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ISSUE 111

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Dear Readers,

Ding dong merrily on high! So merrily you may need our hangover cure article on page 23! We really do hope that you're nearly sorted for this year's festivities and we wish you the warmest and fuzziest of greetings through Christmas and well into the New Year.

So to finish of the prep, we've got a really fun recipe for salt dough that will give you a much needed excuse to unwind and spend some quality time with your family, children, friends or even just yourself. Prioritise some fun time, that's what the holidays are all about.

We hope you've got some lovely things in store for 2018, we sure do. If you're stuck for a resolution, why not try something truly meaningful and spread a little light and hope whatever you're doing next year.

All best wishes and good health!

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Delightful Dough Decorations

We love a good Christmas craft. Amidst all the mayhem of present shopping and planning Christmas dinner, try and make an effort to take some time out, listen to some Nat King Cole and sip on some mulled wine while making decorations for yourself or with children.

We guarantee you'll feel super festive and it will remind you why we love Christmas so much.

Ingredients:

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup salt
1/2 cup warm water
food colouring (optional)
Paint (optional)
Ribbon & String (optional)

Method:

Preheat oven to 165 degrees C.

Mix flour and salt well. Gradually add water, stirring with a large spoon. Finish mixing with hands. Knead until soft and pliable. Roll out on floured surface about 1/8 inch thick. Cut

shapes with cookie cutters. Place on cookie sheets. With a toothpick make a hole in the top of the ornament for threading string. Bake at 165 degrees C until hard, about 1 hour. Decorate with paint and varnish to preserve.

If you want to make bright white dough, replace some of the water with any white paint you've got. You won't want it to colour in the oven either, so bake on a lower temperature of 90 degrees C for 2-3 hours depending on thickness.

Garlands:

Glue your shapes to baker's twine, ribbon or string with a hot-glue gun to make pretty garlands. Larger ones can be used around the home, tiny ones can be strung on the tree or wrapped around presents!



Hanging Ornaments:

Use cookie cutters and remember to make a hole before drying out. Thread this with string or ribbon and hang on your tree!



Wreaths:

Either bake in sections and glue together when dry, or bake as a whole piece for longer. A ring of salt dough decorations looks festive on any front door or as a table centrepiece with candles and holly.




Add a Splash of Colour:

You can add food colouring to your dough before baking, paint and varnish once dried or a why not try a combination of both!



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England! Excited or Bored? *by Perry Deakin*

With the 2018 World Cup Draw at the Kremlin hogging media headlines last week, it is only natural that we start dreaming of England actually delivering at a major tournament or are we all just a little weary of dreaming of England glory?

Being an England supporter in most sports isn't easy – anxious, irritated, hopeful, devastated, tearful and angry can rush over you in a very short space of time but following the England football team is just about the worst experience possible. We approach all major tournaments determined not to be fooled into thinking we can actually achieve something other than ridicule.



We tell ourselves we will fail – because we always do – we say we will watch the games without unrealistic hope... and then match-day arrives, we invite friends and family 'round to watch the game, we stock up on beer and burgers, buy England flags and before we know it, it has happened – we've been sucked in, we look at our players and believe that because they are amongst the best, most talented in the world we have a chance, we play down the ability of those pesky Germans, Spaniards and Brazilians, we start dreaming of a Harry Kane hat-trick in the final – COME ON ENGLAND!

Then we meet the likes of Iceland – genuine football minnows, a collection of part-time players who are lucky to be on the same pitch as our lads, 'it's their cup final' and if they manage to concede only 6 they will have done a good job.

I'm sure we will all recall that game at the 2016 European Championship finals in France. Iceland utterly humiliated England and produced one of the biggest upsets in major tournament history – and deserved it too! The result saw England's management team lead by our very own Inspector Clouseau, Roy Hodgson, resign immediately (and good riddance!), but then to

the utter disbelief of England supporters everywhere, complain that he had to face the English media to explain what went wrong! Well Roy, maybe the fact that you were managing some of the most talented players on the planet and paid £3.5million per year to ensure decent performances had something to do with it, but I digress...

