

Connections

Name changed to Philanthropy News Network

Journal launching tech newspaper, conferences

The Philanthropy Journal is launching a national newspaper and a national conference series this summer, both focusing on nonprofits and technology.

As part of the expansion, the Journal has changed its name to the Philanthropy News Network.

The nonprofit news group continues to publish Philanthropy Journal Online, PJ Alert, the *Philanthropy Journal of North Carolina*, Nonprofit Jobs and nonprofitbooks.org.

In July, the Philanthropy News Network will begin publishing *Technology Report*, a quarterly newspaper. And in August, the organiza-

tionization will begin producing Nonprofits and Technology, the conference series.

The quarterly newspaper and conference series will examine how nonprofits are using technology and the World Wide Web to manage their organizations, raise money, solicit and recruit volunteers, deliver services and communicate their message.

Cities and dates for the conferences include: Los Angeles, Aug. 27-28; Orlando, Oct. 2-3; Charlotte, Oct. 29-30; Dallas, November; Seattle, January 1999; New York, Feb. 18-19, 1999; Chicago, March or May, 1999; Denver, April 1999; Minneapolis, June



we cover the nonprofit world

3-4, 1999; and San Francisco, July 22-23.

The Philanthropy News Network is a 501(c)(3) private foundation in Raleigh, N.C., whose mission is to help people understand, support and

work in the nonprofit world.

Services of the Philanthropy News Network include:

- Philanthropy Journal Online, a daily online news service.
 - PJ Alert, a free, weekly e-mail newsletter.
 - *Philanthropy Journal of North Carolina*, a monthly newspaper.
 - Nonprofit Jobs, a national online listing of job opportunities in the nonprofit sector; and
 - nonprofitbooks.org, an online nonprofit bookstore that is an affiliate program of BarnesandNoble.com.
- For general information, call 919-832-2325 or visit the Philanthropy

Journal Online at <<http://www.pj.org>>.

For conference information, send e-mail to pnnevents@mindspring.com or call 919-832-2325 or visit our conference Web site at <<http://conference.pj.org>>.

To receive the Technology Report, send e-mail to ldare@mindspring.com or call Lee Smith, marketing director, at 919-899-3756.

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Walking for others

Chapel Hill's 9th annual MS Walk raised \$15,000 that will be used to support the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's programs and research.



Making gifts less taxing Proposed nonprofit tax incentive advances

The bill would increase charitable tax credits for nonitemizers and double deductions for corporate contributions.

By JOAN ALFORD

The state House has adopted a measure that would expand tax incentives for charitable giving.

The measure, which would expand tax credits available to some people and businesses who make charitable contributions, was included in a \$400 million tax-reduction package passed by the House in June. It was not known whether the proposal would be included in the Senate's budget proposal.

Some representatives of the nonprofit community are hopeful.

"There appears to be a lot of support for the incentive," says Pam Seamans, public policy director for United Way of North Carolina. The United Way and the N.C. Center for Nonprofits have pressed for the incentive during the last two sessions.

Even if the Senate does not adopt the provision in its budget proposal, it still could be included in budget negotiations as House and Senate work out their differences, Seamans says.

Under the proposal, tax credits for charitable contributions made by individuals who do not itemize their deductions would increase from 2.75

percent to 7 percent of the contributions.

For example, if a family with an income of \$40,000 gives about 4 percent of their income (or \$1,600), a 7 percent tax credit would be worth \$56.

"This could mean an additional \$180 million a year statewide for individuals," Seamans says.

Seventy-one percent of North Carolinians — whose average household incomes are below \$50,000 — do not itemize their deductions.

"This would be an appropriate way to support the needs of our less-fortunate citizens."

Pam Seamans

Allowable deductions for contributions by businesses would double from 5 percent to 10 percent, which is also the level established under federal tax law.

Corporations such as IBM, CP&L, BellSouth and Glaxo Wellcome support the proposal, Seamans says.

Because of cuts in government services, Seamans says, the need for increased tax credits is great.

"This would be an appropriate way to support the needs of our less fortunate citizens," she says.

Exempt talk goes online

Taxes are the focus of online forum

People who want to know about taxes and nonprofits now can find some details by subscribing to a new e-mail service.

By EMILY BREWER

The Exempt Organizations Committee of the American Bar Association has launched an Internet discussion group for people interested in tax issues affecting nonprofits. At least 300 subscribers have signed up for the group.

"We started it as a forum for exempt organization practitioners to discuss issues, raise questions and exchange ideas among nonprofits," says Todd Mayo, the manager of the discussion group.

The discussion group, called TAX-NONPROFIT, is one of a large number of tax discussion groups managed by the American Bar Association.

"Subscribers discuss the full gamut of tax issues affecting nonprofits, talk about qualifications for federal and state tax-exemptions, private foundation rules, the unrelated business income tax, joint ventures, intermediate sanctions, lobbying activities, state nonprofit law and charitable contributions," Mayo says.

The discussion is not monitored. Subscribers may ask questions or exchange messages with lawyers, practitioners and members of tax-exempt organizations. Questions may or may not be answered, Mayo says.

To subscribe, fill out the form at: <<http://www.abanet.org/discus->

sions/open.html> — and look for TAX-NONPROFIT; or, send e-mail to <listserv@abanet.org> and write "subscribe tax-nonprofit" in the body of the message. To send a message to all members of the list, address e-mail to <tax-nonprofit-digest@abanet.org>.

Users must include names and e-mail addresses in posted messages to the discussion group, since some programs do not have a reply function.

LINKS

American Bar Association
Phone: (312) 988-5000
E-mail: info@abanet.org

Tax forms would be available online

IRS considers increasing public access to nonprofits' information

The Internal Revenue Service proposal would require prospective nonprofits to describe the contents of their Web sites.

By PATTY COURTRIGHT

The Internal Revenue Service is considering two proposals that would increase the availability of information about tax-exempt organizations.

The first proposal is designed to make it easier for the public to have access to a tax-exempt organization's Form 990 tax return.

By law, organizations must make

their Form 990s available at their offices.

Under the new proposal, organizations would have to make the form more readily available, either by providing a hard copy to those who request it or by posting the information on the Internet by way of e-mail or a Web address.

The proposed change does not require organizations to have a Web site, says Michelle Lamishaw, an IRS spokesman. It merely provides the opportunity for organizations to use the Internet to make the forms more accessible to the public.

The key is to make the distribu-

tion widely available, and other means of communication with the public also would meet the requirement, she says.

Under the second proposal, organizations that apply for tax-exempt status would have to disclose to the IRS the content of any Web sites they have.

Marc Owens, director of the agency's Exempt Organizations Division, described the proposal to a recent meeting of the American Bar Association Section of Taxation.

The proposal is related to the Internal Revenue Service's systematic review of exempt organizations by

having access to an organization's publications through its Web site, Lamishaw says. The agency recognizes there is an increasing number of nonprofit groups that use the Internet to provide information.

Neither proposal has become a regulation yet.

LINKS

Internal Revenue Service
Public Affairs: (202) 662-4000
Web: <http://www.irs.ustreas.gov>

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