



Kent County Annual Report

Highlighting the County's 2003 Activities

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Millennium Park Opens to Rave Reviews

Millennium Beach opened to the public with a splash in August 2003. An estimated 7,000 to 9,000 people visited the beach the first opening weekend, and countless more continued to visit throughout the remaining summer weeks. With the beach area now open to the public, the official public dedication and opening celebration is scheduled for July 2, 2004. A community group has been formed to begin the planning for that event.



And this is just the beginning. When completed, the park will span approximately 1,500 acres. More than twice the size of New York's Central Park, it will be one of the largest urban parks in the country.

Families will be able to enjoy the swimming beach, picnic tables, grills, volleyball courts, playgrounds, and fishing docks. Large areas of the park will be devoted to protected habitat for native plants and wildlife, which will be reachable by trail or canoe - all within walking or biking distance of four cities.

The Board of Commissioners has approved either the lease, purchase, or grant applications for the purchase of over 1,200 acres, which is approximately 80 percent of the property targeted for Millennium Park. This total includes 128 acres purchased by the Kent County Parks Foundation. Further land acquisition and development are expected to continue for the next 15 or more years on what will be a premier public urban park.



**Public dedication and opening celebration
Millennium Park - July 2, 2004 - 11:00am**

A Message from Board Chair David Morren and County Administrator/Controller Daryl Delabbio

Kent County Residents,

We are pleased, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, staff and employees of the County of Kent, to present this report on the activities of Kent County during 2003. This past year was again one of challenge and accomplishment. Two major accomplishments stand above the others and both involved grand openings. The first is *Millennium Park*, where Phase I was opened to rave reviews in August. Millennium Park is a crown jewel, not only for the County's parks system, but for all of Michigan and, perhaps, the Midwest. While it is a County-owned park, it is truly a community project, with funding coming from the County, the State, and private contributions. And this is just the beginning as there is much work remaining/planned for the future for what will be a premier public urban park in the United States.

The second opening was the *DeVos Place* convention center. The County, through the Hotel/Motel Tax, is the primary funding partner for this \$220 million project, contributing \$92 million toward the construction of this state-of-the-art facility. Like Millennium Park, this great project was accomplished through partnering and collaborating with a number of organizations and individuals, including the City of Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority, the State, and generous private sources.

These two projects, like many before them, exemplify the significant level of public-private cooperation that exists in our great County.

In a time when the State continues to face its most severe financial crisis, we are striving to provide services that are important to our quality of life, and important to you as residents: law enforcement, public health, and recreational parkland. The County's most important resource in providing these services is a talented and dedicated workforce.

Kent County is committed to continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence in the services provided with the tax dollars paid by County residents. Already, 2004 has shaped up to be a year of great challenges, and perhaps change, as you will be asked to determine whether we move forward with a new Wildlife Park in Grand Rapids Township, taking advantage of Fred Meijer's generous gift of land and money, and an important central 911 dispatch center. As we move forward, Kent County will experience exciting times. There is, however, one thing that will not change – our commitment to provide excellent, efficient, and effective services to the citizens – even in times of economic strain.

Thank you, and please do not hesitate to contact us with your comments or questions at any time.

David J. Morren, Chair
Kent County Board of Commissioners

Daryl J. Delabbio,
County Administrator/Controller



The Tradition of Fiscal Responsibility Continues

Kent County has a strong tradition of being an effective steward of public funds, and a commitment to maintaining a fiscally strong and effective organization. The Board of Commissioners regularly examines the County's fiscal policies and develops guidelines for making financial decisions on behalf of the County. Highlights of activities for 2003 include:

Bond Rating

Kent County is saving money by continuing to hold the prestigious AAA bond rating with three services: Moody's Investors Service, Standard & Poor's, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies Inc., and Fitch, Inc. These bond ratings enable the County to save taxpayer dollars by selling bonds to fund long-term or capital projects at a lower rate of interest. Kent County achieves these ratings, in part, by having a healthy fund balance, a low level of existing bond debt, and strong fiscal policies.

Minimum Fund Balance

Each year the County reserves funds at a level equal to 10 percent of the subse-

quent year's total budget for emergency operating needs. In 2003, the County's minimum operating reserve level was \$38 million. A reserve balance of this level would allow the County to fully operate for nearly two months without receiving any revenue.