We will all be the same yet again at next year's tournament in Russia – we are currently talking our chances down and being realistic – it won't last!

The group stage draw has seen us placed into group G with Belgium, Tunisia and Panama. Surley even England cannot mess this up! With the top two teams from each group qualifying for the knock-out stages, surely, surely, surely we will see off the challenge of Panama and Tunisia, once more, genuine minnows. Im ignoring last year's Iceland debacle, surely we cannot blow this again?

So order in those beers, get the barbeque invites posted, put out the flags, book the face painter and arrange that England garden party – Sunday 24th June, 1.00pm for our game against Tunisia (assuming we have seen off Panama on the previous Monday!)

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By The Barn *by Angela Sargent*



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Although everywhere looks clean and pristine when covered in a blanket of snow, it soon gets discoloured and if the tractor diesel freezes too, it makes life very difficult.

Over the last few years, we have planted quite a bit of Holly as we've replanted and gapped up hedges. Older bushes should be bearing the bright red berries, carried by the female, and the birds are attracted to the colour and help to spread the seed far and wide.

As there are fewer daylight hours, we are more often aware of the Owls as they call to each other and we see more nocturnal animals, such as Stoats, hunting prey.

Follow Angela on Twitter @bythebarn

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Party Planet

Can you believe that 2018 is creeping up on us already? If you're attending a New Year's Eve party, you'll probably pop the bubbly to rowdy singing of 'Auld Lang Syne'. All over the world people will be celebrating the New Year in all sorts of ways...

Some cultures may celebrate New Year at a different time to 31st December, because they use a different calendar to the UK. Generally, whenever they take place, New Year traditions are designed to bring luck and good fortune in the year ahead.

Big fireworks displays

One of the most popular ways to celebrate seeing in the New Year is with big fireworks displays. These take place all over the world, as different countries hit midnight.

In New Zealand, crowds gather at Auckland Sky Tower in the capital for an impressive fireworks display, and the same happens in Sydney Harbour in Australia.

In Toronto in Canada, people gather in Nathan Phillips Square, while in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, people flock to the city's famous Copacabana beach to watch the sky being lit up by fireworks.

Smashing plates

If you came out of your front door to find a load of smashed plates, you might be a bit confused. But that's exactly what people in Denmark hope to find after midnight, as it means good luck.

So, if you were Danish, you might go and smash a plate on a friend's doorstep to bring good luck over the next 12 months.

Eating lentils

In Brazil, there is a tradition to eat lentils at New Year, as these represent money - meaning good fortune for the year ahead!

Dropping things

In New York in the US, huge crowds of people head to Times Square to count down to midnight. But the thing that everyone is looking forward to is called the ball drop, which is when a glowing ball is lowered down a big flagpole, to signal the start of the new year.

As a result, other cities in the US now have their own traditions of dropping things on New Year's Eve. In Vincennes in Indiana, people drop watermelons from high up!

Visiting friends first

In Scotland, people go "first-footing", which is where they aim to be the first person to step foot in their friends' or family's homes after the clock has struck midnight. You might take a gift if you go to do this.

Eating grapes

When the clocks hit midnight in Spain, you'll find people reaching for grapes. This is because there is a tradition to eat one grape each time the clock strikes at midnight. The idea is that this will bring you 12 lucky months in the year ahead.

Ringing bells

Some countries, like Japan and South Korea, ring bells to start the New Year.

In Japan, the bells are rung 108 times, so you can expect it to be quite noisy!

Throwing furniture

In Johannesburg in South Africa, people like to start the year without any unwanted items.

They do this by throwing old furniture out of the window.



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Hopeful Resolve



As the clock strikes midnight, and we welcome in the new year, many of us choose to make resolutions. One of those choices is between hopefulness and resignation. So this year, instead of giving up chocolate, why not do something positive and choose to be more hopeful in your outlook.

Hopefulness has several benefits:

- Hopefulness expands what we believe is within our circle of influence. With a hopeful mindset,

you will feel like you can attempt and tackle more challenges.

