



# Heartbeat

News and views from the Worcestershire Ambassadors

## Having a ball

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- Kathy Leather gets on her soapbox



Ambassadors and their guests enjoy the ball

Ivan Knezovich of the West Midland Safari Park generously added to the sum raised by the charity auction on the night, by donating an additional £5,000 enabling

the Worcestershire Ambassadors to donate £21,000 to their chosen charities: St Richard's Hospice, Primrose Hospice and Kemp Hospice.

During the evening, Worcestershire Ambassadors announced their annual Pride of Worcestershire Award, this year presented to David Baxter-Smith, a local surgeon who specialises in men's health, driving awareness in the county and who has held two health check sessions for male Worcestershire Ambassadors, with more scheduled.

ON SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER, three hundred and twenty leading business figures from around the region danced the night away at the Worcestershire Ambassadors' annual ball. The evening was held at a splendid new venue within the West Midland Safari Park near Bewdley where guests were entertained by a stunning performance by the acclaimed Operababes.



## Derek is Ambassador of the Year

**DEREK FRADGLEY** was presented with the inaugural Ambassador of the Year award at this year's Ball, in recognition of his huge commitment to the Worcestershire Ambassadors.

Commenting on the achievement, Derek said: "I wasn't born in Worcestershire, but I've lived in the county for over 40 years, it's home for me, my family and my business, and the location of pretty well all of the important events in my life. When I heard about the Ambassadors scheme in 2000 I thought

that it sounded a marvellous way of getting to know people and supporting the county. Being a Worcestershire Ambassador has exceeded my expectations, and being involved in the management of the scheme has been a great pleasure, despite the fact that I 'volunteered' to act as treasurer for one year in 2003!"

"When I was presented with the award at the ball in September it was a very big surprise for me, and for once in my life, I was stuck for words. What I did manage to say, and meant sincerely, was that I need to enjoy everything I do; I thoroughly enjoy being a part of this

great team and am honoured to be the first recipient of the award. Thank you sincerely."

Louise Hewett, Chair of the Worcestershire Ambassadors added: "Derek has always been a key figure in the Worcestershire Ambassadors - his official title is 'Treasurer' but he's much more than that. I confess that without him there would be a huge void - he keeps everyone in order and makes me laugh on a daily basis - in fact a phone call from Derek most mornings is excellent therapy to start the day! - It was only fitting that he should be the first to receive this prestigious award."



Derek Fradgley



Louise Hewett

# From the Chair

**“ALTHOUGH 2009 has been a challenging year for businesses and the wider community it is a year that has seen Ambassadors membership increase significantly broadening our reach and diversity of businesses represented across the region.**

Worcestershire Ambassadors have featured widely in the local press and glossies raising awareness, showcasing business successes and promoting the county as a great place to live and work even in these difficult times! Special thanks go to Caroline Leah (PR) who has offered some of her time on a voluntary basis and whom we have also engaged to produce this excellent publication!

Ambassadors can congratulate each other on achieving this year's objectives – particular thanks go to our energetic management group. Ambassadors and RBS raised over £25,000 on the Worcestershire Way Walk in June this year and another £21,000 was raised for the local Hospices at the hugely successful Ambassadors annual ball in September. The aim to achieve a more cohesive approach within the business community began with the Morgan event in October seeing the IoD, Chamber and Ambassadors joining together to strengthen and enhance links and begin to achieve a more connected business community.

Next year will see opportunities for the Ambassadors to join the IoD initiative in mentoring students from the University of Worcester. Wheels have also been put in motion to initiate a collaborative approach between local projects

aimed at supporting young people in the Worcestershire area. By bringing together some of the excellent existing initiatives it is hoped to produce more continuity and support for disadvantaged youngsters in Worcestershire. This is something that's been of particular interest to me and it's great to have the support of the Ambassadors' management group to enable us to get the ball rolling.

I'm looking forward to embracing the challenges 2010 brings. We have a great community in Worcestershire; I'm confident Ambassadors will continue to lead the way, setting the standards for a brighter future in the county in the year ahead."

