Educator based in Kent County, is one of the Center's affiliates. In 2012, she will be working to increase the public's awareness of local food systems as well as promoting farm-to-school and farm-to-hospital programs. For more information, please contact Kendra at (616) 336-2028 or willsk@anr.msu.edu.

Human Resources Department



Kent County Employee Recognition for Quality Service Program

At Kent County, providing quality service to our customers is our number one priority. *Our mission* is to be an effective and efficient steward in delivering quality services for our diverse community. Our priority is to provide mandated services, which may be enhanced and supplemented by additional services to improve the quality of life for all our citizens within the constraints of sound fiscal policy.

If you believe that a Kent County employee has helped fulfill our mission by providing outstanding quality service, we would like to hear about it. Starting in January 2010, Kent County began accepting nominations for the Quality Service Employee of the Quarter. The *Employee Recognition for Quality Service Program* is designed to identify and recognize those employees who have served Kent County's customers/clients by providing them with outstanding quality customer service.

Under the program, Kent County customers/clients have the opportunity to nominate a County employee or employee group who has provided them with exceptional service.

- Customers/clients are able to share their customer service stories with a designated selection committee by completing an Employee Recognition for Quality Service nomination form
- The nomination form is available online at www.accesskent.com/qualityservice
- Hard copies of the form are also available at each County department/agency
- Nominations can be submitted by anyone, including members of the public, fellow co-workers, supervisors, administrators, elected officials, etc.

For those employees who are not selected, a copy of the nomination form will be forwarded to the employee's department director where the director will have the opportunity to recognize the employee's achievement as he/she feels appropriate.

All employees, excluding elected and appointed individuals, are eligible to participate. To be selected the employee must have:

- Helped to fulfill the County's mission by providing their customer(s) with outstanding quality customer service
- Projected courtesy and respect towards their customer(s)
- Demonstrated outstanding performance in their provision of service

Do you know a Kent County employee who is deserving of this award? If so, please complete a nomination form and send it to the Human Resources Department for consideration.

The County Detail is a compilation of news and information that helps fulfill our commitment to the residents of Kent County, and is distributed bi-monthly to local government officials. Editorial questions or submissions should be directed to Melanie Grooters, County Detail Editor.
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