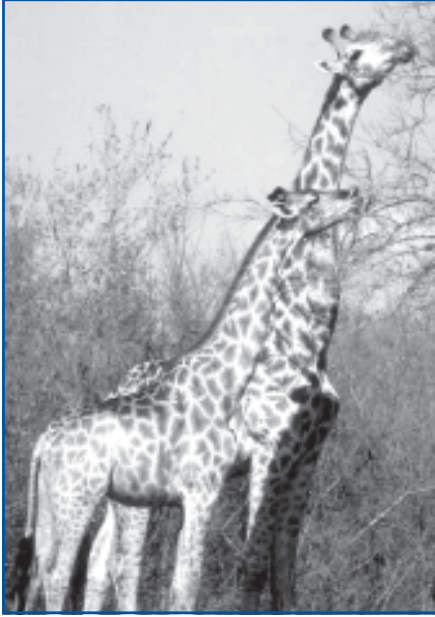
Capital Set-Aside

During 2003, the County amended its Capital Improvement Program Policy Statement to include an annual minimum set-aside of funds equal to two-tenths of one mill from the general property tax levy for acquisition or construction of general fixed assets. This amendment is intended to ensure that County general fixed assets are improved or replaced according to schedule, and minimize exposure to excessive maintenance requirements.

Moratorium on New Hires

In 2003, the County placed a one-year moratorium on adding new positions that require additional General Fund appropriations in the 2004 budget, unless the new position resulted in a net cost savings.

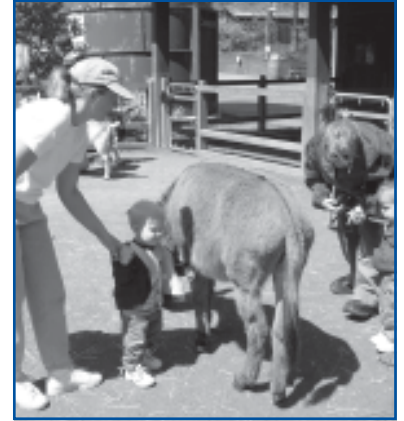
Voters to Consider Wildlife Park



Thanks to a generous offer to donate land and up to \$25 million in matching funds from Fred Meijer, the residents of Kent County are in the enviable position of deciding whether to develop a Wildlife Park in Grand Rapids Township. In September 2003, after considerable study of the issue and its potential impacts on the community, the Board of Commissioners voted to bring the question to the voters. On August 3, Kent County voters will be asked to decide whether to approve a 0.55 millage request to fund construction and a portion of the operating costs of a Wildlife Park.

If approved, the Wildlife Park will be located on the 168 acre site in Grand Rapids Township, and replace the existing John Ball Park Zoo site. A Wildlife Park is different from the current zoo, in that it provides large areas for the animals that reflect their natural habitats. The expanded acreage will allow the park to house larger animals, such as giraffes, polar bears, reindeer, moose, and bison. A citizen task force has been established to make recommendations on what should happen with the current zoo site should the millage proposal pass.

The current year promises to be a year of discussion and debate as Kent County residents weigh the pros and cons of developing a Wildlife Park. Whatever the outcome, Kent County remains pleased to be able to continue to provide world-class cultural and recreational opportunities to enhance the quality of life of its citizens.



Health Department Helps Keep West Nile at Bay



Thanks to the work of the Health Department, other governmental agencies, community organizations, and some help from Mother Nature, there were no human cases of West Nile Virus reported in Kent County in 2003. The Health Department's outstanding public education and outreach efforts were a significant contributor to containing the West Nile Virus to a virtually nonexistent state in 2003. The Health Department developed a comprehensive public education campaign using mass media, community-level educational presentations, the internet, and targeted health alerts for health care providers. During the summer of 2003, staff provided over 50 community educational presentations to nearly 1,500 people, including a workshop for clinicians on diagnosing and reporting human cases of West Nile Virus. The department conducted active surveillance and mapping of dead birds and mosquitoes, and set up a special website to allow residents to report dead birds over the Internet. A contract with an environmental consulting firm provided training in larvacide programs for local units of government in Kent County. Although West Nile Virus was much less an issue in 2003 than the previous year, the Health Department was well prepared following the statewide outbreak in 2002. The department will continue to encourage citizens to take precautionary measures during the warm months.

