



NEWBRIDGE JUST FINE FOR CHRISTMAS '09

Shoppers in Newbridge last month may have got a shock to see 'models' moving in the windows of Michael Murphy & Co... It was in fact the scene of the launch of Newbridge Chamber's seasonal Shop Local campaign, reminding everyone in the locality that "Newbridge is just fine for Christmas '09".



Window Shopping! Chamber President Tim Dooley and member Michael Murphy launch Newbridge Chamber's Christmas campaign for 2009.

The campaign launch took place on November 11th to coincide with the celebration of long-standing chamber member Michael Murphy & Co.'s 35 years in business in Newbridge. President Tim Dooley congratulated Michael and his team on achieving the scale of the Home Furnishing operation we see today and asked him to share his secret of surviving past recessions to be still 'hard at it' and thriving in 2009.

Michael replied with the observation that "Our business thrives due to the continued support we receive from our local customers. It is something we do not take for granted but we appreciate and are thankful that Newbridge shoppers choose to do business with us, and we work very hard to ensure that it remains that way. We take great pride in playing our part in the business success of the town."

The Chamber is asking you, the members, to remind your staff that every cent spent in Newbridge this year to buy a Christmas

present or decorate the house will help support local employers to remain in business, and so in turn pay staff and suppliers, while contributing to the tax and rates intake for the area. All of this economic activity will help keep Newbridge ticking over in what is one of the toughest trading periods seen in decades.

'Why go anywhere else?' Newbridge and its environs offer shoppers value, unrivalled personal service, as well as the handiness and diversity everyone craves when ticking off that list and checking it twice! Newbridge Chamber is reminding shoppers "Even if you are cutting down on your expenditure this year, make sure you shop locally with that reduced budget, as it will be in the interest of everyone in the town to do so. There is excellent value to be had on all our streets, shopping centres and retail park so for value, variety and convenience there's no need to stray away!"

Ireland's small businesses could save up to €300 million p.a. in energy costs

SEI has completed energy reviews of 1,500 small businesses over the past 2 years. All these businesses reduced their energy costs by 10 – 20%. The reviews found:

- In offices and shops, lighting can account for up to half the total bill.
- In pubs and restaurants, refrigeration can be a big cost.
- Heating and air conditioning are major costs across many sectors.

SEI estimates that if all of Ireland's small businesses review their energy usage and take remedial action, the savings would be around €300m. According to Newbridge Chamber member Barry Goulding, Energy Consultants, action steps include more efficient lighting types and lighting controls, better time and temperature control over heating and cooling equipment, combined with an energy management plan.

In a recent review of member Newbridge Gas and Fireplace Centre's showrooms in Tougher's Business Park, the total wattage of lighting was reduced to 2338W from 6658W by use of occupancy sensors and changing bulb types to 2W LED and compact fluorescent. This equated to a 35% reduction in usage and, when combined with changing electricity supplier, meant a 40% reduction in lighting costs. **For further tips, why not call Barry on 086 2249659?**

Your response to Chamber Rates Survey

Thank you to all of you who replied to the Members' Rates Survey conducted in recent weeks. The picture which emerges is one where **50%** of respondents' rates had **INCREASED** over the past year

and **50%** had **stayed the same**. None had decreased. 86% of respondents had NOT requested a rerating; 14% had. Of that small number, half of the requested reratings had taken place.



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CHAMBER COMMENT

Newbridge Chamber President speaks out

What a busy quarter we've had! Noel Caffrey's Go MAD Thinking session in October was very timely as we all need accurate decision making now. It is great to see members hosting such events – this is the support business owners need in such uncertain times. Last month we accepted the kind offer of our colleagues at South Dublin and two other Dublin chambers to do some mega Speed Networking! Remember, these are the types of service you get from your membership; are you availing of them?

I'd like to thank long standing member Alan Nolan of Falcondale Properties Ltd. for their kind sponsorship of our Budget Breakfast this year. The fine food helped us swallow details of the bitter budget somewhat! In fact I'd like to thank all our 2009 sponsors, without whom this show could not be kept on the road as we are a non-profit organisation. As always, we ask you to support one another, keep money in our local economy, and everyone benefits.