# Pets mean prizes for award winning Ambassador

**IN THIS ISSUE, Heartbeat meets Jill Angell who is Marketing Director for Fish4Dogs, the award winning producer of high quality treats, complete foods and supplements for dogs and cats, based in Rushock, Worcestershire.**

One of the main remits of a Worcestershire Ambassador is to spread the news about everything wonderful about living and working in Worcestershire, and Fish4Dogs' Jill has certainly been doing that, not just in the six months since she has been an Ambassador, but throughout the growth of her hugely successful company.

"I already spend a considerable amount

of time telling my overseas customers about Worcestershire as a beautiful county to live in and work in. Sixty per cent of our business is now export so I now travel all over the world in my role. I am very proud of our business location in Worcestershire – we have fantastic local staff, and wonderful countryside to look out on and a practical business location for the rest of the country and the world.

## Best new pet product award

In the four years since it launched, Fish4Dogs has created an important niche for itself in the multi million pound pet market. "Our philosophy is, the better quality food you feed your pet, the healthier they will be, and so that is why our products are the very best quality, with no additives, preservatives, colourings or other 'bulking agents'," explains Jill. The company recently won the Best New Pet Product in the UK Award, given by the Pet Products Retail Association (PPRA). The award is voted for by independent pet shops all over the UK who have nominated Fish4Dogs' products, as being the best in the UK. "We are very proud of receiving this award for Worcestershire," Jill smiles.

Fish is not normally associated with Worcestershire but Jill and her husband Robert who created and own the business, have been in the human seafood industry for 15 years, working with seafood processors all around the world, and in particular on the coastline of the UK. As a result, they have found that land locked Worcestershire is actually is the perfect location for them, giving the easiest possible access to all areas of the UK coastline, as well as access to travel networks for business trips to see customers and suppliers.

## Saucy

As an organisation, Fish4Dogs is a true Ambassador for Worcestershire, currently exporting to over 40 countries, all from its base in Rushock. Every day the company has 40 foot containers arriving from Eastern Europe, Russia, the Far East, and the USA. Jill is finding that her customers, suppliers and contacts already

know a little about Worcestershire: "Every time I visit an overseas customer I give them a slide presentation of my company, which includes photographs of the Worcestershire countryside and they are always very impressed. When I am asked where I am from, and answer Worcestershire – I always know that people will know it – they all say 'where the sauce comes from?' They know it but they can't spell it! I have started to take a bottle of Worcestershire sauce with me to present to each new customer round the world!"

Such personal touches in a business environment help position Fish4Dogs' location in overseas' customers mind but is also an indication of the dedicated and thoughtful approach that Fish4Dogs takes to its business. "My marketing skills have given me such a good base for creating a business which is based on the marketing mantra of 'first anticipate the customer need, create the product/service, then deliver it profitably', has given me a strong and focused approach," Jill admits.

As the company grows and celebrates this year's big award, Worcestershire remains a clear and central part of their vision. "We started 4 years ago with only 2 and a half staff, and have recently taken on a new Senior Management Team, bringing our staff total now to 20. That's 20 jobs Worcestershire wouldn't have without us. We also have overseas visitors here, staying in local hotels, and spending money in the restaurants and shops – this all brings benefit to the Worcestershire economy. Fish4Dogs' staff are encouraged to use local companies for all our goods and services (except fish of course!). When we want to buy something, we always see if it can be supplied from neighbouring companies on the Rushock Trading Estate before we even venture further afield to Droitwich, Worcester or Kidderminster."

Jill Angell adds: "Fish4Dogs is living proof of the benefit of growing a business in Worcestershire, and our customers from all over the world certainly seem to agree and love to visit us here!"



Fish4Dog's Jill Angell and her pooch Amber

# On course for further growth and success



Judith Elkin

Worcester in 2006 and around that time proudly accepted an invitation to become an Ambassador.

