



DOWN THE HOLE IN ONE?



Western Park Golf Course Under Threat: More on Page 4

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Hello From The Editor

This month, the main talking point is a city council proposal to close the Western Park Golf Club to save money. Understandably that's angered a lot of golfers and they're fighting to keep it open.

Roger Blackmore travels 100 year back in time to when Western Park was still a gleam in an architect's eye, Helen Knott has developed a superpower worthy of anyone who wears their pants over their skirt and our Gardening God, Tony Huxley, happily prods a few carnivorous plants to see what happens.

The possibility that Lidl might knock down the old Empire Hotel making way for a new store divides opinion in the letters section, Rod Smart from Hinckley Road Police Station has his latest local bobby update, Richard Perry explains why we shouldn't really still have Windows XP on our computers and as always the Brain Tazers await you on the inside back cover.

This month we are also giving you the chance to win two tickets, including camping and worth over £140 for the weekend, to the world's greatest tribute band festival! - Gasonbudget is back and you could be going!

As always if you have a local story, please drop us a line at: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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Events Diary

Zumba Class Tues. 7.15 - 8.15 at New College. Call Sarah - 07810 307 113.

Fosse Camera Club: Fridays. St. Peter's Church Rooms. 7.45pm. 0116 299 2230.

Fosse Singers: Fosse N'hood Centre. Weds. 7pm.

International Folk Dancing: Monthly 2nd & 4th Fri. St Anne's Hall. 2-4pm. T: Geoff on 0116 285 8352.

Peter Crebbin & his Cool Swing Band: Café Cino at Hilton Hotel Meridian. 6th May & 6th June. 1pm-3:30pm.

Leic Farmers Market: 1st Thurs of the month. C-Centre.

Murder Mystery: 16th May. Jewry Wall Mus. 8pm.

Water Babies: Until 17th May. Curve. 7.30pm.

Terry Pratchett's Wyrd Sisters: 16th & 17th May. Guildhall. 7.30pm.

Leicester Does Vintage: 18th May. City Rooms. From 10.30am.

Sparks Festival: 19th May - 1st June. w: sparksfestival.co.uk

Find the Right Words: 21st May. Upstairs/Western.

Glastonbudget: 23-25th May. w: glastonbudget.org

Science Mus Live: 31st May. De Montfort Hall. 7pm.

Pop Up Restaurant: 7th June. St. Anne's Com Hall. Tickets £25 & info from 0116 224 6074.

Riverside Festival: 7/8th June. Bede Island & canal.

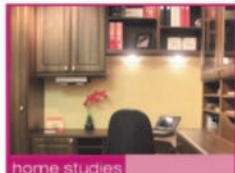
Western Park Festival: 5th July.

Simon Says: 26-27th July. De Montfort Hall

Email events to: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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Down the Hole in One?

West Leicester MP Liz Kendall is backing a campaign to save the Western Park Golf course following City Council proposals to shut it down to save money.

The 104 year old club moved to Scudamore Road from the top of Letchworth Road near Greenacres School in 1973, but the 18 hole public course could close as the council looks for ways to cut its £2.9 million sports and leisure budget.

If the closure goes ahead the 149 acre site, one of the oldest municipal golf courses in Britain, could be sold for development.

An average of 25,000 rounds are played on the course every year and the possibility of its closure has enraged members and casual players alike.

Over 2500 people have signed a petition urging the council to think again which was handed to MP Liz Kendall who promised to look for a way to keep the course open.



A copy has been handed to City Mayor Peter Soulsby and another online petition is still actively picking up signatures.

Western Park Golf Club's ex President, Taff Howells, said: "There's nowhere else to play this cheaply. A lot of us started here. I learned when I retired; everywhere else was too expensive."

"We've got 130 club members and hundreds who pay and play as well as joggers, dog walkers, ramblers and bird watchers. We've even got great crested newts in the ponds."

A drop in usage over the last few years, which the club puts down to the economic climate and bad weather, has been compounded by, what they say is, a shortage of investment. "It's only been costing the council money recently because of lack of maintenance. The ground staff don't have the equipment. We've been doing our own drainage work and the course has now improved."

A decision will be made after the public consultation which ran until 18th April. City Mayor Sir Peter Soulsby said the council would have to make some difficult choices due to budget cuts.



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The Maya Women Well-Being Project at the Aapka Centre on Pool road in Newfoundpool is celebrating its eight year.

