

Prudential Awards Volunteer Grants to Area Organizations

NEWARK — Prudential awarded \$1,000 to the North Jersey Sea Scout Squadron, Ship 243 because Deidre Buchner of Roselle, a project manager for the company, dedicated 780 hours to the squadron in 2005. As secretary, her responsibilities included communicating with the crew, handling parental permission slips, securing tour permits and answering letters from the public regarding the program.

The North Jersey Sea Scout Squadron promotes citizenship, improves members' boating skills and knowledge of maritime heritage.

The Soccer Club of Cranford received \$1,000 from the company because insurance agent Hank Di Iorio of Cranford volunteered 200 hours to the soccer club in 2005. Since 1991, he has served as the executive vice president and chairman of the scholarship committee. The Soccer Club of Cranford organizes, sponsors and administers teams, competitions and programs to promote soccer competence, sportsmanship and enjoyment.

The Girl Scouts of Washington Rock Council received \$1,000 from Prudential because Nancy Faulks of Roselle, a systems consultant, dedicated 250 hours to the Girl Scouts in 2005, as troop leader for senior troop 776.

She also served the Roselle Girl Scouts, where she was responsible for community activities for the troops. She coordinated a spaghetti dinner fundraiser, food drive, holiday caroling for the community tree lighting, swim night and the annual par-

ent/daughter dinner. She was one of five delegates for the Washington Rock Council to attend the National Girl Scout Convention in October 2005.

Clark Pop Warner Football received \$1,000 from the company because Evan Murray of Clark, security operations, contributed 640 volunteer hours to the group in 2005 as the executive board secretary. He was responsible for maintaining records correspondence on behalf of the group. He served as the league's equipment manager and assisted with the home game activities, including setting up yard markers, admission gates, announcing booth and concession stand. Mr. Murray was head coach of one Pee Wee level football team.

The mission of the Pop Warner Little Scholars is to enable children to benefit from participation in team sports and activities in a safe and structured environment.

The Plainfield P.A.L. Tsunami Track Club received \$1,000 from the company because Kevin Turner of Plainfield, a systems analysis, volunteered more than 400 hours to the club as assistant coach. He designed workouts, scheduled meets, procured uniforms and solicited sponsorship. He secured new uniforms in 2005 from Johnson & Johnson. Mr. Turner also served as the meet director for the USATF Jr. Olympic Preliminary meet, which the club hosts every year.

The Plainfield P.A.L. Tsunami Track Club serves youth between five and 17 years old grow, encourages individual growth and development; instills character, confidence and self-esteem; and promotes camaraderie, sportsmanship and ethical behavior.

Genealogical Software Topic For Meeting

WESTFIELD — Larry Fermi will speak to the Genealogical Society of the West Fields on Saturday, January 13, at 10 a.m. in the Westfield Memorial Library Program Room, 550 East Broad Street, on the subject of genealogical software. He will discuss what features are available, their cost and whether they will run on Windows or Macintosh. The lecture will include practical demonstrations of several programs.

Mr. Fermi, a member of the Monmouth County Genealogical Society, has spoken at national conferences and, since 1989, has performed in depth family history research with a focus on European immigration during the peak periods of the 19th and early 20th centuries. He belongs to many professional groups and has appeared on CNN and Public Radio. The public is invited and refreshments will be served. For additional information call Elizabeth Youngs at (908) 276-7104.

Tri-County Red Cross To Hold CPR Courses

AREA — The Tri-County Chapter of the American Red Cross has revealed its schedule of upcoming CPR courses.

First Aid with CPR/AED-Adult CPR, Child CPR and Infant CPR will be held on Saturday, January 6, and Saturday, January 20, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Some or all portions of the course may be taken at either session.

The first session will be held at the American Red Cross office at 332 West Front Street in Plainfield, while the second will take place at the Red Cross office at 16 Jefferson Avenue in Elizabeth.

Standard First Aid with CPR/AED-Adult will be offered on Thursday, January 18, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the American Red Cross office at 16 Jefferson Avenue in Elizabeth.



