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ISSUE 169

FREE

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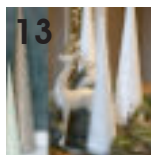


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LOCAL LINKS



ISSUE 169

Dear Readers,

Here at Local Links HQ we love all things Christmas... so much so we've been known to bust out a mince-pie or seven early in November! Now that it's officially the count-down to Christmas we've got some lovely festive ideas in this issue.

Give Santa a break from mince-pies with the fab festive cookie recipe we have for you this month. There's also an article with some super and affordable festive décor ideas to give you some home inspiration.

There are some winter gardening tips from our regular contributor Tim, winter art exhibition details from Deb, and as ever our favourite seasonal farming read from Angela!

We also encourage you to support Burton's YMCA who are helping homeless people and rough-sleepers this Christmas.

*As always, wishing you a very merry Christmas & New Year, The **LOCAL LINKS** team*

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Weds 11th January

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A Winter Collection *by Deb Walker*



in the gallery as usual in the run up to Christmas, which offers an oasis of calm at this busy time of year. With new seascapes, coastal

& Cinnamon and Nordic Forest scented candles will surely put you in the mood for the Festive Season!

We have a solo exhibition of paintings by resident artist Deborah Walker, at 'the gallery @ Ridware Arts' in the lead up to Christmas this year, open until Saturday 17th December. Open all year round, Wednesday to Saturday 2.30 – 5pm. The gallery re-opens after Christmas on Wednesday 5th January 2023.

paintings and local landscapes to tempt you, why not avoid the hassle of city shopping and visit her at 'the gallery' instead?! This year's exhibition features work by Deb and some of the gallery's favourite artists. We have a wide selection of paintings, including a range of mounted, tiny, original watercolours which would make an ideal and unique gift; alongside original prints, ceramics, sculpture, jewellery and glass. Our Christmas Spice, Apple

For information about workshops for 2023 with Deb, please email to receive a programme for Spring 2023. Be assured of a warm welcome in the gallery this Christmas! For further information about the forthcoming exhibition please contact Deb at 'the gallery' on T: 01889 504102 or E: deb@walker-art.co.uk

On the A515 from Kings Bromley to Yoxall, turn left at the roundabout to Hamstall Ridware and continue to turn or bear left to Blythe House Farm.

The gallery is the working studio of Deborah Walker RI RSMA and she will be painting



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Butterscotch Christmas Cookies

Think of all those houses where all Santa gets to munch on is the same old mince pie. Why not give Santa a surprise this year and bake these fun and festive butterscotch cookies to leave with his glass of milk... or brandy!

BUTTERSCOTCH COOKIES



Ingredients:

185g butter - softened
160g brown sugar
55g sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 egg
240g flour
2 packets of butterscotch flavour Angel Delight - not prepared
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup dark chocolate chips
1 cup white chocolate chips
1 cup red and green M&M's

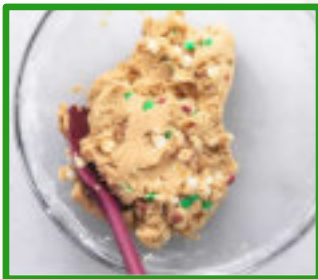
Instructions:

In a large bowl, cream the butter, brown sugar, and sugar for 1-2 minutes until fluffy and pale. Add vanilla and egg and mix well.

In another bowl whisk together flour, and dry angel delight, baking powder, and salt.



Gradually mix dry ingredients into wet ingredients until incorporated. Stir in most of the chocolate chips. (Reserve a few chocolate chips and the M&M's for later) Cover and chill for at least one hour.



Preheat oven to 175C. Very lightly grease a baking sheet.

Roll about 3 tablespoons of cookie dough into a ball (Should be about the size of a golf ball) and place on a prepared baking sheet. Gently

press remaining chocolate chips and the M&M's into the cookie dough balls (this makes sure you can see the chips and the M&M's after they bake!).



Bake for 9-12 minutes until cookies are set but still slightly underdone for a chewy cookie or 2-3 mins longer for a crunchy cookie.



Allow to cool for at least 10 minutes on the baking sheet. Transfer to a cooling rack to finish cooling completely. Store in airtight container at room temperature.

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By The Barn *by Angela Sargent*

As winter sets in and the short daylight hours make for increased use of lighting, many farmers are having to think carefully how they can reduce energy use or obtain it from different sources.