"I am a people person, with a very strong belief that the University makes a huge difference to the local and regional economy, and to the cultural, social and educational life of the city and region, particularly with the City's aim of being: 'A first rate University and Cathedral city'," says Judith whose role has been to deputise for the Vice Chancellor, Professor David Green, and with him to grow the University and its profile, with a particular concentration on leading new academic course development and research. "My new (part-time) post is to fundraise, to set up a long term Endowment for the University, particularly to support scholarships and bursaries and new facilities; helping the University to expand and do things it could not otherwise afford to do," she adds.

The University of Worcester currently injects over £200 million a year into the local and regional economy, and its reputation for excellence is reaching far beyond home territory. Developments include the refurbishment of the former Worcester Royal Infirmary to house the fast-growing Business School and provide a high profile city centre venue for the region. Plans to develop further sports and performance facilities and the long term development of Grove Farm as a science and business park will further add to this. For Judith, the University's growth and development can only serve to reinforce the overall success of Worcestershire, across business, tourism, education and leisure. "I can

proudly raise my arm as a Worcestershire Ambassador and say our University leads the way in welcoming a wide range of national and international students and offering truly useful courses," explains Judith. "We promote lifelong learning - many of our students are mature students studying for professional and/or postgraduate qualifications. We are renowned for helping students with ability and commitment to achieve to their potential, a philosophy which has resulted in strong links with organisations in the business, creative, education and health communities in Worcestershire and the surrounding counties, complementing our vocational courses."

## Setting a standard in education - why the University of Worcester is making Worcestershire proud

- The University of Worcester, based in the City of Worcester, is the only Higher Education institution within the two counties of Worcestershire and Herefordshire.
- It is currently Britain's fastest growing university, with applications increasing 10 times the national average in the past six years.
- The University provides a wide variety of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, including teacher training, nursing and midwifery, sciences, humanities, sport and a host of business degrees.
- The University has been selected as a training camp by the Lithuanian Men's Basketball team for the 2012 Olympics.
- The University is developing a £60 million joint library and history centre with

Worcestershire County Council. This unique facility is believed to be the first fully-integrated university and public library in Europe.

- The University of Worcester was named the greenest university in the West Midlands in 2009 - and among the top 20 universities in Britain.
- In 2009 the University of Worcester became the first university in England to gain Gold, across all of its sites, in the national EcoCampus awards.
- The University was also presented with the coveted Carbon Trust Standard in 2009. Fewer than 10 universities have received the certification, which is awarded to institutions in the UK for measuring and reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.

University of Worcester students on campus



**PROFESSOR JUDITH ELKIN is Deputy Vice Chancellor Emeritus, and Professor of Children's Literature, University of Worcester. A dedicated Worcestershire Ambassador, she reflects the Ambassadors' philosophy every day in her role at the University.**

Judith has worked at the University of Worcester since September 2003 and thanks to the University's expansion has become increasingly involved in business and community activities across the county. Wanting to be more involved in promoting the benefits of living, working and studying in Worcestershire, Judith moved from Birmingham to live in

## News in brief • News in brief

### Driving forward

Worcestershire business leaders met at Morgan Motor Company in Malvern for an event organised by the Worcestershire Ambassadors, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce and the Institute of Directors (IoD) in Worcestershire, which was attended by over 100 business leaders who were able to network, tour the fascinating Morgan factory and hear from Charles Morgan in his organisations centenary year. This was the first in a series of planned combined events by the three organisations.

Business leaders attend Morgan event



Viv Hudson (centre) with some of the hotelshopUK team

### Ten out of ten!

hotelshopUK has recently launched its 10/10 challenge which pledges to raise £10K for the Prince's Trust over the coming 12 months with different fundraising events and initiatives. Managing director Vivienne Hudson is on the Regional Council for The Prince's Trust in the West Midlands. "hotelshopUK is still here and growing apace, ready for the next ten years and more! After the 2007 floods which devastated our business, we were helped by several local companies to get our business operational again, and we are proud and thrilled that we did it and are here to celebrate our tenth anniversary. Support from the community made us more determined than ever to help others, resulting in our commitment

with our 10/10 challenge to raise £10K during our tenth anniversary year for our chosen charity the Prince's Trust, whose admirable work supports young people getting their lives back on track."

