



Sustainable Kent News

Special Edition – October
2025 Sustainability Month
Celebration

The latest on sustainability efforts in Kent



October 2025 Sustainability Month Celebration

INSIDE:

The City of Kent Sustainability Commission's October Sustainability Month Celebrations

A review of the Proclamation of October 2025 as Sustainability Month, tabling at the Haymaker Farmers' Market, and the Lights Out! at Plum Creek Event

Around the City

Hear from City departments, community organizations and area residents in their own words and pictures about how they celebrated October Sustainability Month

Calendar

Updates to upcoming events and free metered parking downtown on Black Friday and Christmas Eve

Welcome to the Sustainable Kent News Special Edition focused on the City of Kent's October 2025 Sustainability Month! The celebration invited all residents, schools, businesses, and organizations to join this celebration by participating in activities throughout the entire month that promote sustainable practices.

Everything from remembering to take your own bags to the grocery store to hosting a special event promoting sustainable practices qualified as contributing to this celebration. By showcasing sustainability efforts together throughout the month, a celebration as unique and special as Kent itself was had, and we're excited to share about some of those efforts!

That said, sharing about the Kent community's sustainability efforts doesn't have to stop with this special edition! The Around the City column of the regular edition Sustainable Kent e-newsletters is a place where anyone in the Kent community can submit a write up about sustainability work they are doing to have it shared in same. Please feel free to contact the City's Sustainability Coordinator, Julie Morris, at: julie.morris@kentohio.gov with any questions, or to submit a write up for a future edition of the newsletter.

The City sincerely thanks all those who participated in the October Sustainability Month Celebration and for the work you all do each and every day that helps us enjoy a healthy and resilient community!



The City of Kent Sustainability Commission's October Sustainability Month Celebrations

How it started: A proclamation was made!

The City of Kent proclaimed October 2025 as Sustainability Month in recognition of its and the community's work that creates a brighter, more sustainable future for the City of Kent and beyond at its 10/01/25 City Council Committee meeting.

It encouraged all residents, businesses, and organizations to join the celebration by participating in activities that promote sustainable practices.

The proclamation document can be accessed by clicking the following link: [2025-october-sus-month-proclamation-signed.pdf](#)



Proclamation

CITY OF KENT, OHIO
TREE CITY USA

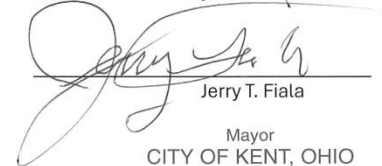
- WHEREAS,** the City of Kent recognizes the well-being of a community is directly linked to the health of our planet, and the Kent community has a long history of working to protect and enhance the environmental, health, and social well-being of those who live, work and play in the City; and
- WHEREAS,** cities across the nation are at the forefront of building a more resilient future by enacting initiatives related to renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste reduction, transportation, and urban green spaces that offer numerous benefits such as cost savings, improved public health, and enhanced quality of life for all residents; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Kent is committed to implementing policies and practices designed to preserve and protect the Kent community through a commitment to ongoing, responsible, environmental stewardship; and
- WHEREAS,** to honor this commitment, the City of Kent, with the help and input of the community, adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in April 2023 which identified strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, a key contributor to climate change; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Kent, recognizes the importance of implementing these strategies and continuing to work together as a community to raise awareness of how individual and collective action can lead to a healthier, sustainable, and more resilient future,

Now, Therefore, I, Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of the Kent City Council, in alignment with the Education and Outreach component of the CAP, do hereby proclaim the month of October 2025, as
"SUSTAINABILITY MONTH"

in the City of Kent, Ohio. All residents, businesses, and organizations are urged to join this celebration by participating in activities that promote sustainable practices. Working together can create a brighter, more sustainable future for the City of Kent and beyond.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of the City of Kent to be affixed this 1st day of October, 2025.


Jerry T. Fiala
Mayor
CITY OF KENT, OHIO

VISIT OUR SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW WEBPAGE!

The City has a webpage to highlight its sustainability work and keep the community posted about related Climate Action Plan implementation progress, programs, news, events, and more!

Visit: <https://www.kentohio.gov/business-building-development/sustainability-overview/>

City of Kent Sustainability Commission's tabling at the Haymaker Farmers' Market



Sustainability Commission Members (Left to Right) Julie Grant and Maryjayne Stone sharing information about a variety of October Sustainability Month Celebration items.



Todd Cartner, President of Kent Environmental Council and Co-Owner of Discover Bats Ohio, sharing information about bats.