Work Continues on Countywide 911 Dispatch

Public health and safety are core values of Kent County, and the County has continued work throughout 2003 to develop a plan for a central, countywide 911 dispatch system. The County is working with local police and fire departments, the Sheriff Department, State Police, and EMS companies to develop a plan for consolidating the County dispatch and several local unit dispatch centers. A countywide 911 system is expected to improve public safety efforts through shortening response times and improving coordination between public safety agencies.

The final report and recommendations of the planning group will be brought before the Board of Commissioners before summer in 2004. If approved, the plan would require a vote of the citizens to adequately finance the development and ongoing operations for the system.

Kent County 2004 Adopted Budget



Sources of Funds

Revenue	\$314,387,327
Use of Fund Balance	<u>11,952,377</u>
Total Sources	\$326,339,704

Uses of Funds

General Government	\$ 76,307,881
Public Safety	51,678,532
Judicial	38,684,765
Cultural and Recreation	15,067,686
Health and Welfare	64,732,149
Enterprise Activities	76,986,422
Other	1,753,348
Appropriation Lapse	(3,059,329)
Capital	<u>4,188,250</u>
Total Uses	\$326,339,704

DeVos Place Convention Center: A Public/Private Partnership Success Story



Hall, a 2,446 seat performance venue in the DeVos Place complex, is currently home to the Grand Rapids Symphony, Grand Rapids Ballet, Opera Grand Rapids and the Broadway Theatre Guild. It also hosts concerts and other special events year round. The Convention Center includes an underground parking garage and is connected to two hotels by a heated skywalk. Currently under construction is a 40,000-square-foot flexible-use Ballroom with 3,250-seat banquet capacity and 35,000 square feet of sub-dividable meeting space. DeVos Place will be complete in January 2005.

This project exemplifies the significant level of public-private collaboration and cooperation that exists in the greater Grand Rapids area. The project reaffirms our ability to work together toward the greater good – an ability which separates this area from others.

Increasing Access to Health Care for People of Color

2003 marked the first full year of activity for a new initiative aimed at increasing access to health care for people of color. The initiative is the result of the final report and recommendations of the Task Force on Health Care for People of Color, a body appointed by the Board of Commissioners in 2001 to identify ways to address the health disparities for minority populations.

It was a busy first year for the new initiative. One of the early successes was the development of a new health clinic consortium, which brings together clinic directors to collectively address health care system improvements in the areas of data collection, pharmaceutical access, and health screenings. A clinic mapping project is underway with the nine participating clinics to determine the types of services offered by each clinic and identify health care gaps by geographic area.

Work also began in 2003 on development of a coordinated, community-wide pharmaceutical access program to provide a vehicle for distributing free or reduced pharmaceuticals to uninsured/underinsured populations. The project, which is being developed in coordination with the Kent County Health Department, Kent Health Plan, local hospitals and clinics, and other community organizations, is expected to be completed in late 2004.

To address transportation barriers to health care, the initiative worked in conjunction with the Emergency Needs Task Force to develop a transportation resource directory, which will be available in the early part of 2004. Work continues in partnership with The Rapid and Hope Network on developing a centralized, coordinated transportation system with a single point of access.

After years of planning and construction, the DeVos Place convention center opened for business in December 2003. The County, as well as being a partner of the Convention/Arena Authority, is the primary funding partner for this \$220 million project. Through the Hotel/Motel Tax, the County contributed \$92 million toward construction of the building. Once again, however, this project could not be completed in a vacuum. Other contributions to the project include \$65 million from the State of Michigan, \$10 million from the City of Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority, \$4 million from the Convention/Arena Authority, \$7 million in federal grants, and \$33 million raised through private sources.

DeVos Place brings together the Welsh Auditorium, the Grand Center, and DeVos Hall under one roof, and expands convention space with the DeVos Place Exhibit Hall, which offers 160,000 square feet of column-free exhibit and show space – the size of three football fields. The new Grand Gallery provides an impressive and distinctive entryway for the convention center, with a curved glass roof soaring 75 feet into the air. It spans from the Monroe Avenue entrance to the Grand River, where it opens onto the 9,000 square foot Riverfront Promenade. DeVos

Finally, a contract was awarded to the Woodrick Institute for the Study of Racism & Diversity at Aquinas College to develop an educational curriculum designed to address racism and promote cultural sensitivity within health care.

While 2003 was a busy year, 2004 promises to be even more productive as the initiative and its partners continue this very important work. Kent County remains committed to removing barriers and helping assure equal access to quality health care for all of its citizens.

Did You Know...



