

It's Administrative Professionals Week

By MARGARET J. KORSAK
Business Journal Intern

Chocolate shops, restaurants and florists are preparing for an increase in business during the week as bosses observe Administrative Professionals Week.

The holiday, first conceived by the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) in 1952, began as a single day, but has since expanded to encompass an entire week. It was designed to honor secretaries, executive assistants, clerical supervisors and others who work behind the scenes to keep offices across the globe running smoothly.

Lisa Phillips, marketing manager of Gertrude Hawk Candies, said the company experiences a spike in sales in the preceding week, and that assorted chocolates are their most popular item.

"We usually try to put out something special for the day," she said.

This year it's their Cafe Collection, a 16-piece assortment of truffles in such exotic flavors as key lime, almond amaretto, white raspberry cheesecake and dark lemon drop.

"We encourage them to buy a box for each assistant because they are so good there's not enough to share," Phillips said.

"More men come in than women to make purchases, and some want specially made assortments," she said. Her advice: "Know what your assistant likes because it shows you care."

Joshua Westbrook, assistant manager of Pistachio Bar and Grill on Cedar

Crest and Hamilton Streets, Allentown, said the day definitely impacts their business. They can expect an additional 10 to 15 people per day during that week, mostly bosses who bring their assistants in groups. He said salads and desserts are the most popular items on the menu.

Peg Fegley, owner of Bethlehem Brew Works, said they also experience a surge in business, and they see groups as well.

"They're there for the afternoon — it's very leisurely dining with their bosses," she said.

She said she also noticed that instead of the usual burgers, there are more dinners being ordered at lunch time.

Florists, too, see an increase in sales. Julianne Spanitz of Phoebe Floral Shop in Allentown said the day is bigger than most other holidays.

"It's major for us. It usually runs from the 21st through the 23rd, and some orders are already being filled."

IAAP encourages employers to observe the day by providing training and education to administrative staff in addition to the more traditional gifts of

chocolate, lunch and flowers. That is exactly what Northampton Community College is doing.

According to Leadership Development Coordinator Peg Bodansky, the college is holding a luncheon and training session at no cost to their assistants.

"This year's topic will be assertiveness as opposed to aggressiveness," she said, "and they also get flowers and chocolates."

Training is important to administrative professionals because "the office professional's role in

the workplace continues to expand to include more complex duties and responsibilities," says IAAP spokeswoman Emily Hoffman.

Lorraine Kernaghan, a retired administrative assistant, agreed that training is important to help make workers more valuable to their bosses.

"Administrative Professionals day is nice," she said, "but the true appreciation shows up at review time, in the form of raises and bonuses."

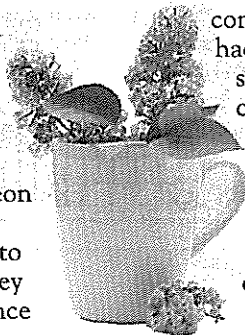


Luncheon to honor 4 administrative professionals

By STEPHANIE KOVACS
Business Journal Intern

On Wednesday, April 23, the 2008 Administrative Excellence Awards will be presented at the Administrative Professional's Day Luncheon at the Hotel Bethlehem.

Local companies were asked to nominate employees whom they believe display high performance



behavior in their daily jobs. To be considered for an award, nominees had to be employed in an office support role and meet several criteria, including minimum years of service, professional training and direct work on important projects or initiatives.

The four individuals who exhibit administrative excellence this year are:

- Margie Pacheco of Lehigh County Conference of Churches;
- Tina Christman of Concannon Miller & Co.;
- Jane Long, also with Concannon Miller & Co., and
- Karen Scherer from Minsi Trails Council Boy Scouts of America.

The awards program is co-sponsored by Integrity Personnel Inc. and the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce.