

IT'S YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO RE-ENERGISE NEWBRIDGE... do you know what the candidates stand for?

Newbridge Chamber hosted a Pre-election Local Information Evening on 20th May last at The Keadeen Hotel. All candidates going forward in the Local Elections were invited to attend, to let the voting public know what they stand for. Independent and party candidates were appreciative of the opportunity to show their wares and a lively night ensued!

The key to the success of the evening was its independent Chair – Ger Colleran, Editor of The Star newspaper and Newbridge resident. He was an inspired choice, with a fair but witty execution of his role.

19 candidates contesting Kildare County Council and Newbridge Town Council seats individually 'laid out their stall' against the clock and then participated in a 'Questions & Answers' forum. Around 100 members of the public of all ages attended from Newbridge, Kildare, Monasterevin and environs. Lots of thought - provoking questions were posed and much discussion ensued, with interaction from both the panel of candidates and audience members.

Topics covered included business issues like rates and employment barriers plus community issues including youth services provision. The evening ran from 7.30pm until it was wrapped up at about 10.45pm.

Chamber President Tim Dooley said 'We were glad to host this important event to give everyone a chance to have their voices heard and in turn listen to how the candidates feel on certain issues and their likely positions if they are elected.' He also



Newbridge Chamber President Tim Dooley with guest Chairman Ger Colleran at the Chamber's Pre-election Local Information evening



Some of the audience at last month's Local Information evening



A selection of the crowded top table

used the opportunity to call for a 20% cut in commercial rates in the Newbridge area to enable businesses to stay open and survive the current recession.

World Environment Day



To mark World Environment Day on 5th June 2009, Newbridge Chamber has invited members and other interested organisations for their opinions on how businesses can do their bit for the environment. See inside on page 3 for some helpful hints on how you can help your pocket at the same time as the world around us!

Forthcoming dates for your diary:

Monday 15th June 2009 – Free Marketing & Financial Strategy Seminar, kindly provided by Chamber member O'Kelly Sutton. "Learn how companies from Ireland and abroad are winning in tough times." Hotel Keadeen at 6 p.m.

A full Activities & Events Calendar 2009 can be downloaded from www.newbridgechamber.ie/events.htm

September 2009 – Newbridge Chamber Annual Golf Classic. Venue + time to follow

October 2009 – A Free introduction to Go MAD Thinking – Opening Minds to Make a Difference from Chamber member Noel Caffrey of The 2CCompany. Venue + time to follow

Newbridge Chamber,
Canning Place, Newbridge,
Co. Kildare, Tel./Fax: 045 438296
email: office@newbridgechamber.ie
www.newbridgechamber.ie

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CHAMBER COMMENT

Newbridge Chamber
President speaks out

We have had a busy month or two at the Chamber. When introducing the local election candidates last month at our public information evening, I took the opportunity to remind them how expensive it is to do business here, relative to Northern Ireland or across the continent of Europe. I called on them to keep down any costs we can control, including rates, to ensure businesses will survive the recession and emerge the other side. If businesses fail so will jobs, creating a vicious circle of depression in our community.

As I also told attendees at our Annual President's Lunch in April it's bad enough that we're 23% dearer to run a small/medium business in the 26 counties as compared to the North, without compounding the situation with further financial strain. Our guest speaker EU Commissioner McCreevy heard our plea and assured attendees that he is spearheading a campaign to reduce red tape in business administration – something we'll all be glad to witness.

June 5th provides a chance for all of us to use our vote for the greater good – ask your canvassers when they call to your door what are they doing for small /medium businesses? Remember what's good for business is good for the greater community at large.

Finally it's good to see Culture Factory's plans moving on apace with the appointment of consultants to prepare its business plan. It's a long road from dream to reality for this group of young Newbridge people but this is a vital step and we wish them all the best with their dedicated work.