The last few years have seen increased numbers of wind turbines and solar panels on farmland and, with increased electricity costs, the use of fuel filled generators. Farming uses lots of energy, from the care and production of dairy through to the heating/ cooling of poultry units to the refrigeration of grown products to keep them suitable for consumption.

One method of energy production is the Anaerobic Digester, found on a few farms. This is where micro-organisms break down biodegradable material, in the absence of oxygen. One of the end products is biogas, which can be used to generate electricity and heat or can be processed into renewable natural gas or transportation fuel.

Hedges are being trimmed or laid now and fallen trees from winter storms are sawn up and removed. Boundaries are maintained, most livestock having moved inside, but ewes can be seen grazing the fields and uplands, hopefully the rams having done their job.

Glancing out into shadowy paddocks as night falls, sometimes a fox might be glimpsed, looking for food or the white shape of a Barn owl silently hunting. The stark shape of leafless trees provide camouflage for other predator birds too. And the howl of the North wind brings sleet or snow to cover all tracks!

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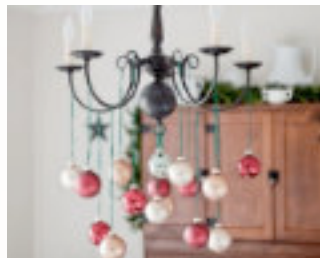
Use gold and silver sharpies to decorate glasses and mugs. Make sure to keep the decorations away from the rim. Rubbing alcohol will clean the sharpie off afterwards.



Bauble Decor

Baubles aren't just for the tree! You can hang them from decorative ribbon as beautiful light fitting ornaments or fill a

large glass jar with them on the mantelpiece. Decorations that aren't glass are best for these uses.



Let It Snow!

Print off snowflake shapes and place into a plastic ringbinder sleeve or underneath some other transparent plastic. Trace over with white craft glue and once dry you can peel the snowflakes off the plastic!



Wrap it up!

Use long strips of fabric to make your front door look like a giant gift. Include a big bow and spread the cheer in your neighbourhood this Christmas!



Minimal Trees

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The impact of COVID-19 has been felt by everyone. Lives have changed, demand for their services has increased and their income has been significantly affected. They could not continue to do what they do without the help of others. Your help is never

more needed than now! At this time of year demand is particularly high and they need support you can spare to help them to continue to provide their much needed services in Burton.

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New Year Customs

Can you believe that 2023 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.

Ringling 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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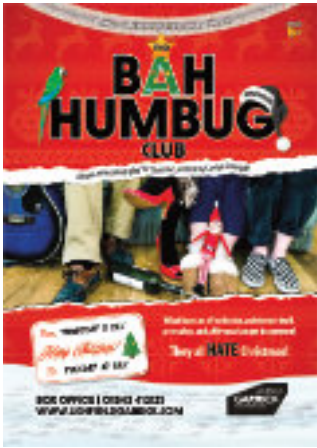


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Bah Humbug!



The cast has been announced for Lichfield Garrick's brand new comedy play for Christmas – The Bah Humbug Club – written by local Lichfield writer Carolyn Scott-Jeffs and promising laughs, a few tears and a bit of nostalgia – like all best Christmases – from 8th – 27th December.

Érin Geraghty, Danny Horn, Beck Graig and Rosie Coles will take on the roles of four incompatible Christmasphobics playing an elf collector, an internet troll, a stalker, and a Nirvana fan. The Bah Humbug Club begins in 1999 with four strangers, who don't like Christmas spending it together by chance, only for them to choose to spend the next 20 Christmases together.

Irish actor, Érin Geraghty brings decades of screen and stage experience with a career which began in 1966, when she was chosen to dance in a film with Julie Andrews. Érin takes on the role of Pauline, the main protagonist in The Bah Humbug Club, the glue that holds the club together.

Talking about the role Érin commented: "I'm absolutely thrilled to be coming to lovely Lichfield over Christmas, especially for such a fun play. Christmas is so overhyped that many people find it overwhelming and for many, it's a painful lonely time. The Bah Humbug Club is the perfect Adult Antidote to it all! A Christmas show for those who don't like Christmas!"

Beck Greig brings experience from immersive theatre productions in London, they will bring the role of Curt Cobain and Nirvana loving Andy to life, their story spans their late teen years through to adulthood with Andy becoming a successful human rights lawyer.

