



Hello From The Editor

Here we go with the **March** issue of the **Western Park Gazette**.

In this month's offering; the Mayor of Leicester plants a very nice fruit tree and Roger Blackmore harkens back to the time when we, in Leicester, had our own skiffle queen. Younger readers, feel free to google the word 'skiffle' then buy a washboard... also google the word 'washboard'.

Helen Knott's monthly rant was so furious it bordered on deranged, so we cut out the more colourful expletives and sent her some chocolate and a crate of wine to calm her down.

Our Gardening Guru, Tony Huxley composes on decomposing, the fittest person in West Leicester, Laurretta Curtis, tells us that women can successfully weight train without ending up looking like a bag of walnuts and we have Richard Perry on why your smartphone could be an open book.

There's the regular Police update from Hinckley Road and the dreaded Brain Tazers are silently lurking on page 22, awaiting victims.

We are always looking for contributions, so if you have some local news and information or you're holding an event, please drop us a line.

Sharon e: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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The Gazette Twitters!

We have been neglecting our Facebook page and social media recently. But we have now grasped the nettle and re-launched it all.

We already have a fully functioning and thoroughly brilliant website which is getting over a thousand unique visitors a month, which we'd prefer you to join. It's full of previous issues of the Gazette and there is even a forum to discuss any burning issue of the day!

The recent Facebook revamp has deleted all our previous members, so you now have a choice.

Either re-join it or, much better, register as a member at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

All that means is that from April, you'll get message every month with a link to a downloadable version of the Gazette. You'll be able to view your copy on a laptop, tablet or smart phone and you'll get it up to a week before they're delivered!

And we're now on Twitter. Just search for "mygazette" and you'll find us.

We are linking our twitter account to both Facebook and the website, so there's no escape!



Tree Planting

City Mayor, Sir Peter Soulsby dug deep to aid The Big Tree Plant, when he visited Western Park on the 9th March as a guest of local charity, Groundwork Leicester & Leicestershire.

Sir Peter joined local residents, the Western Park Free Riders, staff and volunteers from Groundwork to help plant a local orchard.

The planting is part of the national Big Tree Plant Scheme which Groundwork is delivering in Leicester, and one of the Mayor's first 100 day

pledges. The tree planted by Sir Peter was one of twenty that will form the first phase of a community orchard, itself part of a larger planting scheme involving two hundred trees.

Kim Hawksworth, who is leading the project at Groundwork, said: "It was great to have the City Mayor along to highlight and help with the work we are doing. The community orchard on Western Park has been a fabulous partnership involving a number of local groups and this will be a real boost for everyone's efforts. We see this work contributing massively to the Greener Leicester strategy."



The community orchard created on Western Park is the starting point of an edible trail running throughout one of Leicester's favourite green spaces in the hope of attracting more local residents and wildlife.

The Big Tree Plant is a campaign to encourage people and communities to plant more trees in England's towns, cities and neighbourhoods. For its part, Groundwork will be planting 6, 250 trees throughout the city and county.

Events Diary

Zumba Class Tues 6.45-7.45 & 8-9.00pm at New College. Call Sarah 07810 307 113.

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

Gypsy: Until 15th April at Curve.

Public Transport Talk: Fri 30th March. Fosse Library. 11am. Free.

Fosse Singers Spring Concert: 31st March.

Judgemeadow Community College. 7.30pm. £6.00.

Celebrate Easter - Grow your own plants: April 2nd. Newarke Houses Museum. From 11am. £2.50.

Bouncing Bunnies: 5th April. The Guildhall. From 11am. Activities - £2.50.

Easter Bonnet Competition: 7th April. Market Centre. 11am. Free.

Hansel & Gretel: 14th April. Curve. 01162 423 595.

Steam & Hobbies Day: 15th April. Abbey Pumping Station. 1-5pm. Family ticket £8.00.

Breastfeeding Group: West End Sure Start Children's Centre, Catesby Street, Leicester, LE3 5PB Every Tuesday 1:30pm - 3:00pm. 0116 225 2225.