Sustainability Commission Members (Left to Right) Justine Gallo and Judy Nelson collecting suggestions for the sustainable activities board.



Sustainability Commission Members (Left to Right) Julie Grant and Judy Nelson are tabling-ready!



Todd Cartner, President of Kent Environmental Council and co-owner of Discover Bats Ohio with market guest discussing October Sustainability Month items.

As one of their activities for the October Sustainability Month Celebration, the Sustainability Commission tabled at the Saturday, October 11th Haymaker Farmers' Market in downtown Kent. The Commission members worked to share information about the City's Climate Action Plan, the Proclamation of Sustainability Month, and other October Sustainability Month Celebration activities. Todd Cartner, President of Kent Environmental Council and Co-Owner of Discover Bats Ohio, LLC joined the Commission's table to help share about the Commission's planned Lights Out! at Plum Creek Park event and provide information about impacts of light pollution on area bats and other wildlife for marketgoers.

The Commission members offered suggestions to help folks identify sustainable practices or activities they may practice in their own lives which they could use to participate in the October Sustainability Month Celebration. That suggestion list (and more) can be found at the following link: <https://www.kentohio.gov/business-building-development/sustainability-overview/october-sustainability-month-celebration/>.

The Commission members also encouraged those who stopped by to provide their own contributions to the suggestion list, highlighting practices they support, engage in, or encourage for incorporating sustainability into one's lifestyle.

Those inspiring community suggestions were captured in the following picture and transcribed to read as follows:

- Solar panels
- Vote!
- Wild your garden
- Compost! Leave the leaves! Rags instead of paper towels
- Composting
- Walk to store
- Use red spectrum LEDs not blue
- We have an EV & PHEV cars – Bill
- Take my own “to go” containers into restaurants
- Forage
- Use the Public Library!
- Switch to bar soap and shampoo bar
- Use rechargeable head lamp – Petzl (brand)
- Grow your own food
- Plug In Hybrid
- Reusable grocery bags
- Car pooling
- Shop local
- Thrifting
- Eat locally sourced meat and produce
- Compost!
- Use the Library
- Farmer’s Market
- Cloth napkins
- Mending/repairing
- Not cut half grass for the Bees & Animals
- Mutual Aid! Shopping local and sharing resources w/community
- Raised garden beds with composting



Lights Out! at Plum Creek Park Event



As a start to any good spooky story, it was a cold and rainy night.....no, really, after days and days of sunshine, and the day prior to the event featuring 80° warmth and clear skies, the night of the Lights Out! at Plum Creek Park event held Sunday, October 19th was literally cold, windy, and cloudy with some heavy downpours for good measure!

That didn't stop brave community members from attending an evening full of education about light pollution's impact on area wildlife, the benefits to be had from turning the lights out, and a night hike through the park was had by most!

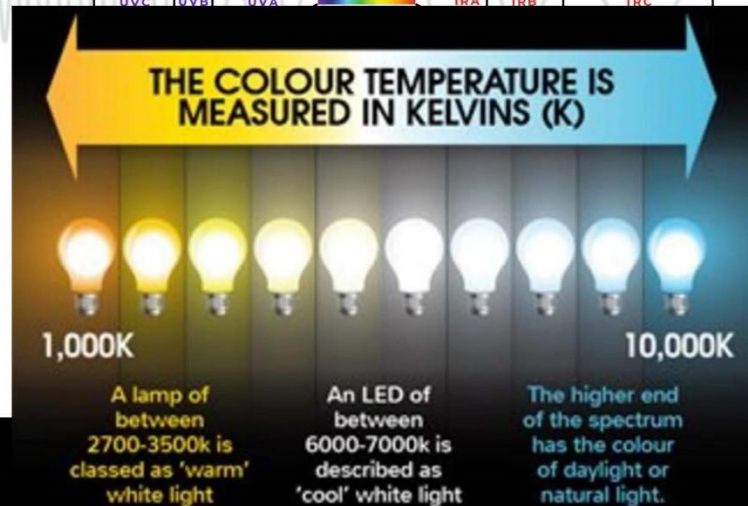


Todd Cartner, President of Kent Environmental Council and Co-Owner of Discover Bats Ohio, LLC, as well as Holly Stoneberg, Education Program Coordinator from Portage Park District provided excellent presentations with some highlights from the evening as follows:

Seeing At Night

- The Evolution of Light
- Campfires & Torches
- Candles and Lanterns
- Streetlights – Oil in the 1500s, 1807 with gas
- 1879 Thomas Edison's first Lightbulb
- 1880 First electric streetlight
- 1938 the fluorescent light was invented
- 1962 the LED lightbulb was invented

Todd spoke about the evolution of light systems and provided information about light spectrum. We learned that light on the warmer spectrum has less impact on nocturnal and migrating wildlife.