Danny Horn will bring his stage and screen experience – including Doctor Who and Vera – to the role of Fred, a cricket

fan and stalker who heads off on that first Christmas in 1999 in order to try and clean up his act. Experienced stage actress Rosie Coles completes the anti-festive four in the role of Jane, secretly an internet troll, the 20 Christmases follow her failed love life, will the final Christmas in the play bring a happy ending for Jane?

Matt Clay, Interim Executive Manager of the Lichfield Garrick said: "We can't wait to welcome Érin, Beck, Danny and Rosie to Lichfield Garrick and to be producing this brand-new show by talented local writer Carolyn Scott-Jeffs. The production promises a lot of laughs, tears, and nostalgia and is the perfect Christmas entertainment. It feels great to be open and offering so much festive fun for audiences this winter – we look forward to welcoming you into the theatre!"

The Bah Humbug Club runs from 8th – 27th December in the Lichfield Garrick Studio, tickets are on sale now and available via the Lichfield Garrick website:

www.lichfieldgarrick.com
or from Box Office on 01543 412121

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To enter this month's competition, all you have to do is email your name, address and daytime telephone contact number to: **local@locallinksmmedia.co.uk**



Alternatively, you can post your details to:

**Local Links Media
Middletons Competition
PO Box 8049
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DE14 9NQ**

The closing date for entries is the 10th of January and the winners will be announced in our February edition.

Good luck to everyone who enters!



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A Doggone Crime



Kate Kniveton, Member of Parliament for Burton and Uttoxeter, attended an event organised by the Dogs Trust in the House of Commons where the charity called on the Government to take urgent action to end the cruel practice of Puppy Smuggling. MPs from across

the UK were invited to discuss with the charity how they can work together to bring an end to the illegal practice

Through five undercover investigations, Dogs Trust has revealed the falsifying of documents to import underage puppies, often unvaccinated and in poor welfare conditions, which go on to be sold to unsuspecting buyers in the UK.

An interactive station at the event illustrated the importance of introducing visual checks at the borders to put a stop to the cruel trade once and for all.

Commenting, Kate Kniveton MP said:

"I was shocked to learn about the horrendous ways puppies are smuggled into the UK and the poor conditions they endure.

"Dogs Trust is doing great work to raise awareness of this issue amongst legislators and to ensure that all dogs imported into Great Britain are done so legally.

"For this to be successful, I recognise it is vital that the requirement to carry out a visual check on dogs being imported is introduced. I, along with my fellow MPs will continue to support the work of Dogs Trust and will do what we can to encourage the introduction of visual checks."

An advertisement for "Birthday's in a Box". The top part shows a train with various boxes on it. Below that, a blue banner reads "Click & Collect. Make any Occasion special at Home. Birthday's in a Box. See our Website for details". The bottom part shows two boxes: one labeled "Paint a pot" containing various paint pots and brushes, and another labeled "Build a Bear" containing a teddy bear and building materials. At the bottom, it says "Barton Marina, Barton under Needwood, DE13 8AS Tel: 01283 771341 www.themagtag.co.uk".



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What's On Guide

SUNDAY 11TH DECEMBER

Christmas Concert

At St. James's church, Barton under Needwood, starting at 7.00pm, the Needwood Singers will be giving their magical concert of Christmas Music by Candlelight. Tickets are £10 for adults and children are free. Book via the website www.theneedwoodsingers.co.uk or just come along.

MONDAY 12TH DECEMBER

Beginners Watercolour - Tutbury

Every Monday at Tutbury Village Hall from 10am - 12 noon. Ideal for anyone who has never painted before. For details or to enrol contact Ann on 07816 118776. Admission by prior registration only. www.artmoves.co.uk

TUESDAY 13TH DECEMBER

Barton Arts

Every Tuesday 10 til 12.30 at Barton Village Hall, Casual Arts and crafts, 'Bring your thing', and join our friendly chatty group, all abilities, just bring your thing. £15 per month. Contact Judith Freeman for more information judithmick.f@hotmail.co.uk / 01283 550344

Marstons Club - Over 50s

Over 50s Bingo every Tuesday afternoon. 1 'til 3pm. For more information contact Christine Adams on: 01283 299833

Walking for Health

Free event, meets every Tuesday at 2pm starting from Stretton Green. Walk for 1 hour and then meet afterwards for a drink. Friendly group.

WEDNESDAY 14TH DECEMBER

Priory Art Group

Every Wednesday morning 9.30 to 12. We are a small friendly group of artists meeting at the Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton. New members always welcome. Contact Sandra 01283 329743 or call in and see us.

