



CHESTER COUNTY CHAMBER  
of Business & Industry  
- Chamber of Influence -

# b2brief

a chester county chamber of business & industry publication

Volume 11

December 2011 / January 2012

## From my desk to yours...



*December is always an interesting month at the Chamber as it is for many businesses, representing a month filled with balancing work and family demands. What makes December especially interesting for me is the annual trek to NYC for the PA Society events. From the Chamber's perspective, we take this opportunity every year to host a reception in the City to present a "Salute to Leadership Award", this award is presented to someone who has had a positive influence both politically and professionally and exemplifies the skills of a successful leader. It was with great pride that this year we were able to present this award to **James McErlane**, founding partner of **Lamb McErlane, PC**. Well over one hundred people stopped by to congratulate Jim and to network with some of our areas brightest business owners and elected officials.*

*While the Chamber reception is one of many in a three-day dawn to dusk series of events, it is not unnoticed that we are one of only three chambers in the State with a visible presence as a host of an event. Why is this important?*

*It's important because it shows our commitment to be the voice for business and to utilize an event of this nature to nurture and build relationships, not only with our elected leaders but with top CEO's across the Commonwealth. It's an opportunity to learn first-hand what the priorities of our state and national leaders are, and in today's environment of texting and e-mail, a chance to interact face-to-face with our government and industry leaders.*

*So between you and me, I actually almost dread the series of dinners, multiple receptions, lectures, presentations and handshakes... until I am there and am reminded very quickly of the value of developing relationships. While the events last only 3 days, the rewards of the connections made, last for a long time.*

*Please accept my sincere wishes for a wonderful holiday season and most importantly a very productive and profitable new year!*

Your President and CEO

Nancy Keefer CCE



## County Applauded for Interactive Community Profiles

Having just launched our new website at [www.cccbi.org](http://www.cccbi.org), I find myself immersed in the wonder of technology and the information it places at our fingertips. I was very impressed to see the new **interactive maps** on the County's website. It is worth a couple minutes of your time to peruse the site, my guess is you will spend a little more time once you see the wealth of information on the site. It is very easy to maneuver and the menus allow you to extract information that is important to you. For example, I selected County and then further refined my search to State House Districts. When you go back to the map and mouse over a township, up will pop your house member and a phone number. It just doesn't get any easier. Congratulations to the Planning Commission for this innovative approach to putting our county on the map! This will be a great tool for existing businesses, new businesses looking to invest in Chester County and for educational purposes of our residents.

## CNN Article Dispels Myths About GenXers

I have often found generational management an interesting topic and ran across this report from CNN about our future leaders. Half the battle of managing GenXers, and any generation for that matter, is understanding what makes them tick.

A generation once labeled "slackers," detached and melancholic has grown up to find out that reality doesn't bite as much it seemed when they were younger. To the contrary, most of the 84 million Americans ages 30 to 50 are "active, balanced and happy," according to the authors of "**The Generation X Report**," a research report from the University of Michigan.

The release is the first in a series of quarterly reports based on questionnaires, interviews and tests from 4,000 Gen X respondents who have participated in the study since 1987. The study defines Gen X as those born between 1961 and 1981, though others sources tag Gen X as those born starting in 1964.

## Neighborhood Stabilization Program - Department of Community Development 2011 Year-End Summary

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) authorized the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) for the purpose of stabilizing communities that have suffered from foreclosures and abandonment. NSP redevelopment funding is being focused within the City of Coatesville in order to comprehensively address neighborhood sustainability and competitiveness.

Read more about the progress being made with acquisition, rehabilitation and resale of foreclosed and abandoned properties in DCD's updated **Neighborhood Stabilization Program Summary Report**.

## Representative Truitt Looking for Applicants for Scholarship

Representative Truitt recently announced he is seeking student applicants from the **156th District** to participate in the Valley Forge Military College Legislative Appointment Initiative.

This program gives students the opportunity to attend one of the most esteemed military colleges in the country with a scholarship to Valley Forge Military College. This special program is available to all qualifying students, not only those seeking a career in the military.

The selected student will receive guaranteed acceptance to Valley Forge, a minimum \$12,000 scholarship to attend, and my nomination to participate in the U.S. Army's Early Commissioning Program at Valley Forge.

The Early Commissioning Program will allow the appointee the chance to become a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army in only two years and have his or her college education essentially paid for by the U.S. Army. Receiving a Legislative Appointment to Valley Forge does not guarantee acceptance into the U.S. Army's Early Commissioning Program.

