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Leinster Society of  
Chartered Accountants

Charting the way for Business

Newsletter of The Leinster Society of Chartered Accountants

## April Speaker Paul Appleby, Head of the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement



Paul Appleby

Paul has been the head of the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement (ODCE) since its formal establishment in November 2001. Paul is also a Director of the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority and a member of the Company Law Review Group. Prior to 2001, he was a senior civil servant in the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment and held company law responsibilities for a period of five years.

Paul Appleby will address the members of the Leinster Society on Thursday 30 April at the Westbury Hotel. Time 12.45pm for 1.00pm. Cost €60.00 per person. Concessions available.

Please contact the office of the Leinster Society on Tel: **01 6377362/1** or book online at [www.lscs.ie](http://www.lscs.ie) or email [leinstersociety@icai.ie](mailto:leinstersociety@icai.ie)

## Dublin Port Company CEO Calls on Irish Businesses to Regain Competitiveness

At the LSCA February Luncheon, the Chief Executive of Dublin Port Company, Mr. Enda Connellan, called on Irish businesses to get competitive or run the risk of returning to the economy of the 1980s. Addressing the Leinster Society of Chartered Accountants, Mr. Connellan said that if the country is to regain its competitiveness, businesses needed to seriously address their cost base and that Ireland's focus should be on the real trading economy and real jobs.



Julie Herlihy and Enda Connellan, CEO, Dublin Port Company.

Given the fact that Ireland depends more than any other country on trade for GDP, Mr. Connellan said Dublin Port Company is very conscious of the part it can play in fostering sustainable competitiveness. "We are committed to continue to help Irish business drive this economy, to cement the real trading economy and ensure that we can handle extra trade as the economy recovers."

"The port, for example, directly supports 4,000 real jobs. These are real people, supporting real families, in the heart of Dublin city. Dublin Port will continue to be a dynamic force, feeding Irish commerce as it has done for centuries, located perfectly, close to its main market. Ireland and Dublin, and all the businesses in it, need to achieve maximum competitiveness. As we in Dublin Port Company help get the goods to market in a cost-effective, efficient, green manner we help drive competitiveness. Our "hidden" role is often taken for granted but at the end of the day, efficient delivery of goods to market keeps

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Dublin 4.

[www.lscs.ie](http://www.lscs.ie)



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## Dublin Port Company CEO Calls On Irish Businesses To Regain Competitiveness

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prices down and keeps the wheels of commerce turning. We are an efficient, profitable company making a significant contribution to Dublin business, Dublin citizens and Dublin employment."

Speaking about Dublin Port Company's own experiences in addressing its own cost base he highlighted that in the 1980s Dublin Port and Dublin Port Company's costs to customers were way too high. He told how Dublin Port was losing business to Belfast Port, then the largest port on the island, and the Port of Larne and drew parallels with Irish retailers losing business to cross-border shoppers seeking more competitive prices.

On the steps Dublin Port Company took to address its cost base, Mr. Connellan said: "Dublin Port Company was a case in point on how to manage costs and improve competitiveness. Dublin Port Company has reduced its cost base and introduced nine

competing terminals. Costs to the unitised trade are now lower in nominal terms than in 1988. Mr. Connellan added: "We've had fifteen consecutive years of increasing throughput and seven consecutive years of payroll cost reduction. In 2002 our wage bill was €21 million which was unsustainable. Today it is €13 million. If we hadn't implemented the efficiencies needed to be competitive our wage bill would be €25 million, twice what it is today."

Optimistic about the future, Mr. Connellan said we have all the resources we need to build for recovery. He warned that, "We must show a determination to carry through the National Development Plan. We must build the world class road network, the schools and the public transport that will feed our return to growth. We cannot find ourselves trying to play catch up when recovery comes, as we did when the Celtic tiger arrived."



## Ladies "Health and Wellbeing" Evening

On Thursday, 12 February, right on time for Valentine's Day, the Leinster Society hosted the third annual "Health and Wellbeing" evening in the Conrad, sponsored by Glennon Insurance. As in previous years, this light hearted event proved to be an extremely popular way for members and their guests to have a fun, relaxing night's entertainment.

The attendees enjoyed an informative and entertaining talk from Geraldine Dignam, image and style consultant, who has consistently received great feedback from our events. She engaged the audience with helpful advice about spring/summer 2009 looks, tips on accessorising and how to get the most value from your wardrobe. She focused particularly on what colours and styles suit flatter different shapes and also explained how versatile an expensive outfit could be, with a little imagination.