Tim Dooley
President
Newbridge Chamber

Derby Day at The Curragh

Hard to believe it's that time of year again – Derby Day at The Curragh! The Irish Derby Festival featuring the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby is taking place from the 26th to 28th June. As well as being one of the most spectacular sporting and social events nationally, it has a special spot in local hearts too. Chamber member Evan Arkwright, Commercial Manager at The Curragh Racecourse has been telling **Chamberchat** about what's on offer this year:

Kildare Village Derby Friday kicks off the weekend with a fun packed evening starting at 6pm with seven exciting races featuring the Ballygallon Stud Stakes (Listed) together with a packed programme of entertainment including live music from the Furey Brothers & Davy Arthur after racing at 9pm. A variety of packages are available including the *Kildare Village Big Bash Ticket*, ideal for groups of friends or an evening with work colleagues for only €45 p.p.

Saturday is one of most fashionable racing days of the year with high drama on the track and high fashion in the enclosures with Europe's leading fillies lining up in the Audi sponsored Pretty Polly Stakes and great prizes from Kildare Village for the lady judged to have the Most Stylish Hat.

On **Sunday**, enjoy the spectacle and excitement of Ireland's greatest international race day of the year with the world's finest thoroughbreds competing for one of the ultimate prizes in Irish sport, the **Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby**. The best of fashion, entertainment, hospitality and, most importantly, fun combines to make this one of the greatest race days of the year. A fantastic



Frozen Fire flies by to win the 2008 Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby

shopping spree courtesy of Kildare Village awaits the lady who is judged to be Most Stylish. 1st race 1.30pm.

Finally, for the first time, the stars of racing will be joined by the stars of the culinary world when 15 of Ireland's top restaurants and chefs bring a **Taste of Ireland** to The Curragh for the first time. Taste of Ireland will be this summer's most exciting food festival, combining the thrills of Ireland's premier racing festival. Access to the "Taste of Ireland Enclosure" is free with your admission ticket. Admission prices: Friday €15 Saturday €20 Sunday €40. Admission with a Premier level seat from €60.

Book on line at www.curragh.ie to receive **20% discount** off all admission prices.

The Chamber wishes everyone involved with this exciting Kildare event every success and appreciates the economic boom from the industry to Newbridge and surroundings.

"Thanks Bríd!"

Sitting quietly in the corner of The Keadeen's Beech Room at the Annual President's Lunch on 24th April last, Bríd Nolan was looking forward to hearing words of wisdom from EU Commissioner Charlie McCreevy and then tucking into a nice lunch with Chamber colleagues. Her shocked face said it all when she was called to the podium to accept a presentation from Newbridge Chamber President Tim Dooley, to mark her tireless work on behalf of the Chamber over the past two decades!



Tim Dooley presents a gift to Bríd Nolan to thank her for her tireless work on behalf of Newbridge Chamber for almost 20 years

Bríd's relationship with the Chamber started in 1990 when she acted as secretary for seven years. She ran the then new office on a daily basis, giving the Chamber a new level of professionalism from 1997 to 2002. Bríd worked with the Strategic Committee of 1996, to achieve accreditation standard for Newbridge Chamber, from Chambers of Commerce Ireland. This committee also pushed a broader 5-year plan with an agenda to promote economic development for Newbridge.

In 2002, Bríd moved on from the Chamber office to work in the accounts area of the family business, Falcondale Properties on Main St., Newbridge. At the same time she adapted her Chamber role to that of voluntary committee member, monthly minutes secretary and today still maintains an energetic interest and pro-active stance on all Chamber matters.

The present Tim gave to Bríd was a signed copy of Oliver McCrossan's book *'Flashback'* which we believe has given her hours of browsing, once she got over the shock!

The Business Case for Energy Efficiency Evidence from Irish Business Experience

As energy costs play an increasingly important role when it comes to the bottom line, ongoing energy reduction efforts are vital if businesses, and Ireland as a whole, are to remain competitive. **Sustainable Energy Ireland's services for business can help you lower your energy usage by up to 20%!**

Sustainable Energy Ireland is Ireland's national energy authority whose mission is 'to promote and assist the development of sustainable energy'. Through their work with a wide range of businesses they know that significant energy savings are available and they know what works. The top four actions to successfully reducing your energy costs are:

- a) **Know your energy bill** – Companies must understand where their energy is going before they can start to tackle how to reduce their energy use.
- b) **Make energy efficiency routine** – If companies build energy management into their every day practices it ensures that there is a continuing downward trend of energy usage and upward trend of saving money.
- c) **Start with quick, high-impact actions** – Quick energy savings can be made with little



capital investment. For example a retailer who installed low energy lighting and night covers on chill units resulted in a 23% reduction use and €600 saving per month.