THURSDAY 15TH DECEMBER

Tahitian Dance with Hinatea

Free event, every Thursday, starts 6pm. Through this class, there is no worry over performance. The focus is on feeling good about ourselves, being kind with ourselves and having fun with our body. Online event: bit.ly/3P6B1Yy

Burton Breast Care Support Group

Every 2nd Thursday of the month at Burton Library. Meetings start at 7pm. Friendly group with speakers, teas and homemade cakes. For more info email ann.davidson@sky.com

St Mary's Coffee Morning

Every Thursday morning from 9.30am to 11.30am. Join the village community for coffee, biscuits, a chat and good company. At the Old Grammar School Room in the church grounds off Church Road Rolleston on Dove. Contact Lee Cooke on 07973 411431 or Bryan emailsecsltd@yahoo.com

FRIDAY 16TH DECEMBER

Cribbage Club

Stretton Bowls Club, every Friday at 7.30pm

Carols at Rolleston-On-Dove

A family evening from 6.30pm. Carols Around The Christmas Tree at Almshouses Lawn. Burnside, Rolleston on Dove.

SATURDAY 17TH DECEMBER

Spirit Café

Free event. Every Saturday at 7.30pm. Live Spiritual Readings with our team. A great no pressure way to get insight, healing, and perspective. Online event: bit.ly/3dsbCev

SUNDAY 18TH DECEMBER

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. Online event: bit.ly/3Q1E1zw

MONDAY 19TH DECEMBER

Kundalini Yoga & Gong Bath

Free event. Every Monday. Starts 7pm. Evening yoga class designed to inspire and give you the tools to transform your life and those around you. Open to all levels. Online event: bit.ly/3P5QuYz

Christmas Bingo

Come and join us for our last Bingo this year on Monday 19th December. Eyes down at 7.45pm at Branston Village Hall Clays Lane Branston. Everyone welcome put this date in your diary and see you all there!

TUESDAY 20TH DECEMBER

Online event 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! Online event: bit.ly/3oYWAj7

WEDNESDAY 21ST DECEMBER

Photography for Children

Free event, every day. Starts 7pm. Little eyes, Big stories A photography course for children aged 6+ to encourage them to think creatively and use what they have around the house. Online event: bit.ly/3zxYBHO

THURSDAY 22ND DECEMBER

Stapenhill WI

Meet every 3rd Monday of the month from 10am-12pm at Emmanuel Church in Stapenhill with speakers' crafts and outings.

Midlands Bowel Cancer Support Group

At Whittington Village Hall 10.30 - 12.30. All welcome to drop in for a brew and a chat (and cake of course!) Meetings continue on the fourth Thursday of each month in the new year

Creative Writing Workshop

Free event every Thursday. Starts 7pm. Flex your creative muscles, let your imagination flow and put your spiralling thoughts to paper in this light and friendly creative writing workshop. All levels and abilities welcome. Online event: bit.ly/3AbW0sq

FRIDAY 23RD DECEMBER

Pick'n'Mix Craft Session

Free Event every Friday. Starts 10am. Pick'n'Mix is a free weekly arts and crafts session for young children, hosted by Shoe Lane Library. Online event: bit.ly/3zACdGW

SATURDAY 24TH DECEMBER

Christmas Eve Carolling

Bring along your family and friends for a Clubhouse Christmas Eve and sing along with our Christmas carollers. Mulled wine and pulled pork buns are available to buy from 4 pm onwards, if you would like to reserve a table please call 01283 528 336 or email christmas@branstonclub.co.uk

TUESDAY 27TH DECEMBER

Tuesdays Art Class

Every Tuesday morning 10am-1pm, during term time. Suitable for beginners and improvers. £18 per session, or £15 per half-term in advance. Newcomers taster session £15. For more info or to book your place please email helentarrat@gmail.com or phone or text 0779122888.

WEDNESDAY 28TH DECEMBER

A Climate of Change

Free event every Wednesday. Starts 4pm for 8-15yrs, 6pm for 16-24yrs. Everyone has had a different experience of COVID-19 and we want to give young people a unique opportunity to express themselves through music and the creative arts, to explore how the environment and social culture is changing around them. Online event: bit.ly/3ZF6hrU

Find more events on our website

THURSDAY 29TH DECEMBER

Coffee at the Castle

Free event, every Thursday. Starts 11am. A friendly results driven online networking event. Online event: bit.ly/3zFqn5g

FRIDAY 30TH DECEMBER

Solo Dancing

Every Friday. Solo dancing so no partners required. Learn to dance latin steps in line – learn cha-cha, salsa, mambo, rumba, merengue, samba plus waltz, quickstep etc. Intermediate 9.45 - 10.45am, £5.00. Beginner 11.00 - 11.45am, £4.00 (Attend both classes £7.00) Venue: Priory Centre, Church Road, Stretton DE13 0HE. Ring 07598159744 or email larhiney@hotmail.com for more details or just turn up.