...If you are in the unfortunate situation of getting in a traffic accident and a Kent County Sheriff Deputy wrote up your accident report, you can obtain a copy of your report online at www.accessKent.com for only \$3.

...Kent County allocates nearly \$550,000 annually to support over 25 community-based programs and services. The funded services are determined through an annual allocations process administered on behalf of the County by the Kent Family Independence Agency.

...A rapid HIV-testing pilot program began in May 2003 at the Health Department's STD/HIV Clinic. Three counselors were trained to provide same-day testing and results to clients present for HIV testing. This has great public health benefits since clients receiving HIV tests only return for their test results 66% of the time; rapid testing has the potential to increase that rate to 100%.

Serving the Community

2003 Highlights

Kent County was named as one of the "Top 10" national 2003 Digital Counties Survey Winners by the Center for Digital Government for its website, www.accessKent.com

Kent County was awarded the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its 2003 Annual Budget. This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting.

The 63rd District Court received an award from the Michigan Secretary of State Office for a 99 percent "Timely Submission of Abstracts" in 2002.

The Kent County Health Department completed a year-long strategic planning process designed to identify departmental priorities. The plan is available to the public on the department's website at www.accessKent.com/health/publications.

The Register of Deeds Office recorded 253,000 documents in 2003. This is a 17.6 percent increase over 2002, and a 94 percent increase since 2001.

A new Sheriff South Substation opened in the Spring of 2003 in cooperation with Gaines Township. The continued presence of the County's law enforcement arm in this state-of-the-art facility reaffirms our commitment to bringing services to the people.

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport celebrated its 40th anniversary and served a record 1,976,833 passengers in 2003. That's approximately 5,400 passengers per day.

The Community Re-Entry Center Work Release Program of the Kent County Sheriff's Department placed 750 residents in community jobs in 2003, a record number.

The Community Mental Health Department became an autonomous governmental entity separate from County government. The transition resulted in greater administrative efficiency while providing a seamless continuation of services to clients.

The 17th Circuit Court significantly shortened the time frame for individuals that are in a domestic violence or stalking situation to receive a Personal Protection Order (PPO). Now it can take as little as a day to have a PPO prepared, signed, and given to the filing individual.

The Health Department participated in six regional smallpox vaccination clinics in 2003, which vaccinated nearly 100 health care workers from public health departments, hospitals, and EMS agencies in a 13-county region.

In fall of 2003, the Kent County Detention Center initiated a year-long program at its Waalkes School Program, operated by the Grand Rapids Public Schools. The new program provides residents of detention with regular school instruction Monday through Thursday, and provides life and social skills training on Fridays.

John Ball Zoo was awarded an International Conservation Award for support of the Rodrigues Fruit Bat Conservation Program.

County Awards \$1.25 Million for Prevention Services

Kent County awarded \$1.25 million in contracts in 2003 for prevention services as part of the Kent County Prevention Initiative. The awarding of these funds is a key milestone in the initiative, which was developed in 2001 by the Board of Commissioners to expand services that support families and prevent future costly and destructive problems. The initiative calls for service expansion in three priority areas: family support services for parents of young children, early intervention for families at risk of abuse and neglect, and services aimed at "breaking the cycle" of substance abuse within the family structure. The initiative includes an extensive evaluation component to measure the long-term impact of the services on children's health, education, and safety.

The contracts awarded in 2003 will allow important prevention services to touch the lives of over 2,000 Kent County families. The funding will expand Healthy Start home visitation and phone support services to approximately 563 first-time families per year and Bright Beginnings parent education home visits and parent groups to 210 families per year. The funding also expands early intervention services for 1,300 families identified as being at risk for child abuse or neglect. The 2003 allocation of \$1.25 million is part of an overall dedication of almost \$2 million. In 2004, the County will award \$450,000 to expand early intervention services for families with substance abuse issues. The remaining funds have been set aside for evaluation.

In establishing the Kent County Prevention Initiative, the Board of Commissioners recognized that by providing supportive services to families early, future costly problems can be reduced. The initiative is an investment that will pay off in reduced costs for incarceration, mental and physical health services, and services for delinquent, abused, or neglected youth. Most importantly, it is an investment in Kent County families, which will pay off in improved quality of life for Kent County residents for years to come.

Did You Know...



...Young offenders who participate in the Young Delinquent Intensive Intervention Program are less likely to have repeat felony offenses (4.3% vs. 34.4%) and misdemeanor offenses (10.9% vs. 42.2%) than those in a traditional program. Over 125 young offenders have been referred to the program since its inception.