Knit & Stitch Club: Thursdays. Braunstone Library. 1.00-3.00pm. Free.

Plant Sale: 4th-7th May. Afternoons. Woodgate Resources Centre.

Peter Crebbin & His Cool Swing Band: 6th May. Residency at the Hilton Hotel. 1-3.30pm.

St. Anne's, St. Paul's and St. Augustine's

At St. Anne's Church Hall -

Mon - Fri Sandhurst Playgroup 285 7440.

Mon: 5.30 - 7.00pm: W.E.A. Yoga 255 6614.

7.15 - 9.00pm: Tai Chi. Call Rick 285 5159.

2nd Tue: 2.00 - 4.00pm: MU Speakers.

3rd Tue: 7.30 - 9.30pm: W.P. Gardening Club.

Wed: 5.00 - 8.00pm: Weightwatchers.

Wed: 8.00 - 9.00pm: Tai Chi with Rick.

1st Wed: 2.30 - 4.00pm: Wednesday Club.

4th Wed: 7.00 - 9.00pm: MU Speakers.

Thurs: 9.00 -10.00am: Pilates for fitness.

1.30 - 3.30pm: Pram Club. (Term time)

6.30 - 8.00pm: Rebounder Aerobics.

Fri: 10.00am: Coffee Morning.

1st Fri: 1.30 - 1.00pm: Lunch club.

2 & 4th Fri: 2.00 - 4.00pm: Folk dancing.

Tuesdays 10.00am: Mums and Toddlers: Over 60's Club. 12.30 (**St. Paul's**)

Messy Church: April 7th, May 12th.

Coffee Morning for the Leprosy Mission: 14th April, 10-12 noon. St Paul's Worship Centre.

Church of the Martys

Westcotes Drive Leicester

Tomatoes Cafe Church: Live music alternate Saturdays, 9.30 -12 noon.

Shake Rattle & Roll: For babies toddlers & carers every Thursday in term time- 9.30-11.30am.

Street Self Defence: Mondays in the Hall. 7.30-8.30pm Call 07788 637 686 for details.

Martyrs Football Training: every Weds eve 9pm at New College, Glenfield Rd.

Craft Group: for any type of craft. Every 2nd Thurs of the month.

Karate: Fridays in the Hall. 6.00-7.00pm.

Rainbows: Mondays 5.15pm.

Brownies: Mon & Thurs. 6.30pm.

Guides: Tuesdays. 7.00pm.

Details of events and services can be found at www.martyrs.org.uk

St. Andrew's Methodist Church

Glenfield Road East, Leicester

Weds: Brownies. 6.30-8.00pm. T: Heather Valentine 0116 287 1056. **Fri:** Pram Club. Term Time. 10.00-11.30am. T: Jean, 0116 255 2912.

Parish of St. Peter

21 Hinckley Road Leicester

Details of events and services can be found on line at www.stpetersleicester.org.uk

Epworth Methodist Church

Blackbird Road, Leicester

Weds: Boys' Brigade 6.00 - 9.30 (ages 5 - 17 years) Tel: John Ogleby 0116 233 7978

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Nancy Whisky - Skiffle Queen

This month I was settling down to write about one of our areas former musical celebrities when the news came through that Engelbert is to represent the UK at this year's Euro-vision Song Contest. It just goes to show how many singers and musicians have been associated with Leicester. Kasabian and Showaddywaddy spring immediately to mind. Englebert, of course, has a considerable family connection to West Leicester, but he's not the only one.

Another of these was Anne Alexandra Young Wilson, born in Glasgow in 1935, who became a talented singer and guitarist in the 1950's.

To those of us of a certain age, she will always be Nancy Whiskey, her stage name taken from a Scottish folk song which has the chorus "whisky, whisky, Nancy whisky".