- Hopefulness gives us energy, which in turn energizes those around us. Hope is infectious and can lift everyone up together.
- Hopefulness is the glue which connects and strengthens our communities. When we work together to achieve change for the better we become closer and more compassionate communities.
- Hope helps us to set goals and makes us think about the practical ways to achieve them.

Hope locates itself in the premise that we don't know what the future holds and that in

the spaciousness of uncertainty we have room to act. When you recognise uncertainty, you recognise that you may be able to influence the outcomes – you alone or you in concert with a few dozen or several million others. Hope is an embrace of the unknown and the unknowable, an alternative to the certainty of both optimists and pessimists. Optimists think it will all be fine without our involvement; pessimists adopt the opposite position; both excuse themselves from acting. Hope in action is the belief that what we do is what matters.

So make the plans, implement the changes and resolve to make even the tiniest thing a little better in 2018.



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Get Ready For Festive Fun

Looking great for the festive season is really easy to do. If it's getting into that party dress or suit, there is laser lipolysis and toning for body contouring specific areas. For that special glow, there is a range of golden brown spray tans.

To get great skin, planning ahead is the key as microdermabrasion, non-surgical facelifts and light skin rejuvenation take a couple of weeks for that dramatic effect. There is also the revolutionary new plasma pen treatment that lifts skin as well as smooth out wrinkles. The plasma pen will also get rid of milia and skin tags and only one treatment is required.

Make up will set the final look and the current trend is the polished 'no make-up' look, but of course, good make up is still needed. For an alternative bold look, metallics are back, together with bright, red lipstick.

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Christmas time, mistletoe and wine?" Perhaps that should be "Christmas cheer, mistletoe and beer", for beer happily sits at the Christmas dinner table.

Take your starter of smoked salmon and try a wheat beer rather than champagne. Spritzy and light, their citrus notes complement the fish perfectly. You'll find Hoegaarden and Blue Moon on the shelves of your local supermarket.

For the main event; roast turkey with all the trimmings, you'll want to match the meat and gravy with a beer of similar flavour intensity and Brooklyn Brown Ale fits the bill. There's enough carbonation to cleanse your palate in between bites too.

As important as the turkey is the Christmas pudding and beer has got you covered there too. Opt for a rich, chocolatey porter and you can't go wrong. Look out for Little Valley Vanilla Porter - a perfect end to your Christmas lunch!

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For this month's competition, EIGHT lucky readers can win a £25 VOUCHER from **Midland Karting**.

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building, Stag & Hen events, and Open & Exclusive races.

With the Christmas holidays fast approaching, vouchers from Midland Karting would make the ideal present. You can purchase vouchers on their website here: www.midlandkarting.co.uk/go-karting/gift-vouchers/

If you need any further information, you can find it here at: **www.midlandkarting.co.uk**

To enter this month's competition, all you have to do is put your *name, address and daytime telephone contact number* on a postcard and send it to:

**Midland Karting Competition
Local Links Media,
Suite 29,
Anglesey Business Park,
Anglesey Road,
Burton-on-Trent,
DE14 3NT**

Alternatively, you can e-mail your details to:

local@locallinksmedia.co.uk

The closing date for entries is the 16th January, and the winners will be announced in our February edition.

Good luck to everyone who enters!



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Food Fix

Party season is upon us and guaranteed there'll be an episode of alcohol excess and the usual utterance of the vow 'Never again!'. Well while you're feeling your most sorry for yourself, here's some tips, to hurry the hangover along and get you back to your spritely self!

KEEP IT SKINNY!

While you're drinking, drink from taller, narrower glasses like a flute. Studies have found that we pour 12 percent more liquid into wide wine glasses.

MEATY MUNCHIES!

Eat the meaty nibbles. Seriously! Meaty snacks are rich in amino acids that you need to make neurotransmitters, these are the messengers that transmit signals in the body. This should help to counteract alcohol's ability to interfere with these signals and your subsequent fuzzy head.

