



Kent State University

# THE KENT COMMUNICATOR

October 2010

## In this issue of The Kent Communicator:

- [Introduction from the University-Community Liaison](#)
- [Adopt-a-Senior Service Day in Kent](#)
- [A History of Community-University Involvement](#)
- [Important Halloween Safety Facts](#)
- [Downtown Halloween Celebration](#)
- [Responsible Neighbors](#)
- [City of Kent Code Enforcement](#)
- [Ohio Landlord and Tenant Law: What Students Need to Know](#)

## [Introduction from the University-Community Liaison](#)

Welcome to “The Kent Communicator!”

My name is Neal Stefanko and I am the University-Community Liaison and I would like to welcome you to the new “The Kent Communicator.” First, let me explain my position. I am a vital communication tool that will be used between Kent State University and The City of Kent Community. One way I am working to obtain communication has been to walk through the community going door to door talking to residents and students. Throughout this process I am pleased to say I am enjoying meeting everyone and look forward to meeting those residents and students that I have not yet met. The feedback I am receiving will help in my position continue to make informed communications and educate where needed to obtain a well balanced approach to the University and Community residing in harmony.

Second, I want to welcome everyone to “The Kent Communicator”. This newsletter will be of great value to students and residents alike. Every article will be vital information for students and residents with emphasis on important issues that are needed to help educate and inform students and residents alike. There will be a blend of information streaming from University and Community sources. As this newsletter continues to grow I would encourage anyone and everyone to submit ideas or articles to my email. This may include pictures and graphs or any other information that would be considered vital for everyone from students to community to read about.

In closing, I welcome your feedback at anytime. Feel free to contact me at [UniversityCommunityLiaison@kent.edu](mailto:UniversityCommunityLiaison@kent.edu) or 330-672-2480. I cannot wait to hear many more good stories about our amazing student body as well as the opportunity to answer your questions.

Sincerely

Neal A. Stefanko  
University-Community Liaison

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

## [Adopt-a-Senior Service Day in Kent](#)

In cooperation with the City of Kent, numerous organizations throughout the community and Kent State University will work together on Saturday, November 6 to provide volunteer service for area senior citizens in the first Senior Service Day. The goal is to support the independence of aging citizens of Kent by providing assistance through various minor home repair and maintenance projects.

Beginning at 8:00 a.m., five teams of volunteers will disperse to assist about fifteen homes in the area. Concerned Seniors of Portage County will be raking leaves and performing yard work thanks to the provision of rakes and special leaf pick-up by the City of Kent Service Department. The Kent Firefighters Union, through the support of the City of Kent Community Development Office, will install free smoke detectors. Rebuilding Together, Inc. will install grab bars for the safety of seniors and will also oversee many of the volunteer efforts. Finally, Kent Social Services (located at 1066 S. Water Street) is hosting a senior services fair which will include material and representatives from local agencies willing to provide services for any seniors in need.

Many Kent State students will be engaging in the activities through the support of the Office of Community Service, Learning and Volunteerism (Office of the Vice President, Enrollment Management and Student Affairs). Cooperation also comes from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and the Medication Access Program. The first Senior Service Day in Kent promises to be a Saturday of which both the local community and the Kent State campus can be especially proud.

Kent State students and organizations should contact [agosky@kent.edu](mailto:agosky@kent.edu) for more information and to volunteer for the Senior Service Day.

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

## [A History of Community-University Involvement](#)

The Second World War was a time of community sacrifice and service for both the city of Kent and the young university. Students, faculty, and local civilians signed up by the thousands to put their lives on the line waging crucial battles in Europe and the Pacific. Those at home, including many students on campus, eagerly organized to support the war effort. The Kent State Office of War Activities sponsored local fundraising campaigns, encouraged students and citizens to “adopt a soldier,” and collected gifts to send to Kent soldiers, sailors, and Marines overseas. The Army Air Corps utilized Kent’s experience with training civilian pilots to drill 2,000 enlisted men on campus. To conserve materials and redirect skills, local housing construction in Kent halted.

