

Clark Patriot

"A Voice for All, an Echo for None"

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Purolator, government join hands for unemployed

By R.R. Faszczewski
Approximately 70 employees of Purolator Products, Inc. of Rahway, who found themselves out of work as of last Friday because the firm ceased its manufacturing operations at the New Brunswick Ave. location, will be steered toward new employment prospects through a state grant awarded Union County recently.

The \$131,043 grant comes from a "discretionary fund" set aside by Gov. Thomas Kean to specifically aid areas experiencing plant closings.

Union County applied for and was granted the money from the fund for the first time this year, according to Union County Manager Louis J. Coletti.

The 70 employees are the ones out of 150 affected by the plant closing who volunteered for the county- and state-sponsored program, Thomas Richel, the manager of employe relations at the plant told The Rahway News-Record and The Clark Patriot at a news

conference conducted by Mr. Richel, other Purolator officials and state and county aides at the plant on Nov. 30.

Using the grant an Employe Assistance Center has been set up at the Rahway plant.

According to Henry C. Kita, the director of the Union County Private Industry Council, plant workers are in the process of being surveyed and evaluated.

A comprehensive job-search placement program will be undertaken providing placement, resume writing, counseling, classroom and on-the-job training and job searching.

It is estimated that 90 percent of the participants in training activities will be placed in unsubsidized private sector employment by the end of the program period, Sunday, June 30, of next year.

Some of the workers will easily be transferred to manufacturing skills such as being tool-and-die makers and being lathe operators,

according to Jean Kozula, a planner with the Union County Dept. of Human Services.

However, according to Mr. Richel some of the employees, whose skills may not have been as easily transferable, have expressed an interest in being trained for careers in word processing and computer repair.

Based on surveys which started as long ago as last summer, according to Mr. Kozula and Mr. Richel, there has been counseling and assessment of each employee to refine their skills and make them more job ready.

About 60 percent of the workers are Union County residents, Mr. Kita said.

Of this number, according to Mr. Richel, about 20 percent are from the local area, such as Rahway, Clark and Linden.

Mr. Kita said the county contacted Mr. Richel about the grant, which is the first one to be made in conjunction with the Job Partner Training Act, a federal program, in Union County.

He added the grant requires 100 percent matching funds from the firms involved and Purolator is doing this by providing space for the employe assistance center.

"We have received complete co-operation from Purolator officials," said William McKinley, the chairman of the Private Industry Council representing New Jersey Bell Telephone Co. on that body.

"The company personnel office is willing to get involved in contacting other area employers to secure jobs for those being laid off. In addition, the company will match, as close as possible any funds expended to provide service to the dislocated workers."

Mr. McKinley added Purolator will donate the time of its administrative staff to join in the activities of the employe assistance center, along with absorbing the cost of heat, lighting, telephone services, photo copies and other supplies for the center.

The county officials said the county will try to get the same type of grant, amounting to about \$198,000, for workers displaced by the recent closing of the Gordon's Gin plant in Linden.

"This co-operative effort to re-train and re-employ workers who will lose their jobs through a plant closing is an excellent example of how government and the private sector are working together to solve common concerns," said Gerald B. Green, a member of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, referring to the Purolator effort.

"Manufacturing represents a declining portion of the labor force within Union County. Luckily, the strong surge in the professional and service areas has kept the county's unemployment rate from increasing."

In 1983 the county's unemployment rate was 8 percent with the state averaging 7.8 percent.

The Purolator employe relations manager reported the bulk of the employees had their last day of work on Oct. 26 and the approximately 20 left were to leave on Nov. 30.

He added the average age of the displaced employes is 35 with most of them ranging in age from 35 to 40.

In February the firm's Purolator Products Division announced it planned to cease manufacturing operations at the Rahway facility due to economic and operational reasons, according to Mr. Richel.

He added the office facility in the city will remain open.

Mr. Richel complimented the employes for maintaining their high level of efficiency and their high level of productivity during the phasing out of the manufacturing facility.

"One of the most traumatizing events that can occur in a lifetime is the loss of a job at which a person has been employed for some time," Mr. Coletti stated.

"The ultimate benefit of this program, designed specifically for affected Purolator employes, is not only unsubsidized employment, but the significant movement away from the unemployment insurance lines."



NEW HOPE FOR WORKERS...State and Union County officials explain the details of a joint government-Purolator plan to help recently-unemployed workers at Purolator's closed Rahway plant to find new jobs and get re-training. The scene was a Nov. 30 press conference at the plant.



SHARING THANKSGIVING BLESSINGS...In the spirit of Thanksgiving students at the Carl Kumpf School in Clark donated food and money to supply 25 complete Thanksgiving feasts to needy families in the area. The Student Turkey Dinner Drive, co-ordinated by Kenneth Lightbun, enabled Kumpf students to experience the joy of giving. Some of the students who helped organize the food drive, shown, left to right are Kelly Bongiovanni, Adam Bierstein, Tricia Washington, Karon Dushevsky and Mark Bongiovanni.

Township to give free butter, milk

The Township of Clark will be participating in the Federal Dairy Program by giving to those Clark Residents WHO QUALIFY a five pound container of butter and dry milk, reports Mayor Bernard G. Varusavage.

The butter and dry milk distribution will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 12, between noon and 4 p.m. at the Clark Municipal Building at 315 Westfield Ave.

Mrs. Lois Sissel, welfare director for the township, stated those who are eligible

to receive the butter and dry milk are persons who receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or food stamps or who participate in Women, Infants and Children Programs (WIC) and they qualify with those whose income falls within 185 percent of federal poverty guidelines.