SATURDAY 31ST DECEMBER

Electronics Club For Children

Free event. Every Saturday, starts 6pm. 1 hour session every weekend on Electronics during weekends (delivered through Zoom). Each weekly session will have unique content and will build on the knowledge from the previous sessions. Online event: bit.ly/3zyyGj2

SUNDAY 1ST JANUARY

Intro to Coding Workshop

Free event. Every Sunday. Starts 1pm. This workshop is intended for those who have little or no experience in coding and want to find out if a career in web development is right for them. Online event: bit.ly/3Aw0OFx

MONDAY 2ND JANUARY

Drink & Draw

Free event. First Monday of the Month. Starts 7pm. Drink&Draw is a casual event, run by London ACM SIGGRAPH hosted online every first Monday of each month. Online event: bit.ly/3p0vjgb

The Creative Corner

Free event, every Monday. Starts 7pm. Would you like to dedicate an hour out of your week to make that thing you still haven't made? Do you need a little extra encouragement? Online event: bit.ly/3P7CC06

TUESDAY 3RD JANUARY

Tai Chi Classes

Free event, every day. Starts 10am, 3pm or 7pm. The class starts with warming up exercises, deep breathing or Tao Yin and Kai Men Qigong which opens the energy channels. This takes about twenty minutes, then we have twenty minutes of Tai Chi dance and the beginners class is concentrating on the first ten moves. Online event: bit.ly/3QcC6zo

WEDNESDAY 4TH JANUARY

Barton WI

Meeting the 1st Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm at St James's Hall Barton. For more information email pennycarthy@hotmail.co.uk

Stroke and Neuro Exercise group

Every Wednesday at 11am. Run by experienced neuro physiotherapists. All ages and abilities welcome. Circuit exercise class with exercises tailored to each individual. £10 per class. Run at our bespoke clinic in Needwood. Screening assessment and first class FREE! Please call or email to book. info@pathwaysphysio.co.uk / 07410 623439. www.pathwaysphysio.co.uk

THURSDAY 5TH JANUARY

Smelly Wellies

Let your little ones imagination develop, grow and flourish through the wonderful world of play. Set in the imaginary town of Smelly Wellies. Aimed at walkers to 5 years, younger siblings are more than welcome. From 11am-12noon at Rugeley Community Church and Centre, WS15 2HX. £5 for up to two children, £7 for up to three children.

YESS Emotional Support Drop-in Session

'Your Emotional Support Service' host a free session, every Thursday 10am-12noon at 23 Carter St, Uttoxeter, ST14 8EY. Please call ahead to register your place 01889 567756

FRIDAY 6TH JANUARY

Abstract Art Workshop

Donations welcome. Every Friday. Starts 7pm. This workshop is for everyone who wants to relax, who feels isolated with lockdown and wants to enjoy art and explore new ideas. Children, adults, families, all welcome Online event: bit.ly/3QrNtTz

SATURDAY 7TH JANUARY

Reduce Procrastination Workshop

Free event, every day. Starts 7pm. Join this free 1-to-1 workshop to better understand how you can overcome procrastination and fatigue, in order to maintain sustainable high performance and consistency towards your business and life goals. Online event: bit.ly/3bK9Y7v

SUNDAY 8TH JANUARY

Intro to Coding Workshop

Free event. Every Sunday. Starts 1pm. This workshop is intended for those who have little or no experience in coding and want to find out if a career in web development is right for them. Online event: bit.ly/3p4i8L0

Rykild Rabble Morris Dancers

We welcome anyone who wants to come and experience the joy of traditional dancing. FREE and no obligation. At Kings Bromley Village Hall 11am to 1 pm. Every Sunday. For more information call 07875 999673

MONDAY 9TH JANUARY

Burton Prostate Cancer Support Group

Every second Monday of each month at the Scout headquarters in Rolleston on Dove DE13 9AB, meetings start at 7pm to 9pm. Everybody is very welcome, Tea, coffee and cake. Contact details email: burton.prostate.cancer.supportgrp@gmail.com Tele: 07478 889577

