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ISSUE 146
FREE

MY FAMILY VALENTINE

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Dear Readers,

Wow! Did you ever think we'd get 2020 behind us? For many of us the optimism that 2021 promises is palpable! Hands up if you're looking forward to weddings and hugs and family get-togethers and dancing at gigs and in nightclubs! Ok, maybe we're getting ahead of ourselves, just popping to the shops normally would be nice, so for now, we're keeping our fingers and toes crossed and our masks on!

In this issue we've got tips for a family Valentine's Day at home. Sweet! Interesting articles on random stuff you might not have known and the return of our virtual 'What's OnLine' guide - don't forget to let us have details of your online events!

Have you got article ideas? Share them with us by emailing: local@locallinksmedia.co.uk

Take it easy!

The **LOCAL LINKS** team

ISSUE 146

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My Family Valentine

Valentine's Day on 14th February is often associated with romantic love but this holiday is the perfect opportunity to make your loved ones feel extra special... and that includes your entire family! There are many ways to celebrate love and togetherness with your whole family, even if you're staying at home this year.

1. Love Jar

Decorate empty jars with paper hearts and valentine stickers, making one for everyone in the house, you can even include the pets!

Everyone then writes nice things about the other people in the house and pops the notes in the relevant jar. You can write things like "Why I love Mum" or "Why Dad is the best Dad" or "Crazy things my brother does".

At dinner everyone can each open their jar and read how loved and valued they are!

2. Heart Shaped Treats

If you're the baking type, you could try your hand at making heart shaped biscuits, cakes or even pancakes. For added fun, you could colour them shades of pink and red!

Are you a disaster in the kitchen? No problem, stock up on heart shaped treats for the day. Good ones are Jammy Dodgers, Love Heart sweets, Jelly Lips sweets, Haribo Hearts, or heart shaped chocolates from Thorntons or Hotel Chocolat.

3. Handmade Cards

This is a fun thing to do for all the family. You're never too old to make a card. Drawing a cartoon of your other half is guaranteed to lead to fun and laughter. Don't try and make it too perfect, the sillier the better!

4. Love Stories

This is the perfect day to phone or video-call loved ones. Do you know how your grandparents or parents met? What better day to find out? Find out what their wedding days were like and any funny dating stories they have.

5. Love Film

Find a feel-good family film and gather together with popcorn on the sofa. Anything with Tom Hanks & Meg Ryan is sure to fit the bill!

6. Memory Box

Decorate a shoe box and ask everyone to contribute meaningful things like photos, stories, old baby socks, anything associated with good memories. Then seal it up and open it up next year for a warm and fuzzy feeling on Valentine's Day next year too!

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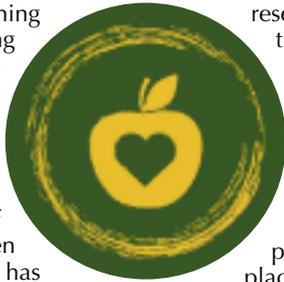



Have You Got Healthy Intuition?

Are you planning on starting 2021 with a diet?

2021 warrants a new start, finding new solutions to old problems. If you have been someone that has usually started the new year with a new diet have you ever stopped to ask yourself whether why this time will be any different?

Diets can and do work temporarily but they are never a long term solution to changing eating habits for good. Long term they can cause more emotional stress and anxiety than the weight itself. There is substantial



research to suggest that obesity in itself is not creating an unhealthy person, but the chronic stress that dieting causes is just as detrimental as the physical stress placed on the body.

We need to be able to relax around food.

Your relationship with food started the moment you were born. Your learnt experiences throughout childhood and into your adult life have formed a set of values and beliefs around food that you use to make food decisions on a daily basis. Learning to eat intuitively helps you to understand how your

relationship with food has developed for you and teaches you to 'unlearn' some of the thoughts and beliefs that are inhibiting you from enjoying food and feeling relaxed about yourself and your eating and in turn this enables you to make the right choices for you.