COUNTY GIVING...The employees of C.R. Bard located in Murray Hill gave \$127,000 this year to the Union County United Way. Pictured, left to right, are Linda Hrevnack, Bard Community Affairs; Kevin Phoenix, Bard Facilities Dir.; James Horne, Jr., CEO of United Way of Greater Union County and Nancy Tringali, Exec. Dir. of Community Health Charities.

BARD Giving Generates \$222,400 in Charity

COUNTY — The employees at C. R. Bard, Inc. helped the company to new heights in philanthropic giving. Bard's 2005-2006 Workplace Giving Campaign generated \$126,954 in employee donations to support the United Way (UWUC) and Community Health Charities (CHC). The company conducted other fundraisers and matched employee donations to achieve a total donation of \$255,547.

This year's campaign resulted in a 14.8 percent increase over last year, with a 71 percent employee giving rate.

"Bard and its employees have always shown a strong commitment to caring for the people of our community," said James Horne, Jr., chief executive officer of United Way of Greater Union County. "In addition to its annual Workplace Giving Campaign, Bard is always quick to organize volun-

teers for community projects, food drives and other activities to help meet urgent needs in our area."

UWUC supports more than 100 programs for county children and youth, people with disabilities, seniors, families in crisis, and the hungry and homeless. Its 2-1-1 helpline connects callers with community resources and human services. For more information on UWUC, call (908) 353-7171 or visit uwguc.org.

CHC is a workplace giving program devoted exclusively to health — researching cures, preventing disease, aiding people with disabilities and promoting healthier lives.

C.R. Bard, Inc. (crbard.com), headquartered in Murray Hill, is a multinational business of medical technologies in vascular, urology, oncology and surgical specialty products.

WF Optimist Club Sponsors Student Essay Contest

WESTFIELD — The Optimist Club of Westfield encourages area students to expound on the phrase "I Want to Make a Difference Because..." as part of the Optimist International Essay Contest for 2007.

The contest is open to students in grades 10, 11 and 12 who are under 19 years of age as of December 31 of the current school year. Applications and essays must be submitted no later than Wednesday, January 10.

Non-members of the Optimist Club will judge the essays based on the above theme and determine one winner. The winner will receive a prize of \$250 and the winning essay will be sent to the district level.

Essays will be judged at the district level; each district will send top entries to the international level. College scholarships are available for top winners at the district and international levels.

Last year, the winning Westfield student, Katie Gorman, won the district contest.

"Young students today have so many fresh ideas about the world and their future," Optimist Club President Steve Wearley said. "As Optimists, it is our goal to encourage them and do what we can to bring out the best in each of them. This gives them a wonderful opportunity to tap into their creativity and pursue possible scholarships at the same time."

The Optimist Club of Westfield has been participating in the Optimist International Essay Contest for 16 years and has been active in the community since 1989. Other programs and service projects the Club organizes or participates in include holiday food baskets, the annual Halloween haunted house, a ninth-grade orientation service project, a middle-school oratorical contest and the annual Project Graduation (BASH). The club gives annual recognition for special achievements in the community: the Friend of Youth award, the Karyn Oros Youth Volunteer award and Middle School Teachers of the Year award.

Students wishing to participate in the essay contest should contact Corey Walsh at Westfield High School or by calling him at (908) 789-4500.



Your IRS News

IRS Notes Help Available for New Law Signed in December

Gregg Semanick, Local IRS Office, Springfield

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service has announced new guidance to help tax filers in 2007 claim extended deductions and other tax advantages in the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006 signed into law last month.

The start of the 2007 filing season will begin on time. However, recent changes in the law mean the IRS will not be able to process a small percentage of individual tax returns until early February, primarily involving three tax deductions — state and local sales tax, higher education tuition and fees and educator expenses.

"The IRS is taking a number of steps to ensure taxpayers have the correct information on these deductions when they prepare and file their tax returns," IRS Commissioner Mark Everson said.

Taxpayers can get information on the Internet (IRS.gov holds updated information on the late legislation) or through a special mailing of Publication 600, which will include the state and local sales tax tables and instructions for claiming the sales tax deduction on Schedule A (Form 1040), to six million taxpayers. Publication 600, State and Local General Sales Taxes, will be sent to taxpayers who will receive the 2006 Form 1040 package in early January. Publication 600 has been posted to IRS.gov; the special mailing will arrive in mid-January.