Todd demonstrated light across the spectrum via a candle, a gas lantern, and flashlights with red and white/blue light hues for the audience. He advised the red spectrum flashlight can be used when doing research on bats and other wildlife at night.

How Bats See in the Dark

Note Call Phases:

1. Search
2. Approach
3. Feed (Buzz)

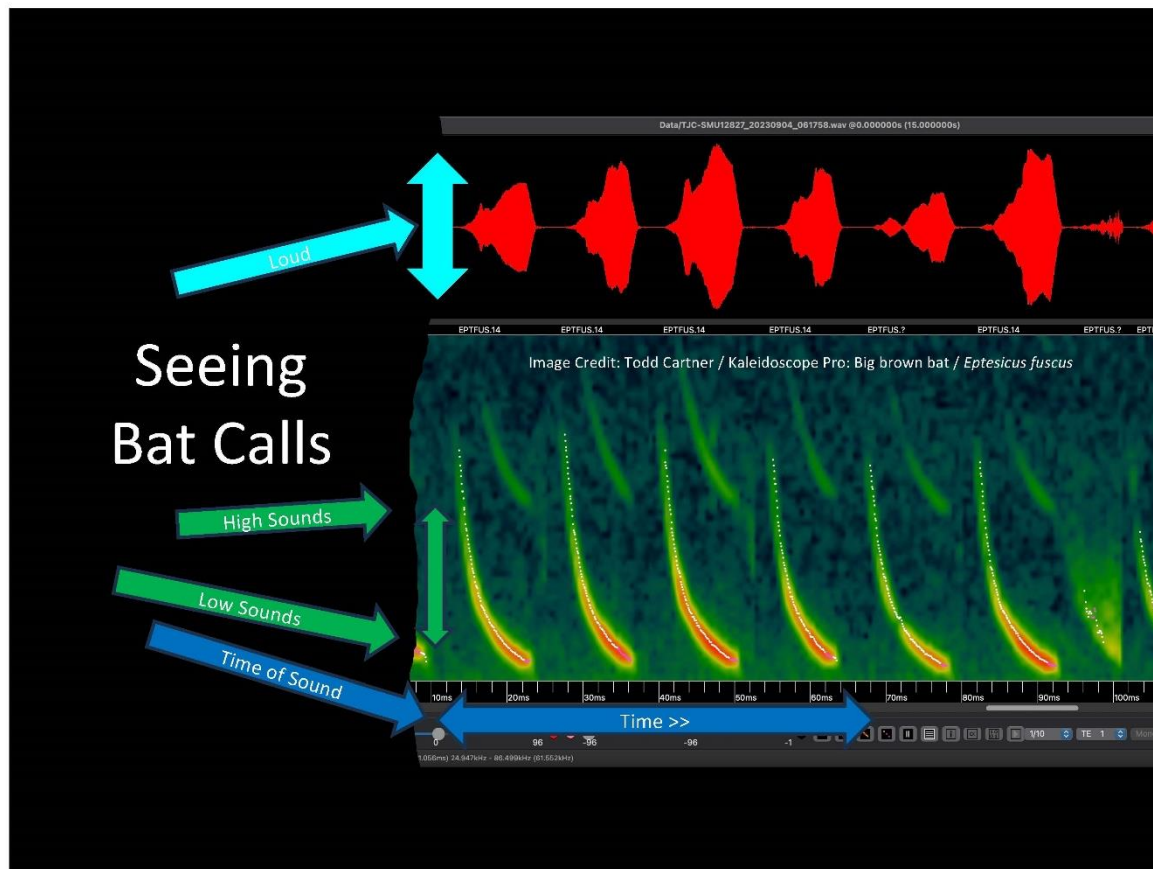


Video Credit:

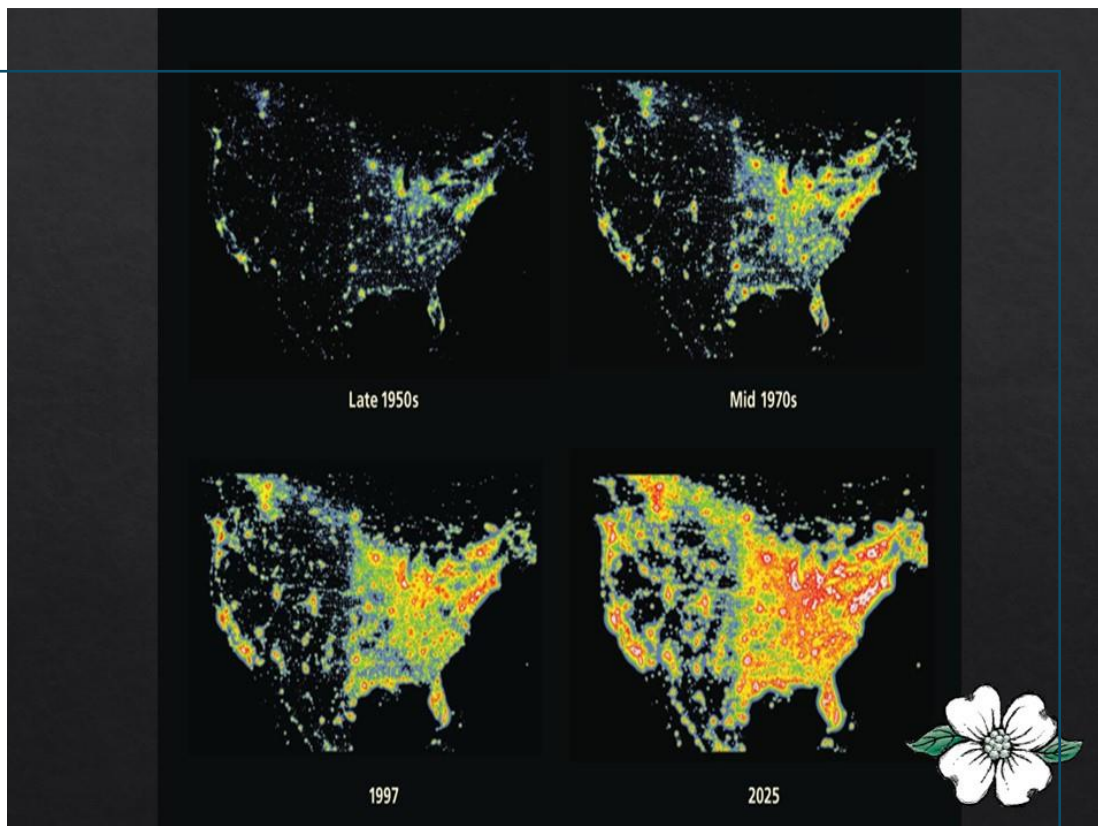
International Society for Neuroethology

<https://www.youtube.com/@Neuroethology>

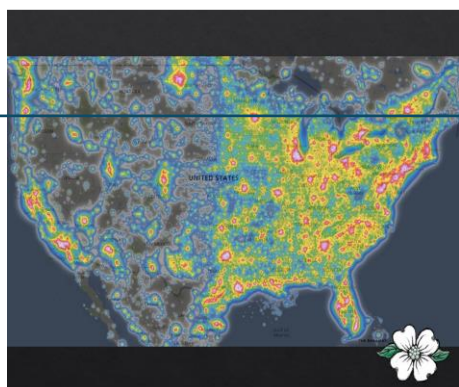
Todd offered some fascinating information about how bats actually see in the dark using echolocation. He pointed out there is a sequence to the calls while the bats are searching for, on approach to, and then feeding on their prey. Todd provided a demonstration of audio files of bat calls matched to a visualization of those calls during the call phases.



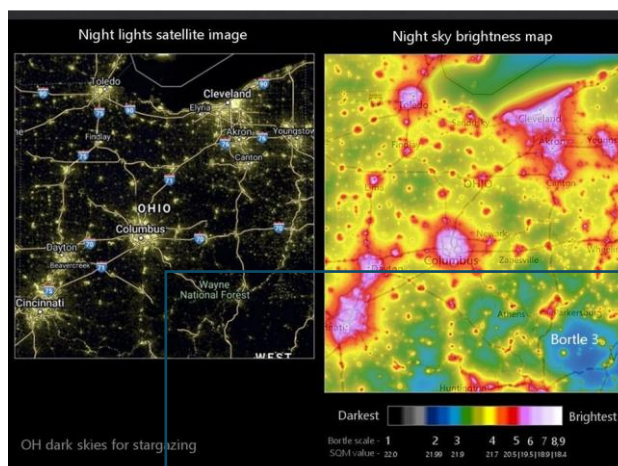
Both Todd and Holly provided information about the impacts of light pollution and its increase over time. Holly also noted that more than 1/3 of the world's population and about 80% of people in the U.S. can no longer see the Milky Way in the night sky due to light pollution. Utilizing information from darksky.org, ohiolightsout.org, and obcnet.org (Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative), Holly provided more details about these impacts.



