

LOCAL LINKS

A yellow stuffed rabbit and a pink stuffed rabbit are pushing a metal shopping cart. The cart is filled with several colorful Easter eggs in shades of yellow, orange, red, and blue. The background is a light teal color.

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ISSUE 127

FREE

SUGAR EGGS

Alternative Easter Treats

ALLERGY AWARENESS

Spotting signs of food allergies

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LOCAL LINKS



Dear Readers,

Easter is upon us and all things bunnies, chicks and chocolate are popping onto the scene! If like us, you're a fan of chocolate, you'll be pleased to know that chocolate is not entirely bad for you! Thanks to our lovely contributor Rebecca we can enjoy our favourite treat somewhat guilt free! Be sure to read her article on pg.23!

Spring brings with it adorable baby lambs, By the Barn have their hands full with these little woolly delights but these are not the only babies making an appearance! Angela has recently become a new Grandma! Hands full that's for sure!

May is 'National Walking Month' so get out in the springtime sunshine and enjoy the great outdoors!

The **LOCAL LINKS** team

ISSUE 127

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Next issue out from:

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Sweet Sugar Eggs

As Easter fast approaches, we thought it would be fun to make something sweet and pretty to eat on Easter Sunday. These sugar eggs are super easy and you can have so much fun with the flavours, colours and decorations you choose!

Sugar Eggs

You will need:

- White fondant icing
- Food colourings
- Candy flavourings (e.g. peppermint, cherry, lemon etc.)
- Decorations (e.g. sprinkles, sugar flowers, edible gold or cake decorating.
- catering or other protective gloves

Directions:

- Put on your protective gloves and divide the fondant icing into portions.
- Add a few drops of food colouring to each piece of icing and massage into the fondant. You can either mix it in thoroughly or choose to leave the colouring with a marbled effect. Be sure to wash and dry your gloves between colours to keep them bright!
- Take pieces of the coloured fondant depending on the size of the egg you wish to make and roll in your hand to form an egg shape, round with one slightly tapered end.
- If you wish to decorate with sprinkles roll your egg shapes in the sprinkles or press them into the surface, rolling your egg in your hand to secure the sprinkles into place.
- Set your undecorated or sprinkled eggs aside for several days to harden up.
- Once hardened, you can decorate with edible gold or mix some fondant with a little water and food colouring to make a paste to paint your eggs with a paint brush.
- You may need to paint one side and allow to dry before decorating the other side.
- Once your eggs are fully dry you can place in a pretty bowl as a sweet treat or give to friends as gifts!





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By The Barn *by Angela Sargent*



Now it's April - doesn't time fly by? Everything is growing well. The grass fields are fertilised and rolled so they are ready for silage making, the arable fields are checked for diseases and pests and the crops are assessed for their nutritional needs too.

On a wet spring day you will often see earthworms on the surface, but there are many different types that live in different soil layers or types of soil and scientists suggest they live for one to two years in gardens but can live four to eight in field conditions.

We do not trim hedges at this time of year, nor do we walk on the field margins, if we can help it, in case there are ground nesting birds.

To find out about all things farming, follow Angela on Twitter [@bythebarn](#)

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Forbidden Foods

Many of us can tell when food doesn't agree with us, whether we feel bloated from eating too big a portion or maybe you suffer from reflux. Sometimes people confuse food intolerances with allergies so we thought that 29th April - 3rd May being 'Allergy Awareness Week' would be a good opportunity to look at the difference and the most common food allergies.

What Is the Difference Between Food Allergy and Food Intolerance?

Food allergy is quite uncommon and normally causes symptoms within a few minutes of eating the offending food or being in contact with the relevant substance. Food intolerance (non-allergic hypersensitivity) is much more common. The onset of food intolerance symptoms is usually slower and may be delayed by many hours after eating the offending food; the symptoms may also last for many hours, even into the next day. Some common food intolerances include lactose intolerance; gluten intolerance and histamine intolerance.

About 90 percent of allergic food reactions are caused by eight foods: milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat and soybeans. There are 14 major food allergens which need to be mentioned (either on a label or through provided information such as menus) when they are used as ingredients in a food product or meal. However you can be allergic to any food substance.