- d) **Bring people along with you** – You need individual's commitments from top management level to all staff.

SEI offers a range of services including advice, mentoring and assessment, innovative training programmes and web-based resources. All SEI asks is that you show commitment. The more committed a business is, the more SEI can help and the more meaningful the bottom-line savings will be.

To avail of SEI's services, simply contact the SEI business team on 01 808 2087 or visit www.sei.ie/business for more information.

Environment update from Newbridge Silverware

Chamberchat has spoken to Newbridge Silverware's engineer **Jim Doyle** to get the latest on what these local pioneers are up to at the moment on the environment front:

"We are moving on all fronts on energy conservation and management. The most significant of these is a complete re-vamp of display case lighting in our showrooms and, in particular, the units in the shops throughout the country.

This means changing many dichroic lamps to a low wattage LED bulb, rated at 2-3 watts. This will produce a huge saving in electricity (100 kw plus), reduce our carbon footprint, prolong the life of the displayed items and enhance the visual effect.

We are in the process of connecting our generator heat exhaust to our factory and canteen areas to increase the overall efficiency of the generator

to about 65%. Gas usage will be reduced as a result.



We have installed a 60 tube array of thermal solar panels and are about to start trials on a new installation of panels to heat our process tanks in our plating area. This will save on electrical costs during the day and in particular during summer time when we can fully benefit from the long bright days.

We have replaced all of our display lighting in our museum areas with low energy LED bulbs and continue to change, where we can, any other bulbs to low energy types.

Finally, we have signed up with Energia as our electricity and gas provider. This will give a substantial saving (in the order of 25 -30%) of the combined costs of these services". **Jim Doyle.**

Close up on Committee



In this issue we meet **Noel Delaney**, Director of **Grant Thornton**, Newbridge. Since April 2007 he has headed up the team in Newbridge, delivering financial services to local industries in the areas of audit, accounting and tax compliance, as well as specialist services such as corporate finance and restructuring, wealth management and specialist tax planning. Grant Thornton joined Newbridge Chamber on its arrival and Noel subsequently came on board the Committee, more recently taking on the key role of Treasurer.

With Grant Thornton since 1996, Noel has a BA in Accounting and Finance and also a Masters Degree in Business Studies and Accounting at Dublin City University. He is a Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. Today Noel delivers objective, decisive advice on behalf of Grant Thornton that's tailored to the unique needs of local owner managed businesses.

Originally from Ballyroan, Co. Laois, Noel spent 12 years living in Dublin and in 2004 returned to his native area with his wife Sinead and their three children Caoimhe (8), Odhran (6) and Fionn (4). A keen GAA follower, Noel played in three Leinster finals in Newbridge back in the 90's – 1 Senior club and 2 Inter-county u-21.... and one suspects these were not in lily - white jerseys!

You can contact Noel on **045 449322** or email him on **noel.delaney@grantthornton.ie**

An insight into FADA



FADA is a group of local Newbridge volunteers dedicated to the promotion of sustainable living with the rekindling of community spirit. The Chamber asked them for their opinions around World Environment Day. **Brian Kaller** explains:

"Within living memory, most of Newbridge residents' needs were produced locally – food

from local farms, goods from local factories. Today, we are part of a common global economy: in a single trip to the shop we might buy a toy from Indonesia, apples from New Zealand and soft drink made from Iowa corn. It is difficult to track where our money goes, and most of us don't bother.

This modern system, along with Ireland's recent boom, has brought us choices unknown a few generations ago, and few want a return to hardship. But it also brings disadvantages. Local

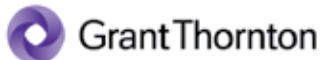
farmers struggle to compete with agribusiness in Brazil, most local factories have closed, and when bankers on the other side of the world fail, so do many of us.

We in FADA believe the future could hold the best of both worlds, between the local and traditional vs. the modern and global. If we produce more locally and keep more money circulating in our region, we become more resilient in the face of global ups and downs.

