

## Administrator's Office

### Revenue Sharing

In 2004, the State of Michigan mandated that all counties transition from a December tax levy/collection to a July tax levy/collection. This was accomplished whereby counties collected four years worth of taxes over the course of three years. Excess taxes collected by each county were placed in a Revenue Sharing Reserve Fund. When this process was approved by the State, the State was experiencing fiscal problems. The statutory revenue sharing line items for counties was eliminated, with the commitment that as counties were scheduled to have their revenue sharing payments restored, the State would fulfill its responsibility and include such funding in the budget. During the past two fiscal years, the Governor and Legislature has fulfilled its promise. While the State is still under fiscal stress, the Governor has included restoration of revenue sharing to those counties who are scheduled to have such funding restored in 2010 in her budget request to the Legislature.

While this affects counties at the present time, action on the part of all local units is required. We should all be contacting our State legislators and urging them, and

their colleagues, to honor the commitment made by the State to restore revenue sharing payments to counties as their Revenue Sharing Reserve Funds are depleted. In the case of Kent County, this fund will be "zeroed-out" sometime during 2011. Revenue Sharing payments to Kent County amount to approximately \$12 million dollars annually. This funding represents approximately seven percent of the County's annual general fund budget. This funding represents jobs for approximately 170 employees. This funding represents providing essential services—public safety, health and welfare, and justice. This funding pays for supplies and services, and adds to the economic well-being of our community.

Your assistance in contacting our state legislators and urging their support of the Governor's budget to continue to restore statutory revenue sharing payments to counties is needed.

A draft letter has been prepared by the Administrator's Office. If you are interested in using some, or part, of it contact Daryl Delabbio 616-632-7576 or [daryl.delabbio@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:daryl.delabbio@kentcountymi.gov).



community partner and can be a wonderful asset to other county departments. Please see the following listing of our program areas and let us know how we can work with you:

### **Surviving financially:**

Extension educator Dave Treul provides:

- A 10-hour basic money management course called “Dollar Sense”
  - A Train-the-Trainer workshop for those who work with others around the issue of money
  - A monthly easy-to-read newsletter called “Cents Ability” which now reaches over 13,000 Kent County residents per month
- Contact Dave at 336-3265 or [treuld@msu.edu](mailto:treuld@msu.edu)

### **Managing stress while parenting:**

Extension educator Diane Blain provides Better Kid Care training, print and video resources for child care providers and parents throughout Kent County. Contact Diane at: 231-679-6783 or [blain@msu.edu](mailto:blain@msu.edu)

### **Building health with good nutrition:**

Extension educator Monica Smith provides:

- One-on-one nutrition education for limited-income participants in their homes
  - Group nutrition education series emphasizing healthy eating on a budget
  - Train the trainer monthly nutrition classes for agency staff working with low-income clients
  - Breastfeeding peer education to encourage higher breastfeeding rates
- Contact Monica at: 336-3265 or [smit1159@msu.edu](mailto:smit1159@msu.edu)

Extension educator Stephanie Marino works to reduce childhood obesity through the Kent County Coordinated School Health program. Contact Stephanie at 336-3265 or [marinos1@msu.edu](mailto:marinos1@msu.edu)

### **Agriculture:**

MSU Extension educators provide support to agriculture in Kent County across a wide spectrum. Staff contacts for information on the following areas:



**Nutrient Management**—Charles Gould, 616-994-4580, [gouldm@msu.edu](mailto:gouldm@msu.edu)  
**Commercial Horticulture**—Tom Dudek, 616-994-4580, [dudek@msu.edu](mailto:dudek@msu.edu)  
**Dairy**—Bill Robb, 616-994-4580, [robbsg@msu.edu](mailto:robbsg@msu.edu)  
**Beef**—Kevin Gould, 616-527-5357, [gouldk@msu.edu](mailto:gouldk@msu.edu)  
**Tree Fruit**—Phil Schwallier, 1-800-767-1345, [schwali@msu.edu](mailto:schwali@msu.edu)  
**Bioeconomy Development**—Dennis Pennington, 269-671-2412, [pennin34@msu.edu](mailto:pennin34@msu.edu)

**Tree Fruit**—Amy Irish-Brown, 1-800-767-1345, [irisha@msu.edu](mailto:irisha@msu.edu)  
**Small Fruit**—Carlos Garcia-Salazar, 616-994-4580, [garcias4@msu.edu](mailto:garcias4@msu.edu)  
**Vegetables**—Bill Steenwyk, 1-800-767-1345, [steenwyk@msu.edu](mailto:steenwyk@msu.edu)  
**Farm Management**—Roger Betz, 269-781-0784, [betz@msu.edu](mailto:betz@msu.edu)  
**MSU Product Center**—Matt Birbeck 517-432-8753 [birbeckm@msu.edu](mailto:birbeckm@msu.edu)