Mrs. Sissel announced for the first time in two years seniors who participate in the Pharmaceutical Assistance Program for the Aged (PAA)

WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE for surplus federal commodities. Because of a ruling by the United States Dept. of Agriculture the State of New Jersey was forced to drop PAA as an automatic eligibility category for commodities before it could conduct any further distributions. The Agriculture Dept. objected to the fact PAA participants could have incomes in excess of 185 percent poverty, the statewide income standard used for the program.

Mrs. Sissel, who is the manager of the community distribution program for Clark, advised eligible seniors they will need to either bring proof of their income or participation in one of the above-mentioned programs, or be prepared to sign a self-certification form attesting to their income in order to receive the butter and dry milk.

Under the 185 percent poverty guidelines a single senior may have an annual income of up to \$9,213. A couple may have an income of \$12,432, she said.



WELCOME ABOARD...On Nov. 1, Brownie Troop No. 1278 had its investiture ceremony at the Valley Road School cafeteria in Clark. The girls invested, shown, left to right, are: bottom row, Tammy Hnat, Dawn Calandra, Annette Peterczak, Anna Lukonczak and Erin Teodmann; middle row, Kristin Sarnowski, Melissa Bishop, Kelly Ciccolilli, Mary Ann McClusky, Lisa Mueller, Laura DiFazio, Jennifer Reilly and Laura Zambuto. The leaders are May Ann Hnat, Dolores DiFazio, Alice Peterczak and Maureen Reilly. Mrs. Mary Carol Galiszewski, the community chairwoman of the Clark-Winfield Girl Scouts, was the honored guest of the troop. After the ceremony the Brownies served their guests refreshments.



RECYCLING PAYS...At the annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Convention Clark Township Council President Fred Eckel, left, learns from MR. R.E. CYCLE, the working symbol of the New Jersey Dept. of Energy Office of Recycling, how "The Magic of Recycling Pays."

New Jersey proves recycling pays

Energy Commissioner Leonard S. Coleman, Jr. recently awarded grants totaling \$1.6 million to 288 New Jersey municipalities which recycled their solid waste last year.

In distributing checks to representatives of the municipalities at the New Jersey League of Municipalities Convention in Atlantic City, Mr. Coleman praised communities' efforts in promoting recycling.

"During 1983 new Jerseyans recycled 476,000 tons of paper, glass, metal, plastics, oil, food and yard waste," Mr. Coleman said.

"That represents an 82 percent increase over the 262,000 tons recycled during 1982. It also means we are now recycling nearly 10 percent of our municipal solid waste, and are well on

our way toward reaching our goal of recycling 25 percent of our solid waste by 1986."

The grants, which range from several hundred dollars to over \$100,000, are based on the amount of material recycled within each community. The municipalities were paid \$25 for each ton of glass, \$8 for each ton of paper and \$4 for each ton of other materials. In order to qualify for a grant this year a municipality had to be either a first-time applicant or had to recycle more material than it did last year.

"These grants are the state's way of saying 'thank you' for helping to reduce the flow of solid waste to our landfills," the commissioner said. "They provide

the necessary incentive to further develop recycling programs in each community, and represent one more way that recycling pays for everyone."

Erratum

The \$20,500 transferred to the account for professional services for attorney by the Clark Board of Education on Nov. 27 has not been earmarked for any individual or particular case, it was only placed into the above general account, according to Edward Flanagan, Board secretary. This information was reported incorrectly in last week's Clark Patriot.

Legion has forms on Agent Orange

Clark Post No. 328 and other American Legion posts in Union County have Agent Orange claim forms. A spokesman informed all Vietnam Veterans who believe they have adverse health effects related to Agent Orange to contact the nearest American Legion Post in their community to obtain a form.

These completed forms must be returned no later than Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1985. Failure to return the form by that day will prevent veterans from receiving money from the settlement fund.

Agent Orange remains a priority of the American Legion and will continue as such until the questions relating to the effects of this herbicide on Vietnam veterans who were exposed, are answered. The Legion remains in the forefront on this issue and continues to monitor the Agent Orange Examination Program at

Veterans Administration facilities to make sure the examinations are performed thoroughly, in a compassionate and informed manner, the spokesman added.

The legion has concluded existing medical evidence is now sufficient to warrant government disability compensation payments to exposed Vietnam veterans. The legion is currently involved in the final phase of a joint research effort entitled "The Columbia University Vietnam Legion Study of Vietnam Era Veterans," the spokesman noted.

The legion will use the findings of the study in its work on behalf of the Vietnam veteran and his family before the Veterans Administration, other government agencies and Congress, he pointed out.

For further information or claim forms, please telephone Clark Post No. 328 service officer, Mike Mikus, at 276-8345.

Papers set holiday deadlines

The offices of the Rahway News-Record and The Clark Patriot will be closed on Christmas Eve, Monday, Dec. 24, Christmas Day, Tuesday, Dec. 25, 1984, New Year's Eve, Monday, Dec. 31, 1984, and New Year's Day, Tuesday, Jan. 1, 1985.

In order for our staff to enjoy the holidays THE DEADLINE FOR THE THURSDAY, DEC. 27 ISSUES OF THE NEWSPAPERS WILL BE 5 P.M. ON WEDNES-

DAY, DEC. 19, AND THAT FOR THE THURSDAY, JAN. 3, 1985 ISSUES WILL BE 5 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, DEC. 26, 1984.

ALL COPY RECEIVED AFTER THESE DEADLINES BY THE EDITOR, AT 219 CENTRAL AVE., RAHWAY, WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE TRANSFERRED TO THE APPROPRIATE FOLLOWING WEEK'S ISSUES.