When 10,000 young veterans enrolled at Kent State under the G.I. Bill, neither the university nor the community was in a condition to accept the flood of new students, but both worked together to house the returning heroes. This sudden influx of new students was a watershed moment in the university’s history, forever transforming Kent State from a small university into the large public institution we know so well today. In 1946, students campaigned with veterans to effect a better housing situation, prodding local residents to offer a “bed for a vet.” Many of the veterans were older than other students on campus, having spent years in uniform; some were married and had children, prompting concerned locals to offer rooms for those who had already sacrificed so much. On campus, Wills Gym was lined with makeshift cots and coat racks, and temporary barracks were constructed in an assembly that came to be called Terrace Lodge (site of today’s Terrace Hall).

By engaging the students and the community, returning veterans had forever changed Kent State and the local community. The same spirit of activism and service that they inspired survives to this day.

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

**SAFETY  
TIPS!**

Homecoming is Here and  
Halloween is just around the  
corner...

# CELEBRATE RESPONSIBLY

- ◆ **Attend the Football game** (And other campus sponsored events)
- ◆ **Travel in groups** (Check in with each other at parties & leave together)
- ◆ **Don't become isolated** (With someone you don't know at a party)
- ◆ **Park/walk in well lit areas** (Avoid shrubbery)
- ◆ **Wearing a costume?** (Chose one suited for the weather; Hypothermia is more common than you think)
- ◆ **Be aware of your surroundings**
- ◆ **Planning a party?** (Pair food with non-alcoholic drinks)
- ◆ **If you drink alcohol, don't get drunk** (Legal age drinking is 21)
- ◆ **Watch friends for signs of alcohol poisoning** (Unconscious/semiconscious; slow breathing; clod, clammy, pale/bluish skin; vomiting. **Call 911** Don't leave them alone)
- ◆ **Keep your cell phone with you** (report suspicious behavior/people to Police)

**Focus on Having Fun! Remember to stay Safe and Sober !!!**



**KENT POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
319 SOUTH WATER STREET, KENT, OHIO 44240  
(330) 673-7732

JAMES A. PEACH  
CHIEF OF POLICE

**MEDIA RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPT. 20, 2010  
CONTACT: LT. JAYME COLE (330) 673-3221

**DOWNTOWN HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION**

ANNUALLY, THOUSANDS OF KSU STUDENTS, KENT RESIDENTS AND VISITORS GATHER DOWNTOWN THE SATURDAY PRECEDING HALLOWEEN. THE ORIGINS OF THIS TRADITION ARE UNKNOWN FOR CERTAIN BECAUSE THE GATHERING HAS NEVER BEEN SPONSORED OR SANCTIONED BY ANY ORGANIZATION OR GROUP. DESPITE BEING AN UNORGANIZED EVENT, THANKFULLY THE CELEBRATION IS TRADITIONALLY A FESTIVE AND ENJOYABLE GATHERING. THE KENT POLICE OFFER THE FOLLOWING SAFETY TIPS TO THOSE WHO WILL GATHER DOWNTOWN THIS YEAR, TO HELP KEEP THE CELEBRATION A FESTIVE AND ENJOYABLE GATHERING FOR EVERYONE.

