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## Big charity event for 2008



Faith Douglas

Photographs: Mike Waistell

Right: Faith Douglas performs 'Big Spender' with Lesley Eland at a charity event

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# Faith in fund raising

By John Highfield

**F**AITH Douglas is not an easy woman to say no to...which is clearly why she's so good at raising money for great causes. First there was the Cavendish Challenge, the 2006 event which, inspired by her own successful fight against cancer, got Sheffield's business community involved in raising an extraordinary £150,000 for the Cavendish Centre, the organisation which provides professional care and support to people with cancer and their families, including children.

Last year she was the driving force behind the Stars in Their Eyes event which saw South Yorkshire businesses fielding some of their top vocal talents in a contest which raised £12,000 for city charity Neurocare's Brainwave appeal.

## Last year she was the driving force behind the Stars In Their Eyes Event

And now the Royal Bank of Scotland executive is back on the fund-raising trail again, this time joining forces with the Master Cutler, Gordon Bridge, for what promises to be one of the biggest charity events of 2008.

The principal behind the campaign is simple - every company taking part is given £50 and all they have to do is make that figure grow within six months.

The challenge begins in February and all the money raised will go to two of the region's most popular and important charities, St Luke's Hospice and Rotherham Hospice.

Go onto the challenge's website, [www.mastercutlerchallenge.com](http://www.mastercutlerchallenge.com), and you'll find a host of suggestions for making the money grow, everything from having a dress-down day in the office or doing a sponsored event like the Great Yorkshire Run or simple old favourites like organising a raffle.

Faith is certain, though, that once people have signed up they'll come up with some truly original ideas that will help swell the final total to record levels.



"Quite often, the best ideas are simple but innovative," she points out. "You may wish to do something that complements your business nature and allows you to take advantage of your existing expertise and contacts.

"Equally, you might also like to do something which provides a contrast

from your day-to-day work, such as a sponsored abseil. Whatever you choose to do, there will be a prize for the most innovative fund-raising idea, so get your thinking caps on!"

## All they have to do is make that figure grow within six months

There are only places for 100 companies to take part and Faith is anticipating that, following the success of the previous events, demand will be extremely high.

Entry is simple - simply go to the website and fill in the entry form there and then start to think about imaginative and lucrative ways of making that initial £50 start to grow.

The closing date for entries is January 21 and on February 7 there will be a champagne reception at the historic Cutlers' Hall in Church Street, followed by the official start date of the challenge on February 14.



The challenge officially ends on August 14 and all final submission forms have to be back with the organisers by August 28, with judging of the best campaigns by a panel that will include Hugh Facey and Chris Rea, scheduled for September 2, with a grand gala dinner and awards ceremony on September 19.

"Development of skills and talents is all important to our economy," says the Master Cutler. "The Master Cutler's Challenge is designed to tap into this talent, encourage teamwork and entrepreneurship as well as raising a lot of money for the Master Cutler's nominated charities."

■ **To find out more about the challenge you can either visit the website or write to The Master Cutler's Challenge, Cutlers' Hall, Church Street, Sheffield, S1 1HG.**

■ **And don't forget if you want to publicise your event you can get in touch with John Highfield at The Star Business Monthly on 0114 2521356 or via email at [john.highfield@sheffieldnewspapers.co.uk](mailto:john.highfield@sheffieldnewspapers.co.uk)**

## LEGAL ISSUES

In association with **irwinmitchell** (IM)

Given the raft of high profile, big money divorces coming before the courts, it is unsurprising that the pre-nuptial agreement has come to the fore.

**Martin Loxley**, of Irwin Mitchell, investigates



**ALTHOUGH** pre-nuptial agreements are not strictly binding, the courts have over the last few years given more and more weight to their existence. The Court of Appeal, on the 19th December of last year took a marked step forward in this area.

The decision relates to the divorce of Stuart and Susan Crossley, whose marriage lasted only 14 months. Theirs is certainly a big money case. Mr Crossley is worth something in the region of £45 million and Mrs Crossley, who has been married three times previously, has £16 million in her own right.

Prior to marriage, the couple entered into an agreement that in the event of divorce they would retain their own assets and make no claims against the other. Mrs Crossley now contends that the agreement is invalid. This is on the basis that she was unaware of £60 million in foreign bank accounts.

Earlier in the year, Mr Crossley successfully argued that normal court procedure should be circumvented. As the marriage was short and childless and as the couple had entered into a pre-nuptial agreement, he argued that a one day hearing to evaluate the agreement would suffice. Mrs Crossley appealed on the basis that she would not have the opportunity to raise other issues such as her husband's failure to disclose assets.

The Court of Appeal agreed with Mr Crossley that a day would be sufficient. In doing so it sent out a clear message that in cases like this the existence of the pre-nuptial agreement would be the key feature.

The court described the case as a classic example of where it would not simply consider the existence of the prenuptial agreement as a peripheral factor, but as a "factor of magnetic importance". The court also called for Parliament to legislate on this area of law.

In relation to long marriages or those bearing children, the influence of a pre-nuptial agreement will always be countered by other factors. However, where the marriage is brief, childless and the parties have freely entered into a pre-nuptial agreement, it appears that there is a good case to argue that the agreement should form the basis of any provision on divorce. Given the approach taken in Crossley, it would appear that the pre-nuptial agreement is coming of age. It would be sensible to watch this space.

## THE STRESS BUSTER with Kathryn M. Borg

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**H**OPEFULLY you had a stress free Christmas and are ready to meet the New Year with motivation and confidence. However, I deal in stress and in this piece I am looking at the typical symptoms of stress. We need to know what to look for in ourselves and in those around us, either at work or at home. The symptoms show themselves in many different ways and can be obvious to others but not to oneself.

The typical stress symptoms include general lethargy, tiredness and not feeling any better after sleeping. A difficulty in make decisions is a classic sign of stress, as is an inability to cope with small things going wrong in your life.

Waking up with thoughts running through your head thereby causing an inability to sleep at night is a sure sign of stress. Depression and panic attacks or uncharacteristic fears should be looked for. When you wake up in the morning and you don't feel refreshed and ready to go, you have a stress situation.

Difficulty in concentrating, poor memory, which usually affects the short term memory, is a symptom. A sluggish metabolism or uncharacteristic weight gain, digestive complaints including a feeling of fullness and bloating can point to stress. Poor caffeine and alcohol tolerance as well as overeating. This could be comfort

eating which is sometimes a way to feed stress. At the same time under eating, due to loss of appetite in a stressed situation, is typical.

How we manage stress in our lives is crucial to our overall health. To avoid the damage from stress becoming permanent, or difficult to reverse, we need to consider ways to lower stress naturally. Each one of these solutions I will discuss in depth, however, for now consider your lifestyle and how they can be introduced. Exercise and food intake are all beneficial to stress and can increase stress if not correctly applied.

Stimulants feed stress and blunt the body's ability to respond appropriately to a stressed

situation. Staying optimistic is vital and I am aware this is easy to say when someone is under great stress; however, there are ways to help.

Taking anti-stress supplements even when we are not stressed prepares our bodies for the battle-ground that it becomes in the middle of a stressful life. Finally physical stress needs looking at. It isn't only the mind that is affected by stress; our muscles and soft tissue are sometimes irretrievably damaged by a stressful posture. Consider all these solutions as I will be dealing with them individually over the coming months.