They have recently been awarded more funding from the Leicester City Council to continue their work aimed at elderly women in the black, Asian and minority communities. The group's activities range from low impact exercises such as Tai Chi, and Yoga through to treadmills and dance therapy.

For more information call Sharda Parmer on 0116 224 4177



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100 YEARS AGO

In the last few decades of the nineteenth century, the city of Leicester had spread across the river from West Bridge and up towards the Dane Hills as far as Gimson Road.

In 1900 the countryside stretched out along the valley of the Braunstone Brook up to where the Winstanley family had built their mansion at Braunstone Hall back in the 1780's. More recently, Western Park had been created in countryside, with its main entrance bordering the Hinckley Road.

By 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, things were beginning to change and the area showed the first signs of becoming suburbanised. The year before, a new school (now Dovelands) had been established on Hinckley Road, surrounded by fields. A few houses had already been built towards the top of Shoulder of Mutton Hill in the Victorian era, but recently builders had begun to look to building new homes in



the Westfield Road area.

Westfield Road itself was a cul de sac ending some 70 yards short of where Glenfield Road runs today. Other houses were also built in the four newly created roads of Mellor Road, Meadhurst Road, Sunnycroft Road and Western Park Road. The Dominican Convent stood alone at the top of the hill.

The spoil heaps of the Dane Hills quarries were very visible near to what is now the Sandhurst Road area. Several houses still show on their frontages the dates of their first construction. Interestingly, the influence of Gimson and other members of the Art and Crafts movement can still be detected in a number of these.

What is now Christ the King primary school was of course, then, the Gimson family home, opposite which still stand the famous "Gimson Houses", which were preserved thanks to a major campaign by local residents a few years ago.

Since 1914, our area has witnessed much new building and the creation of many new streets where once were open fields and cherry orchards; Western Park itself still remains the city's largest public park. It is interesting how many late Victorian and Edwardian buildings have stood the test of time. *Roger Blackmore*

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KNOTT'S LANDING

If you read Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus it turns out one of the key things my gender has going for it is peripheral vision.

Women are apparently designed to see what's going on out the corner of their eye to enable them to better gather berries and guard errant toddlers and thus ensure survival of the species. It also comes in quite handy keeping tabs on what your other half is looking at. That thing where the wife always catches the husband ogling young ladies... that's peripheral vision in action. Well just recently it has come to my attention that I have VERY good peripheral vision.

First up I won a crab catching contest. I spotted loads of the little nippers hiding down the side of rocks and under seaweed. I was so good at it we needed a considerably bigger bucket to contain my haul. I won a t-shirt and a certificate!



Then at Western Park I was watching my little one play and make new friends in the sand pit when it became apparent that one of the mummies was searching for something. A brief chat later and it was revealed that while brushing sand out of the hair of her daughter, she had managed to flick her hand and send her wedding and engagement rings flying straight into the sand. A search had ensued and the wedding ring had been found but there was no sign of the engagement ring. As any parent knows, as soon as you start any kind of close, delicate work the kids find this instantly fascinating and want to help. The last thing you need when trying to find an engagement ring in a sandpit is a hoard of well meaning kids stomping their feet around and flinging sand about 'helping' so I pitched in to assist. We sifted, stroked the surface and pounced on anything vaguely ring shaped. There is a surprising amount of shiny stuff in the sand. The lady was starting to talk about how her husband may react to the news of a lost engagement ring. I pictured the look on Mr. Helen's face if he had received such news. I redoubled my efforts. Just as we were about to give up, out of the corner of my eye I saw the sand shift and there it was, one engagement ring. Peripheral vision to the rescue and one very relieved Mummy able to pack up her kids and go home happy.

So now we know. I have discovered my superpower. I am Peripheral Vision Girl. Catchy eh! I promise to use my powers for good. No, I'm not wearing my pants over my tights, although a cloak and a mask is quite appealing!

Helen Knott

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Letter Box



So local residents think that the Empire should remain? Perhaps reopen as a pub? Wouldn't that be nice?

Erm... No! I worked at the Empire some years ago. Firstly we had a 1am licence on a Friday and Saturday night. That's nice and helpful to get the kids to sleep... the police being called at the weekend was the norm. Now what do you think that will do to the value of your house?

A nice little supermarket providing much needed employment sounds so much better doesn't it? Sometimes the best thing to do is rip down, start again and move on.

