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Welcome to the November edition...

By the time this arrives Christmas will only be 6 weeks away! Check out page 6 to see what local Christmassy events are on. If you fancy treating yourself to a night out before the main event, find out what's on at the cinema and the **Core theatre in November on page 36**. Have a look through the magazine too as some of our advertisers are holding their own local Christmas events and would love your support.

You've just about got time to make any last-minute changes to your home in time for Christmas so remember to support local businesses as they really value their customers – we have a great collection of local tradespeople and businesses who are local and are looking for your custom.

Here's hoping the **pre-Christmas build up** isn't too hectic and that you find the time to relax, maybe over a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie!



Zoe Reece
Tel: **07557 220585**
Email: zoe@dorridgedirectory.com
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community events

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Solihull Choral Society Concert – Remembrance

Saturday 17th November, 7.30-9.45pm

Solihull School Chapel, 793 Warwick Road, Solihull

A concert of remembrance accompanied by the Sinfonia of Birmingham, conducted by Oliver Walker. Featuring work by Vaughan Williams and including performances by the superb baritone Andrew Ashwin, as well as violinist Jacqui Martens. Tickets available online from www.solihullchoral.org.uk or on the door.

Black Tie Ball in aid of Solihull Marie Curie Hospice

Saturday 17th November, from 7pm

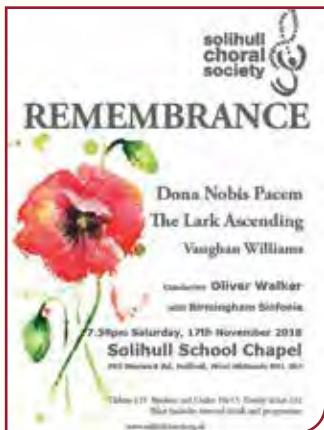
St Johns Hotel, 651 Warwick Road, Solihull

A fabulous evening consisting of a drinks reception, three course meal, live entertainment, Casino tables with fun money, photo booth and plenty of amazing raffle prizes. Tickets £45 per person – available from Claire on 07774 759758.



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- **Jellybeans** – held monthly on a Thursday morning for story-time and rhymes for the under 5's 10.45am -11.30am
- **Monday Story Times** - Weekly story time and rhymes for toddlers and pre-school children 10.30am-11.00am
- **Under - fives** Rhyme Times at 2pm every Friday
- **Knowle Knit and Natter Group** – held monthly on a Tuesday 10.30am -11.30am
- **The Reading Café** – Monthly on a Friday morning 10.30am -11.30am
- **Self-Running Family History Group** – Monthly on a Tuesday 2.15pm -4.00pm
- **Reader's Circles** – Knowle Readers Circle meets monthly on a Friday 2.15pm
- **Knowle Library Self Running Readers Circle** monthly meeting Tuesday 11.00am -12pm
- **Poetry Group** - Monthly on a Tuesday 11.00am -12.00pm
- **Scrabble Club** - Adult Scrabble Club Fortnightly – Thursday 2.00pm





Charity Christmas Fair

**Saturday 1st Dec,
10am – 2pm, Knowle
Village Hall**

The Knowle Village Hall Fund Raising Committee, in association with the Knowle Flower Club, invite you to a Charity Christmas Fayre attended by Santa Claus himself with his Children's Lucky Dip. There will be plenty of Christmas and other items on sale plus competitions and Face Painting as well as refreshments. Everyone is most welcome.

"The Chimes of Christmas"

**Saturday 8th December, 7.30pm
Knowle Village Hall**

The Strolling Players are presenting this festive concert in aid of Macmillan Cancer Care: Reg Charity 261017. The programme

includes G&S, songs from the musicals, opera - plenty to enjoy! Tickets £8 from Box Office 01564 772071.

Christmas Outdoor Cinema

**10th – 22nd December
Mell Square**

Visit the marquee in Mell Square to see showings of your favourite childhood Christmas movies, including Frozen and Miracle on 34th Street. The movies are free to watch, and seating is on a first come, first serve basis. Refreshments will be available to buy, including hot chocolate and hot dogs.



Solihull Festive Feast

**19th – 23rd December
Solihull town centre**

The event will feature a range of food and drink options, including a mix of international traders as well as local producers



"Scrooge – the Musical"

**Wednesday 30th Jan to Friday
1st Feb 2019 (7.30pm) / Saturday
2nd Feb 2019 (2pm & 7pm)
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Based on "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens, this spectacular musical, full of joy, memorable songs and magical illusions, is about hope, redemption and the kind of happiness that money can't buy. Tickets available on-line: www.solihull-smash.org.uk or telephone 07506 206892. For ages 7+. Adults £12.50, children (under 16) £8.50 - including refreshments.



Being the best version of ourselves.

It can be very difficult in a world of Facebook and Instagram to not compare ourselves to others. We know we don't grow green grass simply by looking at our neighbour's garden but we cannot help wanting what someone else has sometimes.

11+ results are out and there are many disappointed, hardworking students out there comparing themselves to others who did better. Imagine though that the test was so hard, none of their friends got through, they would feel instantly better. **The fear of missing out (fomo) is not just for children though is it?** When you got your last car, you were probably over the moon with it, kept it tidy and felt really happy driving in it but as time goes by we get bored with the material things and the car gets messy, a new model comes out and hey presto! we are comparing it with the shiny new one!

If I can't make a date for work or play, I immediately start to wonder what opportunities or fun I am missing out on! When I am in someone else's business though or (someone's car for that matter!) that means I am not in my own and so I am so busy looking at what everyone else is achieving, I forget to work on myself. We need to tend our own lawns instead of looking enviously at those of others.