The top 14 food allergens are:

Celery; Cereals containing gluten; Crustaceans; Eggs; Fish; Lupin; Milk; Molluscs; Mustard; Nuts; Peanuts; Sesame seeds; Soya; Sulphur dioxide (sometimes known as sulphites).

The only way to prevent these reactions is by completely avoiding foods that contain allergens you are allergic to; however, this can be challenging because we eat many foods that are comprised of multiple ingredients, and we often eat foods prepared outside our homes by other individuals. Reading and understanding labels along with effectively communicating food allergy risks can be paramount in protecting those with food allergies.

What Are the Symptoms of Food Allergy?

Normally food allergy symptoms appear within a few minutes of eating the offending food, although they may be delayed by up to a couple of hours. The symptoms are usually those of 'classic' allergy, some of which are:

Gut reactions:

Abdominal pain
Vomiting
Diarrhoea

Skin reactions:

Itching
Swelling (rash or nettle rash)

Respiratory reactions:

Runny nose
Sneezing
Wheeze
Cough

For mild allergy symptoms, such as hay fever or hives, give an over-the-counter antihistamine.

If the person has had severe reactions in the past or has any of these symptoms you should call 999:

Difficulty breathing
Hoarseness or trouble speaking
Swollen lips, tongue, or throat
Abdominal pain, or vomiting
Fast heartbeat or pulse
Anxiety or dizziness
Loss of consciousness



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If you are intrigued by this article and would like to know more information, please contact Emily on 07500352329 hollandtowc@gmail.com



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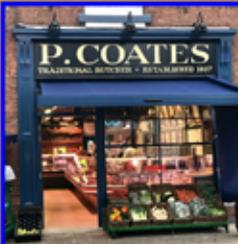


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Lei May

With spring in full swing and a multitude of bright colours starting to bloom in the hedgerows we love to celebrate the abundance of flowers on show. Many cultures around the world celebrate the beauty of flowers but Hawaii had dedicated the 1st May as 'Lei Day'. A lei is a garland of flowers worn around the neck in Polynesian cultures. Exotic and fragrant these delightful garlands are given to someone for a variety

of reasons, symbolising peace, love, honour, or friendship for another person.

Among residents of Hawaii, the most popular occasions at which lei can be found are birthdays, graduations, weddings, funerals, retirement parties, and bridal showers. It is not uncommon for a high school or college

graduate to be seen wearing so many lei that they reach their ears!

On May 1st each year, Hawaiians celebrate "Lei Day", first conceived in 1927 by poet Don Blanding. At the time, Blanding was employed by the Honolulu Star Bulletin, and he shared his idea with columnist Grace Tower Warren, who came up with the phrase, "May Day is Lei Day".



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Walking is simple, free, and one of the easiest ways to get more active, lose weight and become healthier.

Sometimes overlooked as a form of exercise, walking briskly can help you build stamina, burn excess calories and make your heart healthier. You don't have to walk for hours. A brisk 10-minute daily walk has lots of health benefits and counts towards your recommended 150 minutes of weekly exercise.

Pick up the pace!...

A brisk walk is about 3 miles an hour, which is faster than a stroll. One way to tell if you're walking briskly is if you can still talk but can't sing the words to a song.

If you're not very active but are able to walk, increase your walking distance gradually.

If you're not active because of a medical condition, get advice on exercising with a disability.

Make it regular!...

The easiest way to walk more is to make walking a habit. Think of ways to include walking in your daily routine.

- walking part of your journey to work
- walking to the shops
- using the stairs instead of the lift
- leaving the car behind for short journeys
- walking the kids to school
- doing a regular walk with a friend
- going for a stroll with family or friends after dinner

Make it entertaining!...

Walking while listening to music or a podcast can take your mind off the effort. Music can also get you into a rhythm and help you walk faster. You'll be surprised at how fast the time goes when you're walking to your favourite tunes.

Change the scene!...

Add variety to your walks. You don't have to travel to the countryside to find a rewarding walk. Towns and cities offer interesting walks, including parks, heritage trails, canal towpaths, riverside paths, commons, woodlands, heaths and nature reserves.

For inspiring walks, visit: www.walkengland.org.uk

For wheelchair users, visit : www.walkswithwheelchairs.com, and for parents with buggies, visit: www.walkswithbuggies.com.

Join a walking group!...