Monday Meditation

Free event. Every Monday, starts 6.30pm. A free meditation session, online through Zoom, every week. I provide this as a free, spiritual practice to anyone who wants to practice meditation, and pranayama, as a gift. Online event: bit.ly/3vNcdhs

COMPETITION WINNERS

Congratulations to our **Escape Time** Burton competition winners who have won various prizes:

Omaira Mahmood, Branston

Lindsey Bufton, Stretton

Brian Bolton, Tutbury

Rachel Elston, Walton

Look out elsewhere in **LOCAL LINKS** this month to win a Rollator from Middletons Mobility Store Burton.

LAST MONTH'S SUDOKU PUZZLE SOLUTION

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



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Christmas Tree Safety by Derby Cats Protection



Cats Protection has lots of ideas on how to make your Christmas tree cat-safe. This includes covering any wires leading to the tree by using plastic cardboard tubes and making sure you switch your Christmas lights off at the mains when you're not home. You should also make sure your Christmas tree has a sturdy base or secure it with weights to stop it from falling over. Any hanging decorations should be hung closer to the top of the tree, out of reach of your cat's paws, and avoid using glass baubles or any decorations that could break easily and cause harm to your cat. To be super safe, you could ditch the tinsel and swap it for ribbons. But if you want to keep tinsel, just make sure you keep it out of your cat's reach and don't let them ingest it. Cats Protection adds that you shouldn't place any presents for your cat under the tree – especially if they contain catnip, because this will just make your cat manic.

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after



before

Wintertime Gardening Indoors *by Tim Brooks*

It is that time of year for a gardener like myself, when you long for the longer daylight hours to return again. The lack of daylight, together with the cold weather restricting what jobs you can get on with now.

However there are a few things you can sow indoors, like salad crops grown in a greenhouse or in a heated propagator. Types of lettuce like "little gem" or greens like corn salad and mustard plants.

Aubergines can also be sown indoors in a heated propagator, as these are slow growing plants. Sweet peas can also be sown now and you could use old toilet roll tubes filled with compost, stood upright in a tray, which give room for a deeper root system to develop. Protect indoors from frosts if placed on a cold windowsill. Pinch out the growing tips when about two inches tall. This encourages the side shoots to develop, which will produce more flowering stems later on.



You could also start sowing Geranium seeds in pots, again with the help of a propagator. For an early crop of broad beans, these can also be sown now under polythene, which should crop in May next year, a few weeks earlier than those sown in springtime.



Greenhouses are best lined with "bubble wrap" during the winter months, as it's a great insulation and keeps frosts away from delicate seedlings and overwintered plants stored

in them. It also helps with germination when you start sowing more varieties early in the year. You can remove it in April to store for next winter.

Now is also a good time to start ordering your seed packets from the endless seed catalogues that drop through our doors this time of year. I usually order too many packets in over enthusiasm for the coming gardening season ahead. But at our allotment site I devised a "seed share" box, where you can put any unwanted or part-used seed packets, so others can use them or even share their unwanted packets, to save any waste.

If the weather is kind during December, there is still plenty of time for winter digging if you are lucky enough to have an allotment or a veg garden. It will save time in spring and give you a head start when it is time for sowing outside again. It is a good excuse for working off the "excess eating" most of us indulge in over the Christmas season!

Merry Christmas Folks!

LOCAL LINKS SUDOKU

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

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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Reverse Advent Calendar



1 Cereal	2 Peanut Butter	3 Rice Pudding	4 Coffee
5 Biscuits	6 Tinned Fruit	7 Jam	8 Tinned Tuna
9 Tea Bags	10 Apple Sauce	11 Long Life Fruit Juice	12 Cranberry Sauce
13 Baked Beans	14 UHT Long Life Milk	15 Rice	16 Custard
17 Pasta	18 Tomato Sauce	19 Chicken Soup	20 Tomato Soup
21 Tinned Sweetcorn	22 Pot Noodles	23 Tinned Carrots	24 Christmas Cake

On each day, add an item to a box.
Then on Christmas Eve, donate the
box to a food bank.

Victoria Sylvester
Branch Director

Our reverse advent calendar is a great way for you to donate food for families living in poverty in the local area, to give them a treat this Christmas. If you're struggling to get to a food bank, you can contact me on 01283 247 076 and I will collect it from you.

EweMove.com/BartonUnderNeedwood