The only person we can truly compare ourselves with is our self! Being in the now and focusing on our behaviour and our achievements in light of our own view of the world and previously set goals is a far more effective way to be the best version of ourselves.

Reviewing where we are and what we have achieved is a great way to become the best version of who we



are and far more realistic. Don't be fooled by the perfect life pictures on social media, they have been carefully selected to paint a picture that is not real. **Instead, draw your own picture of what YOU want and reflect each day in a journal on how you are getting on.** The three Rs are a great way to do this. Review, Refine and Repeat. What would you say about the day, what would you do better next time and what would you do again.

Happy journaling and let me know how you get on!



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See page 60



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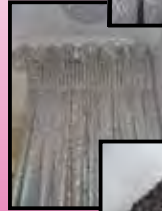
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Save with a **Service**

By Tom Hancock

Why an annual boiler service is important.

Sometimes we might wonder if it's worth arranging a boiler service, especially if everything seems to be working fine. It's one expense we can do without when Christmas is looming. Here are five reasons to book your service now.

IT SAVES LIVES - A faulty boiler is dangerous. According to government statistics, each year in the UK, 50 adults and children die from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning; 200 are hospitalised and

around 4,000 people end up in A&E with symptoms due to leaking boilers. A Gas Safe qualified boiler engineer will check for and fix any leaks or weak points during a service.

IT SAVES MONEY ON FUEL BILLS - A qualified boiler engineer will check that your boiler is running as efficiently as possible and isn't wasting energy.

IT SAVES THE ENVIRONMENT - If your boiler isn't wasting energy your carbon footprint is reduced.

IT SAVES ON REPAIR BILLS

- That annual service to make sure your boiler is working correctly will save money on future repairs by letting the boiler engineer fix minor issues which might have caused significant problems later.

IT SAVES ON INSURANCE

HASSLES - Most boiler warranties and some home and business insurance policies require that you ensure your boiler is safe to use. An annual boiler service meets most insurance policy requirements.

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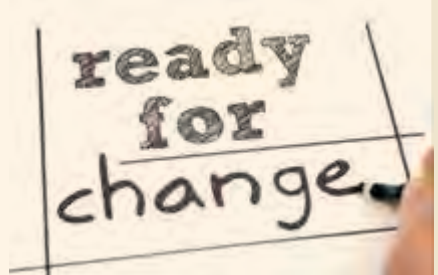
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Why wear a Poppy?

It's over a century since more than nine million soldiers were killed during the First World War. The last of the veterans from that era are dead and many young people know little about the causes and devastating aftermath of the conflict. **Many refuse to wear a poppy because they think it glorifies war.** Perhaps it's more important than ever that we discuss the poppy's place in history.

Much of the worst fighting in World War 1 took place in Flanders, the western part of Belgium. The area suffered terribly, with homes, farms, roads and trees all completely destroyed. The land became a bleak, muddy graveyard for the thousands of soldiers who fell there.

One plant, however, thrived in the disturbed soil and **that was the poppy.** Year after year, as the warm weather arrived, the poppies bloomed and turned the grim bare ground into a sea of red. At that time, fighting in Flanders was a young Lieutenant, Colonel John McCrae, a Canadian physician. In May 1915, his close friend and fellow soldier was killed in action. Seeing the poppies growing alongside his grave moved McCrae to write the poem '**In Flanders Fields**', which was later published in Punch magazine.



The idea to use the poppy as a symbol of remembrance for dead soldiers came from an American professor and YWCA worker, Moina Michael, in 1918. She wrote a poem in reply to McCrae's called '**We Shall Keep the Faith**' and started to sell silk poppies. The idea was adopted by the American Legion in 1920 and she became known as '**The Poppy Lady**'.

In 1921, Anna E Guerin started making artificial poppies in France and gained the support of Field Marshal Douglas Haig, founder of the Royal British Legion.

The first poppy appeal was held on Armistice Day 1921. It was hugely popular and, despite a recommended selling price of threepence per poppy, single petals sold for £5. In all, the appeal raised £106,000 – that's nearly £30 million in today's terms!

In recent years some people have chosen to wear a white poppy, either instead of or alongside a traditional red one. **White poppies symbolise pacifism and also remember the civilians killed in conflicts past and present,** as well as the soldiers. The idea is not a modern one as I originally assumed; it was initially put forward in 1926 by the No More War Movement, and the first white poppies were sold by the Cooperative Women's Guild in 1933. They are now distributed by the Peace Pledge Union, a British pacifist non-governmental organisation that works for a world without war.

However you **choose to wear your poppy this year** I hope you now have a greater understanding of the interesting and complex story behind this iconic flower.

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Choose the Perfect Winter Coat

A winter coat is one of life's bigger clothing investments, so it makes sense to be fully informed and have a plan before hitting the shops (or the internet!).

The first thing to look at is your lifestyle. Imagine someone who travels by car and parks outside their place of work every day, but who likes to go for country walks with their dog at the weekend. Then imagine someone who waits for a bus or a train every day and has a half mile walk at either end of their commute. They will have different demand from their winter coats.

In the UK winters vary from mild to extreme but one thing is certain...it will rain! A waterproof outer shell is a must-have for any winter coat. Look for 'water resistant' on the label. Don't rule-out a proper wool coat; a somewhat unsung property of wool is its water-resistance. Beware though: many coats which purport to be 'wool' are a wool blend with only about 20% wool fibres. These will be less resistant to a downpour; more likely to make you sweat and smell a bit fusty after a while.