Walking in a group is a great way to start walking, make new friends and stay motivated. Local ramblers' groups often organise walks for health, leisure and as a means of getting around for people of all ages, backgrounds and levels of fitness. Why not have a look at our 'What's On Guide' for local walking groups in your area!





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palms and ferns, tropical plants and distant mountains before completing the journey in the tribal village and cannibal camp.

On the Mermaid Rock course, adventurers will start at the docks and travel through the monkey temple, full of vines and lush tropical plants. Monkey calls and sounds of jungle creatures add an extra challenge for putting experts not used to hitting a ball in the middle of a rainforest. The expedition will continue through the lost lagoon and will finish in a mystical bazaar spice market full of fragrant fruits, carpets and lanterns, against a backdrop of rich sounds and smell.

Our 19th hole gives all adventure golfers the chance to win a free game at the end of the round. Look out for exotic animals along the way and remember forget crazy golf...

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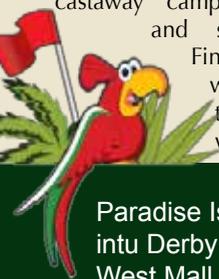
You can find more information at: www.paradiseislandgolf.com/Derby

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:

**Local Links Media,
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Alternatively, you can e-mail your details to:
local@locallinksmedia.co.uk

The closing date for entries is the 14th of May, and the winners will be announced in our June edition. Good luck to everyone who enters!



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Guilt Free Chocolate *by Rebecca Tucker*

So Easter is upon us, which usually means plenty of chocolate too! The good news is, when eaten in moderation, the right type of chocolate can actually be good for us. Something to think about when choosing your Easter eggs this year...

The healthiest forms of chocolate are dark chocolate (70% cocoa content or higher) and cacao nibs, the original, natural form. (Just in case you are wondering, the health benefits of milk or white chocolate, and any of the processed sweetened stuff are slim to none!) Here's what it can do for your health.

1. Fights against disease

Dark chocolate and cacao nibs are high in antioxidants, which help fight free radicals that can damage the cells in your body. Two groups of antioxidants found in dark chocolate are flavonoids and polyphenols. The higher the percentage of cocoa in your chocolate bar, the greater the number of antioxidants.

2. Good for heart health

Research also shows the flavonols in dark chocolate have a positive effect on heart health by lowering blood pressure, improving blood flow to the heart and making blood less sticky and able to clot.

3. Better brain function

Eating chocolate also increases the flow of blood to the grey matter in the brain. It's been suggested that cocoa flavonols would benefit conditions associated with reduced blood flow to the brain, including dementia and stroke. A study of the elderly that looked at consumption of flavonols lead to better cognitive function.

4. Makes you happy!

The essential amino acids in dark chocolate help increase the production of the happy hormone serotonin, which can help alleviate feelings of anxiety and depression. Chocolate also contains the chemical phenylethylamine, which occurs naturally in your body and gives you the same boost you feel when you fall in love.

set over the simmering water, stirring occasionally.

Once melted, tip into the prepared tin and smooth with a spatula so the chocolate is evenly distributed. Scatter over the remaining ingredients and chill in the fridge until the chocolate sets (about 30 mins). Peel off the parchment and break into pieces. Store in an airtight container for up to a month (if it lasts that long!).

Rebecca Tucker is a Registered Nutritional Therapist practising at The Natural Healthcare Centre, Burton. For more healthy recipes or to book a complimentary 30 minute call and discover how nutritional therapy could help you, visit www.nourishbalanceglow.com

Fruit & Nut Chocolate Bar

350g dark chocolate
125g blanched almonds, toasted and chopped
100g unsweetened dried fruit (eg cranberries or mango)
Pinch of sea salt

Line a baking sheet with parchment. Melt the dark chocolate by filling the bottom of a saucepan with couple of centimetres of water and bring to a simmer over a medium-high heat. Put the chocolate in a glass bowl and



What's On Guide

TUESDAY 23RD APRIL

Burton Dance & Social Club

We invite and welcome anyone over 18 years of age. We meet every Tuesday Evening 8-11pm at Marstons Sports and Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton-on-Trent. Activities include sequence, ballroom and line dancing to professional live music, bingo, raffles and food nights. Come along and join us and meet new friends. For more information contact Pauline: 01283 519159