...The Department of Public Works provides a free household hazardous waste program. Paint and other household hazardous waste products are accepted from households only, no commercial businesses, institutions or farms. For information, call (616) 336-2501.

...Computers and consumer electronics such as printers, fax machines, VCRs, DVDs, audio equipment, video game machines and small televisions can be recycled. Residents can drop items off at the North Kent Recycle & Transfer Station in Rockford, the South Kent Landfill in Byron Center, or the Recycle Facility in Grand Rapids.

Extension Offices Offer New Training Opportunities



After many years in cramped space, the Kent/MSU Cooperative Extension Office has moved into newly renovated headquarters at 775 Ball Street. The \$1.2 million renovation of the former Kent District Library Headquarters was completed in the Spring.

In addition to new offices and updated technology, perhaps the most important feature of the new space is the addition of new training space. Thanks to two new large training rooms, Kent/MSU Extension is able to offer educational programs for County residents, volunteers, and professional staff, and provide space for community meetings. In the first ten months, the two new training rooms were used a total of 424 times. The rooms have been used for money management programs, 4-H Council meetings, 4-H project area leaders meetings, first-time homebuyer classes, Extension Council meetings, Master Gardener classes, satellite trainings for several county departments, water quality meetings, restricted-use pesticide certification classes, leadership development training, manure management training, Junior Master Gardener training, community worker training by the Child and Family Resource Council, meetings of the Greater Grand

Rapids Food Systems Council, parenting classes, Telfarm check in, Kent Special Riding Program meeting, United Growth for Kent County meetings, training for business entrepreneurs, and more! Kent/MSU Extension also continues to offer a variety of other services to the public, such as the Master Gardener horticulture hotline, where residents can call nine months of the year with questions about plants and gardening. Extension staff also process soil samples for the public, sending the samples to the lab at Michigan State University, to give people an accurate picture of their soil and how to successfully grow specific plants in it.

Overwhelming, isn't it? The new offices have given Kent/MSU Extension a single location for their many varied education programs, creating a "one stop" center for residents to learn about programs and classes. To learn more, check out Kent/MSU Extension's website, www.msue.msu.edu/kent, and start learning.

New Judges Take the Bench

The Kent County Circuit Court welcomed three new judges to the bench in 2003. Judge Daniel V. Zemaitis and Judge James R. Redford were elected in November 2002, and both assumed the bench on January 1, 2003. Judge Steven M. Pestka was appointed by Governor Granholm in April 2003 to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge H. David Soet. He assumed the bench on May 8, 2003.

All three judges have their roots in Kent County, and have a strong history of service to the community.

Judge Zemaitis will be serving as Circuit Court Judge in the Court's Family Division. He has lived in Grand Rapids most of his life. Judge Zemaitis has been a sole practitioner for most of his 25 years of law practice, Magistrate for the 59th District Court from 1990 to 2002, and in 1995 became a Multi-District Court Magistrate by joining the 62A District Court. During this time, Judge Zemaitis was a Visiting Professor of History/Law at Grace Bible College from 1995 to 1997 and 1999 to 2002.

Judge Redford is assigned to the Court's Civil-Criminal Division. Judge Redford is a Captain in the U.S. Naval Reserves. He served on active duty in the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the United States Navy for five years, and as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Western District of Michigan for nearly eight years. Prior to assuming the judgeship, Judge Redford was a partner in the law firm of Plunkett & Cooney.

Judge Pestka was appointed to the Court's Family Division. He was born and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and began his career with the Kent County Prosecuting Attorney's office and the Kent County Friend of the Court. In 1980, he entered private practice and for the next 18 years was involved primarily in the area of Family Law. He served on the Kent County Board of Commissioners for six years, and then in the Michigan House of Representatives, where he was a member of the Appropriations Committee and Vice-Chairman of the Appropriations Sub Committee on the Judiciary. As a County Commissioner he played a key role in developing the plan for the present courthouse, and was recognized by Kent County for his "service in making a courthouse a reality for the people of Kent County."