- **DO NOT DRIVE DOWNTOWN.** TYPICALLY, THE VOLUME OF TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN CROWDS OVERWHELMS THE CAPACITY OF THE STREETS, RESULTING IN GRIDLOCK CONDITIONS THAT ARE NOT SAFE FOR DRIVERS OR PEDESTRIANS. ADDITIONALLY, PUBLIC PARKING AREAS FILL UP QUICKLY, AND THE OWNERS OF MANY BUSINESSES WILL NOT PERMIT UNAUTHORIZED PARKING - MEANING YOUR CAR WILL LIKELY BE TOWED IF YOU PARK IN A PARKING LOT WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE OWNER. INSTEAD OF DRIVING, WALK DOWNTOWN, TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OR UTILIZE A REPUTABLE TAXI CAB COMPANY.
- **IF YOU DO DRIVE, REGARDLESS WHERE YOU PARK, LOCK YOUR CAR AND DO NOT LEAVE ANY VALUABLES INSIDE.** MORE THAN ANY OTHER NIGHT OF THE YEAR, THIEVES WILL FLOCK TO KENT THAT NIGHT LOOKING FOR EASY TARGETS.
- **IF YOU WEAR A COSTUME, CHOOSE ONE THAT DOES NOT LIMIT YOUR ABILITY TO SEE.** OBEY ALL TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES WHEN CROSSING STREETS AND MAKE SURE YOUR PATH IS CLEAR. REMEMBER THAT YOUR COSTUME MAY BE DIFFICULT FOR AN ONCOMING DRIVER TO SEE, AND DRIVERS MAY BE DISTRACTED BY ALL THE FESTIVITIES. IN A CAR-VERSUS-PEDESTRIAN CRASH, THE CAR ALWAYS WINS.
- **IF YOU WEAR A COSTUME, DO NOT INCLUDE ANY ITEMS OR PROPS THAT ARE OR COULD POSSIBLY BE USED AS A WEAPON.** FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU'RE MASQUERADING AS FRED FLINTSTONE, YOU CAN'T CARRY A REAL OR A REALISTIC-LOOKING CLUB; IF YOU DRESS AS A FIREMAN, YOU CAN'T CARRY A REAL AXE. POLICE OFFICERS WILL CONFISCATE ANY ITEM (CLUB, SWORD, KNIFE, ETC.) THAT IS NOT IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZABLE TO BE A TOY.
- **FIREARMS (INCLUDING TOY GUNS) AND KNIVES ARE NOT PERMITTED, AND CARRYING EITHER COULD SUBJECT YOU TO ARREST.**

- ALL STATE LAWS AND CITY ORDINANCES REMAIN IN EFFECT. OPEN CONTAINERS OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE NOT PERMITTED IN PUBLIC AND ALL LIQUOR LAWS WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.
- PLAN FOR A SAFE EVENING. DO NOT GO OUT ALONE, AND HAVE A PLAN FOR A PLACE TO MEET IN CASE YOU GET SEPARATED FROM YOUR FRIENDS. DO NOT GO TO PRIVATE RESIDENCES (HOUSE PARTIES) IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN INVITED AND/OR DO NOT KNOW THE RESIDENTS. NEVER ACCEPT ANY FOOD OR BEVERAGE ITEM FROM ANYBODY YOU DO NOT KNOW WELL.
- BEHAVE RESPONSIBLY. FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY, (EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT DRIVING) DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES TO EXCESS.
- BE CIVIL. ESPECIALLY EARLY IN THE EVENING, THERE WILL BE MANY FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN DOWNTOWN TO SEE ALL THE COSTUMES. DON'T DO ANYTHING ON SATURDAY NIGHT THAT YOU WON'T BE PROUD TO TELL YOUR MOTHER ABOUT ON MONDAY MORNING.
- AVOID CONFRONTATION. NOT EVERYONE DOWNTOWN ON HALLOWEEN IS YOUR FRIEND, AND NOT EVERYONE IS THERE FOR A GOOD TIME. THERE ARE ALWAYS A FEW BAD CHARACTERS WHO COME SPECIFICALLY TO PREY ON OTHERS, START FIGHTS, COMMIT ASSAULTS OR WORSE, AND STEAL YOUR STUFF. STICK CLOSE TO YOUR FRIENDS, STAY IN WELL-LIGHTED AREAS AND AWAY FROM ANYBODY CAUSING TROUBLE.
- THE ENTIRE KENT POLICE DEPARTMENT WILL BE WORKING THAT NIGHT TO KEEP YOU SAFE. OFFICERS WILL BE PATROLLING IN GROUPS ON FOOT DOWNTOWN AND IN OTHER SELECTED NEIGHBORHOODS. IF YOU SEE ANYBODY ACTING DISRUPTIVELY OR SUSPICIOUSLY, EITHER FIND THE NEAREST POLICE OFFICER OR CALL THE KENT POLICE AT 330.673.7732 (OR DIAL 9-1-1 FOR EMERGENCIES).