Painting for Pleasure

Every Tuesday from 1pm to 3.30pm. Painting for Pleasure is a meeting place for artists to practise their skills in a friendly group. The cost is £12 per month, for the room hire. There are occasional visits and demonstrations from visiting artists, and an annual Christmas lunch. New members are welcome to come along and see for themselves. For more information contact Dave Jones: 07429 074758

WEDNESDAY 24TH APRIL

Burton Amateur Radio Club

Burton Amateur Radio Club meets every Wednesday evening at 7-30pm for nights on the air, construction projects, licence exams at all three levels with one to one tuition if required. New members are very welcome and we meet at Stapenhill Institute 23 Main St, Burton-on-Trent DE15 9AP Contact Bob 07812 146333 www.g3nfc.co.uk or club@burton-arc.co.uk

Fradley Needlework & Craft Group

Every Wednesday from 1.30pm - 4.00pm at Fradley Village Hall. For anyone who enjoys patchwork, knitting, crochet, cross stitch or any type of craft. Beginners and experts welcome. Instruction available. Contact: 01283 791467

Barton Under Needwood Flower Club

Hosting an SOS Fashion Show with well known High St and Designer labels on the 24th April at St James Church Hall at 7.30pm with refreshments and raffle tickets from Fiona Panter 01283 71 2174.

THURSDAY 25TH APRIL

New Beginnings

Mature Singles Friendship Group (55yrs+). If you enjoy the theatre, meals out, walks, cinema, activities, holidays/outings and general socialising but don't want to do it on your own, then New Beginnings is for you. Come and join us to make new friends. Meeting each Thursday 8pm at Fradley Arms (on A38) - feel free to just come along or contact Sue for further details Tel No: 07742 801681

FRIDAY 26TH APRIL

Friendly Fridays

Friendly Fridays, aimed at those living well with dementia and their carers. Brewhouse's cosy cinema space at 1.30pm. We enjoy music with low lighting and controlled sound levels with tea and biscuits.

Latin-in-line Classes

Latin-in-line class - 11.15-12.00 pm Cost £4. Venue: the Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton, DE13 0HE. 07598159744 larhiney@hotmail.com

SATURDAY 27TH APRIL

Claymills Victorian Pumping Station

Guided tours given around one of Britain's largest Victorian steam pumping stations. Magnificent Victorian workshop where you can see steam restoration in action. Videos of the station in steam in the visitor centre. Contact: 01283 509929

Spring Fair

An event for 'Me & Dee Charity'. From 10am - 1pm at Rolleston Scout HQ, Station Rd, Rolleston-on-Dove, Burton, DE13 9AB. Face painting, pop-up tea room, stalls, raffle, tumble. For further information contact: jenniferbagworth@yahoo.com

SUNDAY 28TH APRIL

Rapper Sword Dance Workshops

Come along and try Rapper Sword Dancing, this is the fastest and most spectacular of all the traditional English dances. We are running a series of beginners workshops. Kings Bromley Village Hall, Alrewas Road, Kings Bromley DE13 7HW from 10 am to 11 am. For more information call Nigel Moss 01283 790088.

MONDAY 29TH APRIL

Burton Art Club

Meets at Stretton Methodist Chapel Main Street, Stretton. Monday evenings 7.00pm to 9.00pm We are a lively group who share an interest in art and all abilities are welcome.

TUESDAY 30TH APRIL

Art Classes

1-3pm at Anslow Village Hall. Beginners welcome. Fees: £11 per class on the day or £9 per class for 6 weeks. For details and to book your place phone 07791 228 881, or email helentarr2002@yahoo.co.uk

WEDNESDAY 1ST MAY

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

Sportscar Evening

In aid of the Air Ambulance, a talk, questions and answers session and book signing by Oliver Winterbottom, car designer for Lotus, Tvr and Jaguar. Tickets £10 includes, tea, coffee and sandwiches. Tatenhill Village Hall, main Street, Tatenhill, Burton on Trent DE13 9SD Doors open 7pm until 10pm. Book tickets www.pjslotus.co.uk/events

Barton-Under-Needwood WI

1st Wednesday of every month at The Village Hall, Crowberry Lane. 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 2ND MAY

New Beginnings - Mature Singles

Come and join us to make new friends. Meeting each Thursday 8pm at Fradley Arms (on A38) - feel free to just come along or contact Sue for further details Tel No: 07742 801681

Holland Tug of War Club

Training is a full body workout, focusing on cardio, strength and stamina. The sessions are suitable for all abilities, aged 14 upwards, girls, boys and adults all very welcome. Thursday evenings from 8pm to 9.30pm, at the Holland Sports Club off Effinch Lane, Barton under Needwood, DE13 8ET.