Animal Shelter Offers New "Assess-a-Pet" Service

In July 2003, the Kent County Animal Shelter began an innovative new temperament testing program to determine the adoptability of animals in their care. Based on the "Assess-a-Pet" test, the program allows the Animal Shelter to gain a better understanding of each dog's needs and to appropriately match them with the needs, lifestyles, and abilities of potential adopters. Qualification for adoption is determined by each dog's individual temperament, meaning that fewer dogs are being euthanized due to age, breed or treatable health conditions. With the new temperament testing program, all dogs are tested prior to being made available for adoption. Dogs must demonstrate a desire for social interaction with people, as well as a lack of aggression when food or toys are taken away. Dogs that pass easily and show no signs of potential aggression are known as Level One dogs and may be confidently placed in most homes, including homes with inexperienced pet owners or small children. Dogs who demonstrate a more dominant nature or who present more challenges are known as Level Two dogs and are recommended to go to owners who have prior dog handling experience.

Did You Know...



...If every page of every document recorded by the Kent County Register of Deeds office in 2003 was laid end to end, the trail of paper would reach from Grand Rapids to the Mackinaw Bridge.

...A new Snow Leopard kitten was born in 2003, one of several born at John Ball Zoo over the last 20 years.

...John Ball Zoo welcomed 307,000 visitors in 2003, providing the opportunity for them to learn about wildlife and wild places in a fun, relaxing environment. Zoo education staff and volunteers made contact with more than 175,000 individuals through 40 separate programs.

Farmland Preservation Opportunities Created

Kent County is continuing its efforts to encourage the preservation of valuable farmland and promote responsible urban growth. In late 2002, the Board of Commissioners adopted a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) ordinance and approved a plan to preserve 25,000 acres of prime agricultural land.



PDR is a preservation program that allows farmers to voluntarily give up the development rights to their property and be reimbursed for the value of those rights. PDR is a key component of the recommendations of the Urban Sprawl Subcommittee, which was established in 2000 by the Board of Commissioners to identify ways that county government could positively address the issues of urban growth. The recommendation to establish a PDR ordinance was the result of the Subcommittee's finding that Kent County, as Michigan's fourth largest County, was losing valuable farmland at twice the state rate. In adopting the ordinance, the Board of Commissioners noted that it was providing townships and landowners with the opportunity to preserve farmland. The ordinance allows townships and landowners to participate in PDR, but does not appropriate County funds for the program.

In 2003, the Board established the Agricultural Preservation Board to review applications for purchasing development rights of qualified farmland and apply for foundation grants to assist in leveraging state and federal dollars for the program. The first application cycle, offered December 2003 - January 2004, resulted in 44 PDR applications for over 5,300 acres from eleven townships: Ada, Alpine, Courtland, Grattan, Nelson, Oakfield, Spencer, Sparta, Tyrone and Vergennes. Funding for the program is being sought from foundations and the Federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program.

In addition to beginning PDR, Kent County has adopted a resolution of support for the United Growth for Kent County initiative, supporting the GVMC "Blueprint II" initiative through a financial commitment of \$100,000 for three years, partially funded a land use educator through the Kent/MSU Extension Office to increase public awareness about land use issues, and has been actively involved in community-wide dialogue relating to establishing countywide standards for storm water drainage and sanitary sewer systems. Through these initiatives and others, the County will continue to work with the community to ensure responsible urban growth, and protect the unique agricultural heritage of Kent County for the enjoyment of generations to come.

A Plethora of Information & Services...



Have you ever needed information from Kent County, but it's after business hours or the weekend? The next time you are in a bind, check out the County's website, www.accessKent.com. Over 1,200 pages of content and 800 reports, brochures and forms are available, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – all from the convenience of your home, office or library. During 2003, accessKent came to the rescue of many information seekers by providing nearly 6.5 million page views during 1.1 million visits. Get online and get the information and service you need from Kent County, around the clock.

Health Department Welcomes New Medical Director



For many, the hustle and adrenaline-fueled world of the emergency room might seem light years away from the relative calm of a public health clinic. But for Mark Hall, MD, emergency medicine and public health are two sides of the same coin. Dr. Hall became the County's new Medical Director in August 2003.

"Emergency medicine tends to be the final path for public health issues" says Dr. Hall, adding that many of what are considered public health problems show up first as patients in the emergency room. "Drug abuse, domestic violence, and even access to care issues show up in the emergency department." Hall knows this because he has practiced emergency medicine for nearly 20 years – first in Kansas City, KN, and for the past five at the Spectrum – Blodgett emergency department, a position he will continue to hold while serving at the Health Department.