SPICE IT UP!

Have some spice, either a curry or a herbal tea will work. You'll need either ginger, turmeric or

chillies. These all contain anti-inflammatory properties that counteracts the nausea that boozing induces. Try a tea with 1/2tsp each of turmeric, cinnamon, ginger and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Steep for a few minutes in hot water then strain and drink.

COFFEE CURE!

Combat the inflammation. When processing alcohol your body produces acetate that is part responsible for your hangover. Research suggests an anti-inflammatory painkiller such as aspirin before bed and a cup of coffee when you wake can counteract the acetate effects. The painkiller lowers acetate levels by reducing inflammation and the caffeine blocks the acetate from reaching your cell receptors.

CUT THE CIGS!

Avoid cigarettes! Well, that's just good advice for life, but if you are partial to a smoke, try not to when you're drinking. Cigarettes cause inflammation in the body and make the after effects of alcohol feel worse.

CHARCOAL CLEANSE!

Try drinking a charcoal drink before bed. It's been found that charcoal is very good at binding to toxins in the gut, so you'll need to drink it soon after your night out. Try 1/2tsp of Baldwin's Charcoal Powder (£1.95, Baldwins.co.uk) in a glass of water when you get home.

SOUP IS YOUR SAVIOUR!

Have a soup for breakfast. Soups can help replace sodium and potassium and help to rehydrate you. A meat soup will also be rich in vitamin B1 which can help with headaches.

So armed with these top tips, you should be well on your way after lunch and feeling spritely enough to start all over again! We suggest you don't though and give your liver a break. Remember to always try and drink responsibly. Your insides will thank you.



What's On Guide

TUESDAY 19TH DECEMBER

Art Classes

Weekly classes at The Horseshoe, Tatenhill following a programme of skills development with a focus on drawing and observation, then we will be drawing with colour and using water colour paints and mixed media. Lessons will cost £10, or £8 if paid a half-term in advance. Please email or phone for further details or to reserve your place. Contact: Helen Tarr Tel: 07791 228 881

Solid Gold 70's Christmas Show

At the Brewhouse at 7.30pm. £22 (£19 concessions). Kick off your Christmas celebrations in style! Dig out the flares and the platforms; invite your friends, family and colleagues to enjoy this alternative Christmas party night! Book online: www.brewhouse.co.uk

WEDNESDAY 20TH DECEMBER

Quiz

Every Wednesday evening at Rolleston Club. Weekly free quiz, open to members and non members. Prize is six drinks tokens. There is a play your cards right game for £1 entry. Contact: Claire Tel: 01283 812072

Santa's Christmas Wish

At the Brewhouse at 11am & 1.30pm, Suitable for ages 2-7. Price: £10 (inc. Present) £36 for family of 4 (incl. 2 presents). Join a fun, festive, musical adventure to give Santa the very best Christmas, then meet him at his home in the North Pole! Book online: www.brewhouse.co.uk

THURSDAY 21ST DECEMBER

Dementia Walking for Health

Every Thursday, meeting at 10:45am at Oaklands village in Swadlincote for an 11am start. All participants must be accompanied by a carer/dementia friend on this walk. For more information on any of our Health Walks call Judi Whileman on 01283 563483

Rangemore & Tatenhill W.I.

Third Thursday monthly. Meeting 7.30pm - 9.30pm. Henhurst & District Recreational Club, Henhurst Hill, DE13 9TB. Friendship, refreshments, excellent speakers, trips, events, craft club. Not just for ladies of a certain age, and certainly not just "Jam & Jerusalem"! Visitors most welcome. Contact: Lesley Walker Tel: 01283 561337

FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER

Latin in Line dancing class

Enjoy all the popular latin dances - cha-cha, salsa, mambo, rumba etc. NO PARTNERS REQUIRED! 10.30am-11.30am £4.00. At the Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton DE13 0HE. Ring Lorraine on 01332 518161 for more details.

SATURDAY 23RD DECEMBER

A Christmas Carol - The Lost Boys

The Lost Boys return to Sudbury Hall with their irreverent take on the Dickens Classic story of rebirth and redemption.