Look at how well insulated the coat is. Proper



wool coats are naturally warm and feel luxurious. Among other types of coat insulation is a choice of down or synthetic fibres. Down is a classic, natural insulator. It is incredibly lightweight though less good for very wet weather. If you plan to walk a lot in all weathers it may not be the right choice. Synthetic insulation holds up better against moisture but won't retain its insulating properties for as long as down.

Check all zips and cuffs are made from high quality material that will last. Double zips or a zip and Velcro-flap combination create added warmth. Cuffs should be cosy around the wrists so that no drafts can get in.

Once you've found a coat you like, examine it to make sure it really is high quality. Make sure all the seams are secure and there are no holes where insulation is escaping.

There are many super-stylish winter coats around, but never sacrifice comfort and warmth for style as you will regret it on the coldest wettest days. For example, check that you can wear layers, or a thick jumper under the coat. I've found many 'fashion' coats have arms which are too skinny to allow for a jumper and thus restrict your movement and / or blood-flow!

Finally think creatively. In our first hypothetical example the person might prefer a light warm wool jacket for commuting by car to work, but a thick full-length down-insulated coat for country walks at the weekend. OR, they might prefer to buy a jacket with a lining that can be removed and worn separately as a jacket in its own right for car journeys, then with the waterproof outer layer at weekends. If your budget is tight try searching through charity shops or factory shops. There are some amazing bargains to be found from heavy pure wool overcoats to branded hiking wear.

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The Frenemy!

By Sarah Davey

Does one of your friends always seem to undermine you? Do you feel vaguely uncomfortable in their presence and as though something is 'off'? **You might have a frenemy!**

Urban Dictionary describes a frenemy as an enemy disguised as a friend. They seem supportive, **but their ulterior motive is to compete with or even humiliate you.**

Frenemies are clever and manipulative – but once you're on to them, they're fairly easy to spot.

Frenemies are often the type who crave intimacy and **want to be your 'bestie' five minutes after you meet.**

Real friends, on the other hand, tend to take their time getting to know you – and they don't demand details or every intimate detail of your life. **With a frenemy it's all too much, too soon.** Within hours of meeting you a frenemy will probably go into great detail about their life and expect you to reciprocate. The problem is, this closer-than-close relationship turns sour if you don't play along or won't return the favour. A Frenemy may play the sympathy card: **'I do so much for you but you're too selfish to spend the weekend with me / lend me £100 etc'** or they may turn on you suddenly, 'Fine, don't bother to call me EVER again.' Real friends understand when you're busy and don't always expect you to drop everything for them.

A frenemy's most disturbing trait though is the ability to smile while making passive-aggressive insults and criticisms. If you call out her behaviour she pretends it's a joke, leaving you feeling stupid and wrong-footed. **Real friends may tease you but respect you and know when to stop.**

A frenemy zooms in on your insecurities. Instead of being sympathetic and supportive,

they'll slyly encourage you to feel worse. A real friend says, **"I'm sorry you're hurting. Here's a hug and let's go for coffee and cake."**

Go with your gut. That nagging feeling which tells you something is wrong with the friendship? Listen to it. Trust your instincts and observe your "friend" carefully to see whether the behaviour is a one-off slip or part of a pattern of behaviour.

Of course, there's the sticky issue of how to deal with a frenemy. The best way is to cut communication – reply to fewer texts and unfollow her on social media. If you are lucky the 'friendship' will taper off naturally. Unfortunately, some frenemies react to this by turning nasty, spreading rumours or trying to turn mutual friends against you. Don't rise to the bait. It will be difficult but be scrupulous in your own behaviour; say nothing bad about her; remain calm and collected, but if she bullies or harasses you, keep screenshots or copies of everything.

If she confronts you, remain diplomatic. Say something like **'We don't seem to get on as well now, so I think taking a break is a positive step for both of us.'**

Lastly, be a good friend to your other friends – show them that you're a kind and decent human being. If others only ever see you being nice, they are unlikely to believe rumours, and if they do, **you're better off without them!**



COMPETITION

WIN 2 tickets

to see A Viennese Strauss Gala

Tuesday 29th January 2019, 7.30pm

The Core Theatre, Solihull (formerly Solihull Arts Complex)

For your chance to win these tickets, worth £42, visit the Core Theatre website page for this event - www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk - to find the answer to this question:

How many years has this show been running for?

Email your answer to: thecoretheatre@solihull.gov.uk –
and please put 'Strauss' as the subject line

Closing date for entries is 1st December and the winner will be drawn at random and notified by email after this date.

About the Show:

Recreating the romance of the Viennese Festive season, reminding you of a bygone age of glamorous soirees and Strauss waltzes. The Show features highlights from some of the great Operettas of the Strauss family, Kalman and Lehar; including Die Fledermaus, The Merry Widow and many more.

This wonderful production is cleverly staged and choreographed, and authentically costumed, and will appeal to the romantic as much as the music aficionado. It continues to be hugely popular all over the country.



Directed by Stephen Leatherland

SAD times

By Louise Addison

As many as one in six people suffer with a low mood in Winter and a small number of these will suffer with the more serious Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

SAD sufferers are less able to control their serotonin levels in the absence of sunlight and if serotonin levels drop too low, so will your mood.

Here are five ways to raise your serotonin levels even in the coldest, darkest months.

Lighten up - As lack of sunlight is the problem, more light could be a solution. Light boxes are available that provide levels of brightness which can elevate your brain's serotonin levels.

Exercise - There's evidence that aerobic exercise not only boosts your brain's levels

of serotonin but also keeps those levels elevated for hours after your workout.

Laugh - A study in Norway found that laughing with friends, watching a funny movie or doing something that briefly improves your mood may stoke your brain's levels of serotonin.