"I was always interested in biostatistics and epidemiology and used to read a lot to learn as much as I could" says Dr. Hall. "I finally decided the best way to learn about that, and to learn about public health policy, would be to get an MPH (Master of Public Health degree)." He enrolled in the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and will complete his MPH in the spring of 2004.

Although the Health Department has undergone many changes in the past two years, public health itself has changed as well, largely due to the 2001 terrorist attacks. Following the anthrax attacks in particular, the importance of public health preparedness, and the role of health departments in emergency response, has never been more critical. Having an emergency physician – who would likely be one of the first to see victims of any emergency or attack – serve as public health medical director provides a vital linkage between the two, and ultimately bolsters community emergency preparedness.

"I've done emergency planning, and I've always enjoyed the challenges of emergency medicine – having to make quick decisions, diagnosis, thinking on your feet – so this position was a good fit for me" says Hall. "I'm looking forward to learning as much as I can and being a part of the Health Department."

Remember, your vote counts...



Tuesday, August 3, 2004 - Primary Election
(Last day to register is July 6, 2004)

Tuesday, November 2, 2004 - General Election
(Last day to register is October 4, 2004)

To register to vote or to find out if you are registered to vote, visit any Secretary of State branch office or your county, city, or township clerk's office, or visit the Michigan Secretary of State's website at www.sospublius.org to obtain further information. Absentee ballot applications can be obtained from your city, village, or township clerk's office.

Kent County Board of Commissioners



Pictured (L-R): Back Row: Harold Voorhees, Tom Postmus, Gary Rolls, Dan Koorndyk, Vice-Chair Roger Morgan, Chair David Morren, James Vaughn, Harold Mast, Fritz Wahlfield, Paul Mayhue.

Front Row: Dick Bulkowski, Dean Agee, Ken Kuipers, Arthur Tanis, Jack Boelema, Marv Hiddema, Dick Vander Molen, Ted Vonk, Jack Horton



**County Administration Building
300 Monroe Avenue, N.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503**

Contact Numbers

General Information	336-3600
Administrator's Office	336-3512
Airport	233-6000
Animal Shelter (Animal Control)	
Lost Pets/Adoptions	336-3209
Licensing/Complaints	336-3210
Bureau of Equalization	336-3527
Circuit Court Probation	336-3215
Clerk's Office	336-3550
Community Corrections	632-5370
Community Development	336-4200
Community Mental Health	336-3765
Cornerstone Access/Crisis Center	
Assessment & Referral Services	336-3909
Cooperative Extension Service	336-3265
Courthouse Information	632-5000
Circuit Court Clerk-Court Division	632-5480
Circuit Court	632-5220
Jury Information	632-5061
Circuit Court Family Division	
Juvenile Center	336-3748
Adolescent Sex Offender Program ...	336-3748
Crisis Intervention Program	336-3749
Drain Commissioner	336-3688
Friend of the Court	336-2600
Health Department	336-3030
Medical Examiner	336-3021
Housing Commission	336-4200
John Ball Zoological Garden	336-4301
Parks Department	
(General Information & Reservations)	336-7275
Probate Court	632-5440
Property Description & Mapping	336-3527
Prosecuting Attorney (Victim Witness)	632-5400
Public Works	336-3694
Recycling Information	336-2570
Register of Deeds	336-3558
Road Commission	242-6900
Sheriff Department (non emergency) ...	632-6100
Correctional Facility (inmate info.)	632-6300
Soldiers & Sailors Relief Office	336-3492
Treasurer's Office	336-3641

Publications

The following publications and many others are available online at www.accessKent.com or upon request:

- *Appointed Boards, Commissions and Committees**
- *Annual Report to the Community**
- *County Budget*
- *County Detail monthly local government newsletter*
- *Know Your Board of Commissioners**

* Contact the Executive Assistant to the Board.

Monthly Public Meetings

- County Commission every second and fourth Thursday
- Legislative & Human Resources Committee every second and fourth Tuesday
- Finance & Physical Resources Committee every first and third Tuesday

Schedules and agendas are available by contacting the Executive Assistant to the Board, (616) 336-4270, or the County Clerk, (616) 336-3550, or online at www.accessKent.com.

Meetings are televised on Cable Channel 24 (GRTV) – Monday and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

Contacting County Commissioners:

Kent County Commissioners may be contacted through the Executive Assistant to the Board of Commissioners at (616) 336-4270. Offices are located in the County Administration Building, 300 Monroe Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503.



MISSION STATEMENT OF KENT COUNTY

The mission of Kent County government 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.