The possible formation of a County Kildare chamber is moving on apace. Newbridge's steering committee of Michael Mullally, Eoin McDonnell and I have been in discussion with other accredited Kildare chambers over the past few months. We are presently finalising a detailed Memorandum of Information on the proposal. Each member will receive this in January prior to a vote on the creation of such a County Kildare chamber, which will initially see Newbridge and Naas chambers pooling resources together as a starting point. Personally I strongly support the creation of this County chamber, as I feel it best meets the needs of Kildare businesses going forward, offering everyone involved the potential to grow.

As we reach the end of 2009, I would like to take this opportunity to thank most sincerely the Newbridge committee and hard working staff Celia and Breda who together make Newbridge the widely respected and successful Chamber it is.

Best wishes for a safe Christmas and prosperous 2010 to you all.

Tim Dooley
President
Newbridge Chamber



Chamber meets Town & County Chiefs

As part of its continuing commitment to maintain an open dialogue with Kildare County Council and Newbridge Town Council, Newbridge Chamber invited their leaders to a chamber committee meeting recently. Kildare County Manager Michael Malone, Town Manager Thomas Hunter-McGowan and Newbridge Mayor Willie Hamilton came along to discuss matters of the day with Newbridge Chamber's committee.

The meeting included a frank exchange of information from all groups present. President Tim Dooley opened the meeting outlining the concerns businesses have regarding rates bills. Owners in Newbridge are doing their best to pay all their bills while keeping their heads above water in these difficult times and he asked the County Council to consider a reduction in the rates being sought currently. "If companies go out of business there will be no rates paid and surely a part payment is better than none", he commented.

Mr. Malone responded by saying they were very aware of the challenging circumstances rate-payers find themselves in, and the Council would be trying to minimise the impact of rates on businesses but could not agree any reductions in the rates at this point. Rates income accounts for roughly 26% of total budget; there are a lot of other issues out there too. "Kildare County Council is listening to businesses and trying to help all rate payers avoid foreclosure." He stated they are open to working out payment

plans sympathetic to individual situations.

Mr. Hunter-McGowan (as Director of Finance as well as Newbridge Town Manager) went on to explain the cost commitments the Council has, providing essential services etc., all of which puts pressure to gather income from the traditional sources, especially when accompanied by a drop in people's disposable income. He gave the example of the drop in Newbridge Pay Parking revenue from €1.2m in 2008 to a likely intake of €0.7m in 2009.

Mayor Hamilton implored all groups with the common agenda of the welfare of those living in Newbridge and County Kildare to work together in order to pull ourselves out of the recession. He invited Newbridge Chamber to come on board and support the "Economic Development" initiative of the Town Council, which was set up to examine unemployment issues. He also stated that he felt the town was not making enough of its trade opportunities with twinned towns in Germany and more recently Florida. There are also strong links with the Chinese community which should be explored further. His strongest message was that all bodies must work together in partnership - the social partners + Government + business.



Michael Malone,
Kildare County Manager



Peter Moran
East Coast Radio

East Coast expanding



Newbridge Chamber member **East Coast FM** has received approval from the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland to purchase Dublin radio station 'Country Mix 106.8'. The takeover deal, which is subject to approval from the Competition Authority, is expected to complete before the end of the year. Country Mix 106.8 has been broadcasting since 2001 and programmes offer an easy listening mix of music - aimed at a 35+ audience.

Peter Moran of East Coast FM said "this is an ideal opportunity for our company to expand its presence into the Dublin market with an already established station and allow us offer tailor made solutions for our clients across an even wider area with many additional listeners..."

In another innovative development, East Coast FM has launched an Online Discount Store offering up to 50% savings on purchases like superb hotel breaks all over Ireland. You can check it out on www.eastcoast.fm/discount.

COMPETITION

To celebrate this launch, East Coast FM has given **Chamberchat** a fantastic prize of a **Hotel Short Break Voucher in The 4-Star Radisson Blu, Stillorgan Road, Dublin** (2 nights B&B). It will go to the first person that emails breda@newbridgechamber.ie with the correct answer to the following question: "What is the phone number for the East Coast FM Discount Store?"