FRIDAY 3RD MAY

Tots, Pots & Tales

Fridays at The Mug Tug, Barton Marina. Listen to a story and paint a pot related to the tale. Juice and biscuit for the Tots, Grown-ups welcome to bring their own hot drinks. 1.30pm to 2.30pm - See our website for more details: www.themugtug.co.uk. Call 01283 711341 to book.

SATURDAY 4TH MAY

Barton Bowls Social Club

Now open every evening! Darts, pool, dominoes, crib and crown green bowls during bowling season. Members, members guests and new members always welcome

SUNDAY 5TH MAY

Lichfield & District Ramblers

Various routes If you would like to walk with a friendly, organised group, why not join the Lichfield & District Ramblers? We walk every Sunday throughout the year. 01543 491469

MONDAY 6TH MAY

Meditation Class

Weekly Classes of Meditation on Mondays 1pm to 2.30pm and 7.30pm to 9.30pm we are a friendly group who meet for discussion and to meditate with a guided meditation. To join us Contact Kim 07580 551979

Find more events on our website

TUESDAY 7TH MAY

Art Classes

Weekly classes at The Horseshoe, Tatenhill. 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

WEDNESDAY 8TH MAY

Stretton & Claymills Women's Institute

Meeting in the back room of the Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton at 7.15pm on the second Wednesday of every month and new members are very welcome. For info www.strettonandclaymillswi.wordpress.com or strettonandclaymillswi@gmail.com

1st Burton Guides

Every Wednesday Evening. A fantastic unit for girls aged 10-14. They will make friends, grow in confidence and learn lots of new skills. A wide range of activities, from ice skating to canoeing, and craft to cooking, there is something for every girl! Call: 07794 759608

THURSDAY 9TH MAY

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. £4 a month or £41 a year. Come along, make new friends, try something new and have fun. Contact: Wendy Plant Tel: 07772 548230

Burton Jazz Club

Every Thursday, at Marston's Sports and Social Club, Shobnall Road, we present some of the best Jazz Bands in Britain, and occasionally Europe. We book as wide a variety of jazz as possible, but are mostly Traditional, Swing and Mainstream. Admission £9 on door from 7.30pm, for 8:30pm start, no membership, all welcome.

FRIDAY 10TH MAY

Changes Support Meeting

A 12 Step Recovery Programme for Mental Distress, meetings held at Burton twice a week, please contact 01827 311006 for further information. Prior booking only. Peer Support Meeting Peel Croft Surgery, Lichfield Street, Burton 1-30-3-30pm. Wellness Workshops, Wednesdays & Fridays: 9-45-11-45 am Burton Fire Station, Moor Street, Burton.

Bingo at Barton Bowls Club

On the 2nd Friday of every month. Members guests and new members always welcome. Eyes down at 8pm.

SATURDAY 11TH MAY

Stretton Gala

11am to 4pm. At St Marys Church field and hall, off Hillfield Lane. Free entry to Craft and Charity stalls, Live entertainment with Dance troupe, Dog Show, Tug-of-War. Plenty of Food and Drink stalls plus Prize Raffle.

SUNDAY 12TH MAY

Burton Parade

The Burton & District Section of the Vintage Motorcycle Club are running the 37th Annual Burton Parade. Starting at Marston's Social Club, Shobnall Road Burton at 10:30 am. Around 100 machines dating from the early 1900s to the 1980s. Free of charge to the public at Marston's before the start and at the finish.