There is a lot of stigma around weight that is not helpful, some people have just had a difficult start in life when it comes to food. It is just harder for some people and they need acceptance, support and encouragement, not guilt and shame. If you know someone who struggles with their relationship with food, be kind and non-judgemental, and they may just feel more confident about making those small changes.

Nurturing a healthy relationship with food

- 1-2-1 consultations
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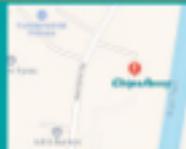
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By The Barn *by Angela Sargent*

*"When men were all asleep
the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on
the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually
settling and loosely lying,
Hushing the latest traffic of the
drowsy town."*

Robert Bridges

Happy new year! Well, let us hope it is better than 2020 and with the roll out of a vaccine, Covid may finally be on its way out!

January brings more of the same for us. Bedding the cattle several times a week (more if the atmosphere is damp) with straw that is in short supply. Feeding with corn and silage to maintain condition and moving imminent calvers into a separate place for them to give birth. We usually have two or three born over winter and we need to take care when entering their shed.

As we no longer lamb early, the ewes, although pregnant, are still some way off lambing and so do not need any extra feed yet, only enough to keep them healthy and they should be able to find enough grass to do that, with maybe a mineral block to provide anything their

nutrition might be lacking. As we do not graze our sheep on our cattle pasture, we can feed them on the ground if necessary, troughs make too much mess on our ground and it's easy to get knocked over by determined ewes and our legs bashed against the hard edges.

Have we a deal yet? Do we know what detail is in the Agricultural bill yet? Important detail was missing from the announcement of the agricultural bill made before Christmas. Lowland livestock and upland farmers are the sectors most likely to be affected by all the changes ongoing, potentially losing 60-80% of their income and it is worth remembering that around 80% of farm income goes back into the local economy, something that particularly needs our support at this present time.

As we make our way across the fields on our rounds, checking livestock and doing repairs to gateways and fences, we often see how the furrows in our ancient pasture move the rainwater on its way into the ditches and then into streams. Birds, including Pheasants and Buzzards often sit on the ridges, rifling through

the remnants of dropped straw and silage, looking for a tasty morsel or several and the cowpats fertilise the ground, returning the nutrients taken by grazing animals.

We will be hedge laying now too, just the odd bit to improve our field boundaries. The fieldfares and redwings are finishing cleaning up the berries and fallen fruit and I will be planting a few hedge-line trees, grown in pots over the summer. What lovely names trees have! Spindle, Wayfaring, Hornbeam, Whitebeam and Buckthorn - deciduous trees, which lose their leaves in winter, found in our country hedges and woods.

Ted will be seven this year and in his prime. Although he has his moments, generally he does a good job (excellent worker away from home!). I cannot believe it is that long since we lost our Meg but Ted is very loving, though he certainly gets dirty at this time of year and consequently so do all our kitchen cupboards when he shakes!

For more on all things farming follow Angela on Twitter **@bythebarn**



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National Lego Day

Those colourful little plastic bricks we all know as LEGO have been entertaining both children and adults around the world for almost 70 years! National Lego Day, 28th January, celebrates the popularity and ingenuity of these enriching toys.

We thought we'd take a look at some fascinating and little-known facts about the company and those iconic plastic blocks.

Timeline

The LEGO company was founded in 1932 by Danish carpenter Kirk Christiansen. Originally they made wooden toys, the plastic LEGO bricks were first manufactured in 1949. In 2017 LEGO was recognised as the world's most powerful brand, beating the likes of Google, Nike, Ferrari to the top spot!

Toy Story

So far there have been four feature films made featuring LEGO: The LEGO Movie, The LEGO Batman Movie, The LEGO Ninjago Movie and The LEGO Movie 2. In total they have grossed almost 1 trillion dollars in cinemas worldwide!

Trillions of Combinations

Each LEGO set contains trillions of unique block combinations. Two eight-stud bricks can be combined 24 different ways. Six of the same eight-stud bricks can be combined over 900 million unique ways!