FADA works on this in several ways. We host

(article continued on back page)

“Decisiveness” the key watchword say Commissioner & Chamber President



The Annual President's Lunch was a great success on Friday 24th April. Tim Dooley, President of Newbridge Chamber welcomed the full house to Hotel Keadeen, thanked guest speaker EU Commissioner Charlie McCreevy and sponsor of the annual event, Grant Thornton chartered accountants.

Grant Thornton was represented by Noel Delaney, head of their Newbridge Office. Noel addressed the crowd to say that they were delighted to sponsor the event which coincides with their 2nd anniversary in Newbridge. He concluded by reminding everyone present “to stay optimistic, as Donald Trump once said he was more successful in a downturn than in boom times!”

Tim Dooley then spoke to the assembled gathering ahead of introducing the guest speaker. He reminded everyone present that 1.1 million people are employed by SMEs across Ireland. “Newbridge Chamber is determined to play a supportive role to business, so that it can overcome obstacles such as the fact that it is 23% more expensive to do business in the Republic of Ireland than in Northern Ireland” he said. “We have the 2nd highest electricity costs in the EU. We used to be the 4th most competitive economy in the EU to do business and now we have slipped to one of the dearest. I urge you all to also support local industry - e.g. horse racing in The Curragh, Naas and Punchestown. The contribution the equine industry makes to the local economy cannot be over estimated” said Tim. He concluded by emphasising the importance of all business people in the area staying positive and confident. He called on the Government to make tough decisions and take action now.

Finally EU Commissioner Charlie McCreevy, took the floor, saying there was nothing as pleasing as speaking on home turf. He commented that times have changed since he was last in the neighbourhood and that it was now time to adapt to these tougher times. 23 million SMEs all over Europe are in a battle for survival. Entrepreneurs elsewhere are juggling the need for cash flow with risk taking - just like those in Ireland. The difference, according to Commissioner McCreevy, is that here in Ireland we have one great



Presentation to Commissioner McCreevy from Tim Dooley, Chamber President & Noel Delaney of Grant Thornton (sponsor)



Fiona McLoughlin, Margaret O'Gorman & Ria Wiid

advantage - the agility with which we can adapt and change.

“Re-energise” is the message sent out recently from the EU President and he is concentrating on devising EU policies to facilitate that, with measures to increase householders’ purchasing power. Mr. McCreevy suggested that the business people present should in fact check out the EIB’s website to see what help is available therein. One of the Commissioner’s crusades at present is to fight against ‘red tape’ - and he explained he is behind the movement to remove redundant red tape for businesses, especially SMEs. This programme should save €6.3 billion in 2009.

Commenting on the banking sector, Commissioner McCreevy felt that regulations were too lax throughout the EU and US, not just Ireland. He felt that the solution is to deal with the banking



EU Commissioner Charlie McCreevy, Guest Speaker



John Leddy, Brenda Condron & Anne Cunningham



Tony Jones, Sean Power T.D., & Tony Monahan

crisis in some way - to be proactive and decisive, while flexible. He smilingly said to beware of ‘lynching’ the politicians, bankers and builders too quickly; as there is a need for all three professions in the successful future development of Ireland. “We need to encourage the risk takers or we could be in this recession for ever! We cannot live in the past - what’s most important now is that we recognise what went wrong and learn from this experience. We need to make new decisions and be active. We cannot afford to drag our heels or procrastinate.”

After his address there were some questions from the floor for the Commissioner and then everyone tucked into a very enjoyable Keadeen lunch, bringing another popular Newbridge Chamber event to a close.

(FADA article continued from previous page)

gardening courses, help create Farmers’ Markets and are creating gardens and allotments, all to foster local food production. We have hosted festivals and talks to bring neighbours together and promote sustainable living. We have enlisted local residents in an Energy Audit to help trim waste. We are working on a food co-op, which would allow people to buy food cheaply during a recession. We are interested in creating a local currency and stock exchange, which would allow money that enters the area continue to circulate locally.

For many of these projects, however, we need help from the local business community, so contact us if you are interested”. Brian Kaller can be reached at 087 299 4552 or briankaller@yahoo.com.

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