A prediction map from the National Park Service dated in 2001 for light pollution in the United States



A 2015 map of existing light pollution from DarkSky International (darksky.org)



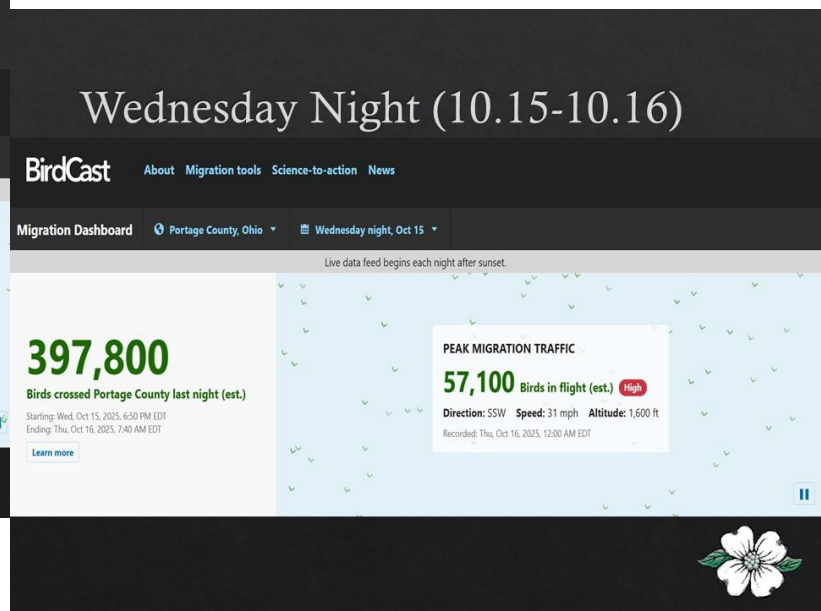
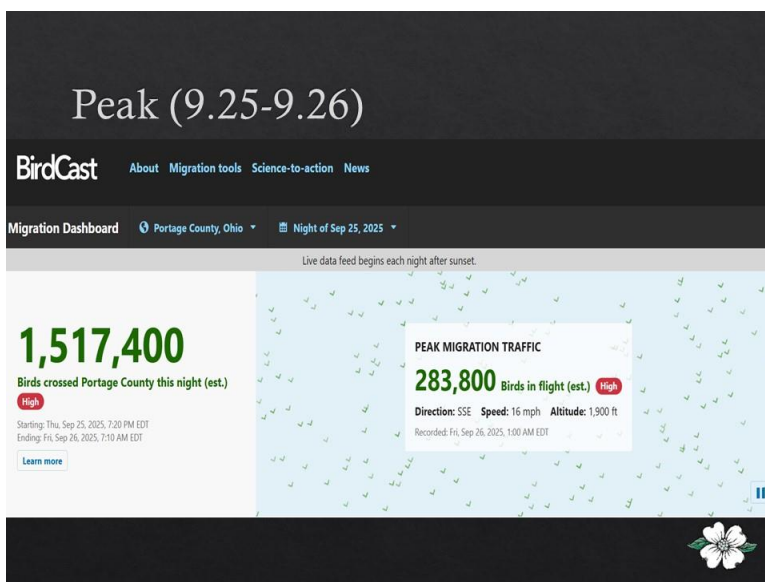
Close-up of Ohio light pollution in 2015 from [Ohio Dark Sky Parks & Places | Stargazing & Astrotourism](#) - Akron/Kent located in middle of top right of map



Holly's example of birds circling in the lights of the Twin Towers Memorial in NYC, disoriented by the lights – the NYC Bird Alliance monitors the birds in the light beams every 20 minutes, and if the count surpasses 1k birds, the Tribute in Light organizers will turn off the lights for 15-20 minutes to allow the birds to reorient themselves.