Tyre Manufacturer?

LEGO makes 400 million tiny tyres every year for its various vehicles - far outstripping any real-life tyre maker!



The House That James Built

James May, of Top Gear fame, once built a real house out of 3.3 million LEGO bricks. It contained a working toilet, shower and bed!



LEGO Loves Learning

Because building LEGO is repetitive and structured play, it helps autistic children develop many key skills such as verbal and nonverbal communication, sharing and teamwork.



Biggest Lego Sets

The Star Wars Millennium Falcon LEGO set used to be the largest single set you could buy with 7,541 pieces. This is closely followed by Harry Potter Hogwarts Castle at 6,020 pieces. However, this year saw the release of the Roman Colosseum LEGO set weighing in at a staggering 9,036 bricks!

Super Strength

A single LEGO brick can support 3,750,000 other bricks before buckling. This means that you could build a LEGO tower 2.17 miles high before the bottom brick begins to give way. You can test brick strength by accidentally standing on a brick but we do not recommend it. Ouch!

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* Photography taken before COVID-19 outbreak

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Data Dilemmas

Internet privacy is an ever-growing concern, especially with children and the content they are able to view. Aside from that, many concerns for the privacy of email, the vulnerability of internet users to have their internet usage tracked and the collection of online personal information also exist. Did you know Data Privacy Day is 28th January?

There are many arguments against the necessity of privacy on the internet. One of the most common responses is “if you’ve got nothing to hide, you’ve got nothing to worry about”. The problem here is that the word “hide” presupposes that nobody can ever have a *good* motive for wishing to protect information about their private lives. This is plainly false.

Many people can have a very legitimate interest in avoiding disclosure of a wide variety of personal information that is none of anyone else’s business. Would you want your bank statements published on the front page of the local paper? Not likely. Therefore it is reasonable to avoid giving everyone unlimited access to your life!

Fortunately, the plus side of living in ‘the information age’

is that there is plenty of good advice and trustworthy tools available to us all to make our internet usage as private and secure as we like.

Use A VPN

When we browse the internet, our approximate geographical location is exposed via our ‘IP address’ which is a series of numbers linked to your internet connection. If you’d rather internet sites didn’t know where you live, using a *virtual private network* or VPN can mask that information and keep your browsing anonymous.

Strong Passwords

It can be tempting to use things like your birthday or anniversary for your bank account password but this is not secure and can be easily ‘guessed’ by nefarious software used by criminals. The length and complexity of your password increases its security. Alternatively use a *password manager* such as Bitwarden or 1Password which can generate long and complex passwords that are very secure.

Same Password - NO!

Avoid using the same password for more than one website. If your password is ‘hacked’ or discovered, using

the same password for all services could mean that someone could get access to all of your accounts, not just one. Again a password manager can help here or create a password sheet - a physical piece of paper with your passwords on. Don’t forget to keep it in a safe place though!

Don’t Save Personal Info

Many websites, such as Google, offer to save your passwords and information when you use them. While this can be incredibly handy, it also exposes that information to the digital world.

Scammers

Scammers send you emails that try to trick you into thinking your bank or mobile phone provider is contacting you. It is highly unlikely to be a genuine email if it you are asked for personal information (account number, password, credit card number). In this case get the number for your bank or utility company and ring them to ask their advice. If it is a scam they will be pleased to hear about it and you will keep your information safe. These scam attempts can be very convincing so stay vigilant and stay safe!

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A close-up photograph of a jeweller's hands using tweezers to work on a gold ring set with a red gemstone. The background shows a workshop environment with a workbench, a bracelet on a textured block, and a bright light source.

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Nuts About Squirrels!

By Alena Sahota

If 2020 has taught us anything, perhaps it is to revel in the small joys of life. This year, National Squirrel Appreciation Day is on 21st January. It was conceived ten years ago by Christy Hargrove, a rehabilitation specialist, with the aim of changing the increasingly unforgiving attitudes shown towards the bushy-tailed creatures. With all this in mind let us take a closer look at these remarkable tiny animals.

