

Great Lakes BUSINESS

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March 2009

Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship.

B. Franklin

Women In Business Workshops

Thank you to all business women who have expressed their interest in participating in the Regional Women in Business Mentoring Program in the Great Lakes area. There has been a very positive response across the region.

Hunter Business Centre is currently in the process of securing funding and as soon as we receive confirmation we will commence organisation of the program. All those interested will be contacted to confirm eligibility and further details of workshops, networking events and mentoring sessions. Every effort will be made to assist women interested in participating in the program with convenient times and locations for each session.

If you have any further queries in relation to the Program, please do not hesitate to contact Deb Tuckerman, Economic Development Manager of Great Lakes Council by phoning 02 6591 7390 or email deb.tuckerman@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au.

[For further information](#)

BAS client day changes

Please be advised that client guidance appointments with the Hunter Business Advisory Service will change to each **Thursday** in the Great Lakes area, starting from the **19th of March**. (This is instead of the existing Wednesday appointments.) Appointments can be made by phoning 02 6539 3966 or emailing sue@businesscentre.com.au. Appointments will still take place at Level 1, 60 Manning Street, Tuncurry (the office of Great Lakes Secretarial Service). Gloucester clients please call or email to arrange a suitable appointment time.

New Chamber Committee

The Forster Tuncurry Chamber of Commerce held their Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 3rd of March and now have four new faces on the board for 2009 as well as 3 previous members. The new Committee consists of -

President - Joanne Jay
Vice President - Bob Lee
Secretary - Jim Isackson

Treasurer - Jan Lee
Committee - Paul Tucker, Stan Kremian & Jenny Peddell

The first committee meeting will be held on March 16th. The networking nights will continue on the first Tuesday of each month at the Sporties Club, Tuncurry 6pm. For further information contact Joanne Jay by email joannecjay@hotmail.com

Small chambers of commerce funding

The Small Chambers of Commerce Fund was set up to assist established Chambers of Commerce & business development organisations such as progress associations in communities of less than 5,000 across New South Wales. It is to provide \$450,000 to small towns over the next five years and grants between \$2,000 and \$5,000 are available to aid promotional activities such as web sites, signage for town entrances and business development seminars. The Fund is managed by the NSW Department of State & Regional Development.

If local groups would like more information or would like to discuss applications they can contact Susan Rowe of DSRD (02 4908 7341) or Deb Tuckerman of Great Lakes Council (02 6591 7390). If your application is specifically for marketing or promotional activities to attract visitors to your town contact Richard Old (02 6554 8799) of Great Lakes Tourism to discuss your project ideas.

[For further information](#)

\$52 million infrastructure fund to support business investment in regional NSW

A new \$52 million Local Infrastructure Support Fund will assist infrastructure projects that are directly linked to economic development opportunities in regional NSW.

The fund will help to off-set the costs of developing specific infrastructure projects that directly influence a business investment project. It will also leverage funds that directly influence a business investment project. It will also leverage funds contributed by business and local councils. It will help fund small capital works projects that can make or break a business' decision to expand or relocate.

The fund will support the common infrastructure needs of a group of existing prospective businesses. It provides for lower level, highly responsive intervention to remove barriers to investment on specific projects. Go to link below for further information.

[For further information](#)

FREE Grant Writing Workshops - How to access funding

Grant Writing Workshops will be held 9am to 12noon, in:

**Hawks Nest - 19th March in the Community Hall &
Forster - 20th March in the Council Chambers**

The workshops will -

* raise awareness of the range of funding opportunities available for community projects, and build the grant writing skills of potential grant applicants.

- * outline a range of current funding sources (including the Small Chambers of Commerce funding) and how to keep informed of future opportunities.
- * take participants through the process of how to apply for funding.

Participants can question an expert panel on what funding program selection panels are looking for. The funding program representatives will be available for one-on-one sessions through the afternoon to discuss your project ideas.

All business, community groups and other interested organisations are strongly encouraged to send a representative. To register for this FREE workshop complete the registration form available on the Great Lakes Council website www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au or to be sent a registration form call Council on 02 6591 7222 or email chloe.beevers@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au.

One-day Tender Training Workshop

Australian Business Defence Industry Unit and Lange Consulting and Software, in conjunction with the NSW Department of State and Regional Development (DSRD), will be conducting a one-day tender training workshop that is aimed at improving tendering by individuals/companies to the Department of Defence and is also applicable to other Government Departments - Federal and State.

