

TAX & FINANCE

Free tax return preparation available at library

Now that the holidays are over and the new year is underway, it is time to think about that annual April ritual, income tax-filing day, April 15. Once again, the Siuslaw Public Library will co-sponsor free tax preparation clinics operated by local American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Tax-Aide volunteers.

These volunteers are trained and certified by the IRS to prepare and file individualized federal and state tax returns for low- to moderate-income taxpayers, particularly those over the age of 60. The clinics will begin on Feb. 2. They will be held on Mondays and Thursdays, from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the Bromley Room at the Siuslaw Public Library in Florence. In addition to the Monday and Thursday clinics, one Saturday clinic will be held at the same location on April 11, from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Anyone planning to take advantage of this free service will need to bring the following information to the clinic in order for the volunteers to properly prepare their tax returns (s): official photo identification; social security card; copy of 2014 tax returns; checkbook or direct deposit information; income informa-



Local AARP Tax-Aide volunteer counselors (seated from left): Harry Jorgensen, David Dunn and Mike Byrnes; standing (from left): Gary Hensen, training coordinator; Frank Williams, local coordinator; Patricia Kane, Bradford Smith, Nancy Martin, Margaret Lessor and Terry Newell

tion such as W-2 forms, unemployment statements, and 1099 forms; forms and/or checks showing federal and state

income tax paid for 2014; expense information such as home mortgage interest payments, medical/dental expenses,

charitable contributions, income and property tax payments/refunds; and, new this year, proof of compliance with

the Affordable Care Act, such as evidence of health care coverage for at least nine months of the tax year, or a Form 1095-

A if you purchased insurance through the Marketplace /Exchange.

Local AARP Tax-Aide volunteers are currently in training. These volunteer tax counselors receive special training to assist the public in completing their taxes. Gary Hensen, the program's trainer, uses IRS approved materials to expertly train the local Tax-Aide volunteers.

The local coordinator for the program, Frank Williams, manages the clinics and volunteer counselors.

"We are really thankful for the space provided by the library, including space for clients to wait, high-speed Internet access and storage for our equipment," said Williams. "We're also very fortunate to have some very qualified, hard-working and conscientious counselors to work with clients."

Anyone interested in becoming an AARP Tax-Aide volunteer counselor next year should contact Williams at 541-997-7836.

For more information about the free tax preparation clinics, visit the Siuslaw Public Library in person or visit the library's website at www.siuslawlibrary.org.

March 1 deadline for business tax returns is approaching

Each individual, partnership, firm or corporation that has taxable business personal property is required by Oregon law to file a personal property tax return by March 1 each year unless an extension has been requested and granted by Feb. 15.

Examples of personal property include office furniture, personal computers, easily-moveable machinery — even off-road vehicles or display cases — if they are used in the business.

Business owners should also include leased equipment, such as copiers or power washers.

The return must contain a full listing of all assets, date of acquisition, cost and a state-

ment of value. This information is kept confidential. In 2014, if the assessed value of an individual's business personal property totaled less than \$16,000, the taxes were cancelled.

This year's threshold has not yet been established by the Oregon Department of Revenue. All business owners must file personal property returns, even if personal property value is less than the current cancellation threshold.

Business owners must file a return each year even if they didn't receive a tax return from the county where their property is located; the assessor cancelled their tax in prior years; the business was sold or closed

during the year; or the personal business property was sold or disposed of.

All returns filed late are subject to penalties of 5 percent to 50 percent, depending on how late the return is filed.

Tax return forms are available online at www.oregon.gov/dor/PTD/Pages/propform.aspx.

Additional information may be found on the Oregon Department of Revenue's website at www.oregon.gov/dor/PTD/Pages/IC_303_661.aspx.

Anyone with questions should call the Lane County Assessment and Taxation Office at 541-682-4321, between 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

Not all tax forms available at library

The IRS has informed libraries across the nation that due to budget cuts they will only be supplying the 1040, 1040A, and 1040EZ forms. They will not be supplying instruction booklets or other tax forms.

Oregon ceased providing tax instruction booklets several years ago. Siuslaw Public Library patrons have several options, as follows:

- For Federal (IRS) forms and instructions: Visit www.IRS.gov/Forms to view and download the forms and instructions you need; visit www.IRS.gov/order forms to order tax products to be delivered by mail; call the IRS at 1-800-829-3676 to order tax

products to be delivered by mail; visit the library and either use our Internet computers to view and print forms or ask staff for assistance at the reference desk.

As with all printing, the first 10 pages are free and it's 10 cents for each page after that.

- Oregon Department of Revenue forms and instructions: Visit www.oregon.gov/dor; call 1-800-356-4222, or visit the library and either use its Internet computers to view and print forms or ask staff for assistance at the reference desk.



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