Squirrels belong to the *Sciuridae* family which makes them a cousin of the chipmunk and prairie dogs. With over 200 different species their size can vary a lot! From the smallest African Pygmy, at five inches long, to the Indian Giant squirrel which is an enormous 36 inches from nose to tail.



Nuts About Nuts

While we may all be aware of squirrels' love affair with acorns and other nuts it may come as a surprise to find out that most are omnivores, equally enjoying an entrée of insects – they're especially fond of caterpillars!

Why the long tail?

There is no mistaking the twitchy feather boa that perfectly complements their character, but a squirrel's tail serves as a lot more than simply a fashion statement. A squirrel uses its tail as a counterbalance to aid jumps between trees and it also doubles as a parachute that helps soften their journey to the ground. When it's raining, the squirrel uses its tail as a little umbrella to keep dry and in hot weather the tail swells with blood to reduce their body temperature.



Perhaps the most interesting and certainly the most endearing fact is that squirrels will often use their tails as a tool with which to signal to other squirrels. Signs to look for include a wagging tail which warns of danger and a trembling tail that indicates a squirrel of the opposite sex is nearby!

Red vs Grey

The biggest war within the squirrel kingdom is the one waged between the houses of the red and the grey squirrel. The more robust of the two, the grey squirrel, has long

been demonised for its part in the decline in the red squirrel population. However, it is important to remember that their presence is only a contributing factor not the main threat. The main reason for the red squirrels' decline is mostly due to habitat loss.



Film Stars!

In the 2005 remake of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, for the squirrel scene, the squirrels were not computer graphics, but were actually real life and were professionally trained by The Nut Room Animal trainer Michael Alexander and his team who spent 19 weeks training these squirrels for this one scene.



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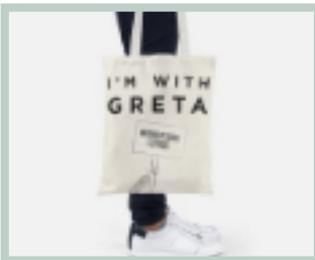
To enter this month's competition, all you have to do is put your *name, address and daytime telephone contact number* on a postcard and send it to:

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Alternatively, you can e-mail your details to:

local@locallinksmedia.co.uk

The closing date for entries is the 9th February, and the winners will be announced in our March edition. Good luck to everyone who enters!



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Property Round Up

What a year 2020 has been, and unsurprisingly the housing market has been just as affected as everything else, although not in the way you might think! In spring the property market stalled for nearly three months (as did almost everything else). Many Estate Agents and Conveyancing companies had to temporarily close their offices and furlough staff. It was a difficult time as many were not equipped for remote working.

Agents had to act quickly if they wanted to continue to trade without physically entering people's homes. Here at EweMove Lichfield & Barton-Under-Needwood we were proactive and visited every property on the market to record video tours so that we could carry out virtual viewings via zoom during this unprecedented time. You may be surprised to hear that we even listed and sold properties virtually during the initial lockdown!

At the end of spring, the property market was one of the first sectors of the economy to be re-opened. Every economist predicted house price drops in the order of 10% in the best-case scenario and 25% in the worst, yet nothing could have been further from the truth. Ever since the housing market emerged from its pandemic-

driven freeze there has been a frenzy of home buying.

Those three months had allowed many homeowners to re-evaluate their relationships with their homes. The true worth of an extra bedroom (for an office) became a real asset, as people working from home were having to take calls and work from the dining room table, while juggling family space for home schooling.

Properties with gardens and/or close to green spaces all of a sudden became even more desirable. Then, in another surprise move, the government introduced the Stamp Duty Holiday, meaning that buyers could save thousands of pounds in tax if they moved before the end of March 2021. For those of you who are currently on the market and hoping to beat the Stamp Duty Deadline it would be beneficial to contact a solicitor now and complete your initial paperwork for the sale of your property. This will enable your solicitor to issue draft contracts as soon as a sale is agreed and your buyer's solicitor will be able to apply for the searches and raise their enquiries straight away.