The empire was a bad place.

Mike Feller



Picture by www.droneography.co.uk

I was disappointed but not surprised that Lidl appeared to be collecting supportive but not necessarily negative opinions on the project. It is difficult to gauge those not in favour.

I believe there are too many supermarkets of various sizes - some independent - in the area. We don't need more and another bland supermarket does not enhance the area. Certainly not at the expense of a 200 year old building, of which, there are not many in the area. I did not appreciate the attractive front until I saw your photo on the front cover of the magazine.

If they (Lidl) kept the structure and features then it would be much more palatable proposition. Personally, I would prefer to see the building refurbished to provide attractive homes/apartments whose occupants would bring money to local shops in the area.

As for the church one of the attractive windows or wall could remain and be structurally supported, with the remaining land becoming a tranquil space for local residents.

Supermarkets do not appear to care much about the local community, its all about profit. Food tastings during proposal consultation and 'displays in the entrance' leave a sour taste and it's us that will lose out in the long run.

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I am writing to you because I feel that people need to be made aware that the number of motorbike thefts seem to be increasing.

Last night as me and my family slept, someone came into our drive, cut the chain from my £1000 bike (a reasonably thick chain) and then after stealing it, and this is the part that really hurts, moved it 100m from my house, up a side way and set fire to my pride and joy.

Now I have no way to get to work and as a 19 year old apprentice getting a replacement will not be easy or cheap.

The thing that angers me most is that it was a fully



functioning motorbike deliberately destroyed for fun.

Other bikers must be made aware that these people are around and WILL FOR NO REASON destroy bikes and endanger the livelihood of those that own them.

George Webster-Aikman

Boundary Changes

Local people are being asked their views on the redrawing of Leicester's political map following draft proposals from the Boundary Commission.

Although the number of councilors will remain steady at 54, the number of wards would be cut from 22 to 20.

The Westcotes and Fosse wards will remain but the main local change would be the combination of Western Park with New Parks creating a new ward called Western.

The commission say the changes will deliver electoral equality but objectors believe it takes little notice of historical distinctions between areas.

To find out more about the proposals and have your say visit www.westernpark.co.uk and click the link on the homepage

Win Tickets to Glastonbudget!

It's back! After a triumphant, festival last year, Glastonbudget returns this month for its 10th year with another classic line up of top tribute bands!

This three day festival between 23th-25th May is simply the biggest and best tribute group boogiefest in the world with 130 bands strutting their stuff including local acoustic and rock acts, some getting their first taste of live festival performance.

On stage this year tributes to the Beatles, Michael Jackson, Queen, Abba, Gun N' Roses, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Greenday, The Who, T-Rex, Oasis, Madness... The list goes on.



Now is your chance to win a pair of tickets to the festival that recreates the sights and sounds of the world's greatest bands right in front of you at Turnpost Farm in Wymeswold!



THE COMPETITION

We have a pair of tickets valid for the entire festival, including camping, for one lucky winner.

This is an email only competition and your answers must be in by 21st of May, so be quick!

THE QUESTION

Blurb, and The Fillers are tribute bands for which rock acts?

Answers by email only to:

editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

Comp T&Cs: Cut off date 21st May. One winner. One entry per person, Tickets non transferable, No cash alternative. Judge's decision is final.

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DO YOU NEED IT? DO YOU USE IT?

Local residents are being asked for their views on neighbourhood services.

Leicester City Council is looking at reorganising services in the wards of Fosse, Westcotes, Western Park, Braunstone and Rowley Fields. The council wants to know which buildings, facilities and community activities people value the most as part of its Transforming Neighbourhood Services programme which aims to deliver services more effectively.

Cllr Sarah Russell, assistant city mayor responsible for neighbourhood services said: "... We might be able to locate different services together in key community buildings, and run fewer buildings overall. This can help us to save money while maintaining services. But we won't start looking in detail at how to reorganise services until people have had a chance to give us their views."

Residents, community leaders and local groups can have their say in a number of ways. They can speak to staff in local libraries, community centres and other neighbourhood buildings, and pick up a leaflet to fill in. Or they can give their views online at www.leicester.gov.uk/tns

The closing date for people to give their views in the west of the city is 16th May. Cllr Russell said: "We will consider all the ideas that people put forward and use them to inform our proposals for reorganising services. We will then hold a public meeting to propose changes in the area, and a full public consultation will take place this summer."