For people using IRS e-file or Free File, tax software will be updated to include the three key tax provisions. E-file gets refunds to taxpayers faster than paper returns.

The IRS urged taxpayers to use e-file instead of the paper forms to minimize confusion over the late changes and reduce the chance of making taxpayer-related errors on their returns.

"As we always do, we encourage taxpayers who think they may claim these deductions to file electronically," Mr. Everson said. "They will get their refunds faster through e-file. Even more importantly, e-file will greatly reduce the chances for making an error compared to claiming the deductions on the paper 1040."

This new legislation affects a number of areas of tax law, but the most significant effect on individual taxpayers involves the deductions for state and local sales tax, higher education tuition and fees, and educator expenses. The sales tax deduction was claimed on approximately 11.2 million tax returns filed in 2006 for Tax Year 2005. The tuition and fees deduction was claimed on about 4.7 million returns, and the educator expense deduction was claimed on 3.5 million returns.

The IRS will not be able to process tax returns claiming these extended-related deductions until early February. Based on filings earlier this year, only about 930,000 tax returns claimed any of the three extenders provisions by February 1. This year, the IRS expects to receive about 1.36 million tax returns.

The IRS also announced details on how taxpayers can use existing lines on the current Form 1040 and other

tax documents to claim the three major extenders provisions. The key forms (Forms 1040, 1040A, Schedule A&B, and instructions) went to print in early November and reflected the law in effect at that time. The instructions contain a cautionary note to taxpayers that the legislation was pending at the time of printing.

The majority of taxpayers file electronically, but taxpayers using a paper Form 1040 will have to follow special instructions if they are claiming any of the three deductions. Form 1040 will not be updated. Instead, taxpayers should follow these steps:

State and Local General Sales Tax Deduction: The deduction for state and local general sales taxes will be claimed on Schedule A (Form 1040), line 5, "State and local income taxes." Enter "ST" on the dotted line to the left of line 5 to claim the general sales tax deduction instead of the deduction for state and local income tax.

Publication 600 for 2006 is an option available to all taxpayers regardless of where they live, though it's primarily designed to benefit residents of the eight states without state and local income taxes.

Higher Education Tuition and Fees Deduction: Taxpayers must file Form 1040 to take this deduction for up to \$4,000 of tuition and fees paid to a post-secondary institution. It cannot be claimed on Form 1040A.

The deduction for tuition and fees will be claimed on Form 1040, line 35, "Domestic production activities deduction." Enter "T" on the dotted line to the left of that line entry if claiming the tuition and fees deduction, or "B" if claiming both a deduction for domestic production activities and the deduction for tuition and fees. For those entering "B," taxpayers must attach a breakdown showing the amounts claimed for each deduction.

Educator Expense Adjustment to Income: Educators must file Form 1040 in order to deduct up to \$250 of out-of-pocket classroom expenses. It cannot be claimed on Form 1040A.

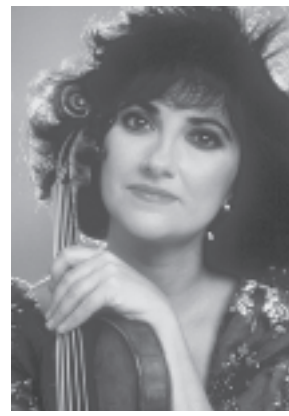
The educator expenses deduction will be claimed on Form 1040, line 23, "Archer MSA Deduction." Enter "E" on the dotted line if claiming educator expenses, or "B" if claiming both an Archer MSA deduction and the deduction for educator expenses on Form 1040. If entering "B," taxpayers must attach a breakdown showing the amounts claimed for each deduction.

The law affects a small number of business taxpayers who don't use the Form 1040 series. There could be minimal processing delays for these filers in January and early February.

January is the slowest part of the filing season for the IRS, with less than 6 percent of all individual returns coming in during the agency's first two weeks of processing. Typically, early returns are from taxpayers with simpler refund returns who do not claim the extended provisions. Earlier this year, the IRS had less than 2.5 million returns filed by January 20. An additional 4.2 million returns came in by January 27.



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