# How To...

## get caught by the Police.

---

### **Push it to the Limit**

By far, the best way to get caught by the Police is to go overboard. Having a huge group, partying too long, and having too much to drink are all winners. Don't forget to be excessively loud.

### **Old Enough to Party**

Underage drinking is commonplace in a college town right? Maybe, but if you're caught it could land you a \$1000 fine and some jail time. (typically \$200-\$300 fine)

### **Get Hammered**

Getting drunk to the point where you can't walk isn't a big deal, the police have people called 'jailers' that'll help take care of you.

### **Act Like You're 12**

Make sure to draw as much attention to your party as possible. This can be accomplished by taking anything you can lift, throwing it into a pile in the street and lighting it on fire. If that doesn't work try starting a fight.

### **Free Advertising**

Carry around your open beers with pride, let everyone know that's your brand. Police officers respect that kind of dedication- they'll give you a free ride downtown. Just make sure to have some money saved up, an open container charge costs \$150.

### **Eagle Scout**

Just like camping, peeing (or worse) on trees, cars, buildings and other people is completely acceptable, so long as you can afford a \$135 fine.

## [Responsible Neighbors](#)

So, it's fall at Kent State University. The days are shorter, the leaves are turning, and the air is chilling. And let's not forget, the semester is half over, football season is in full swing, and Halloween is just around the corner. Soon, bon fires will replace volley ball nets, and jack-o-lanterns will take the place of tiki torches all over the city. As the lazy days of summer give way to studying, exams and essays, fall is a great time to throw a party. Nothing beats the day-to-day grind like a gathering of friends to celebrate a team win, the end of exams, or just the total (if only temporary) abandon of your academic pressures.

Be that as it may, when planning your big bash, it's important to remember you have neighbors. While some of these neighbors may actually be attending your party, there are likely plenty of others who will not. So, it would be wise to remember that, in response to complaints and concerns from Kent residents regarding party and noise disturbances over the years, the City of Kent recently passed a new ordinance dealing with these issues. Chapter 509.13 of the Codified Ordinances of Kent specifically addresses the "Nuisance Party Regulations" which are now in full force and effect throughout the city limits.

Pursuant to General Offense Code 509.13, a "nuisance party" is defined as follows:

"A social gathering or party which is conducted on premises within the city and which, by reason of the conduct of the persons in attendance, results in any one or more of the following conditions or events occurring at the site of the said party or social gathering, or on neighboring public or private property:

1. disorderly conduct;
2. illegal open container;
3. outdoor urination or defecation in a public place, or on the property of another;
4. unlawful sale, furnishing, dispensing or consumption of beer or intoxicating liquor; sale or furnishing of beer or intoxicating liquor to an underage person;
5. possession or consumption of beer or intoxicating liquor by an underage person; illegal use of a controlled substance;
6. public indecency;
7. unlawful deposit of litter or refuse;
8. damage or destruction of property without the consent of the property owner; unlawful pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
9. standing or parking of vehicles that obstructs the free flow of traffic on the public streets and sidewalks or that impedes the ability to render emergency services; unlawfully loud noise;
10. any other conduct or condition that threatens injury, inconvenience, or alarm to persons or damage to property which is hereby declared to be an unlawful public nuisance."