Some readers will vividly recall the summer of 1957 when the song Freight Train made its way high up in both the UK and American hit parades, selling over one million copies and earning her a gold disc. At the time she was the vocalist with The Chas Macdonald Skiffle Group and Freight Train was the group's first single.



Another favourite Greenback Dollar also made it into the top 30.

Shortly after this, she left the band and continued as a solo performer with a backing group ironically called "The Teetotallers"

Nancy had been taught to play the guitar by her lorry driver father in Glasgow where she quickly began to perform on the local folk club circuit. Her influences included the blues, bluegrass and hillbilly music and in this respect she shared much in common with Lonnie Donegan. Indeed one of her last public engagements was with Lonnie at a skiffle revival concert in March 1999 at the Royal Albert Hall.

1970 she and her husband, musician Bob Kelly, who was part of her backing band, came to live just off Fosse Road South.

Nancy lived here in Leicester for 33 years up until her death in 2003 at the age of 67. For most of that period she lived quietly away from the lime-light.

© Roger Blackmore

Steve's Marathon Task

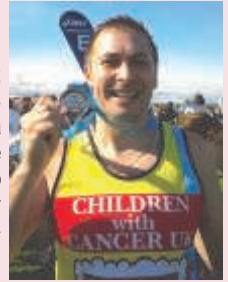
West End resident, Steve Doughty, is preparing for another marathon.

He is embarking on the ultimate challenge of running the London Marathon on April 22nd.

He is raising money for the disabled children's charity Get Kids Going and needs to raise £2000.

Steve says: "I know times are hard for everyone right now but all I'm asking is that if you could spare a pound or two to help me raise enough money to enable the charity to buy the much needed equipment to help get kids in wheelchairs involved in sport, it would be greatly appreciated. Please dig deep for such a worthy cause and I promise to do all I can to complete the marathon."

You can either donate online at www.uk.virginmoneygiving.com/stevedoughty or send a cheque made payable to Get Kids Going to Steve's home address: 52, Cherryleas Drive, Leicester, LE3 0LS.



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Loafing at Breakfast

One of Braunstone Gate's most cool and chic bars is celebrating its 12th anniversary by offering an even greater variety of fare.

The Loaf Bar and Restaurant, with an already diverse menu, is now opening for breakfast.

Owner and manager Paul Draper said: "I opened Loaf 12 years ago because Braunstone Gate needed something different, now we're offering something new again with our fresh early breakfast menu."



Loaf now opens from 7.30am and serves a full English breakfast, large cups of freshly ground coffee, teas, hot baguettes and continental pastries, either to eat in or take away.

As with all Loaf's menu, the produce is sourced locally. Paul uses his twenty years of experience in the restaurant business to the full and goes to great efforts to locate the right suppliers. He said: "I think it's very important to support local food producers. Our sausages come from Frobarbs, beef from Swinford and chicken from Melton. The quality is very high, but that is not reflected in the menu price."

There are a wide range of dishes on offer in Loaf's extensive menu. From nibbles to sandwiches, through to steaks and veggie burgers, all at reasonable prices and below what you could be paying in town.

There is more than food at Loaf. There is a wide selection of wines, beers and specialty teas to be enjoyed in comfortable surroundings whilst you surf the net on the free Wi-Fi.

Paul is also opening the downstairs room to local clubs and societies. He said: "Any local group can book the room for free, or if you want to sit down and work from the bar, that's fine as well... the more the merrier!"

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KNOTT'S LANDING

Helen Knott

I pulled four bags of litter out of my hedge the other day! Four bags! I knew there was some rubbish under the bushes but that's ridiculous.

How rude to force someone else to clean up your rubbish. If I came and dropped my kitchen rubbish on your doorstep there would be uproar, so why is it OK to dump yours in my hedge?