Westcotes Burglary Warning

Over the past couple of months there have been a number of burglaries in the Westleigh Road and Ashleigh Road areas of the Westcotes Ward.

The police are undertaking a number of initiatives to reduce offending in the area, including additional high visibility and covert patrolling. We would urge local residents (across the whole area, not just Westleigh Road and Ashleigh Road) to be extra vigilant, make sure that they lock doors and windows, consider additional crime prevention measures and report any suspicious behaviour to the police immediately.

For more information about policing in our area visit www.leics.police.uk/local-policing follow on www.facebook.com/leicestercitypolice or Twitter on @LPWesternPark, LPFossePolice or LPWestcotesCops
email: hinckleyrd.lpu@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk
April's police update from Sergeant Rod Smart is on page 16

TECHIE THUMP

Richard Perry

Security leaks, software update issues and increased downtime are just a few of the problems facing some PC users as Microsoft shelved Windows XP after 12 years of great service. In fact 30% of the world still uses it but are deserting in droves now that it's no longer supported.

This doesn't mean your trusty old computer will drop dead on the spot, but it will signal the start of many headaches and increasing unreliability.

Although some free antivirus software like Avast! will continue to update their software for the next couple of years, you can expect more security attacks. Microsoft will not produce any counter measures against new viruses which target Windows XP's exposed loopholes. No security patches are being released. It will only be a matter of time before the aged operating system becomes dangerously unstable due to weakening defences against the cyber hooligans.

As Microsoft stopped maintaining XP, it also forced major software application developers to withdraw their support. Sage, Java, Adobe, Symantec etc. can not provide backing or updates after their current software subscription expired.

With no provision from Microsoft, support from tech helpdesks can only provide basic advice and very little service relating to Windows XP problems. The solutions may not be readily available, rendering certain functions or whole applications useless.

What can you do if your PC/laptop running XP is ancient? And by that I mean over 10 years old with less than **2 Gigs of RAM, no dual core processor and a small memory?** Unfortunately probably nothing. Without major and costly surgery - it's fubared.

The best thing to do, in this case, is to take all your data off and transfer it to a new laptop, followed by a quick trade - in or a trip to the tip.

If your laptop or PC is a little newer, with higher than the above specifications, it could have the grunt to cope with a Windows 7 upgrade. It will still cost you the price of the operating system and any necessary hardware and driver updates but a newer machine might just survive the trauma.

If you are attempting a DIY upgrade - you won't find a Windows 7 disc at the big PC stores and you can't download them either, but you will find them at the smaller independent shops or online. Better still - get a local professional to do it... It's easier.



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There's an Arabic saying "Your soul cannot travel faster than the speed of a trotting camel."

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same amount of energy.

Enjoy friendships more. Breeze rides, for women, and Sky Ride Local, led rides for everyone, are advertised on www.goskyride.com The Women's British tour will pass through Leicestershire on May 8th and the route is available on www.womenstour.co.uk. - but they might be going a lot faster than a trotting camel!

(Sponsored article)

Pirates of the Playground

Yo Ho Ho! Dovelands Primary School on Hinckley Road was taken over by pirates, as children and families from across Western Park turned out in force to raise money for improvements to the school's playground facilities. The event, which was organised by a group of parents at the school, has so far raised a jaw-dropping £1713.42 of pirate gold.

The pirate-themed fundraising day proved an enormous hit with little ones and grown-ups. Many really got into the spirit, dressing up as buccaneers with lusty shouts of "Aaaaaaaaaaaaaarrrrrr!" filling the air.



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A 5 lap sponsored walk, of the school playground raised £798.58 and money is still pouring in. Inside the school-hall there were a range of fun piratey activities, carefully designed to keep little seafarers amused, which raised an exceptional £533.14 of booty.

St. Anne's Playgroup donated to take-part in the sponsored walk, whilst a Penny Pinching Pirate initiative prior to the day contributed £231.70 to the treasure tally.

This money will be used to improve playground equipment and create new signage within the foundation playground, used by the schools youngest children.



the river include colourful boats from across the region, canoe demonstrations, boat trips and the popular arts & craft street market plus a variety of tempting food stalls.

On land the festival continues to build on its live music reputation by showcasing some of the best local bands and artists on the main stage. There's plenty to entertain the whole family including children's activities, arts & crafts, music and a children's funfair in Bede Park. Castle Gardens hosts



inspiring eco activities with the opportunity to have -a-go and learn new skills as well as providing a relaxing space to enjoy a picnic.