Step outside - Research shows that walking in nature — especially with other people — is an effective way to combat depression. Spending at least 30 minutes a day outdoors even during the cold winter months may offset the seasonal drops in serotonin.

Physical contact - Massage has been proven to increase your brain and body's levels of serotonin. The soothing experience significantly reduces the blues.



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For front entrance and back entrance, there are three main types of products used in homes today – wooden, UPVC and composite doors.



UPVC Doors

UPVC doors are available in a wide range of colours and finishes and their comparative lower cost to alternative materials has made them popular in recent years. They also have other benefits, such as a higher resistance to weathering and generally require less maintenance



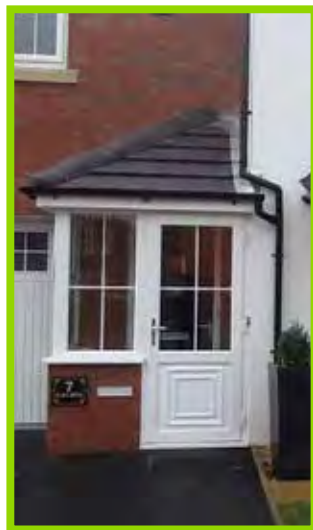
Bifold doors

Bifold doors are built to stack neatly to one or both sides of an aperture when open. This allows people to move freely from inside to outside or from one room to another. These can be used as room dividers or to open onto a balcony or terrace.

Composite Doors

As their name suggests, they are made up from several different materials to produce a robust, secure and attractive-looking to protect your home. The combination of materials, such as PVC, wood, insulating foam and GRP (glass reinforced plastic) results in a product that is very strong and requires no painting or varnishing to keep it looking good over its long lifetime. An occasional wipe with a damp cloth is all that is needed to keep it clean and retain its smart appearance.

Porches



How do you get to Wimbledon?

By Debbie Singh-Bhatti



No the answer isn't practice, unless you have designs on the trophy of course!

I've always been a fan of Wimbledon, and ever since my older brother came home from a school trip, excitedly describing his visit to Centre Court, I've had a dream to visit the championship myself. If a visit to Wimbledon is on your bucket list too, here's what to do. There are four options.

The first is the Public Ballot. To take part, send a SAE to AELTC, PO Box 98, London, SW19 5AE by 19th December latest and you will receive an application form. This needs to be returned by 31st December and grants you entry into the draw for a

pair of tickets, but you can't select which court or day you will visit. Successful entrants will be chosen by random by computer and will be notified by post. Once an offer of tickets has been received, you will need to pay for them online by debit or credit card. If you're unsuccessful with the Public Ballot, all is not lost! You can still buy tickets online at Ticketmaster. Several hundred tickets for Centre Court and Court 3 go on sale one and two days before the day of play. **They can sell out in seconds** and are issued strictly on a first come, first served basis, with a maximum of two tickets allowed per person.

If you're particularly gutsy, you could join The Queue.

A limited number of tickets for Centre and Courts 1 and 2 can be purchased on the day, along with several thousand Grounds Passes for courts 3-18. The earlier you join the queue, the more likely you are to get the best tickets, so if it's one of the show courts you're after, **don't forget your tent!**

Finally, you could purchase a **hospitality package**. This is expensive but offers you the **VIP treatment** and would really **make your visit a day to remember!**

For more information on how to plan your trip to Wimbledon, visit www.wimbledon.com.

Maybe I'll see you there?!

The Perfect Cheeseboard

By Tom Hancock

How much cheese? - Allow about 100g-125g (3½-4oz) cheese per person if your cheeseboard is being served after a meal, or slightly more - 150g (5oz) per person if you're serving it as a snack/light meal.

Which cheese? - Three or four cheeses is enough – more than that and there's too much for the palate to enjoy. The cheeses should be different styles, textures and flavours. Cheddar, Stilton and Brie is a classic combination, as it mixes a hard, soft and a blue. Why not go totally

British with a traditional West Country Farmhouse Cheddar matched with Cropwell Bishop, a wonderful robust blue, and maybe Bath Soft Cheese, which is gorgeously gooey and mushroomy in flavour.

It's nice to put one wild-card cheese on the board like a citrusy goat's cheese or meaty smoked cheese like St James.

Crackers - A good oat biscuit, cracker or artisan bread will complement the cheese. Add a chutney - look for unusual brands at farmers' markets, and some apples or grapes.

Drinks - After a meal a sweet fortified white wine is always good. You could even try a whiskey, or a gin and tonic. If the board is going to serve as a light meal, then beer or cider is a good choice.

A note on storage - Store in a cold room or the bottom of the fridge, wrapped in waxed paper if possible. This allows the cheese to breathe. Let the cheese to come up to room temperature for about 20 minutes before serving for maximum flavour.



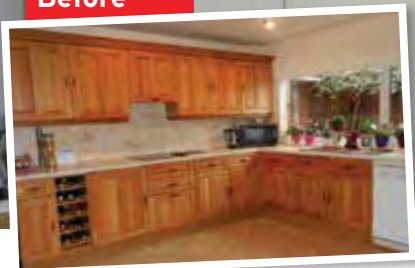
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a taster of what's on in November and December...

CINEMA

Juliet, Naked

from 2nd November

Based on the novel by Nick Hornby, this is the story of Annie, Duncan's long-suffering girlfriend, who unexpectedly strikes up a friendship with Tucker Crowe, a musician whom Duncan's obsessed with.