Meeting Members

Meeting with Michael Murphy to launch the Chamber's "Shop Local" Christmas campaign this year we were immediately struck by the energy this man has for his work, his family, his adopted home of Newbridge and his Wexford roots. This energy is obviously what has propelled him through every day of his 47 years in business to get him to where he is today.

From his origins in Fethard on Sea, Michael learned his craft in the hardware trade in Campile in 1962. He moved to Keegan's Hardware, Newbridge in 1968, and then within three years went on to Cox's Carpet Department. In 1974 he took the plunge and opened up his own shop on Edward St. - across the road from the current site. Twelve years later, he expanded to a 25,000 square foot building. In 1996, Michael increased the store to the 60,000 square foot area Michael Murphy & Co. Ltd. occupies today; one of the finest complete home interior showrooms on display in Leinster.

From this base the company supplies everything for the home, including quality furniture, flooring, carpets, lighting, and curtains. In 2007 a major overhaul of the Newbridge showroom commenced with an emphasis on showroom presentation, making it easier for customers to shop in comfort.

In 1976, Michael opened his second store on the Quay in New Ross Co. Wexford. In 2007 the business re-located to a 40,000 square foot emporium at the New Ross Retail Park on the town's ring road. Working alongside Michael are his wife Rose, their son Joe and 85 staff between both locations.

We wish Michael and his team the health and energy to continue as part of Newbridge's streetscape for many more years to come.



Michael Murphy

Close up on Committee



In this issue we meet **Paula Egan** of **Comprehensive Business Services & Fit Business** – one busy lady! Paula is a strategic and innovative entrepreneur with over 20 years experience at senior management level. In that time she has successfully created, managed, owned, advised, built and sold her own and others' businesses! Winner of 2007 Entrepreneur of the Year Award she is also a keen member of several commercial and voluntary committees and boards.

She is a graduate of University of Ulster, specialising in Finance, and of Dublin City University with an MBA. In a very competitive sector she built Celtic Careers, a recruitment and career development agency, with her business partner Deirdre Moore to become one of the leading recruitment companies in Ireland. She trained in human resources and qualified in psychometric and personality testing, has coached executive directors in career strategy and guided many successfully through high profile career moves. Having spent nine years in the recruitment sector and eager to work on other projects Paula sold her shares in Celtic Careers at the peak of its success.

Following 6 months off to enjoy her financial freedom Paula was never one to rest on her laurels. She returned to her first love, finance, and re-launched CBS, Comprehensive Business Services in 2008. She proves that businesses, new or old, can profit whatever the economic environment. It was at this time she also joined Newbridge Chamber's committee and has proven to be a huge asset on this voluntary body! Paula is a fun and energetic person to work with, regardless of project. She's married to Barry and they live in Naas with their two sons. You can contact Paula on tel. **01-2573838** or via email **pegan@financeservices.ie**.

"Worth the investment?" – your membership under the microscope



Newbridge CHAMBER
IN BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS

Are you using your membership enough? Why pay the sub and then not use the services offered? It's like joining a gym and never turning up! Remember what your annual membership entitles you to:

- **Networking opportunities** at a packed calendar of local events each year
- **Generation of new leads** of fellow members via current Membership list
- Discounted offers on products and services from fellow members in the **Affinity Network** (see www.newbridgechamber.ie/network.htm for these exclusive offers)
- **Opportunity to go on committee** at the Chamber's AGM and influence the agenda and

direction Newbridge Chamber takes for the next twelve months

- Local, focused **training** at reduced rates for you and your staff needs
- Being part of a **lobby group** which represents you at county and national level, e.g. communication with Kildare County Council etc.
- Being a part of the **Chambers Ireland** organisation, getting access to relevant business information on county and national levels
- Access to **Certs of Origin** for export purposes.

If you are not participating in the **Affinity Network**, why not? Contact breda@newbridgechamber.ie to get your offers out there too!