What about 2021?

The Stamp Duty holiday ends in March 2021. However, this is also when unemployment could reach a peak and there are so many unknowns over

how Brexit will play out.

House prices are forecast to drop in 2021 but only time will tell. We are fortunate to be in a part of the country which attracts homebuyers from all over the UK due to our central location and beautiful villages.

My only advice, which holds true at any time, would be, if you are thinking of moving and are wondering when would be the right time to put your house on the market, there is no 'right time', only the 'right time for you'.

Many owners looking to move want to wait until they have found a house to buy before putting their current home on the market. While this might feel quite logical my recommendation is that you need to be in a position to make an offer if you find somewhere you like. So, my advice is always to put your house on the market first and wait until you have a buyer for yours before going to view potential properties to buy. You will also save yourself some heartache this way!

Whatever your plans for the year ahead, I wish you all good health, and know that we can beat Covid-19 together!

Happy New Year to all Victoria

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Virtual What's Online Guide!

MONDAY 18TH JANUARY

An Evening with Michael Palin

Starts 7.30pm. For this online event, the Livingstone Medallist of RSGS will focus on his work in North Korea, shedding light on one of the most intriguing and secretive countries in the world. There will be chance to ask questions of Michael in the live Q&A that follows his presentation. Tickets £5 - £8. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/an-evening-with-michael-palin-registration-131325984555?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

TUESDAY 19TH JANUARY

The Brothers Grimm

Free event. Starts 5pm. World-famous for their fairy tales; less well known is that their most famous work is the multi-volume dictionary of the German language. They were involved in political controversies and Wilhelm was even exiled. Find out more about these fascinating siblings in this talk by Rare Books Curator Dr Anette Hagan. National Library of Scotland. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-brothers-grimm-living-a-fairy-tale-tickets-132552346637?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

WEDNESDAY 20TH JANUARY

The Large Hadron Collider

Free event. Starts 5pm. Ever wondered what the Large Hadron Collider does? And how did scientists at CERN discover the Higgs boson? www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-large-hadron-collider-and-the-hidden-universe-tickets-100937314224?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

THURSDAY 21ST JANUARY

Women's Empowerment

Free event. Starts 12pm. A women's empowerment event for anyone interested in personal or professional growth. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/women-empowerment-event-tickets-119820709969?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

Florence Nightingale at Home

Starts 5.30pm. What does Florence Nightingale's life reveal about the history of nursing? What myths about Nightingale live on in nursing stereotypes, and what was she really like as a person? www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/florence-nightingale-comes-home-tickets-128852295685?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

FRIDAY 22ND JANUARY

Online Life Drawing

Free event. Donations welcome. Every Tuesday at 7pm and Friday at 10am. Our life drawing sessions are perfect whether you're a complete beginner or the next Picasso! www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/online-life-drawing-with-brixton-life-drawing-tickets-117373428083?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

SATURDAY 23RD JANUARY

Burns Night

Starts 6.30pm. You can expect the usual good Scottish banter and poetry and lots more. Tickets £2.74. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/jci-edinburgh-burns-night-2021-tickets-128247017281?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

SUNDAY 24TH JANUARY

Vinyasa Flow Yoga

Every Sunday 10am. Contribution £5-15 (pay what you can - contact for reduced rate due to financial circumstances). My yoga is for everyone. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sunday-vinyasa-flow-yoga-live-online-tickets-100825465682?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

MONDAY 25TH JANUARY

The Origins of Stonehenge

Free event. Starts 7.45pm. This talk will present the results of a recent research project to establish the source of the huge sarsen boulders used to build Stonehenge. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-origins-of-the-sarsen-megaliths-at-stonehenge-tickets-128777148919?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