In short, if the police come to your residence due to a complaint about noise or other disturbances concerning your soiree, they don't even have to give you a warning. The party will be shut down, and the tenant(s) of the property, and even the party-goers, may be cited. And the citation is nothing to scoff at! While parts of the regulation's definition may seem vague, the penalty for its violation is not. A first-time offender convicted of violating any one or more sections of the regulation will **automatically** be found guilty of an unclassified misdemeanor, and will be fined no less than \$500, all the way up to \$1000, and could receive up to 30 days in jail. No "if's", "and's", or "but's" about it. And if that's not enough to make you cringe, a person violating this ordinance within 12 months after a first-time offense will be hit with a minimum fine of \$750. That's a lot of Chipotle burritos down the drain!

Look at it this way- if the police believe you are intoxicated or out of control, they're not going to believe you will follow their direction to disperse, or that you will cooperate with just a warning about shutting down the party if they are forced to return. Let's be real, here. Kent City police have more than enough to keep them busy without having to respond to multiple noise complaints, unruly party-goers, and "unlawful public nuisance" behavior resulting from the same party. So, in an effort to cut down on usage of police manpower and resources, this ordinance allows the officer to shut your party down and cite you immediately- without warning. The bottom line is, if your neighbors complain about your bash, not only are you inconveniencing them, but also the police, and that can't end favorably for you or your fellow "party people".

Here are some suggestions to help keep your neighbors happy, and you out of trouble with the police.

**1. Inform your neighbors about the party before it begins.** This is not only courteous, but a great way to make contact with your neighbors. Let them know how to reach you if there are any disturbances. Talking with your neighbor beforehand helps raise comfort levels, and encourages your neighbor to come to you- not the police- if your party gets too wild for them to tolerate.

**2. Invite your neighbor!**

Let's face it- if your neighbor is partying with the rest of you, they're not likely to complain about noise, music or any other party activity in which they themselves are participating. Even if you neighbor declines, just inviting them opens the lines of communication, and gives them the opportunity to bring up any problems or requests they may have regarding the impending festivities.

**3. Read your lease.**

Most landlords, apartment complexes, and condo associations have party clauses written into them that specifically outlines what is and is not allowed to take place on the property. These clauses are meant not only to cut down on noise violations, but also property damage, fire code violations, and other city ordinance infractions.

**4. Be courteous!**

Just because you've been given the "all clear" by your neighbors, doesn't give you the right to get out of control. Remember, you're responsible not only for your property, but for your guests as well. Have a plan with your housemates for keeping everything under control and preventing violations of the law at your house. Carry out that plan! Keep the music at a decent level, pick up your trash, and keep your guests out of your neighbors' hair. If you are respectful each time you throw a party, you will build trust between you and your neighbors, *and* the police.

**5. If the police do show up.**

Stay calm and be respectful. Don't aggravate the situation by being disrespectful and uncooperative. There's no sense making things worse for you or anyone else by arguing with the police. Even if you are right, you won't win that argument. Keep in mind, even if you are 21 years or over and legally allowed to consume alcohol, you can still be cited for a "nuisance party" violation. Think intelligently, and have a sober person speak with the officer. If you are cited, remember to contact Student Legal Services. We're here to help you resolve your legal problems, and prevent more complex legal entanglements later in court.

**6. Know when to call it a night.**

Parties are fun and a big part of the college experience. But having a good time and partying the night away is not worth the cost of being arrested and obtaining a criminal record. Don't forget the reason you're in college to begin with- to prepare yourself for a successful future. A criminal offense on your record can seriously jeopardize that success.

So, as you paint your face with blue and gold, light your bon fires, and don your Halloween costumes this Fall, remember the people next door. Demonstrating respect and consideration for those living next to and

around you goes a long way in preventing the police from shutting down your party, can keep you out of legal trouble, and is the best measure of a responsible neighbor.