On one level I guess I sort of understand, after all, since the IRA bombing campaigns of the 80s there have been fewer and fewer litter bins in public places and the world is drowning under a sea of rubbish because of it. Although quite why it is difficult to carry your rubbish home with you, I am not sure. Maybe it's because some people are hard of thinking, or maybe there has been a special evolutionary change making people's paws slippery so the rubbish just falls out of their hands. I was amazed at what I pulled out from the hedge. There were lots of crisp packets, at least four



sandwich boxes, a lot of sweet wrappers, four vodka bottles, soft drinks cans, a packet of cigarette papers, beer bottles and a bottle of something that clearly was not lemonade!... Thanks for that.

Not content with sorting out the litter I thought I might sweep away the last of the leaves and make the frontage look tidy. I thought about it and then discovered the three piles of giant dog eggs in approximately a metre. It put me right off sweeping anything.

Now I understand why the man in the Green Machine steers away from the leaf pile, although if he swept leaves up in the Autumn it might not get to this point! However it does not mean I'm letting the dog owners off the hook. It's not just outside my house, my walk to playgroup with my son is an obstacle course as we dodge the leavings of dirty scum dog owners who can't be bothered to scoop up after their animals. I know there are lots of people who do clean up after their dog's, and thank you for that, but I can't be the only mum fed up of cleaning the stuff off shoes and wellies.

If it is you letting your dog drop a ton on the pavement, watch out because I'm at the point of turning detective and returning the favour by emptying a potty or two onto your doorstep!

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERIES

Fosse Cllrs Surgery: Monthly, 2nd Sat, 10.30-11.30, Fosse Neighbourhood Centre & last Sat 10.30 - 11.30am Woodgate Residents Association

Westcotes Cllrs Surgeries: Westcotes Library, 1st Sat each month, 10.30 - 11.30am and 3rd Fri each month, 5.30 - 6.30pm. West End Neighbourhood Centre, 4th Fri each month 9.30 - 10.30am.

Manor House Neighbourhood Centre, 2nd Friday every month, 10-11am.

Western Park Cllrs Surgery: Monthly-2nd Weds St. Paul's Church Rooms, Kirby Road. 7-8.00pm.

Local Band?

Local singer?

Local Artist?

GOT A GIG PLANNED?

If you're based in West Leicester and you're performing in the city, drop us a line!

And we'll give you a mention!

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March Police Update

Police have recently raided two cannabis factories on Beaconsfield Road in Westcotes.

Three local men were arrested after police entered a home that had been converted into a cannabis factory near the corner of Browning Street.

At 4.45pm on Friday February 3rd, acting on information received, police raided the building and found three rooms full of cannabis plants and growing gear.

On March 3rd, officers executed a drugs warrant at a flat also on Beaconsfield Road and seized a small number of cannabis plants. No arrests have been made but enquires are continuing.

Seven men, including 28 year old Sayed Alahad of Fosse Road Central have been sent to prison for conspiracy to distribute cannabis.

Alahad, who was said to be a street dealer, received 2 years and 3 months for his part in the crime which could have netted as much as £300,000 in 2010.

Other conspirators received sentences ranging between 3 and 7 years.

Police have received reports relating to the

theft of several catalytic converters from Mercedes Sprinter vans.

Incidents have also occurred locally in Parker Drive, and Cornwall Road.

PCSO Clare Bradley is investigating and said: "These reports suggest that criminals are targeting Mercedes vans and we would advise owners of these vehicles to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the police.

We would appeal to anyone who knows anything about these incidents in particular any scrap metal dealers who have been approached by people selling catalytic converters to contact us."

Police are appealing for witnesses to a burglary at a store in Fosse Road South on March 2nd shortly before 3am.

The front door of the premises was smashed in with a concrete slab and cash was taken.

Police say a couple of weeks before this incident, two men were overheard discussing throwing a slab through the door of the store. They have been described as white, between 5'4" and 5'8" tall and seemed to be with a silver 04 plate Mercedes.

Anyone with information is asked to call 101 or contact Crimestoppers, anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Fosse Singers Spring Concert

Local community choir, the Fosse Singers are busily rehearsing for their Spring concert at the end of March. Supported by the Uppingham Jazz & Soul band, the concert includes songs from the world of pop, soul, swing, choral, musicals, jazz and classic. They are also performing a number of specially arranged songs, as a collaborative effort, including What the World Needs Now and Ain't No Mountain High Enough.