TUESDAY 26TH JANUARY

In Conversation with Donald Tusk

Starts 1pm. Former European Council president Donald Tusk will be joining us for a special livestreamed event about Britain's exit from the EU. Tickets £5.72 - £16.12. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/in-conversation-with-former-european-council-president-donald-tusk-tickets-132932718339?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

WEDNESDAY 27TH JANUARY

Strategies for Faster Running

Free event. Starts 6.30pm. 1 hour webinar and Q&A focusing on improving your running speed and ability to maintain faster paces. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/strategies-for-faster-running-tickets-13145335525?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

Men's Forum

Free event. Starts 7.30pm. Connect with other men, share your views on men's health and be encouraged to support one another. Get advice on various men's health conditions, from experts from a variety of areas. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mens-forum-tickets-130675282287?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

THURSDAY 28TH JANUARY

Gin Cocktails at Home

Free event - supplies purchased separately £69 (optional). Starts 6pm. In this exclusive session you'll learn more about Japanese gin, as well as how to make two classic drinks with a twist. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/gin-cocktail-box-at-home-tickets-124721985817?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

FRIDAY 29TH JANUARY

Stress Management

Free event. Starts 12.30pm. A highly motivational Stress & Anxiety Management LIVE Webinar by NHS experienced, Consultant Psychiatrist. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/stress-management-tickets-108611718574?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

SATURDAY 30TH JANUARY

Poland's Foundation to Crack Enigma

Starts 11.30am. Dr Dermot Turing discusses the real story of how the Enigma code was broken. Tickets £4. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/polands-greatest-contribution-to-wii-enigma-tickets-125036508563?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

SUNDAY 31ST JANUARY

Drama Workshop

Free event. Starts 10am. Scriptwriting, improv, film, comedy, monologues, Shakespeare and much, much more. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/online-drama-workshops-tickets-118733040721?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

MONDAY 1ST FEBRUARY

Zumba Classes

Starts 5.45pm. Join Amie King for the best start to your week from your own home! Tickets £3.50. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/monday-6-pm-virtual-zumba-class-via-zoom-registration-102019599368?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

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TUESDAY 2ND FEBRUARY

Under 5s Story & Rhyme Time

Free event. Starts 11am. Featuring all your favourite stories and nursery rhymes! Lots of fun, laughs and learning for you and your little one, all from the comfort of home. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/under-5s-bookstart-story-and-rhyme-time-tickets-132788388645?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

WEDNESDAY 3RD FEBRUARY

GCSE Yr11 Maths Top-Up

Free event every Wednesday. Starts 5pm. Supporting you, as you work your way through the Maths GCSE curriculum towards your exams in 2021. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/gcse-yr-11-maths-weekly-top-up-tickets-127886695549?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

THURSDAY 4TH FEBRUARY

Fertility, Pregnancy & Maternal Health

Starts 6.30pm. Five leaders and experts to discuss the latest innovations, trends and the state of Fertility, Pregnancy and Maternal Health. Tickets Free - £11.37. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/webinar-fertility-pregnancy-maternal-health-tickets-132764439011?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

FRIDAY 5TH FEBRUARY

Film Friday

Free event. Starts 7pm. Kick back, relax! Join us for our Friday movie night. We have a selection of movies streamed weekly online! Register for this event and snack packs will be provided to those viewing the movie. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/film-friday-tickets-122645781835?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

SATURDAY 6TH FEBRUARY

Black History for Children

Free event. Starts 5.30pm. A fascinating journey into Black history, led by two child superheroes. Multiple choice questions, quizzes, short narrations, archive pictures and amazing Black history relevant illustrations. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/online-black-history-for-children-tickets-131758082973?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

SUNDAY 7TH FEBRUARY

The Webcam Circus Show

Starts 5pm or 7pm. Interactive circus shows on zoom for families and kids, where clown can make everything and anything happen. Experience circus online. Tickets £12 - £30. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-webcam-circus-show-english-tickets-124805916857?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