Student Legal Services  
164 E. Main Street  
Suite 203  
Kent, Ohio 44240  
(330) 672-9550

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

## [City of Kent Code Enforcement](#)

One of the many ways the City of Kent serves and protects its citizens is through the development and enforcement of zoning codes, property maintenance requirements, neighborhood preservation initiatives and other civil ordinances. This enforcement is generally handled by the City of Kent's Code Enforcement Officer. This position was established as a full time position in 2008 by the Kent City Council.

Code enforcement is the social contract that citizens agree to comply with when they make the decision to live in a community. This social contract is based on the generally accepted principles of social responsibility and personal well-being that are the foundation of all communities. The role of the City's Code Enforcement Officer is to ensure these principles are maintained in the community through the enforcement of established code requirements such as trash removal, maintenance of yards and keeping noise at respectful levels. Code enforcement is fundamental to promoting a quality standard of living for all citizens and ensures the aesthetic value of a community's many neighborhoods.

The City of Kent also has developed a tool loan program to assist citizens in maintaining their properties. Tools are available, free of charge, to any person living in the City. Tools included in this program include: a lawn mower, rakes, shovels, a leaf blower, electrical extension cord, a tree branch lopper and snow shovels. This program was initiated in 2008 and has been utilized frequently by both renters and full time citizens of the City.

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

## [Ohio Landlord and Tenant Law: What Students Need to Know](#)

Each academic year, many KSU students make the decision to move out of the dormitories and into rental housing available near the campus. Making the transition to living off campus is often an exciting and satisfying experience for many students. This experience, however, can present challenges for students who are entering into rental agreements for the first time and who are not familiar with tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities. The Ohio Landlord and Tenant Law went into effect in 1975 and the following provides a brief overview of landlord and tenant responsibilities under this law:

### Landlords ARE required to:

- Comply with all building, housing, health and safety codes.
- Keep the property in a livable condition by making all necessary repairs.
- Provide trash cans and arrange for scheduled trash removal at rental properties.
- Provide 24-hour notice before entering a tenant's rental unit, unless there is an emergency situation.

### Tenants ARE required to:

- Conduct themselves in a manner that does not disturb others, including persons residing in the surrounding area.
- Refrain from engaging in illegal activity, including illegal drug use and/or underage drinking, while residing in or visiting a rental property.

- Maintain the property in a safe and clean manner, which includes the disposal of all garbage.
- Use available electrical and plumbing fixtures in a correct and appropriate manner.
- Follow all applicable housing, zoning, health and safety codes that are applicable to rental properties.
- Avoid damaging the property and keep all appliances supplied by the landlord in good working order.
- Pay rent in full every month in a timely manner.

Often students who are entering into a lease agreement for the first time are unaware of what protections they may have as a tenant. Limitations on a landlord's authority are addressed in the Ohio Landlord Tenant Law and include the following:

Landlords are NOT permitted to:

- Retaliate against a tenant who files a complaint with a government agency concerning a possible violation of a building or safety code. Types of prohibited retaliatory actions include rent increases, decreasing services that were previously provided under a current lease, eviction or threat of eviction.
- Shut off utilities or services, change locks, remove doors or windows, or confiscate tenant possessions in order to force someone to move even when the tenant is in arrears on rent payments or the lease has expired. The only way a landlord can evict a tenant is by filing an eviction action against the tenant and obtaining a court order.
- Charge excessive late fees or application fees, raise the rent, terminate the tenancy or change the terms of the lease agreement without giving proper notice.
- Discriminate against a potential or existing tenant on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability or military status.

Fair Housing Contact Service (FHCS), a nonprofit agency which provides fair housing services for the City of Kent, offers a variety of services for tenants and landlords, including a Tenant-Landlord Hotline. The Hotline is a free service and trained personnel are available to answer questions and provide information concerning your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. The Tenant-Landlord Hotline is available by calling **(330) 376-0359**.

(Information included in this article was used with the permission of FHCS).

[\(Back to Top\)](#)