Holly noted that light pollution not only affects human capacity to view the night sky, but impacts migrating birds as well. Holly advised that birds migrate by star maps, and light pollution has also altered their migration timing. She noted millions of birds migrate each year, most of them at night, and the light coming from buildings is disorienting. As a result of this disorientation, Holly advised that the birds either hit the buildings, or they circle the building until they drop. Holly provided a link to a study done in 2014 ([Bird–building collisions in the United States on JSTOR](#)) showing about 1 billion birds in the United States die each year from building collision.

She also provided some statistics from BirdCast ([BirdCast - Bird migration forecasts in real-time](#)) detailing numbers of birds flying over Portage County, Ohio during the peak fall migration in September 2025, and then again from October 15th -16th, just the day before the Lights Out! at Plum Creek event, as seen in the following images.



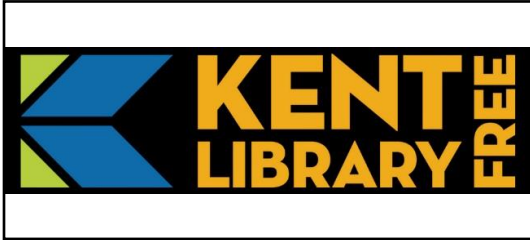
Holly provided some information about light shielding and tips for how we can all help by flipping the switch and turning out the lights!

How you can help!

- ◇ Use outdoor lights only when necessary
- ◇ Use motion sensors or timers
- ◇ Use lower wattage or warm colored lights
- ◇ Close blinds at night



Community members and organizations share in their own words and pictures how they participated in the October 2025 Sustainability Month Celebration

[illegible]

11

Sustainable Kent News

- Reduce, reuse, and recycle by thrifting or buying used items, repurposing materials for art, reusing bags, containers, towels, and refillable bottles, recycling, and composting.
- Conserve energy and water by walking instead of driving when possible, carpooling, driving hybrid or electric cars, opening windows instead of using fans, wrapping in blankets instead heating, and capturing shower water for plants.
- Support local and sustainable food by growing a garden, keeping chickens, shopping locally for produce and meat, eating locally sourced food, composting vegetable scraps, and preserving produce in reusable jars.
- Care for the environment by removing invasive plants, picking up litter, and reporting invasive insects.
- Engage with community resources by using public libraries and supporting local businesses that source locally.

In addition to the Patron Interaction Wall display, Kent Free Library also hosted a Sustainability Book Display during the month of October, and are sharing the Stanford/Doerr School of Sustainability Reading List that was posted near their display:

* Available at Kent Free Library ** PCDL Consortium

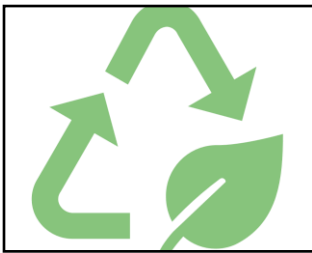
- *The Heat Will Kill You First: Life and Death on a Scorched Planet* - Jeff Goodell (2023) *
- *Fixing the Climate: Strategies For an Uncertain World* - Charles Sabel & David Victor (2022)
- *Into the Clear Blue Sky: Restoring Our Atmosphere* - Rob Jackson (2024)
- *Earth Keeper: Reflections on the American Land* - N. Scott Monday (2020) *
- *Locust: The Devastating Rise and Fall of the Insect that Shaped The American Frontier* - Jeffery Lockwood (2009)
- *The Conservative Environmentalist: Common Sense Solutions For a Sustainable Future* - Benji Backer (2024)
- *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming* - Naomi Oreskes & Erik Conway (2010) *
- *Lessons for Survival: Mothering Against 'the Apocalypse'* - Emily Raboteau (2024) *
- *The Wild Dark: Finding the Night Sky in the Age of Light* - Craig Childs (2025)
- *Is a River Alive?* - Robert Macfarlane (2025)*
- *The light Eaters: How the Unseen World of Plant Intelligence Offers a New Understanding of Life on Earth* - Zoe Schlanger (2024)*



The Kent Environmental Council's October 2025 Sustainability Month Celebration

Thank you for the opportunity to support and collaborate in showcasing Kent's commitment to sustainability. Our October partner program, "Choose Green... Live Clean," was a wonderful celebration of the many recycling and sustainability initiatives across Kent and Portage County. Sponsoring and participating in "Lights Out at Plum Creek Park" was also a family-friendly way to introduce people to the richness of the natural world at night—and to highlight how Kent can continue reducing its environmental impact through mindful lighting and practices. Thank you again for allowing us to be part of Kent's journey toward sustainable solutions, and thank you for all the work you do!