MONDAY 8TH FEBRUARY

A Brief History of Drag Kings

Free event, donations welcome. Starts 6.30pm. From Ancient China's Yuan Dynasty to the music halls of Victorian England drag kings have been around for centuries. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-brief-history-of-drag-kings-tickets-132798121757?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

TUESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY

An Invitation to Hope

Free event. Starts 10am. Christian leaders from multiple traditions and cultural spheres will guide us in lament, prayer and reflection. We'll ask God what he is doing and how we can partner with him in a new wave of mission across our country. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/an-invitation-to-hope-mission-through-prayer-and-lament-tickets-129701395365?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

WEDNESDAY 10TH FEBRUARY

Cuppa & Chat

Free event, every other Wednesday. Starts 8.30pm. An online get together with other SEND parents, carers and professionals who understand. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cuppa-chat-online-tickets-102882187392?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

THURSDAY 11TH FEBRUARY

Singing Lessons for Young People

Free event! Starts 5pm. Ages 11-16. No need to read music or have any previous singing experience, just a love for music! www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/singing-lessons-for-young-people-aged-11-16-tickets-121230970095?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

FRIDAY 12TH FEBRUARY

Floral Fun

Free event. Starts 4.30pm. Learn how to arrange flowers in your home with qualified florist - no skills needed, just a little bit of creativity and fun! www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/floral-fun-tickets-117397476011?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

SATURDAY 13TH FEBRUARY

Salsa with Paloma

Free event, starts 11am. Salsa class for beginners. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/salsa-with-paloma-tickets-11035308970?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

How to Read Music for Guitar

free event, starts 3pm. Do you play the guitar but struggle with reading music? In this session, learn how to read music for guitar from a classical guitarist. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-to-read-music-for-guitar-tickets-125202480991?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

SUNDAY 14TH FEBRUARY

Fall in Love with Yourself

Starts 5.30pm. Imagine if you could love yourself in the most perfect, nurturing, loving way and stop waiting for someone else to make you feel that way? Tickets £25. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/fall-in-love-with-yourself-powerful-ways-to-learn-to-love-yourself-now-tickets-130132526891?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

Valentine Baking

Starts 10am, for 10-12yrs. We will be thinking of those we love as we make heart shaped biscuits and ice them. Heart shaped cookie cutters will be sent to you in the post. Tickets £5 - £10. www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/girls-appeer-online-session-valentine-baking-10-12-years-tickets-131188130229?aff=ebdssbnonlineasrch

COMPETITION WINNERS

Congratulations to our **Lucinda Smith** competition winner, who has won a **Studio Portrait Session plus £200 voucher**:

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Look out elsewhere in **LOCAL LINKS** this month to win Grace & May.

LAST MONTH'S SUDOKU PUZZLE SOLUTION

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4	9	6	3	1	7	2	5	8
8	5	4	6	7	2	9	1	3
2	7	9	4	3	1	5	8	6
6	3	1	8	9	5	7	4	2
3	6	2	9	4	8	1	7	5
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Celebrating Martin Luther King *by Taya Evans*

On the 18th January we celebrate the life and sacrifice of one of Black history's most notable contributors, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Black History month, originally celebrated in January, began with the intention of helping to educate everyone about the history, successes, notable figures, contributions and experiences within the Black community. This month began as a way for the Black community to help keep alive a rich and diverse history and to help teach those within their own community who may not have had access to their own past.

The Start of Recognition

From humble beginnings as an unofficial celebration solely within black communities in America, to it becoming a Nationally recognised event known as 'Negro History Week' to now being an Internationally celebrated month, the brainchild of historian Carter G. Woodson and other African Americans has blossomed into something to greatly admire.

Observing BHM actually began in the US way back in 1915 and soon after other countries such as Canada, The Netherlands, Ireland and the UK followed suit, recognising its importance and its ability to provide a space and platform for its Black citizens to celebrate their history. This month aims to uplift Black

voices and offer the community the opportunity to pay homage to the history that helped shape where Black people are today.