### Well rated?

All commercial property occupiers in Worcestershire should now have received their draft valuations for the 2010 Rating List, which details the proposed Rateable Value (RV), the basis for the business rate liability for the 5 year period, from 1st April 2010. Property consultancy firm in Worcester, Harris Lamb has seen a non-uniform approach by the local Valuation Offices, with the average RV across Worcestershire increasing by approximately 38%. The firm says Business Rates are one of the few overheads that a business can challenge. With the valuation date of the 2010 Rating List being at a time when the market was at its most volatile, the firm says it pays to make sure that professional advice is sought in order to guide occupiers through the maze of legislation and the relief that maybe open to them to reduce their liability.

### In the guide

Business events organisation conference-worcestershire has overhauled its annual guide and website, creating a

detailed one-stop information source for meetings and corporate events organisers.

Both the website [www.conference-worcestershire.org](http://www.conference-worcestershire.org) and the new guide, entitled 'our little black book' have been designed to bring together all elements of organising a corporate event in the county, making it as easy as possible for those organising meetings, product launches, client hospitality or team-building days.

### Prue Leith opens School FEAST centre at Worcester College

The grand opening of state-of-the-art culinary facilities at Worcester College of Technology marked the latest in the national School FEAST provision of training for the school food workforce. Worcester is one of 29 specialist centres and partnerships comprising School FEAST, (Food Skills and Excellence Training) and is the second specialist training centre for school cooks in the West Midlands. The College's grand opening in October included a Masterchef-style competition, judged by BBC TV's Great British Menu judge and the School Food Trust's chair, Prue Leith.



# Contact us

To find out more about the Worcestershire Ambassadors, please contact Louise Hewett at Hewett Recruitment on 01562 69090, email [louise@hewett-recruitment.co.uk](mailto:louise@hewett-recruitment.co.uk) or visit [www.worcestershireambassadors.com](http://www.worcestershireambassadors.com)

## Recession fighters!

### How are Worcestershire Ambassadors fighting the recession and how are things progressing?

"A number of member companies are now noting an improvement over the last 6-9 months and hopefully we will see this improvement continue into our manufacturing and construction companies who have felt the brunt of the recession to date."

**Mike Ashton, Chief Executive of Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce**

"With the proposed expansion at Bosch and the development of the Worcester Technology Park, further expansion at Malvern Hills Science Park and continued development of the Malvern-based, world-leading Quantum Technology Partnership, the current proposed level of investment in technology-rich businesses across the county is heartening."

It bodes well, in spite of the current downturn, for Worcestershire's prosperity in the medium and longer term."

**Alan White, Chief Executive, Central Technology Belt**

"We are finding that more and more businesses are 'shopping around' for accountancy quotes and we seem to be winning a lot of new business from Big 4 firms, where fees can be very high. Also, with the recent announcement that higher rate tax will increase and that high earning pension savers will lose some tax relief, we are getting many tax related enquires which will hopefully continue over the coming months."

**Jeremy Clarke-Morris, Partner, Kendall Wadley Chartered Accountants**

"The recession combined with digital convergence has meant the regional newspaper industry as a whole has had an incredibly tough time over the last 18 months. Some of our key sources of advertising revenue - property, motors and jobs - have been the sectors worst hit by the recession. However, we have seen some signs of recovery in the last quarter of 2009 and we are cautiously optimistic that this will continue into next year."

**Kevin Ward, Editor, Worcester News**



**CONTINUING THE SOAPBOX series, in this issue Kathy Leather, Commercial Director of Worcester Rugby Club and Worcestershire Business Woman of the Year, highlights the Worcestershire Breast Care Campaign.**

The need for a dedicated breast care unit for Worcestershire speaks for itself, when one in 9 women and one in 1000 men will develop breast cancer. So many people around us are affected by this form of cancer and that is why highlighting the campaign which needs to raise £3 million for a new unit, gets me on my soapbox every time!

