

Welcome to our March Enewsletter! READ ON.....

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1. DON'T MISS JACK BLACK'S MINDSTORE FOR BUSINESS 27TH & 28TH MARCH 2006, NEVIS CENTRE, FORT WILLIAM

The Outdoor Capital of the UK Company has pulled together an amazing opportunity for the people of Lochaber and the wider Highlands, by arranging to bring top personal and corporate development coach Jack Black, to give a special 2-day seminar in Fort William on 27th and 28th March. Jack's development techniques provide a way to set and achieve big goals. His methods have been used by thousands of people and companies around the world, including world-class athletes and business leaders. The Scotsman described Jack Black as: 'one of the top Scotsmen to shape our nation'.

Everyone can benefit from this seminar from local businesses to volunteer groups, sports clubs to school children and everyone who believes in improving the area.

Jack Black's normal venues are in Glasgow, London and Dublin where he can speak to audiences of thousands but he has never been persuaded to come to the Highlands before for a major event. Normal ticket price for these events is £575+ VAT but OCUK has obtained support from Lochaber Enterprise to provide tickets at £220+ VAT (with £20 discount for OCUK members).

For tickets or more information, please contact the [Outdoor Capital office](#) on 01397 705765.

<http://www.mindstore.com>

2. DOES YOUR BUSINESS NEED A GRADUATE?

Following the success of the first scheme, Lochaber Enterprise is again running the Graduate Placement Programme aimed at attracting graduates to work with local businesses. This is an excellent opportunity to bring high calibre skills into your business at a fraction of the cost.

As a local business you'd need to have a specific project which the graduate could undertake, this could be extremely varied, both in its scope and timescale. So, it could be related to, for example, marketing, engineering, IT, environmental issues, or be a specific piece of work in its own right. Ideally it would be a project that would help to grow your business, In terms of timescale the placement would last for a minimum of 3months, but would need to finish by the end of December 2006.

Lochaber Enterprise is able to assist financially by contributing 50% of the graduate's salary up to a maximum of £7,000. The package also includes a range of training options for the graduate.

If you have a suitable project for a graduate, or for more information on the programme then please contact [Roddy MacPhee](#) on 01397 874402 or [Lesley Benfield](#) on 01397 708888.

Do you know a graduate who would return to Lochaber to work through the Graduate Training Programme? If so, ask them to contact Roddy on the above number.

3. CONSTRUCTION SECTOR – HAVE YOUR SAY!

If you are operating in the construction sector, then you are invited to a meeting on Wednesday 22 March, from 5 to 7pm, at Lochaber Enterprise offices. You'll be able to hear more about the results of a recent study highlighting an increase in demand for construction services as well as potential skills shortages. There will also be the opportunity to contribute to a discussion on how to address these skills shortages and other issues. You will find out about how to influence local construction training opportunities, and hear about Lochaber College's new Construction Training Room. For more information please contact [Heather Negus](#) on 01397 708260 or Jenny MacIver, CITB on 07767 844 195.

4. ARE YOU EMPLOYING MIGRANT WORKERS?

Need help and advice to recruit a non-UK employee? Unsure about the paperwork required and legislation that applies? Don't sit and worry – Lochaber Enterprise is able to provide advice to help you. Please contact [Ruth Sime](#) for further information.

Welcome Packs are available in English, Polish and Latvian. If you require copies please contact [Jill Henderson](#) on 01397 708261. If you require copies in different languages, please let us know.

5. THINKING OF DEVELOPING A BUSINESS PROPERTY?

Lochaber Enterprise are able to consider applications from developers of speculative or bespoke business property subject to standard investment criteria being satisfied including determination of market failure. Should you wish to discuss a potential project, please contact [Scott Dingwall](#) on 01397 708270. Please note that under the terms of the existing scheme any approvals would require to be in advance of 31/12/2006.

6. DO YOU NEED CASH FOR YOUR BUSINESS IDEA?

The BBC programme, Dragons' Den gives entrepreneurs the chance to pitch their proposals to a panel of the UK's most successful business people. They have pledged to invest their own money in the best ideas. If you are an entrepreneur, with a fantastic business idea or product that is investment-ready, then they want to hear from you.

For an application form [visit the website](#), [email the BBC](#) or call 09011 110 825 (calls cost 25p).

7. BUSINESS INFORMATION

Revised guidance on Employers' Liability cover

The HSE has [published a revised leaflet](#) about the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969. The leaflet aims to explain how the law affects business owners, covering who needs to have this type of insurance cover, how much cover is needed and what needs to be done with the paperwork.

Free guide helps firms with accessibility rules

[A free 48-page guide](#) has been published by accessibility consultancy Configure to help small businesses comply with rules surrounding the accessibility of their premises for people with disabilities. Firms have a legal duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure accessibility under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The guide covers arriving at the premises, approach and entry, and internal facilities such as reception areas and toilets.

8. CONGRATULATIONS TO....

.....Jamie Smith, Managing Director of The Ice Factor in Kinlochleven, who was runner up at the Institute of Directors awards in the category of Highlands & Islands Director of the Year.

.....Lochaber High School Hockey Team, who won the under 18's Scottish hockey championship last week.

9. AWE INSPIRING 50+ LOCHABER WOMEN

Lochaber has been chosen as one of only three areas in the country chosen to pilot a project aimed at helping women aged 50+ improve their employment options.

Developed by the University of Strathclyde Senior Studies Institute and funded through the European Social Fund Equal Programme, The Advancing Women's Employability (AWE) will work with both employed and unemployed women in the 50+ age bracket enabling them to realise their own potential and develop their own skills, aptitudes interests and enhance their careers.