A mouth-watering hot fork buffet meal followed the talk. The chocolate fountain attracted a few visitors too! People were then pampered by manicurists and hair stylists from Blow, beauticians from Benefit and masseurs from Molton Brown, advice from Dublin Nutri Centre and Temple Spa. Many attendees chose to have their fortunes told by Shaughna Whelan, a chartered accountant and life coach, and this introduced an atmosphere of intrigue to the evening! Guests left with goody bags and discount vouchers from Blow, Benefit, Molton Brown and Temple Spa, Co Westmeath. Many thanks to everyone who attended.



Nora Collender, ICAI

**Ladies' Evening Kilkenny...**  
A similar event, at which Geraldine Dignam, image and style consultant will speak, will be run at 7.00pm in the River Court hotel, Kilkenny on Thursday 7 May 2009. Tickets cost €40.00. To book, contact the office of the Leinster Society on Tel: 01 6377362/1 or email [leinstersociety@icai.ie](mailto:leinstersociety@icai.ie) or book online at [www.lsc.ie](http://www.lsc.ie)

## Leinster Society Book Club

Ever feel like having a rant or a rave about a book that you've just completed? Or hearing what someone else thought about it?

The Leinster Society committee is delighted to announce the start of the Leinster Society book club. It will evolve over time but at this stage it is proposed that it will operate as follows:

- Book club members will meet on the second Tuesday of every month.
- Leinster Society members and their guests are welcome.
- One book (contemporary fiction, initially) will be discussed at each meeting.
- An effort will be made to ensure that the title of the book will be announced two months before the relevant meeting. The first meeting will be an exception so a short book was selected!
- Anyone who can't attend the meeting can email his comments/reviews to the Leinster Society in advance of the meeting and this feedback will be included in the discussion.
- A short review of the books will be included on the LSCA website following each meeting.
- No charge will apply.

The first meeting will be on Tuesday, 14 April at the ICAI offices at 6.30pm. The book to be discussed is the controversial but easy to read *"Never Let Me Go"* by the Booker and Whitbread winner, Kazuo Ishiguro.

The book for the book club meeting on Tuesday, 12 May will be the 2008 Man Booker winner, *"White Tiger"* by Aravind Adiga.

Interested members should contact the LSCA office to book.

Feedback welcome, as always. JH

## Tax Corner

### Preliminary tax – don't forget the new income levy

As most self-employed people will know, preliminary tax for 2009, which is payable by 31 October 2008, ignoring the ROS filing extension, must be at least:

- 90% of the final tax payable for 2009,
- 100% of the final tax payable for 2008, or
- 105% of the final tax payable for 2007, if the direct debit method is used.

To reduce uncertainty, many people choose to pay tax based on the middle test above, i.e. pay an amount equalling 100% of the prior year's tax bill. However, in 2009, any individual who wants to rely on this test must recalculate his 2008 income tax liability as if the income levy had applied in 2008. He must then pay 100% of this new increased figure, to meet his preliminary tax obligations for 2009. Otherwise, interest on an underpayment of income tax could apply. JH

## FREE Wine Tasting Evening hosted by Enowines, IFSC 2 April at 7.00pm

Bordeaux is the most important vineyard in the world! The region's 700 million vines produce between 700 and 900 million bottles of wine every year. While much of the wine is ordinary, some of it ranks among the greatest wines of the world.

Ever since the first vines were planted there 2,000 years ago, history has provided a seemingly random patchwork of good, bad and indifferent vintages. Every 5 years or so the bordelais tend to claim another 'vintage of the century' and once in a while something close to perfection does indeed come along.

With modern winemaking there are few truly poor vintages these days and there have been many great ones in recent times; each with its own style and character, 1982, 1989, 1990, 1996 and 2000 being amongst the very best of them. However, in 2005 we got something quite extraordinary. Almost all commentators agree that these wines are the finest, most homogenous and most consistently superb they have ever tasted. After the *en primeur* tastings, the world's most influential critic, American wine guru, Robert Parker, said: *'I have never tasted so many young wines that are so outstandingly rich, concentrated, with such a precision and endowed with so many tannins.'*