Please meet upstairs in the Coach House Tea Room for breakfast with Scrooge before the performance. Please wear clothing suitable for the time of year. Please note there are a number of staircases to be negotiated. Price includes breakfast - Hot bacon/sausage baps, hot drink and orange juice. From 10.00 - 11.45 am. Adult - £14.50, Child £10.50. Booking essential. Please book through Central Booking Office 0344 2491895. Contact: Leigh Roberts Tel: 01283 585337

SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER

Cookie Calendar Craftiness

Thursday to Sunday from 1st - 30th Keep the little ones entertained during your tea break with this self-led activity. Enjoy a mug of hot chocolate with a cookie and craft your very own 2018 calendar with a Christmas craft pack. Drop in between 10.30 and 2.30. £5.00 per child. Normal Admission Charges Apply to Hall and Museum. Contact: Leigh Roberts Tel: 01283 585337

Family Crib Service (CF)

At 3pm, Lichfield Cathedral. A celebration of Christmas in drama and song. Come and take part - you are welcome to come dressed as a character from the nativity story - Mary, Joseph, Angels, Shepherds and Wise Men. Lambs are also most welcome! Free - donations encouraged

Midnight Mass

At 23.30 (with carols sung from 23.00), Lichfield Cathedral. First Eucharist service of Christmas to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. The service is led by the Bishop of Lichfield with a sermon given by the Dean and singing led by the Cathedral Chamber Choir. Please note incense will be used at this service.

WEDNESDAY 27TH DECEMBER

Priory Art Group

We are a small friendly group of artists meeting at the Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton, every Wednesday morning, 9.30 to 12 noon. New members are always welcome, whatever your level of experience, so why not come and have a chat to see what we have to offer. Contact Sandra: 01283 329743

THURSDAY 28TH DECEMBER

Christmas in Glorious Technicolour

From 28th - 30th December. The 1960's were a decade of vivid colours, kitsch prints and of course the introduction of colour TV. This Christmas at Sudbury we'll be taking a playful alternative approach to Christmas, from monochrome to glorious technicolour. Normal Admission Charges Apply. Contact: Leigh Roberts Tel: 01283 585337

FRIDAY 29TH DECEMBER

Alrewas Bridge Club

Meets at 2pm each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at the Royal British Legion Club. All welcome. Contact: David Hall Tel: 01283 792 464

SATURDAY 30TH DECEMBER

Disco & Street Dance Classes

Fun classes and expert tuition for 3 - 8 years in Branston Village Hall every Saturday. Call Pat Miller for more information: 07973 478444

SUNDAY 31ST DECEMBER

Burton Ramblers

Walks most Saturdays, Sundays and every other Wednesday. All walkers welcome to join this friendly local group, walking in Staffs, Derbys and Leics. Please visit our website for more information. www.burtonramblers.org.uk Contact: Burton Ramblers Tel: 07724 352529

TUESDAY 2ND JANUARY

Burton Hospitals Friends Bingo

First Tuesday of every month. £1.00 admission this includes refreshments at half time. Raffle and Tombola available to add to the fun of the evening. All proceeds are directed to Queens Hospital to provide the extras for patients and staff. Contact: Julie Hammond Tel: 07517126935

Find more events on our website

WEDNESDAY 3RD JANUARY

Burton Abbey WI

Meeting at the Brewhouse on the first Wednesday of the month at 10am to 12 noon. Good Speakers, refreshments, also days out organised. New members welcome. For more information contact Pauline Gaskin 01283 565620

Barton-Under-Needwood WI

1st Wednesday of every month at St James Church Hall. Meeting 7.30-9.30 with good speakers, refreshments and fun. Organised events and trips throughout the year. New members and visitors always welcome.