For more information on how you can get involved call Mary McCulloch on 01967 431 460.

10. COULD YOU HELP GET PEOPLE BACK TO WORK?

Lochaber Employer Coalition - Lorna Ross would be interested to hear from any employers who would like to get involved, especially employers from the care, retail and the outdoor activities sectors. The goal of the Coalition is to increase the number of people who move from benefits to sustainable employment. [Lorna](#) can be contacted at 01463 888270

11. WHAT'S ON?

What's Your Story? - the creative tourism conference

'What's Your Story' is a full day event on how the use of content can make the Highlands a more compelling tourist destination. Organised by Highlands and Islands Enterprise on 10th March in Dingwall with a stimulating line up of speakers is planned. The event is free for those working in the tourism and creative industries, but you must reserve your place. Please reserve your place by [booking online](#) or by [emailing Stewart Meikle](#).

Highlands & Islands Equality Forum Roadshow

Tuesday 14th March 12:00-14:00, Moorings Hotel, Fort William (buffet lunch provided)

The Highlands & Islands Equality Forum would like to invite you to attend this informative roadshow which will bring your organisation up to speed with important changes to equalities legislation, including changes to the Disability Discrimination Act and the forthcoming Age Discrimination Act. To confirm your attendance at this event, please [e-mail](#) or telephone 01463 251734.

University of the Third Age

Open meeting on 23rd March 3:00pm – 5:00pm at Lochaber College.

Is your family all grown up – maybe left home? Or maybe you've retired and left them! Have you retired from paid work, or perhaps now only working part time hours? Are there particular interests or hobbies that had to be shelved as earning a living and supporting a family took priority? And now you have the time!

The University of the Third Age (U3A), a charitable organisation, has arrived in Lochaber. A small committee is planning a series of general meetings out of which particular interest groups are bound to develop. We already have many prospective members looking to meet together to share diverse interests ranging from Local History and French Language to Crafting and Rambling. Interests, you see, may be both academic and recreational... what you gain from your U3A depends entirely upon you.

The first Open Meeting is to be held at 3- 5pm on Thursday 23 March at Lochaber College, Fort William. Refreshments will be available and there will be an entertaining talk on what it is to be a U3A 'student'.

If you are interested but unable to attend this first meeting you may still register your interest in the U3A. Contact [Bill Waugh](#) on 01809 501 335 or [Marina Gunn](#) on 01855 831 533. www.u3a.org.uk

Starting a business?

NewstartScotland, 24th & 25th March 2006, SECC GLasgow

In association with Business Gateway, NewstartScotland is a free exhibition and seminar for people starting a business. With over 50 free seminars and 120 exhibitors the range of service, suppliers, ideas and business guidance at this event is truly unrivalled. Whether you need the finance for your own success story or the tools to boost your existing business, a visit to Scotland's premier business show is a must.

[Visit the site](#) to register or call 0800 634 3400.

Don't miss your opportunity to be part of the 'this years must-attend tourism event'

Tourism Innovation Day 2006, Perth Concert Hall, Tuesday 28th March 2006 9:30am – 4:30pm

Supported by Highlands & Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise, the 2006 Tourism Innovation Day is shaping up to be the most exciting Innovation Day to date, with some of the most respected professionals from 3 continents leading discussions and interactive workshops. The one-day event will help owners, managers and employees of Scotland's wide range of tourism businesses, from B&Bs to 5-star hotels, tour operators and visitor attractions, to develop and capitalise on innovative cutting-edge ideas and practices.

Lochaber Enterprise are supporting the event with assistance for travel/car share/overnight accommodation if required. Contact [Mairi](#) at Lochaber Enterprise for further information.

National Transport Strategy for Scotland

The Scottish Executive is in the process of developing a National Transport Strategy for Scotland.

A Conference is to take place on 28th March 2006 at Dublane Hydro. There will be no fee to attend the conference and places should be booked through [Lisa Ord](#) at Conference Solutions by Expotel on 0161 947 4551.

Tourism E-commerce Roadshow

Moorings Hotel, Banavie, 31 March 2006 10am - 3pm

This roadshow is designed for tourism operators to make more money from the internet. Scottish Tourism Forum, with support from Lochaber Enterprise, [visitscotland.com](#) and VisitScotland will deliver a series of workshops and case studies.

This event will help you to review your internet activities and re-align your objectives with the help of newly emerging opportunities. Cost is £25 per person. To book email: elainet@stforum.co.uk

Ardtornish Slow Food Event

On Saturday 15th April from 12noon to 4 pm traditional food producers from Lochaber and Argyll will gather to showcase their products for a feast of culinary delight. The event will be opened by Jon Snow, Channel 4 News Presenter, followed by sampling of all products, which will then be available to purchase on the day to take home. Entry will be free and all are welcome to the event being held at Ardtornish House in Lochaline.

For more details contact [Jane](#), [Suki](#) or [Bill](#)

12. About this eNewsletter

Please, please send us your comments about our eNewsletter. Our aim is to keep you up-to-date with the support and assistance that we provide, and to inform you about any forthcoming events. Is it interesting? Is it boring? Is it too long? Is it too short? How could it be better? Do you bin it immediately? Did you not receive it??? Or is it absolutely perfect? We don't think so, and are patiently waiting for your feedback.... Please e-mail [Donna](#).

Please feel free to forward our eNEWSLETTER to anyone else who may be interested. If you wish to be added to, or removed from this distribution list, please e-mail [Donna](#).

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