

## Fruity fun at event

A FRUITY Friday is on its way to encourage people to eat more healthily.

On Friday, between 10am and 2pm, fruit kebabs and smoothies will be on offer, along with health information packs, at the council's customer service centre in Llanelli.

The event forms part of Carmarthenshire Council's efforts to increase awareness of cancer prevention.

## Motorist banned

A LLANELLI woman has admitted drink-driving.

Jane Craven, of Tir Newydd, was fined £100 by magistrates. The 34-year-old must pay £15 victim surcharge and £60 costs. She was banned from driving for 18 months.

## Car stolen

A CAR has been stolen from a Llanelli street. The silver VW Golf, registration OU03 GUX, was taken from Coronation Road.

## Theft alert

A 4ft x 7ft aluminium trailer with red wheel arches has been stolen from Clos y Gelli, Llwynhendy, Llanelli.

# 'Getting back into work is hard, but can be done'

AFTER being rocked by the recession and hit hard by redundancies, the workforce in Llanelli could be forgiven for thinking it's under siege. The fightback has started, however, with an agency dedicated to equipping jobseekers with the right tools to get back into work. Star chief reporter GERAINT THOMAS finds out more.



A SPECIAL programme, aimed at banishing the out-of-work blues and helping people back into work, is being given the thumbs up by its appreciative clients.

Over the past 12 months the Programme Centre in Vauxhall has helped perfect around 1,000 CVs in an effort to boost the prospects of jobseekers in the unemployment hotspot of Llanelli and surrounding areas.

Run by Trac, the training division of Carmarthenshire-based enterprise agency Antur Teifi, which has been contracted by the Assembly-funded Jobcentre Plus, it offers a range of activities aimed at landing a new job.

After being referred by Jobcentre Plus, clients get help with important tasks such as preparing a CV, letters of application, interview techniques and searching for jobs.

Senior employment adviser Cathie Williams said: "In the

past we used to have a lot of people who had been long-term unemployed, but now there is a core of skilled people who have recently been made redundant.

"We get all ages, from middle-aged to very young and to people in the latter stage of their employment life, men and women.

"They usually enrol on a 13-week programme, usually 10 hours a week.

"Each person is given an individual action plan. We have to balance individual support with our resources.

"They fill out a self-evaluation form and from that we can match them with relevant workshops to get the general skills they need."

Over the last financial year, the centre helped draw up 1,000 CVs. More than a quarter of those have since found employment of 16 hours-plus a week.

"There is a conception that this is the job club of old where people come in for an hour and read the paper, but we have

turned it around as to when they have to attend," said Ms Williams.

"We have given them opening hours that reflect an office environment, where they have timed coffee breaks and so on to get them into a working environment.

"They are



Trac Programme Centre senior adviser, Cathie Williams gives advice to customer Mike Rees. RM060509B-001

very, very supportive of each other.

"If they come across a job that isn't suitable for themselves, they will think who would suit it and tell them about it. They also talk about their own experiences and help each other.

"When someone is successful, they will come and let us know.

"There are thank-you cards all over the office wall.

"We always make an announcement when someone is successful, they are always pleased for each other.

"I think the phrase job for life has changed. A lot of companies are only offering contracts these days, it's changing totally."

And there is an increasingly optimistic feel at the centre.

"I think the job market will

pick up," said Ms Williams. "There are already new employers coming to the area offering opportunities for

**'I think the phrase job for life has changed. A lot of companies are only offering contracts these days'**

people such as the new units in the old MoD base in Llangennech and the new recycling plant in Bynea.

"Until then, we are here for people."

Michael Rees has been out of work since losing his job in Calsonic in February 2007.

The 49-year-old said: "I've

been coming to the programme centre for months, I find it good, it's very helpful.

"They have helped me put a CV together, shown me how to write a letter of application and improved my interview technique.

"We all help each other and there's a real camaraderie and you get a few laughs along the way.

"At the moment there's nothing out there because of the credit crunch.

"I did go for a job with the council cutting grass, but didn't get it. I don't let it get me down, there's no point, at the end of the day you can only do your best."

● See page 17 for this week's Star Jobseeker

● Comment — page 10

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## Do you know of a local role model?

DO you know of someone who deserves a special pat on the back?

Then get your entries in for a new competition designed to celebrate everything good about the people of Llanelli and surrounding areas. The Star, in collaboration with Carmarthenshire firm Lush Model Agency, has launched Role Model of the Month, which aims to reward people who have helped others or their community.

Anyone aged over 16 can enter. We are searching for people, young or old, male or female, who deserve a bit of praise for their hard work.

The lucky winners will enjoy some VIP treatment and will also be featured in the Star.

The prize includes a photoshoot, which is worth



around £500, and a makeover and choreography during the shoot.

Amanda Davies, who runs the agency, said: "We are not really looking for people who are models or who have done modelling in the past, but who is more of a role model.

"We are looking for someone who has perhaps

won an award, works with a charity or goes unnoticed with their achievements."

Star editor Bede MacGowan said: "Newspapers are sometimes accused of being too negative. Role Model of the Month is designed to show off the best in people — please get involved with this project."

If you know someone who deserves a bit of recognition for their hard work and dedication to others, contact us. Send information on the applicant in no more than 50 words, explaining why they should be Role Model of the Month, plus a small picture.

● Contact Gill Roberts on 01554 745321, or write to Llanelli Star, 11 Cowell Street, Llanelli SA15 1UU, or email [gill.roberts@swmedia.co.uk](mailto:gill.roberts@swmedia.co.uk)

## Three hurt in accident

THREE casualties had to be taken to hospital following a crash on a Carmarthenshire road at the weekend.

The accident happened on the B4311 link road that joins Burry Port Harbour and the A484 towards Llanelli, on Friday at around 11pm.

Two cars were involved — a silver Perodua Kelisa and a silver Ford Ka.

Police are now appealing for witnesses to come forward.

## Threats case

A TRIMSARAN woman has admitted using threatening behaviour. Donna Marie Evans, of Garden Suburbs, was given a 12-month conditional discharge by Llanelli magistrates.