Once again there will be an environmental focus to the festival with the involvement of various groups, bringing together workshops and displays, helping to raise awareness of environmental issues.

Riverside Festival

One of the city's biggest free festivals featuring activities on and off the water returns to West Leicester on the 7th and 8th of June.

The highlights of this years Waterside Festival on

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April/May Police Update

The Smart View with Sgt. Rod Smart

The improvement in the weather and lighter evenings draws many of us out into the garden or participating in sports such as cycling and golf. Residents are advised to make sure that sporting equipment, such as clubs, bikes and gardening tools are securely locked away when not in use. Although it is tempting to leave gardening tools available outside or in a greenhouse, this also makes them available for criminals who can use them to break into houses or outbuildings. While you're locking away those tools, also make sure that ladders are also locked up inside or chained up – it may not come as a surprise that they too can be very useful for criminals.

Shed and outbuilding doors should be secured with a quality lock and tamperproof screws, and shed alarms should be considered. For crime prevention advice, please feel free to contact your local neighbourhood team at Hinckley Road Police station.

On 11 March a 17 old youth from the Western Park area was detained by a member of the public in a chemist on Narborough Road shoving bottles of perfume down his trousers. Trying to escape, he assaulted the person detaining him. The sweet smelling youth has been charged with theft and assault and we are grateful to the community spirited member of the public who fortunately didn't receive any lasting injuries.

On 16 March a burglary took place on Dulverton Road. Thanks to an observant member of the public, a 24 year old local man was arrested inside the address. He fully admitted the offence and has been charged to Court.

On the afternoon of 17 March a house was burgled on Beatrice Road. Three men in their twenties from out of the City area have been arrested and charged with burglary.

On the evening of 28 March officers attended an unruly party on Oban Street several times due to noise complaints. After several warnings two people were arrested from the location, with a 19 year old Beaumont Leys youth being charged with possession of drugs and being cautioned for a public order offence. A 16 year old local girl is currently on bail for assaulting a police officer at the address.

After a spree of shop thefts in the Narborough Road area, a thirty four year old local woman was arrested on 4 April. She was interviewed and subsequently charged with theft of wash powder, meat and Easter eggs.

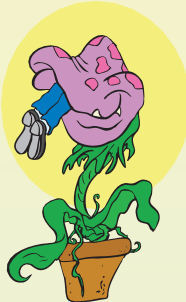
Overnight 7 to 8 April, a burglary took place on Eastfield Road. An 18 year old youth from the Braunstone Estate has been charged and remanded in custody for this offence.

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



Most kids crave chocolate at Easter, not my son. He wanted a Venus Flytrap. Okay, he also wanted his own weight in Cadbury's finest, but my pride in his planty interest was such, I bought him "Audrey".

These fascinating plants are great for introducing curious children to plantsmanship. They seem exotic but follow a few basic rules and you can have your own truly organic pest control. Most carnivorous plants grow in boggy conditions where the soil is nutrient poor and acidic. This means using fertiliser-free ingredients like peat, sphagnum moss, and irrigating with rain water. Your new meat eating friend also likes full sun, hot summers and cool dormant winter. It doesn't like its traps tricked into closing or being fed anything other than fresh insect prey so no lumps of hamburger or inquisitive fingers.



Many carnivorous plants are hardy, some are even native. *Sarracenias*, from North America, will grow in the shallows of ponds. I've successfully grown them outdoors for over ten years. The Huntsman's cap (*S. purpurea purpurea*) is a low-growing species with purple trumpets, whereas *S. flava* and *S. leucophylla*, and their hybrids, can have pitchers over a foot tall. The threateningly named Cobra Lily (*Darlingtonia californica*) is also happy to live outdoors.

Sundews or *Drosera* have leaves made of tiny gel-tipped tentacles which catch tiny insects like hungry fly paper. *D. capensis* from South Africa grow happily on a sunny window sill and make great aphid catchers in the green house. Butterworts have similar predatory habits but with innocent lilac flowers as pretty as any alpine.

I bought Audrey from one of several online specialist growers. I chose a variety called "B52", a giant in the Flytrap world and supplied by a company called The Little Shop of Horrors! Just the place to buy something for my Little Horror!