THURSDAY 4TH JANUARY

Burton Friendship Club

Meets the 1st Thursday in every month 10am for 10.30am in the Rolleston Club. Join us for speakers, quizzes, games, lunches, coffee mornings, day trips and holidays. Phone Stuart and Penny 01283-716626

Friendship Circle

Meets at 7.30 pm on the first and third Thursday of every month in the schoolroom at the rear of Stretton Methodist Church. We meet for activities, speakers, trips and friendship. All are most welcome. For further information contact Iris on 01283 546909.

FRIDAY 5TH JANUARY

Unwind Yoga Class

A gentle, restorative class for all abilities that will stretch out your tension and find stillness within. Using guided meditations and relaxing yoga Nidra, this class will help you float your way home to peaceful night's sleep. 6.45pm - 7.45pm at The Well House, Burton. Call: 01283 529486 for more info.

Art & Craft Drop-In

Every Friday, term time only. Clays Lane Sports Pavilion. 10 to 12 noon. Admission £1.

SATURDAY 6TH JANUARY

Burton Ramblers

Walks most Saturdays, Sundays and every other Wednesday. All walkers welcome to join this friendly local group, walking in Staffs, Derbys and Leics. Please visit our website for more information. www.burtonramblers.org.uk Contact: Burton Ramblers Tel: 07724 352529

MONDAY 8TH JANUARY

Disco & Street Dance Classes

Fun classes and expert tuition for 8 to 12 year olds in Burton every Monday. Call Pat Miller for more information: 07973 478444

Lindy Hop & Vintage Dance Class

Every Monday evening, learn to dance the Lindy hop, Jitterbug and Charleston! Learn the dances of the 20s,30s,40s and early 50s in our fun, relaxed and family friendly classes. No partner necessary, Red & Ginger will teach you in their authentic and imaginative style. In demand at many of the UK's biggest vintage events, Red & Ginger have taught all ages and abilities and performed alongside some of the biggest names in vintage music. Come and join us! Nothing needed except a smile and a willingness to have a go. At Tutbury Castle, Monday nights from 7.30pm. www.dancewithredandginger.com Contact: hello@dancewithredandginger.com. Tel: 07538 472283

TUESDAY 9TH JANUARY

Burton XA

An organisation with over 30 interest groups catering for retired and semi retired people who wish to keep their minds and body's active. The groups cover a wide range of activities from Spanish - Bridge, Digital Photography - Gardening, to name just a few. We meet at The Dial for coffee in the morning of the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month.

Ladies Badminton Club

Meeting every Tuesday afternoon from 2 'til 4pm at Tutbury Village Hall. All abilities welcome. Ring Prim on 01283 327591 to arrange free visit.

WEDNESDAY 10TH JANUARY

Priory Art Group

We are a small friendly group of artists meeting at the Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton, every Wednesday morning, 9.30 to 12 noon. New members are always welcome, whatever your level of experience, so why not come and have a chat to see what we have to offer. Contract Sandra: 01283 329743

THURSDAY 11TH JANUARY

Burton Belles Women's Institute

From 7.15pm-9.30pm. We meet at the St Chads Centre DE14 2SS on the 2nd Thursday of the month. First timers can visit for free and then you can decide whether to pay £4 a month or £41 a year. There will also be refreshments and a raffle. Come along, make new friends, try something new and have fun. Contact: Wendy Plant Tel: 07772548230

FRIDAY 12TH JANUARY

Family History Club

The Club meets on the 2nd Friday of the month in Room 2 at the Burton on Trent Library from 10 am till 12 noon. You may be completely new to exploring your family history or you may have many years of experience - you will be equally welcome. We have speakers on a wide variety of subjects relating to family history.

Latin-In-Line Dancing Class

Cha-cha, salsa, mambo, rumba, merengue etc. NO PARTNERS REQUIRED! Friday 12th, 19th and 26th January. Friday 2nd and 9th February. 10.30 - 11.30am £4.00pp at the Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton DE13 0HE. Ring Lorraine on 01332518161

COMPETITION WINNERS

Congratulations to our **Anoki Burton** competition winners, each winning a £50 Voucher:

Mrs. S.E. Wild, Barton-u-Needwood
Ken Moore, Rangemore
Liz Bishop, Stretton

Look out elsewhere in **LOCAL LINKS** this month to win a £25 Voucher from Midland Karting!