The Grinch

from 9th November

'The Grinch' lives alone and likes peace and quiet. When his neighbours' Christmas celebrations threaten to disrupt his tranquillity, he decides to steal Christmas. They're going to make this Christmas three times bigger than usual, so he's going to be even more mean to teach them a lesson.



Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes Of Grindelwald

from 16th November

This sequel sees the powerful dark wizard having escaped custody, and in the process of gathering his followers. Newt Scamander and Albus Dumbledore must stop him. Dumbledore can't move against Grindelwald himself, and has sent Newt to Paris to help in his place. Newt has accepted this task unaware of the dangers that wait for him – but fortunately, he won't be facing them alone.



Robin Hood

from 21st November

Robin of Loxley returns home from the Crusades to a conflicted England. Under disguise, he becomes Robin Hood and joins the fight against the corrupt crown. Living a double life – as

Hood and Loxley – he'll face his greatest battle yet.

Nativity Rocks!

from 23rd November

This film takes us back to St Bernadette's Primary School, where staff and students are auditioning for a spectacular rock musical competition. But it'll take some doing to get everyone's voices into shape.



Ralph Breaks the Internet

from 30th November

This follow-up to Wreck-It Ralph follows Ralph and Vanellope on their latest adventure after their arcade gets connected to the World Wide Web. Travelling through this virtual metropolis, how can these two misfits hope to succeed in this huge, strange world?



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T.Rextasy

Thursday 15th November

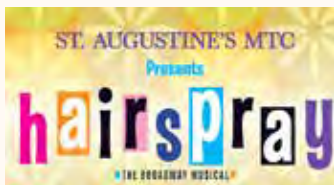
Marc Bolan and T.Rex, were one of the most flamboyant, charismatic stars of the original glam-rock era and the band had a string of huge hits throughout the 1970s. T.Rextasy have performed around the world for over 20 years and the band is now accepted as the world's only official live tribute band dedicated to T.Rex.



Hairspray – the Broadway Musical

20th – 25th November

You can't stop the beat in this big and bold musical about one girl's dream to dance! Set in the early 1960s, Hairspray features the loveable plus-size teen Tracy Turnblad who just loves to dance! This Solihull premiere is presented by St. Augustine's Musical Theatre Company.



Let's Twist Again

Friday 30th November

Love 50's and 60's music? Then you will love 'Let's Twist Again. This company of critically acclaimed artistes and musicians returns by popular demand to deliver a show that combines great music, fun and laughter with the greatest hits of Elvis, Dusty, Lulu, The Beatles, Cilla and more.



80's Mania

Saturday 1st December

Europe's Official 1980s Multi-Tribute Concert featuring 25 chart topping pop icons authentically recreated with a live band and awesome dancers. Includes tributes to Duran Duran, The Human League, Kim Wilde, Culture Club, Madonna, Madness and many more!



MYJO Christmas Concert

Sunday 2nd December

Wonderful Christmas concert performed by the talented Midland Youth Jazz Orchestra - led by John Ruddick. Their Christmas concert, with loads of Yuletide songs, all played in the exciting MYJO style, will be supported by some great young singers.



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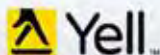
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Although couples marry in the belief that the marriage will be forever, it is an unfortunate fact that almost 50% of marriages now end in divorce and parties need to protect their financial position.

Pre-nuptial agreements are important where...

- One party has or is likely to have significant inheritance prospects.
- One party has significantly greater capital or income than the other.
- One party has a successful business that they would like to keep separate from personal finances.
- One or both parties are entering into a second marriage and they wish to retain their previous divorce settlement.
- One or both parties have children from a previous marriage and they wish to protect their children's inheritance rights.

The court's starting point

In deciding financial settlements, the Court's starting point is a 50/50 split of all the assets. It then considers a variety of factors in deciding whether to move from this position such as whether or not the couple have entered into any prior agreements.

Given significant weight by the Courts

Although pre-nuptial agreements are not legally-binding documents, since the landmark Supreme Court case of *Radmacher v Granatino* in 2010, the courts now give significant weight to them when assessing finances.

If it can be shown that both parties freely entered into the agreement and understood the implications of signing it at the time, then as long as it is not unfair to hold the other party to the agreement the courts should uphold it. Pre-nuptial agreements must be drafted and dealt with carefully to ensure the Court have no reason not to uphold it.



Dipika Mistry and Kathryn Ferris
Wallace Robinson & Morgan Family Lawyers

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A well prepared pre-nuptial agreement could save you a lot of time and money should your marriage come to an end.

If you are getting married, contact us to talk to one of our family law solicitors who can advise you as to whether such an agreement will be right for you.

Co-habitation Agreements

If you are not getting married but are planning to share a home with your partner, you may want to consider a co-habitation agreement. As the law does not afford the same protection to cohabiting couples, there are a number of things which should be taken into consideration when setting up home outside of marriage, including:

- Whether the home should be held as joint tenants or tenants in common, and how the parties' contributions to the purchase price can be protected
- Whether a life insurance policy should be taken out
- Whether the parties need to make a Will and, if so, what provisions should be made for each other. Under the intestacy rules unmarried partners will not inherit upon the other's death, and so this is an important thing to consider.

The legal position regarding any children will also be affected by the fact the parents are not married. A cohabitation agreement sets out arrangements to apply both whilst the parties are living together and on the breakdown of the relationship.

How we can help

Wallace Robinson & Morgan Solicitors have the expertise to help draw up an appropriate agreement that both you and your partner are happy with and one that the courts will uphold.

We will make sure that both of you have obtained independent legal advice and fully understand the implications of the agreement.

We will make certain that both of you have given full and frank financial disclosure and ensure that the agreement is realistic and fair.

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Leaf matter. Leaves matter!