[For further information](#)

Fresh Ideas for Work and Family Program

The Australian Government has introduced the *Fresh Ideas for Work and Family* grants program to support Australian small businesses to implement practices that help employees balance their work and family obligations as well as improve employee retention and productivity.

The program provides grants of \$5,000 to \$15,000 to small businesses to help meet the set-up costs of family friendly arrangements that suit the individual needs of the business. Applications for the current funding round must be received by 24 April 2009.

The grants are dispensed by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Further information on family friendly work arrangements, work-life balance and the program is available from this website. You may also call the Workplace Infoline on 1300 363 264, email FIWF@deewr.gov.au or www.deewr.gov.au/WorkplaceRelations/FreshIdeas/Pages/default.aspx

Regional Development Australia

The national network of Area Consultative Committees (ACCs) has been an important link between the Australian Government and rural and metropolitan Australia.

The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP announced on 20 March 2008 that as foreshadowed in the Government's key regional election commitments, Area Consultative Committees (ACCs) would provide the basis for the creation of Regional Development Australia (RDA).

ACCs are currently transitioning to become local Regional Development Australia

committees.

Expressions of Interest are sought for committee members for the Regional Development Australia (RDA) network of committees in New South Wales. Closing date for applications is 27 March 2009. For further information click on the link below.

[For further information](#)

Earth Hour 2009 - 28th March - 8.30pm

On Saturday 28th March 2009, Great Lakes Council will take part in Earth Hour. On that day, people in Australia and around the world will turn off their lights between 8:30-9:30 pm for one hour – Earth Hour – showing their support.

Great Lakes Council has joined over 50 NSW councils in pledging their support, along with hundreds of other cities worldwide.

Earth Hour 2009 aims to reach **1 billion people** in 1,000 cities who, by simply switching all their non-essential lights off, will show their support for action on climate change. Earth Hour is a positive message of hope and action, emphasising what people can do when they act together.

If you would like to do more than just turning off your lights, you are welcome to join us on a candlelit walk from the Ocean Baths at Forster Main Beach to Pilot Hill. People of all ages are welcome, and candles will be provided to those who register. Free local media promotion will be provided to those businesses who register their participation, and a poster will be supplied to display on their premises. The walk will occur during Earth Hour on Saturday the 28th March 2009 between 8:30 - 9:30pm and candles will be provided to those who register.

If you would like further information on Earth Hour, or to register your business, please contact April McKay on **02 6591 7314** or email april.mckay@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au, or visit the Earth Hour website at www.earthhour.org

Federal Government to provide support for apprenticeships

The Federal Government is planning to help businesses to employ apprentices with a \$145 million package offering employers up to \$2800 extra - in addition to the usual subsidies - if they employ apprentices through to the completion of their training.

Employers who take on an apprentice who has been laid off before finishing their qualification will be given an extra \$1800, paid as a \$150-a-week wage subsidy. To encourage employers to retain trainees, the Government will give employers \$1000 for each apprentice that completes their training.

The Government will also pay registered training organisations \$1250 or \$2500 to help laid-off apprentices complete the training. The size of the subsidy will depend on the level of training required. Employers should note the breadth of apprenticeship occupations that can attract Government funding.

For more information, see www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au.

Useful contacts

Comments and feedback on the Newsletter's content is always appreciated. You might also like to suggest a topic or share some ideas or tips for future editions - good news stories are also welcome - email Sue Druce of the Hunter Business Advisory Service to do so. For past editions of the newsletter please visit

www.greatlakesbusiness.com.au

Sue Druce - Business Facilitator - Hunter Business Centre (Great Lakes & Gloucester Areas)
sue@businesscentre.com.au - Ph - (02) 6539 3966 - www.businesscentre.com.au

Deb Tuckerman - Economic Development Manager (Great Lakes Council)
deb.tuckerman@greatlakes.nsw.gov.au - Ph - (02) 6591 7390 - www.greatlakes.nsw.gov.au

Suzette Gaff - Business Development Manager, Hunter (NSW Dept. State & Regional Development)
suzette.gaff@business.nsw.gov.au - Ph - (02) 4908 7333 - www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au

Susan Rowe - Community Economic Development Manager, Hunter (NSW Dept. State & Regional Development)
susan.rowe@business.nsw.gov.au - Ph - (02) 4908 7333

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