Tony Huxley



D. capensis

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You may have watched the curling at the Winter Olympics. Well, Western Park bowlers do something similar, only on grass. And we don't freeze in the process. Well only occasionally.

Bowls is a historical game. Many of you will know that Sir Francis Drake refused to take on the Spanish Armada until he had finished his game of bowls. But the sport was already several hundred years old by then. The Western Park Bowling Club itself is over one hundred year old with the Ladies Club celebrating their 90th anniversary this year.

Bowls is a challenging game involving individual skill, team work, tactics and some luck. Most games are either triples (three players a side) or rinks (four a side) although we do have single and pairs competitions. It is a game of gentle exercise and good company, the jaw being the most exercised part of the body.

The Western Park Bowling Club is looking for new members. If you are interested in having a free go at bowls contact **Geoff Forse (2515775)**, **Tony Baldock (2221758)** for the men's club or **Eileen Dore (25500405)** or **Joyce Needham (2874974)** for the ladies. Mixed sessions can be arranged.



Western Park Bowling Club

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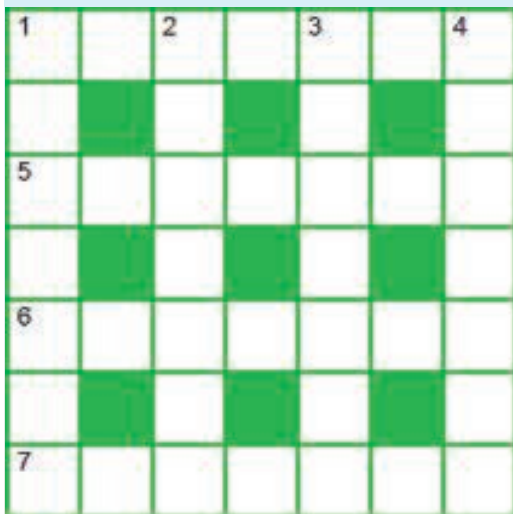
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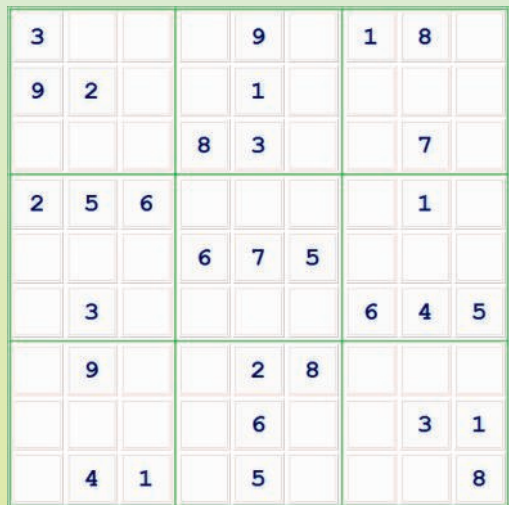
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BRAIN *TAZERS*



Across: 1. Evensong 5. Expressing much in few words 6. Result 7. Medical procedure
Down: 1. Asinine 2. Legislator 3. Part of a broadcast serial 4. Stage set



1. *Ladies Revive First* is an anagram of which popular local event?
2. How many months have 28 days?
3. A door, body and knot can be connected by 1 word. What is it?
4. If 7=D in a W means 7 Days in a Week what is - 12=S of the Z?
5. Rearrange all 7 letters to make 3x7 letter words (Answers at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk)

All Sewn Up!

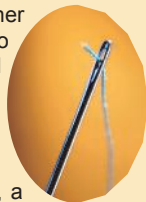
Social sewing evenings organised by a Westcotes sewing teacher are being launched in St. Martin's Square with special guest Tamara from The Great British Sewing Bee.

Following a flippant comment on her Facebook page, Julia Claridge, who started her company Bobbins and Buttons last year, discovered interest in a sewing themed social evening. The reaction was so strong she decided to organise one.

Julia then connected with Tamara, a contestant on the BBC2 series The Great British Sewing Bee through Twitter. Tamara who was a student at De Montfort University and has strong connections with Leicester, agreed to come to the event and set a sewing bee style challenge.

The free social sewing evening starts on May 15th at St Martin's Café Bar and will be held monthly on a Thursday evening from 7.30-9.30pm.

Julia wants to encourage others to take up the craft. She said: "I hope to make the event one big melting pot of all things sewing, a level playing field for all sewing businesses to talk to potential customers and sewers to make the most of a room full of expert sewers"



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