### **Community Development:**

Extension educator Carol Townsend supports neighborhood revitalization and business retention and expansion. Her work connects MSU resources to urban areas in Kent County, empowering people to build the future they envision. Contact Carol at 336-3265 or [townse36@msu.edu](mailto:townse36@msu.edu)

**Local food supply and healthy eating:**

Extension educator Rebecca Finneran helps people to develop their own green thumbs! MSU Extension Master Gardener programs for adults and youth teach skills in growing vegetables and other plants and gardening with fewer environmental impacts. In 2008, the value of time donated by Master Gardeners in Kent County was over \$400,000. Rebecca can be reached at 336-3265 or at [finneran@msu.edu](mailto:finneran@msu.edu)

Ensuring that local land remains available for agriculture is the goal of the Kent County Purchase of Development Rights program. Extension educator Kendra Wills provides education and support for this county program. Kendra can be reached at 336-3265 or [willsk@msu.edu](mailto:willsk@msu.edu)

**Concentrations of talent:**

From a base of 77 4-H club programs to the Collaborative Youth Fair with students from 36 Grand Rapids Public School buildings, the 4-H Youth Development program works to help youngsters build lifelong skills and see themselves succeeding in higher education. Trained volunteer leaders work with youth ages 5-19. For more information, call 336-3265 to talk to:

- Glenda Kilpatrick, [kilpatri@msu.edu](mailto:kilpatri@msu.edu)
- Morgan Gudiño, [gudinom@msu.edu](mailto:gudinom@msu.edu)
- Farris Withers, [withersf@msu.edu](mailto:withersf@msu.edu)

**Support for local decision-makers:**

Educated leaders make confident long-term decisions for their communities. For class information on Citizen Planner, county commissioner workshops or other decision-maker training, contact Kendra Wills at 336-3265 or [willsk@msu.edu](mailto:willsk@msu.edu)

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***Sheriff Department***

- What:** 13th Annual Kent Area Law Enforcement Benefit Hockey Game
- When:** Saturday, March 21, 2009
- Time:** 3:00 p.m.
- Where:** Southside Community Ice Center  
500-100th Street SW  
(1/4 mile west of US 131)



Pizza, Raffle, Chuck-a-puck  
Open Skate after the game.  
**This event is FREE!**  
Donations accepted, to be given to the beneficiary.

# **Health Department**

## **Health Notes**

*A service of the Kent County Health Department*

### **February 2009: Let's Eat!**

**The recent scare surrounding salmonella** in peanut butter highlights the fact that much of our food comes from a single source. Generic brands and high-end brands of cookies, crackers, and more were affected equally by the contaminated peanut butter and peanut paste, as nearly 200 products were pulled from shelves in shopping markets across the nation.

**It takes a little digging to know exactly where** each item you eat originated and it's nearly impossible to always guarantee that what you're eating is safe. However, restaurant inspections, food recalls, and other efforts from local and state health departments and federal agencies aim to greatly improve the chances that what you eat will keep you healthy – not make you sick!

If you're concerned about the safety of your food, here are a few tips that can help ease your mind in the kitchen, the cafeteria, and while dining out:

- **The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA)** regularly updates its list of items that have been recalled in the last 60 days. To see if something in your pantry is impacted, visit <http://www.fda.gov/> and click on "Recalls & Safety Alerts" in the right column. The page includes a searchable database of products recalled due to contaminated peanut butter. The database is at <http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm>.
- **The Kent County Health Department** inspects Kent County's 1,800 restaurants two times each year to make sure that the kitchen is well-suited for food preparation and that staff are using safe food-handling practices. A record of critical violations, such as food that has passed its expiration date or pest problems, is maintained at the Health Department's website. Visit [www.accesskent.com/health/healthdepartment](http://www.accesskent.com/health/healthdepartment) and click on "Food Safety Services" and "Restaurant Inspection Reports" to see how your favorite establishments have fared.
- **Practice lunchbox safety!** Invest in an insulated lunch box or use double paper bags, and store food items in a refrigerator at school or work when possible. If refrigeration is not available, include an ice pack with perishable foods (such as hard-boiled eggs, milk, yogurt, cheese or a sandwich with meat, fish, or poultry). A frozen individual juice box can help serve as a cold pack.
- **When cooking at home, wash hands often,** and do not cross-contaminate by using the same surface to prepare perishable and non-perishable raw foods. Make sure that dishes are heated and cooled properly and that leftovers are not left out for a long period of time. For more information on acceptable refrigerator temperatures, food safety at home and when dining out, and how to report an illness as a result of food consumption, visit [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov).



## **Dig in!**

Editorial questions or submissions: Melanie Grooters, County Detail Editor  
Administrator's Office, PH: 632-7561; E-mail: [Melanie.Grooters@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:Melanie.Grooters@kentcountymi.gov)