Oh, those autumn leaves. So pretty on the trees but they can be rather inconvenient in the garden.

If they drift too deep on the lawn the grass underneath will die so there's nothing to do but rake them up. However,

these fallen leaves are a little autumn gift from nature and with them you can create leaf mould. **Leaf mould is free garden nourishment**, and it's like feeding your soil with the finest fillet steak. Leaf mould is what's left when the dead, fallen leaves from deciduous trees and shrubs are heaped up and allowed to rot down. As they slowly decompose, only the toughest bits remain,

eventually forming crumbly, dark brown crumbs, a bit like chocolate sprinkles. Leaf mould is easy to make, a delight to handle, and you **can't possibly overfeed your soil with it**. Micro-organisms are the driving factor, performing an alchemy that gives the finished product an almost **magical quality**. Its fibrous nature retains moisture and enables free



BY RACHAEL LEVERTON

drainage, which means it also makes a great mulch for trilliums or wood anemones, whose natural habitat is woodland. I adhere to a policy of only collecting leaves where necessary. Where they have fallen and are not obscuring the grass I leave them for the earthworms to pull into their burrows (I wrote last month about how I think of earthworms as my friends and so do nothing to discourage them).

Simply sweeping leaves off paths and decking or patios will keep the garden looking cared for. I also remove any that have drifted around my herb garden because herbs like to be able to breathe. These tasks alone give me enough leaves to create plenty of **lovely leaf mould**.

If you have enough room, create a separate leaf heap rather than simply adding leaves to **compost**. It's quite simple to construct a leaf cage using chicken wire and



posts. You can even bag your leaves in punctured black bin bags and put them in an out-of-the-way corner.

The puncturing is necessary to allow air to circulate. A leaf heap made this autumn will be ready by next autumn. While you're tidying up the leaves it can be tempting to cut down faded perennials. But if you leave them, in a

month or so you will find they have turned into wonderful sculptural winter skeletons which look **incredibly beautiful in the frosts**.

It's all down to personal taste of course, but I often leave perennials standing until February or March **simply to provide** a bit of interest over the winter.

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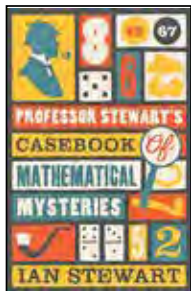


a good read

reviews By Willow Coby

Professor Stewart's Casebook of Mathematical Mysteries

by Ian Stewart



Like its wildly popular predecessors Cabinet of Mathematical Curiosities and Hoard of Mathematical Treasures, Professor Stewart's third book is a miscellany of over 150 mathematical curios and conundrums. He manages the subtle balancing act of appealing to all. Those with a mathematical background will find much to enjoy but so will those whose abiding memory of school maths is counting the minutes until the end-of-lesson bell. He does write about complicated things but in his hands it all becomes understandable and even fun. Casebook is packed full of humour. It follows the adventures of the hapless detective Hemlock Soames and his sidekick Dr John Watsup. By a remarkable coincidence they live at 222B Baker Street, just across the road from their more illustrious neighbour... who can never be mentioned by name.

The book is designed to be read, and shared, in bite-sized chunks and it is the sharing aspect which makes this irresistible. You'll just have to try out the number games and puzzles on members of your family and you won't be able to stop yourself from sharing all the fascinating facts and tricks such as 'The Case of the Face-Down Aces', a mathematical magic trick of quite devilish cunning... Ranging from one-liners to four-page investigations from the frontiers of mathematical research, the Casebook is Professor Stewart at his challenging and entertaining best.

Harvesting Dreams: Hundertwasser for Kids

by Barbara Stieff



You may never have heard of Friedensreich Hundertwasser, but he was an eccentric artist, humanitarian, environmentalist and architect. He dedicated his life to the beautification of the world in which we live. In this colourful, quirky book Barbara Stieff introduces children to Hundertwasser's free-thinking, inspirational approach to art and the environment. There is something about Hundertwasser's vibrant, exciting work which appeals to children and adults alike. Most children enjoy colouring and love bright colours but often become bogged down with making things look 'right' rather than developing their own creative style. Likewise, adults don't always fully appreciate children's imaginative artwork and gently admonish that cows are not pink with yellow stripes...when of course there's no good reason why they shouldn't be any colour at all in a painting.

Stieff's engaging and slightly off-the-wall style suits the book. She spent many years as an art educator at ZOOM, a children's museum in Vienna and it shows. The book is packed with fun projects and suggestions for stretching children's imaginations in an artistic but also in a more general way. It is also lavishly illustrated with Hundertwasser's work which makes it a beautiful decorative item in its own right; a fact of which Hundertwasser would certainly have approved.

Pure Air

By Louise Addison



What you need to know about air-purifiers

Do you suffer with allergies? Are you particularly sensitive to chemical smells from cleaning fluids or detergents? Do you live on a busy road and worry about pollution levels? You might benefit from an air-purifier.

Indoor air pollutants fall into three main categories: **Particles** For example: dust, pollen, and pet dander. **Microorganisms and bioaerosols** For example: dust mites, viruses, bacteria, mould spores, fungi.

Chemical vapours and odours For example: volatile organic compounds (VOCs), odours, smoke and perfumes, including those given off by cleaning products, and cooking smells.

Air purifiers work to filter these contaminants out of your air. Anyone sensitive to allergens or with asthma might benefit from an air purifier. Unfortunately, an air purifier isn't a miracle replacement for keeping your home clean and ventilating it when possible. The most effective way to manage pollutants in your air is still to avoid introducing them in the first place. Preventive measures like not smoking indoors, vacuuming regularly, including upholstery, allowing fresh air in on occasion and keeping solid surfaces sanitized are still the best ways to combat indoor air issues.