Speaking of Chateau Rauzan Gassies in Margaux, he says: *'I know I sound like a broken record, but here is another estate that may have produced its finest wine... ever. I have never tasted so many extraordinarily rich, concentrated, massive wines so high in tannin and extract, yet with such precision, definition, and freshness. It is clearly a singular vintage that should evolve into one of the great vintages of Bordeaux.'*

In April last year Parker tasted the newly-bottled wines. His response was to revise his scores – upwards. He said: *'Tasting the 2005 red wines from the bottle, many of them three or four times, confirmed that this is the greatest vintage produced during my 30-year career. A great majority of the wines are far superior from bottle than they were from cask, confirming the quality of this remarkable vintage.'*

Why was it so good? It's very simple. It wasn't because Bordeaux's winemakers suddenly learned *en masse* how to make better wine. Great wine comes from great grapes well handled and in 2005, nature provided perfectly.

There was enough rain in early spring to hydrate the vines, followed by a long, warm, dry and sunny summer. There was no spring frost at budburst, no heavy rain, high humidity or burning heat through the summer and no hail or rain at harvest-time. Mother Nature smiled all summer long. The only place it could go wrong was in the hands of a dodgy winemaker – and there were precious few of those that year. Across every region and at every quality level, it was pretty much perfect.

In the Spring of 2006 the world's wine trade descended on Bordeaux for the *en primeur* tastings of barrel samples. Everyone was amazed at the purity of fruit, the silky, cashmere-like texture in the mouth and the amazing length of flavour these wines had while still so incredibly young.

On the basis of all the praise coming their way, some chateaux put up their prices sharply; others did so only slightly. Prices of the very top wines seemed extortionate at the time and yet since their release, worldwide demand for such scarce commodities has pushed the prices up further and further. Even in the current recession, which has seen shares tumble, banks go out of business and people lose their jobs, worldwide demand has kept prices of the top wines well above the initial prices. Those who bought these wines upon release have seen a very significant return on their investment. And as these wines develop and begin to be drunk, they will become scarcer and prices are likely to rise again.

### Some top performers:

2005 has offered (and still offers) some great value for investors and consumers alike. Before the recession began to bite, Ausone's prices were up 200% on the release price. La Mission Haut Brion was up 213%, Carruades de Lafite 247% and Haut Brion (our 'Wine of the Vintage 2005') 136%. Prices have since fallen back but are still very considerably up on release price.

For those who actually want to drink the wine, Leoville las Cases, Vieux Chateau Certan, Lynch-Bages and Cheval Blanc are offering more attractive prices.

Yvonne Connolly, owner of enowine is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and delighted to welcome our members for complimentary wine tasting on 2 April at 7.00pm. Please contact the LSCA office on Tel: 01 6377362/1 for details.

Institute members can avail of a 15% discount when they shop online at [www.enowine.ie](http://www.enowine.ie) Simply enter the discount code ICAI15 in the members of the website to avail of the discount.

## February Quiz Results

- Gulliver was travelling with a sack of lettuce, a fox, and a rabbit. While passing through the woods, he came to a small river that was too fast and too deep to cross on foot. Gulliver found a log that was just large enough to allow himself and the lettuce, or himself and one of the two animals, to cross at a time. The problem was that if he took the lettuce across, the fox would eat the rabbit, and if he took the fox across, the rabbit would eat the lettuce. Using just the log, how can Gulliver safely transport the rabbit, the fox, and the lettuce across the river?
  - We will call the two sides of the river A and B. First Gulliver takes the rabbit across to side B, leaving the lettuce with the fox on side A. He then returns to side A, picks up the lettuce and brings it to side B. Next he returns the rabbit to side A. Gulliver then takes the fox across to side B, reuniting the fox and the lettuce. Finally he returns to side A and picks up the rabbit, which by this time is making its third crossing.
- A horse is tied to a five metre rope in front of an old saloon. Six metres behind the horse is a bale of hay. Without breaking his rope, the horse is able to eat the hay whenever he chooses. How is this possible?
  - The rope is not tied to anything else.
- When Mama Leona boils pasta she adds three drops of oil and two drops of vinegar to the water. While at the market Mama accidentally dropped and broke the vinegar bottle. Undaunted she instructed the shopkeeper to put both the oil and the vinegar in the same jar. How could Mama pour exactly three drops of oil and two drops of vinegar in to the water using just the one bottle?
  - Since oil floats on top of vinegar, Mama removed three drops of oil from the surface, sealed the jar, and inverted it. When the oil rose to the top, she simply loosened the lid enough to allow two drops of vinegar to fall out.