MONDAY 13TH MAY

Red & Ginger's Lindy Hop Dance Class

Learn to Lindy Hop, Charleston and swing dance. Suitable for all ages and abilities, for those with a partner or without. Monday nights, 8-9pm term time at St Mary's Church Hall, Hillfield Lane, Stretton, DE13 0BV. hello@dancewithredandginger.com

TUESDAY 14TH MAY

Branston Women's Institute

Held the 2nd Tuesday of each month. We are a friendly group and try to mix our meetings with interesting talks, craft, trips and social events. It is for ladies of any age. Visitors are most welcome. Contact Mrs Barbara Reeves, President, Tel. 01283 546536

Walton-on-Trent WI

Every 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7.15pm Walton-on-Trent WI. We are a small friendly group who meet in Walton Village Hall. Come and join us for fun, friendship, learning and sharing. For more information contact Joan on 01283 713380

WEDNESDAY 15TH MAY

Burton Folk Dance Club

Burton Folk Dance Club meet every Wednesday (except 2nd Wednesday each month) at Rough Hayes Community Centre, Henhurst Hill, DE13 9PX. From 7.30 to 9.30pm. New members welcome. Contact 01283 812645.

THURSDAY 16TH MAY

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 Christine - 01283 543813.

Rangemore & Tatenhill WI

Meeting at Henhurst and District Recreational Club on 3rd Thursday of every month, starting at 7.30 p.m. Lively and friendly group of ladies meet to enjoy good company, an interesting and entertaining programme of events and refreshments. New members and visitors of all ages welcome. For more information contact Marian on 07752160996

SATURDAY 18TH MAY

The Needwood Singers

The Needwood Singers present a concert of classical music at 7.30pm at St. John the Baptist Church, Shenstone, WS14 0JB. Tickets £12 if bought in advance, £15 on the door (under 16s free) from Phil on 07973 239693

The Fabulous Foot Tappers

Dancing to The Fabulous Foot Tappers in aid of The Young Ones project Music from the 50's, 60's, 70's & 80's. 18 May 2019. Doors open 7:30 for 8:00 The Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton, Burton-on-Trent DE13 0HF Bring your own drinks Tickets £7 from 07938 920223 or secretary@theyoungonesburton.co.uk

COMPETITION WINNERS

Congratulations to our **Top Furniture** competition winners, who has won a £250 VOUCHER:

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Look out elsewhere in **LOCAL LINKS** this month to win an UNLIMITED FAMILY PASS from **Paradise Island Golf, Derby.**

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3	4	5	6	9	8	1	2	7
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St. George's Cross



Tuesday 23rd April is the day when nationalism sets in and England's patron saint St. George is celebrated. The iconic flag of England is a red cross on a white background.

There are many countries around the world that share

the same colour scheme in their flags too!

Austria, Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, Georgia, Gibraltar, Greenland, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Latvia, Malta, Monaco, Northern Cyprus, Peru, Poland, Singapore, Switzerland, Tonga, Tunisia & Turkey.

The colours used in flags are often loaded with meaning and will often represent similar themes throughout the globe.

- **Black:** Often used to represent determination, ethnic heritage and/or the defeat of enemies. It can also be used as a symbol of death or mourning.
- **White:** Seen as a symbol of peace, purity and harmony, and has also been used to

represent surrender in times of battle.

- **Red:** Stands for power, revolution, vibrancy and war (symbolic of bloodshed). Other meanings include courage and domination, while it can also be viewed as an alert of danger.
- **Blue:** Signifies determination, liberation, alertness and good fortune.
- **Green:** Often seen as a symbol of agricultural influence, as well as prosperity and fertility. It can also be viewed as youthfulness and hope.
- **Yellow (or Gold):** Has long been viewed as a symbol of wealth and energy, as in the sun. It can also be used to represent happiness.
- **Orange:** Viewed as representation of courage and sacrifice.



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Football Finale



It may seem ridiculous to say but we are approaching the end of the 2018/19 football season – it only seems like yesterday that we were putting on our England ‘Shizzle’ and supporting Gareth and the lads as they took on the world in Russia, falling just short of glory as Croatia edged passed us at the semi-final stage.

How proud we were of the young-guns Gareth had put his faith in, as pub landlords everywhere demanded that our waistcoat wearing hero was given a knighthood for services to beer sales!

Once the fervour had died down, we settled into the new domestic season and went back to supporting our teams, hurling abuse (naturally) at opposition players who we had been declaring undying love for whilst they performed in an England shirt – normal service returned!

In a flash; here we are almost at the end of a fabulous season for both domestic and national football fans – now I clearly refer to England fans here because it has most certainly not been a fabulous season if you happen to be Scottish, Welsh or Irish but enough said on that one!