For more information about the Kent Environmental Council, click <https://kentenvironment.org/blog/> or find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/KentEnvironment>



From Todd and Ann Cartner

We take living sustainability very seriously and have developed many habits to do our part. Some of these have big impacts (the vehicles we drive) but most are little day-to-day habits such as composting and reducing single use items. Recently at the **Haymaker's Farmer's Market** we came across washable/reusable flannel "paper towels" from the **Socially Responsible Sweatshop**. These go-to towels are wonderful to use and pop in the washer, eliminating another source of single use garbage. So many wonderful ideas we find in Kent. Thank you to the entire community... The Cartner's.



From Eric Gorczynski, Environmental Technician for the City of Kent's Health Department

Eric Gorczynski, Environmental Technician for the City's Health Department shared about his and other volunteer work that happened during the October Sustainability Month Celebration, advising:

Not me, but in September and October, some volunteers from the August 2025 Clean-up event who apparently

Sustainable Kent News

found it hard to shake the clean-up bug continued to periodically (about once per week) remove trash from the river and notified me when they had accumulated a bag or pile of trash that they left on the bank. Park & Rec staff and/or I had the trash collected. I did fish out 3 tires that they reported to me. On October 1st I presented at NEFCO/ERTAC regarding the City of Kent's clean-up activities and an environmental investigation/remediation/industrial pretreatment project. I was also interviewed by a KSU student regarding the clean-ups. Last week I had a KSU volunteer group reach out who is interested in trying to get a clean-up event in before November 15th, so I am trying to see if I can put something together for them quickly. In the last month I have been making some contacts regarding an invasives projects.



United Methodist Church of Kent
A Place to Grow

Kent United Methodist Church Green Team Report for the October 2025 Sustainability Month Celebration

Because we believe that the earth is a gift from God that is our responsibility to care for, last spring Kent United Methodist Church called for volunteers to form a Green Team. Team members meet monthly to share ideas and explore ways to be more environmentally conscious, as well as to take action to make a difference in our congregation and the community.

Education and awareness were our first priorities. With that in mind, Pastor Nathan Howe reached out to the Kent Environmental Council. Todd Carter graciously agreed to speak at a dinner, sharing background on the council's

activities, as well as displaying environmentally friendly products and offering green tips from his personal experience. For those who wanted to dig deeper, our church hosted a 6-week study entitled "Wake Up World" that discussed current world-wide environmental challenges, as well as ways individuals and groups can work to make a difference.

Several Green Team members also volunteered to start a "Creation Corner" in the



Creation Corner

Sustainable Kent News

church common area – a bulletin board sharing information about small steps anyone can take to better care for the planet. Topics change monthly, and have included recycling, buying local, composting, and using native plants in landscaping. It also includes an interactive space for others to contribute ideas and information.

Kent UMC has also reached beyond our doors. Groups have travelled to Cleveland three times to Brookdale Orchard, which was established by Mittie Jordan of St. Matthew's UMC in the city's Hough neighborhood. We've helped out by mowing, weeding and harvesting pears in this unique ministry. Other events have included the Pilgrimage of Hope for Creation in Akron and the Climate Action Summit in Columbus, which we attended alongside members of other churches and denominations.



Nature walk on the church grounds

Back at home, the Green Team has held nature walks on the church grounds to assess the property and acquaint the congregation with the outdoor space that is also part of our church. One result of the grounds walk was to devote part of the lawn to native pollinator plants. Several volunteers gathered one Sunday afternoon to mow an area and then spread a native seed mixture which included plants that attract and feed bees and birds – as well reducing the area that needs to be mowed and fertilized. This summer we also initiated an informal produce swap, encouraging gardeners to share the bounty of their gardens with one another.



Creating a pollinator garden on church property

To top it off (literally!), Kent UMC is actively pursuing installation of solar panels on the church roof. The goal is to make a decision in time to take advantage of solar tax credits that will end at the end of 2025. Several other area churches are considering this step as well.

The environmental issues are great, and they can seem daunting. We continue to strive to be faithful stewards of the earth, and to look for new opportunities to make a positive difference in our community and the world. We know that no one can do everything, but we do believe that everyone can do something.

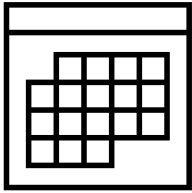
Kimberly Young for the Green Team



From Benjamin Tipton, Volunteer at Main Street Kent's Fall Clean-Up

On October 25th in downtown Kent, Main Street Kent volunteers gathered at the gazebo at West Main Street and Franklin Avenue to kick off a community clean-up day. About 30 volunteers showed up on a cold morning with other neighbors to pick up supplies before heading out to spruce up designated areas across the downtown district. It was a welcoming, community-driven effort to help keep Kent beautiful and vibrant for everyone.