February Quiz winner is: **Kevin Prendergast, Dublin 1**  
 A bottle of Champagne awaits your collection at the Leinster Society Office.

## Can you do it? Yes you can!!

Have you been inspired by the flawless speaking skills of US President Barack Obama? Barack Obama is proof of the career-building power of speech. He is a reminder that the ability to speak convincingly to others has to rank as one of the most important skills in politics, in business and in life.

If you would like to improve your public speaking skills then maybe Society Toastmasters is for you? Some people come to Toastmasters to overcome the terror of public speaking, for others it is just a question of improving existing skills. Toastmasters offers a solution in a **fun, friendly and mutually supportive environment**. The toastmasters programme is not a formal course in public speaking. There are no instructors, no tests are administered. In toastmasters members learn by studying the manuals, practicing & helping one another.

Club meetings are workshops where you study & practice communication & leadership skills with others who are there for the same reason. You develop 'quick thinking' skills as you give one to two minute speeches on general topics at the lively table topics sessions. You will also learn how to introduce speakers & conduct meetings. The greatest learning comes from preparing & presenting speeches following a predetermined schedule of projects.

'Society Toastmasters' meets every 2nd & 4th Thursday of the month at the **ICAI premises, Burlington House, Burlington Road, Dublin 4 at 8.00pm**. Our next meetings will be held on 12 & 26 March. Guests and new members – both ACAs & non ACAs are very welcome to attend any night & see whether Toastmasters is for you. If you have any questions or would like to get in touch with the club please feel free to email us at **societytoastmasters@hotmail.com**. We look forward to greeting you at the club.



## Diary Dates

### Thursday, 12 March 2009

March Luncheon

Venue: The Davenport Hotel

Time: 12.45pm for 1.00pm – Cost: €60.00

Speaker: Brendan Kennedy, Chief Executive, The Pensions Board

### Saturday, 14 & Sunday 15 March 2009

Hillwalking, Wicklow

Time: 10.00am – Cost: €60.00

Nathan Kingerlee of Hilltop Treks

**BOOKED OUT**

### Saturday, 28 & Sunday 29 March 2009

Hillwalking, Wicklow

Time: 10.00am – Cost: €60.00

www.hilltoptreks.ie

**BOOKED OUT**

### Thursday, 2 April 2009

Wine Tasting Evening

Venue: Enowines

Time: 7.00pm – Cost: Free

### Tuesday, 14 April 2009

LSCA Book Club

Venue: ICAI, Burlington House, Burlington Road, Dublin 4

Time: 6.30pm – Cost: Free

### Thursday, 30 April 2009

April Luncheon

Venue: The Westbury Hotel

Time: 12.45pm for 1.00pm – Cost: €60.00 per person

Speaker: Paul Appleby, Head of the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement

### Thursday, 7 May 2009

Ladies Health & Well Being Evening – Kilkenny

Venue: The River Court Hotel, Kilkenny

Time: 7.00pm for 7.30pm – Cost: €40.00

### Friday, 8 May 2009

May Luncheon

Venue: The Shelbourne Hotel

Time: 12.45pm for 1.00pm – Cost: €60.00

Speaker: Charlie McCreevy, European Commissioner Internal Market Services

### Toastmasters – 2nd and 4th Thursday

12 & 26 March

Please note that all the above events can be booked online at [www.lasca.ie](http://www.lasca.ie)

## March Quiz

- Barney Dribble was going on a one-way bus trip. He intended to ride for a certain distance, get off the bus, and walk back to town. If the bus travels at a rate of nine kilometres per hour and he was to walk back to town at a rate of three kilometres per hour, how far would he ride so that he'd be back in eight hours?
- I am a man. If Jason's son is my son's father, what relationship am I to Jason?
- Harry Plum, a fruit farmer from Georgia, was waging war against the blackbirds that were constantly sampling his cherry crop. One day Harry noticed 16 blackbirds dining on his favourite cherry tree. Determined to teach the birds a lesson they wouldn't soon forget, he got out his shotgun and blasted away at them. Although Harry only managed to hit one of the birds, he did succeed in blowing it clean out of the tree. How many birds are now left in the tree?

Please email your answers to [leinstersociety@icai.ie](mailto:leinstersociety@icai.ie) or by post to: **LSCA Quiz, Burlington House, Burlington Road, Dublin 4.**