The Premier League is delivering a genuine title race as Manchester City and Liverpool fight it out for the honour of being Champions – there is genuine affection for Liverpool amongst the football public (outside of Manchester obviously) – most of us who can remember their complete ownership of the 1980’s are rooting for the Reds to finally win a Premier League and halt Pep Guardiola’s march towards world domination (for Pep Guardiola read ‘The State of Qatar’) – as I write this, Liverpool sit top of the table by two points but Manchester City have a vital game in hand – it’s going down to the wire, but my prediction is that Liverpool will just have enough!

At the other end of the table both Huddersfield and Fulham are already relegated with Cardiff, Burnley, Southampton, Brighton, Newcastle and Crystal Palace all desperately trying to avoid the drop – After Cardiff were ‘robbed’ of victory against Chelsea this week following a ridiculously poor assistant referee’s decision they look favourites to suffer the ultimate heartbreak and when you add the plane-crash which took the life of their new signing before he had kicked a ball for them, you can’t help but root for the Bluebirds – however, my prediction is that it will indeed be Cardiff who fall through the trap-door and back to the Championship.

Speaking of the Championship – this is also providing great entertainment as we head towards the finishing line.

Norwich City and Leeds United look to have the automatic places locked-down (although Sheffield United could yet insert themselves into that fight) with West Brom and Sheffield United looking certainties for the play-offs.

This leaves eight (yes, eight) clubs still harbouring ambitions of making the final two play-off spots – my prediction is that Aston Villa and Bristol City will complete the play-off picture with Aston Villa (of course) bouncing back from last years play-off heartbreak against Fulham to claim their place back at the top table of English football... but I am biased – Come on Villa!!

The Championship Play-Off Final is now estimated to be worth £180 Million to the winners, so club owners and CEO’s will be nervously biting their nails and staring at their P&L’s whilst fans will not care at all about the cash... just the glory!

Once all of these questions have been answered of course, we have the Nations League Finals in Portugal to look forward to when we will again support the boys wearing the three lions as they take England to Glory!!

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Caring for Carers

When we have a loved one or family member with a disability or who develops a long-term illness, many of us face important decisions about their care. In the UK one in ten people provides care to someone and this figure is rising and three in five people will be carers at some point in their lives in the UK.

Many of the UK's caring community are unpaid family members and their contribution to the economy is estimated to be £132bn a year. That's more than the Creative Industries in the UK (£130bn) or the Hospitality Sector (£100bn).

Sometimes sadly, the responsibility of care-giving falls on the shoulders of those themselves that need care. Oftentimes elderly or infirm themselves, or even more shockingly they are children caring for a parent.

Only half of young carers have a particular person in school who recognises that they are a carer and helps them. Often these young carers have to miss or cut short school days because of their caring role.

Sadly, 68% of young carers are bullied in schools.

Many services are only funded to work with young carers up to the age of 18 and often young carers are worried about moving on as they feel there is no support for them.

Young adult carers aged between 16 and 18 years are twice as likely to be not in education, employment, or training. Based on Census figures there are estimated to be at least 376,000 young adult carers in the UK aged 16–25. Being a carer has significant health effects on the carer themselves and 45% of young adult carers report to have mental health problems.

One in five people aged 50–64 are carers in the UK and 65% of older carers (aged 60–94) have long-term health problems or a disability themselves, many stating that being a carer has an adverse effect on their own health.

One third of older carers say they have cancelled treatment or an operation for themselves because of their caring responsibilities.

There are 4.27 million carers of working age living in the UK; 2.44 million (57%) of these are women and 1.83 million (43%) are men. Over half of those who are not working say that they want to do so. Nearly one in eight workers is a carer and one in five carers gives up employment to care.

Over half of carers have borrowed money to enable them to provide care and almost two thirds of carers have used all of their savings to cover the costs of caring.

In a survey, 35% of carers had missed out on state benefits because they didn't realise they were entitled to it.

It is clear from the experiences of carers that much more needs to be done to provide fit-for-purpose and easily accessible social care and respite services. Caring can be a lonely endeavour and supporting those that care should be of utmost importance.

For more information and support networks for carers visit: www.carers.org

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3	1	7		8			

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