Air purifiers remove pollutants from the air using one of three methods: filtration, electrostatic precipitation and ionizing. Ionizing air-purifiers work by causing particles to attach to surfaces or to each other and settle out of the air, but they are not recommended for asthma sufferers as they produce ozone which can trigger an attack. **Using a filter-based air purifier is considered the healthiest and most effective option.**

The most effective form of air filtration is a **HEPA (high-efficiency particulate absorber)** filter. Models with filters suck in your home's air and move it through the filter with a circulating fan. When the air moves through each filter, any pollutants and particles are caught in the filter. The clean air is then pushed back out into your space. **HEPA filters** do a better job here than a standard filter because they can catch finer particles.

Air purifiers vary hugely in price. The major difference is typically the quality of the air or how big an area it can purify effectively. Most models are designed to sit on the floor, but you can find table-top or wall-mounted designs. You will need a **model big enough** for your room but bear in mind that the bigger the model the more energy-intensive it will be.

CADR on an air purifier label stands for 'clean air delivery rate' and is a measure of how quickly the purifier can deliver clean air. The higher the **CADR**, the more quickly the air purifier can filter your air. You might also see **MERV**, which stands for '**minimum efficiency reporting value**' where the lowest rating is 1 and the highest is 20. **HEPA filters** rate between 17 and 20.

Lastly, give your home a thorough deep clean before purchasing and installing an air-purifier, to give it the **best chance of providing relief.**

useful numbers

Health

NHS non-emergency	111
Dorridge Surgery	01564 776262
Knowle Surgery	0121 796 2777
Solihull Hospital	0121 424 2000
Spire Parkway Hospital	0845 850 1451

Council

Solihull Council	0121 704 6000
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Utilities

Electricity power cut	0800 6783 105
Gas leak	0800 111 9999
Severn Trent Water	024 7771 5000
Severn Trent Water (emergencies)	0800 783 4444

Travel

National Rail Enquiries	03457 48 49 50
Network West Midlands (buses)	0345 303 6760

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Alan Rebeiro

Tel: 01564 200047
 arebeiro@solihull.gov.uk

local police contact for knowle & dorridge

Sergeant Mike Lloyd

Telephone: 101 ext 892 6037

Email: rural@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk



Bacon and Pumpkin Pasta

Preparation time: 10 mins

Cooking time: 20 mins

Serves 4

Ingredients

3 tbsp olive oil
140g Pancetta or bacon, cut into cubes
1 Small onion, thinly sliced
25g Butter
500g/1lb 2oz Pumpkin or butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and diced
20g Fresh sage, finely shredded
400g Pasta (I used spaghetti)
25g Freshly grated parmesan
Parmesan, plus extra to serve

Method

Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a heavy-based saucepan.

When hot add the chopped pancetta or bacon, then cook for a few mins.

Add remaining oil and the onion.

Cook for 5 mins, until the onion becomes soft and the pancetta becomes crispy.

Stir in the butter until melted, then add the diced pumpkin or squash and the sage.

Stir well to combine, then season well.

Cover and cook for 6-10 mins, stirring occasionally until the pumpkin is soft, but not mushy.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta in salted boiling water until it's soft but with a little bite remaining.

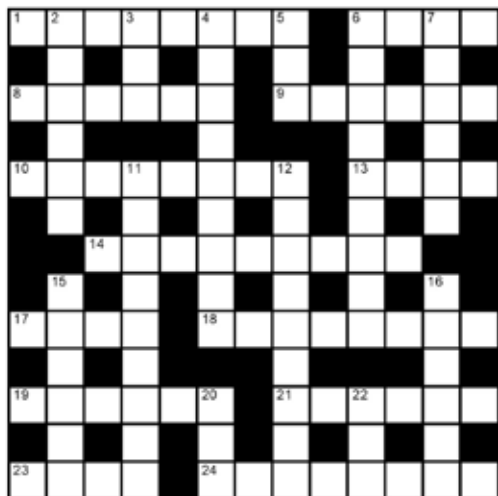
Drain and add to the pumpkin mixture. Stir in the Parmesan and season.

Serve in pasta bowls sprinkled with extra Parmesan.

Serves: 4 people
Preparation and cooking
time: 35 minutes



crossword



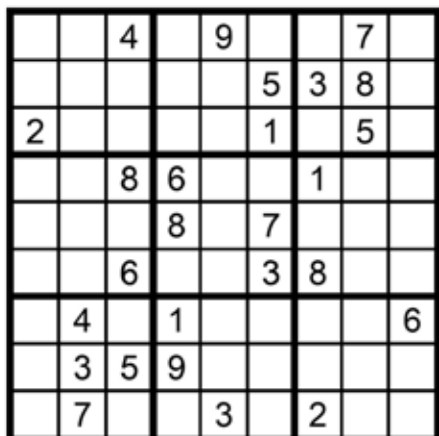
clues

- 1 Small spring flowers (8)
- 6 Slender, narrow (4)
- 8 Climbing apparatus (6)
- 9 Untidy person (6)
- 10 Deprived of weapons (8)
- 13 Distort (4)
- 14 Confession, disclosure (9)
- 17 Hinged barrier (4)
- 18 Revolution, twirl (8)
- 19 Exercise treatment (6)
- 21 Tainted, unclean (6)
- 23 Removed trapped air from radiator (4)
- 24 Funds, budget (8)

Down

- 2 Part of the crew of a touring band (6)
- 3 Rotter, bonder (3)
- 4 Being careful with expenditure (9)
- 5 Distress call (initials) (3)
- 6 Evicted, expelled (6,3)
- 7 Ailing, weak (6)

- 11 Hailed, spoke to (9)
- 12 Illegally leaving the armed forces (9)
- 15 The *Lovely Bones* actress _____ Weisz (6)
- 16 Croaky, raspy (6)
- 20 Clumsy fool (3)
- 22 Wordplay (3)



how to play sudoku

It's simple!

Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box, contains the numbers 1 through to 9 with no repetition. You don't need to be a genius. These puzzles use logic alone. Watch out! Sudoku is highly addictive.

answers on page 60

Accountants

48 Athos Business Solutions 0333 400 7876

Bathrooms

38 EH Smith 0121 713 7200

Blinds / Curtains / Fabric

10 Tudor Rose Curtains 0121 445 2072
10 Soft Options 01564 783 399

Builders

17 Parkfield Building Services 0121 241 2959

Car Services

11 Crossroads Service Station 01564 703 225
44 Johnsons Cars 01564 454 51
45 Easylease 0121 693 0573

Care Services

21 Lady Katherine Housing 01564 772 850

Carpets

28 Don Mander 01564 700 200

Central Heating / Gas Services / Boilers

13 Stephen Smith & Son 01564 200 119

Cleaning Services

40 Sparkly Oven 01564 757 310
41 Dorridge & Knowle Domestic Cleaning Services 07809 567 264
41 Village Domestic Cleaning 0785 4071 892

Computer Services

10 Byte Support 0790 151 2544
16 On Track Computers 0800 077 8301

Drives

22 Dimension Landscape & Driveways 0121 733 1463
39 Central Drives Landscapes 0121 702 1456

Estate Agents

62 DM & Co 0156 4777 314

Events

5 The Henley 01564 793 715
12 Hatton Country World 01926 843 411
14 National Conference Centre 0121 704 2784

Fascias & Gutters

54 Proline 0800 956 1315

Food & Restaurants

2 The Barn at Berryfields 01676 522 155

Garden Services

22 Dimension Landscape & Driveways 0121 733 1463
39 Central Drives Landscapes 0121 702 1456
52 Oakland Group 0700 598 2828
53 Hampton Gardening 0167 5446 174
54 Midlands Grounds Machinery 0156 4773 614

Graphic Design

42-43 Hotlobster Design Ltd 0121 369 1977

Handyman Services

15 Prestige Multi-Trades 07886 922 280

Health & Beauty & Wellbeing

9 Guru You 07930 1477 997
11 Matthew Chinn Podiatry 0756 157 1742
16 Equanimity 0844 693 1282

Kitchens

34 Dream Doors 0121 314 0956
38 EH Smith 0121 713 7200
63 Granite Transformations 01926 675 230

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64 ebuygumm www.ebuygumm.co.uk

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27 Adrian Lewis 07811 455546
29 Bill Boyce 0121 744 0040

Plumbing

3 Knowle Domestic Appliance Repairs 01564 730183
13 Stephen Smith & Son 01564 200119
35 Cullen Plumbing & Tiling 07896 862916

Roofing

1 N Bird & Son 0800 195 6946
27 C Stevens Roofing 0121 733 1276
29 Roofing & Guttering Services 0795 6228 842

Solicitors

46-47 Wallace Robinson Morgan Solicitors 0121 705 7571
49 Probate 0156 4758 055

Windows & Doors

30-31 Mainstream 0121 430 9150

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

Sudoku Solution
from page 59

C	R	O	C	U	S	E	S	T	H	I	N
O	A	C	O	H	N						
L	A	D	D	E	R	S	C	R	U	F	F
				I	O	I					
D	I	S	A	R	M	E	D	W	A	R	P
E	A	D	P	E	N	M					
R	A	D	M	I	S	S	I	O	N		
R	R	N	E	U	H						
G	A	T	E	G	Y	R	A	T	I	O	N
C	S	T					A				
P	H	Y	S	I	O	I	M	P	U	R	E
E	E	A	O	U	S						
B	L	E	D	F	I	N	A	N	C	E	S

Crossword Solution
from page 59



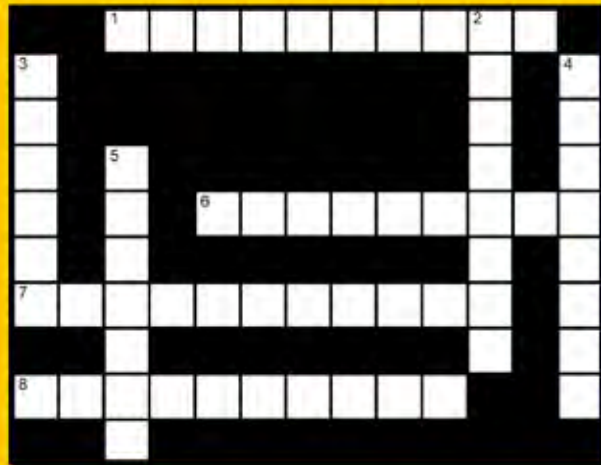
Solution to Mind benders

1. Musical chairs
2. Light at the end of the tunnel
3. Long in the tooth

Mindbenders Solution
from page 9

Kids Page

Have fun with our Bonfire Night crossword



ACROSS

1



5,5

6



3,6

7



6,5

8



DOWN

2



3



4



5



WORD LADDER

Turn POP into FUN
Change one letter
each time

POP
FUN

Stay Safe on Nov 5th!
Follow the firework code

WORD LADDER SOLUTION
POP
PUP
PUN
FUN



Bonfire Night Crossword Solu-

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