CALENDAR & ITEMS OF INTEREST

Supporting our local businesses and organizations is a key component of Sustainability! Check out the City's Culture & Community section of the website (www.kentohio.gov/culture-community/) for more details about the following:

Mayor Jack Amrhein has officially declared free parking in downtown Kent on the following dates to encourage holiday shopping and community engagement:

- **Friday, November 28, 2025 – the day after Thanksgiving**
- **Wednesday, December 24, 2025 – Christmas Eve**

Metered parking is free during this time with the 2 hour parking areas still in effect.

- **Haymaker Farmers' Market**
 - Open year-round, every Saturday morning in Kent: Held outdoors in downtown Kent on Franklin Ave. from April through November, 9am to 1pm, and indoors at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent – Hobbs Hall from December to March, 10am to 1pm. Visit www.haymakermarket.com for full details.
- **Main Street Kent**
 - A non-profit organization that focuses on the promotion, beautification, and revitalization of downtown Kent. The City of Kent, Kent State University, local businesses, and community members support Main Street Kent. Check out their full calendar of events here: www.mainstreetkent.org/events/full-calendar/.
- **Kent In Good Company Podcast**
 - Hosted by Kent resident and small business owner, Katy Thomas, head to the Main Street Kent website at the following link to listen and learn more about Kent's local businesses: <https://mainstreetkent.org/discover/in-good-company/>.
- **The Kent Area Chamber of Commerce**
 - Visit www.kentbiz.com/events/eventcalendar for a full listing of Chamber and Community events.
- **Kent Historical Society & Museum**
 - Learn more about our community at Kent's primary history resource and reference center! Visit www.kentohiohistory.org for organization details and events.
- **Kent Parks and Recreation**
 - Offers a variety of locations, programs, and events for individuals and families to enjoy. They provide quality recreation and entertainment for the community through parks, sports, fitness, education and cultural arts. Visit their full program and event offerings at: www.kentohio.gov/culture-community/kent-parks-and-recreation/

- **Yard Waste Transfer Site Open!**

- The yard waste transfer site hours are Tuesdays 9am-1pm and Saturdays 9am-noon. The site is a place for residents of Kent to drop off brush, clippings, and other yard waste. It is also the place to get the grindings from the waste, to use like mulch, for free! Stop by near Cherry Street and Mogadore Rd, near the entrance to Plum Creek. Full details at: [Yard Waste | City of Kent](#)

- **Small Business Saturday & Festival of Lights – 11/29/2025**

- Make sure to visit downtown Kent for what is sure to be a fantastic day on Saturday, November 29th from 11am to 8pm for Main Street Kent's Small Business Saturday, and the Festival of Lights. Full event details are available at: [Small Business Saturday & Festival of Lights | Facebook](#)

- **Main Street Kent Holiday 5K – 12/6/2025**

- Main Street Kent will be hosting their 5th annual MSK 5K fun, non-competitive run/walk event on Saturday, December 6th. Registration for the event ends on December 5th. Full event details are available at: [MSK Holiday 5K](#)

- **Kent Historical Society Holiday Open House – 12/6/2025**

- Kent Historical Society Holiday Open House will be held on Saturday, December 6th from 10am – 1pm. Details are available at: [Homepage - Kent Historical Society & Museum](#)

- **Cookie Walk – 12/7/2025**

- Main Street Kent invites you to get into the holiday spirit and collect a variety of festive holiday cookies from Kent's downtown businesses on Sunday, December 7th from 12pm – 5pm. Details are available at: [Main Street Kent Cookie Walk 2025 Tickets, Sun, Dec 7, 2025 at 11:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)

- **Phil Kline's Unsilent Night – 12/14/2025**

- Main Street Kent will be presenting the third annual Phil Kline's Unsilent Night, sponsored by Woodsy's Music, on Sunday, December 14th from 5:45pm-9pm. Full details are available at: [Phil Kline's Unsilent Night ~ Kent, OH | Facebook](#)

- **Coffee Walk – 1/10/2026**

- Main Street Kent will be holding the Coffee Walk on Saturday, January 10th from 12pm-5pm. Stay tuned for more details as they become available at: [Coffee Walk - INFO COMING SOON! – Main Street Kent](#)