Clark Launches Results of M7 Corridor Workforce Survey

Chamber member Clark has conducted its 4th annual workforce survey based on a sample of 400 companies across all business sectors and 7,000 employees and candidates along the M7 motorway from Parkwest to Portlaoise. Findings include:

- The gender balance has changed to show a significant decrease in the number of females vs males in the workforce
- The average staff turnover has decreased to between 1 and 5%

- 44% of employees have taken a salary reduction of between 10 and 20% in 2009
- 80% of companies have reduced wages costs in the past 12 months, with the majority of these implementing a redundancy programme
- ¼ of the workforce is currently studying and 1/3 intends on studying next year
- Almost 50% of the workforce has been impacted directly or indirectly by redundancy in 2009.

To find out more or to receive a copy of the Workforce Survey findings please contact the Clark team on tel. **045 881888** or e-mail info@clark.ie

Meet New Members *We extend a welcome to recent new members and look forward to seeing you at future Chamber events:*

NAME	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Barry Goulding	Energy Consultants	Energy Assessors
Fiona McLoughlin & Paula Egan	Fit Business	Business Advisors
Gareth Moxom	FocalPoint Business Coaching	Business Coaching
James Colleran	Kildare Commercial Property Management Ltd.	Commercial Property Management



Chamber members Go MAD

Noel Caffrey of The 2 C Company gave attendees of Newbridge Chamber's October 'Member meets Member' evening an hour of wisdom and insight in his amenable, approachable way at The Keadeen Hotel. In this free seminar for members, he lived up to his promise of delivering a problem-solving system, adaptable to every individual and the way we think called 'Go MAD Thinking and Make A Difference.'

"We all have help or hindering thoughts" he explained at the outset, and then showed how to harness these thoughts to achieve our aims. He also warned to beware of pursuing aspirations instead of goals! All his advice can of course relate to business or personal decisions and issues.

During his presentation, the attendees did all of the thinking and writing of their private thoughts and views, with direction by Noel. He revealed that the simplest way of explaining 'the success process' is a solution-focused system. Six elements connect up to help us make the decision to take the right action and then measure the results to gauge if we are on track:



David Wright, Tim Dooley, Noel Caffrey and Paul Hughes at The 2 C Company's "Go MAD Thinking" event at The Keadeen Hotel.

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Define Goal | 5 Personal Responsibilities |
| 2 Reason Why | 6 Involve Others |
| 3 Plan Priorities | 7 Take Action & Measure Results |
| 4 Self Belief | |

At the end of the exercise, Noel, a powerhouse of positive energy, reiterated his belief that we should all take time to plan - it pays off, every time!

2010 Budget analysed over the 'full Irish'

This year's much anticipated Budget was unveiled in the Dáil on Wed. 9th Dec. by Minister for Finance Brian Lenihan. Next morning at first light Newbridge Chamber members and their guests turned up in force for the Annual Budget Breakfast to hear expert analysis of the announcements by business advisors Grant Thornton, while catching up with friends and associates in The Silver Restaurant.

Sponsor Alan Nolan of Falcondale Properties and Chamber President Tim Dooley both thanked Grant Thornton's Noel Delaney, Sasha Kerins and Vincent Hand for their concise and succinct assessment of our post-Budget situations and how the new changes are likely to effect business owners/ managers. Duly fortified in body and mind after a delicious breakfast and all that budget information, attendees put yet another Budget Breakfast under their (now tightening) belts and headed off to work by 9.00 a.m.

A collection for the Chamber's Club of the Year "Culture Factory" was generously donated to by all present which came to €622. This will be kindly matched by sponsor Falcondale Properties and speakers Grant Thornton so in total the morning raised €1,866 for the work of this energetic local young people's organisation! They hope to put it towards the cost of securing a premises in the next year. Thanks to all contributors.



Noel Shannon and Barry Fitzsimons get service with a smile from Natasha Picovarijok at The Silver Restaurant!



The Falcondale Properties Team with Tim Dooley



Sasha Kerins of Grant Thornton delivering her part of the Budget analysis



The audience listening intently to Vincent Hand



Draw winner Paul Hughes of Newbridge Technology Solutions accepts the fabulous Classic Irish Hamper from Tim Dooley!

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