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So that last-minute present buying is in full swing and panic is setting in. If you're stuck for some ideas, you really can't go wrong with a good book! A cozy excuse to close off the world and relax over the Christmas holidays, your loved one will really thank you. Christmas downtime is a perfect opportunity to delve into classic novels that you just haven't found the time to read yet. Here's some we'd suggest:

5. To Kill a Mockingbird

by Harper Lee

A lawyer defends a black man charged with the rape of a white girl.

Through the eyes of children, author Harper Lee expertly explores with exuberant humour

all the irrational adult attitudes to race and class in the Deep South of the 1930s. The conscience of a town steeped in prejudice, violence and hypocrisy is pricked by the stamina of one man's struggle for justice. But the weight of history will only tolerate so much.

4. Wuthering Heights

by Emily Bronte

Raised together on the Yorkshire moors as children, Heathcliff and Catherine become lovers and soul mates so utterly inseparable that

their destiny seems inevitable. But when Catherine's desire for social status results in her marriage to Heathcliff's wealthy rival, Heathcliff is consumed by revenge. And no one in his path will be spared. Admired for its stark originality and condemned for its fiendish affront to the senses, Wuthering Heights polarized critics. For generations of readers since, its themes of gender and social inequality, religious hypocrisy, social climbing, and the violent extremes of romantic obsession resonate to this day.

3. The Great Gatsby

by F. Scott Fitzgerald

A gripping story about a mysterious young millionaire called Jay Gatsby and his passion and obsession for the beautiful former debutante Daisy Buchanan.

The Great Gatsby explores themes of decadence, idealism, resistance to change, social upheaval, and excess, creating a portrait of the Jazz Age or the Roaring Twenties that has been described as a cautionary tale regarding the American Dream.

In 1998, the Modern Library editorial board voted it the 20th century's best American novel and second best English-language novel of the same time period.

2. Little Women

by Louisa May Alcott

The timeless tale of four sisters - Meg, Jo, Amy and Beth, experiencing both hardship and adventure in Civil War New England. Though

the March family may be poor, their lives are rich with colour, as they play games, put on wild theatricals, make new friends, argue, grapple with their vices, learn from their mistakes, nurse each other through sickness and disappointments, and get into all sorts of trouble.

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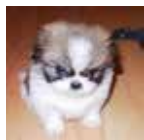
by George Orwell

Hidden away in the Record Department of the sprawling Ministry of Truth, Winston Smith skilfully

rewrites the past to suit the needs of the Party. Yet he inwardly rebels against the totalitarian world he lives in, which demands absolute obedience and controls him through the all-seeing telescreens and the watchful eye of Big Brother, symbolic head of the Party.

George Orwell's dystopian masterpiece, Nineteen Eighty-Four is perhaps the most pervasively influential book of the twentieth century.

Avoid Christmas Catastrophe



Even the most lovable dog can be a danger to postal staff. Dogs are territorial by nature and if they feel they need to protect their family, they can become unpredictable. This Christmas remember to:

- Place your pet in the back garden or a faraway room when the postman is due.
- Close off the access to the back garden, in case your dog could get round to the front when the postman calls.
- Keep your dog in another room before answering the door.
- Give your dog some food or a toy to occupy them while your mail is being delivered.
- If your dog likes to attack your mail consider installing a wire letter receptacle. It will protect your post, and your postman's fingers.
- If it's not practical for you to keep your dog away from a postman delivering your mail, please consider fitting a secure mailbox on the edge of your property.



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LOCAL LINKS SUDOKU

		3		2		1	5	
		5	9		8		7	
8			6	7			1	
	4		2		5		9	
	1			4	9			5
	3		1		7	5		
	9	6		8		2		

Sudoku is a logic puzzle where you follow one simple rule:
Simply fill in the boxes so that the nine rows, the
nine columns, and the nine 3x3 squares
all contain every digit from 1-9.

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