The only requirements to apply are a minimum overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 on a 4.0-point scale and SAT score of 1,000 or ACT score of 21 or higher. Applications are being accepted until Feb. 15. Please contact Truitt's office for an application by emailing [mhollida@pahousegop.com](mailto:mhollida@pahousegop.com) or calling 610-696-4990.

Valley Forge Military College is a co-ed, two-year transfer college offering Associate of Arts and Science degrees in eight areas of study. Ninety-eight percent of Valley Forge graduates are accepted to the baccalaureate granting university of their choice. Valley Forge has produced many national and world leaders.

## DVRPC OPENS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR DRAFT FISCAL YEAR 2013 PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) has opened a public comment period for the Draft Fiscal Year 2013 Planning Work Program. This document outlines all of the federally funded planning projects slated for the nine-county region from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. The listing includes DVRPC projects, as well as projects planned by member governments and transit organizations. The Work Program is developed annually by the DVRPC Board with its planning partners to reflect the region's short-range planning needs.

Copies of the Work Program are available by [clicking here](#); or in the DVRPC Resource Center, located at 190 North Independence Mall West, Philadelphia; or by contacting John Griffies, DVRPC Contracts Manager at 215-238-2925 (email: [jgriffies@dvrpc.org](mailto:jgriffies@dvrpc.org)). Comments regarding the Work Program should be addressed to John Griffies at the above address and should be received no later than 5 p.m. on January 13, 2012.

DVRPC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. DVRPC's website ([www.dvrpc.org](http://www.dvrpc.org)) may be translated into multiple languages. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages and formats, if requested. For more information, please call 215-238-2871.

## IRS Announces 2012 Standard Mileage Rates

The Internal Revenue Service has issued the 2012 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2012, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 55.5 cents per mile for business miles driven
- 23 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations
- The rate for business miles driven is unchanged from the mid-year adjustment that became effective on July 1, 2011. The medical and moving rate has been reduced by 0.5 cents per mile.

Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates.

A taxpayer may not use the business standard mileage rate for a vehicle after using any depreciation method under the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System (MACRS) or after claiming a Section 179 deduction for that vehicle. In addition, the business standard mileage rate cannot be used for more than four vehicles used simultaneously.

These and other requirements for a taxpayer to use a standard mileage rate to calculate the amount of a deductible business, moving, medical or charitable expense are in **Rev. Proc. 2010-51**.

**Notice 2012-01** contains the standard mileage rates, the amount a taxpayer must use in calculating reductions to basis for depreciation taken under the business standard mileage rate, and the maximum standard automobile cost that a taxpayer may use in computing the allowance under a fixed and variable rate plan.

## Final State Redistricting Plan Approved/Congressional Map Proposed

The newly re-drawn maps for the State Senate and House Districts was approved on a 4-1 vote of the Legislative Reapportionment Committee. [Click here](#) to view the maps of the house and senate districts proposed by the committee. The short of it for Chester County is that we end up with an additional representative in Harrisburg.

On the Congressional Maps you will see movement amongst areas of the County as to who their specific Congressman will be, but we still end up with Congressman Pitts, Gerlach and Meehan as our representatives in Washington.

## Some Year-End Tax Tips From Brinker Simpson

I received a great newsletter from our member, Brinker Simpson, full of year-end tax tips. Here are a few that caught my eye.

**Residential Energy Credits:** If you haven't taken advantage of energy tax credits for your home, 2011 is your last chance. The credits - 10% of cost up to \$500 or a specific amount from \$50-\$300 - expire on December 31, 2011 and only apply to improvements in an existing home that is a principal residence.

**Make Charitable Contributions:** You can donate property as well as money to a charity. You can generally take a deduction for the fair market value of the property; however, for certain property, the deduction is limited to your cost basis. While you can also donate your services to charity, you may not deduct the value of these services. You may be able to deduct charity-related travel expenses and some out of pocket expenses. Keep in mind that a written record of a charitable contribution is required in order to qualify for a deduction. A donor may not claim a deduction for any contribution of cash, a check or other monetary gift unless the donor maintains a record of the contribution in the form of either a bank record or written communication from the Charity showing the name of the charity, the date of the contribution and the amount of the contribution.

**Do Not Open E-Mails from the IRS:** The IRS does not send e-mails. If you see one, it is an attempt at identity-theft. Do not open nor forward an e-mail "from the IRS".

**Be sure to delete it and block the sender.**



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For information  
on chamber events  
[click here.](#)

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