It is true that we all know someone; this is the most commonly diagnosed form of cancer in women. I have lost my sister-in-law and a close friend to breast cancer and it is that experience that drives me, combined too with my love of this county which has been my home for the past 10 years. Worcestershire needs and deserves this form of care for its residents. Steve Thrush the breast care consultant surgeon was the real driving force for me to get behind the Campaign. After walking round the hospital as though I was a patient, it really touched a nerve and made me see the importance of having a more specialist, dedicated unit.

## Soapbox: Everybody knows somebody

### Raise awareness

I want to encourage everyone to support the Worcester Breast Care Campaign, but I'm not just asking for money. There is so much more to it than cash alone. Yes, the money is imperative and drives the campaign, but thought and awareness count for so much too. If every single person who reads this goes out and talks about the campaign to someone they know or meet, it helps raise awareness amongst us all. And who knows, one of the people you meet and talk to may have the ability to make a big, medium or small donation, even if you can't.

### Contacts

These are difficult times for us all and it is easy to think that someone else can do the giving. Please don't think like that and don't bury your head in the sand! It could be you have a Chippendale or a Picasso sitting at home that you're tired of or don't like that the charity could use to raise money at auction or you may have contacts with a charitable trust that could assist. It will all help towards meeting the target. Spreading the word too is key. Think about your contacts: talk to them and use the ideas you have to help raise awareness of this campaign, so that you are doing your bit too to provide a vital service for the health and wellbeing of the men and women of Worcestershire.

Worcestershire Breast Unit Campaign is aiming to raise £3 million to realise their vision of a new, purpose-built breast unit that will provide rapid, efficient assessment and care, treatment in welcoming and private surroundings, facilities that will maximise the skills of their specialist teams, dedicated parking, staff continuity and specialist

training, ultrasound available throughout the week, fewer return visits; good news delivered swiftly, space for complimentary therapies and support group meetings.

You can make a difference by giving by covenant, making a personal or corporate donation or by raising money in your community. To find out more please contact David Booth on 01905 459322.



Kathy Leather

## Worcestershire job fund

THE DEPARTMENT FOR Work and Pensions recently announced that the Future Jobs Fund application for £1.98million, through the Worcestershire Partnership, had been successful, leading the way to create 309 job opportunities around Worcestershire. The Future Jobs Fund aims to create 150,000 additional jobs nationally, primarily aimed at 18-24-year-olds, who have been out of work for nearly a year.

West Midlands Regional Minister, Ian Austin, said: "This takes the region's total to nearly 9,000 extra jobs and shows the Government's extra investment helping people across the region to get back to work. In previous recessions no extra help was provided for young people. This time, we are determined not to lose a generation of young people to unemployment as a result of the current recession."

## New Ambassadors

Welcome to these new Worcestershire Ambassadors

<b>Mr Charles Rodway</b>	Lansdowne Rodway
<b>Ms Harriett Baldwin</b>	Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for West Worcestershire
<b>Mr Marcus Burton</b>	Yamazaki Mazak
<b>C.Insp Helena Bennett</b>	West Mercia Police
<b>Mr Chris Jones</b>	Witley Jones
<b>Mr Andrew Muckle</b>	Genesis Print
<b>Ms Anne Moreton</b>	St. Basils
<b>Mr Andrew Radley</b>	Inksmoor Credit Management
<b>Mr Anthony King</b>	Sanctuary Group
<b>Mr Paul Walker</b>	Malvern Instruments Ltd
<b>Ms Judith Toole</b>	Tooles Transport Ltd
<b>Mr John Peters</b>	Monkey Business Consultancy
<b>Mr Guy Green</b>	George Green LLP

[www.worcestershireambassadors.com](http://www.worcestershireambassadors.com)