Celebrating Contribution

Have you ever taken an elevator? Ever opened a fridge? Used a hairbrush? Mowed your lawn? Well then, you've benefitted from the contributions of Black people! Black History Month is for everyone to enjoy and participate in. To help uplift Black voices and learn new things at the same time!

MLK Day

Martin Luther King Day was established in 1983 and is an American national holiday celebrated annually on the third Monday of January, around MLK's birthday. The day celebrates the life, legacy and achievements of the great American hero and honours his efforts in advocating for racial justice for Black Americans and being a pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement. MLK helped end racial segregation and inspired a generation during and after him to understand the power both within themselves and in their own voices.

MLK's perseverance and dedication to the cause in the face of deep opposition also garnered strong support from non-Black people who too believed in his message of freedom and equality and

understood the power of support and that their position in society held value enough to help further the cause. It was because so many of so many kinds resonated with what MLK spoke that there was power in numbers with he and the thousands who marched alongside him to Washington in 1963 that helped change the course of American history and that is why we celebrate him today.

His work has resonated through the ages and is evident today with celebrations such as Black History Month.

Just like those who marched with MLK to Washington, whether Black or not, we can all learn something from Black History as we understand that it is national history and that we benefit from it one way or another. So, next time BHM and MLK Day roll around... let's celebrate!

Steve Frost

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Pet Weight Management

By Scarsdale Vets

It's not just people that are prone to putting on a few pounds over the Christmas period, pets can end up getting a little on the tubby side too! Help your furry friends stay healthy by...

1. Measure Food out Daily

Using a measuring cup or mug can result in you over feeding your pet by 18-80%. Use scales to accurately weigh the food. To save time, you could weigh a week's worth out and put each daily allowance into a sandwich bag.

2. Check you are feeding the correct amount of food

Look at the back of the container/bag and feed your pet for their ideal weight, not their current weight. Each brand of food will have a different daily allowance so always check the packaging. The amount given is their daily allowance, NOT how much to feed each mealtime.

3. For pets that are always hungry/eat quickly

Try increasing the amount of mealtimes. If they usually feed once a day, try increasing to twice daily. Split their daily allowance between how many meals you feed them. If they eat quickly, try using an interactive feeder to slow

them down and make mealtimes last longer.

4. Try feeding a light/reduced calorie diet

You could try changing their diet to a 'light' diet. This is a good idea if your pet is only slightly above their ideal weight or prone to putting on weight, but may not work if they need to lose a few kilos. When changing diets, you should do it gradually over a week or two to prevent upsetting their stomachs.

5. Weight loss diets & weight clinics

Scarsdale Vets offer free nurse clinics to monitor your pet's weight, give you tips on weight loss and advise you prescription diets designed to help your pet lose weight. We have had a lot of success using the prescription diets and these are ideal for pets that have more than 1.2kgs (in dogs) or 0.5 – 1kg (in cats) to lose. If your pet is more than 10% overweight feeding a prescription diet will give you the best results and by joining our free nurse clinics you will have the support to get your pet to their target.

6. Cut down on treats

Most have a high calorie content. Please speak with your Veterinary Nurse to

discuss healthy alternatives to treats.

7. Introduce Daily Exercise Dogs

- Depending on your dog's age and any medical conditions, you should ensure they get a regular amount of exercise on a daily basis.

Try to increase the distance younger dogs are walked by 10 – 15 minutes. For older dogs, try taking them on shorter walks, but more frequently.

Cats

- Try to encourage your cat to play for a couple of minutes at a time. Cats lose interest very quickly, so shorter bursts of play several times a day will help improve their mobility.

Change their toys weekly to stop them losing interest in old toys. There is no need to buy new toys each week, just rotate them so they have a different one each week.

Encourage them to jump and run up and down the stairs. Try feeding them on the stairs by putting a few biscuits on a few of the steps so they have to move around to get them



LOCAL LINKS SUDOKU

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

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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