Hannah Brine, leader of Fosse Singers says: "We are very pleased to have the opportunity to perform with the big band and very much look forward to hearing ourselves backed by all that sound!"

Tony Gray, leader of UJ&SB, promises: "The con-

cert will bring some of that 'Jools Holland magic' – jazz, blues and soul played by a big band that can both rock and swing."

The concert is being held at Judgemeanow College, Evington on Sat March 31st from 7.30pm.

Tickets are available on the door or by emailing fossesingers@hotmail.com. Prices are £6 and £4 for concessions.

Find out about the Fosse Singers on line at: www.fossesingers.co.uk

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

As the Queen settles into her 60th year on the throne, the Gazette would like to know if any local groups or readers are planning a street party to celebrate this achievement?

There will be an extra Bank Holiday to celebrate her Jubilee on the 5th June and the late May Bank Holiday has been moved to Monday, June 4, giving us a four day long weekend.

If you are holding a celebration, email the details and we will send a photographer along.

email: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk



Women's Weight Lifting

I can happily tell you that everything in the box below is complete nonsense!

Common Myths

Weights will make you bulky

Weight training is only for men

Weight training will only make you gain weight

You need to be very experienced to lift weights

I only do cardio because I want to lose weight

It is generally been misunderstood that weight training will make you develop big muscles. As a female you do not have the capacity to develop 'huge' muscles without taking some form of steroid or testosterone; men naturally have more of this in their body which is why they can gain muscle so quickly.



The type of weight training will vary depending on your goals. If your aim is to tone up and lose weight then it is a great idea to lift weights. In most cases it is actually more beneficial than doing endless amounts of cardiovascular exercise (on a treadmill, bike, cross trainer etc.) You can gain better results from 30 minutes of weight/bodyweight training than 60 minutes of cardiovascular training. Yes, believe me it's true!

So next time you are at the gym, please do not shy away from the weights area! If you prefer to workout at home, that's still great news! There is lots of equipment available from sports shops or online that can be perfect for home workouts, such as dumbbells, kettlebells and gym balls. Make sure you always warm up before you begin weight training to prepare your muscles for exercise and to avoid injury. You can do this by performing 5-10 minutes of cardiovascular exercise before starting your weights programme. You should select a weight where you are able to achieve 15-20 repetitions for 3 sets with 30 seconds rest in between each set.

Remember to consult your physician before starting any weight training. Happy training!

© Lauretta Curtis Sponsored Article

Nice Box - What's in it?

Richard Perry

How would you like it if a complete stranger could open your mail and read it any time they liked?

If you've got a mobile app and you're on a social networking site, that could easily happen. In theory, your smartphone could be remotely accessed to take and send pictures, without your knowledge.

It's all hidden away in those terms and conditions we click without thinking.

Your emails, texts, contacts, location and private stuff are just not safe from prying eyes since major services have the right to mine your data.

Who you are, what you do and your preferences are a valuable commodity. A fully connected smartphone is a source of rich information which can be used to target you with personalised advertising.

The technology is very clever and invasive, but we click yes to all those apps without realising the possible consequences. For instance, the Facebook app had been downloaded over 100 million times to Google's Android smartphones. If you're logged onto a Google+ account, your surfing habits are harvested for sale to advertising companies.

It's quite possible that key words can be automatically scanned and picked out of your private messages and targeted advertising sent to you. It is also likely that regulators in Europe and America could make that practice illegal.

Most of the apps need certain information, including the SMS feature, in order to work and connect you across platforms like from Twitter to Facebook. At the moment there doesn't seem to have been sinister use of your data. But can we stop it being used at all? No, not really. You can limit the snooping by not downloading smartphone apps or by not connecting your social media to your phone, but that's about it.

It's worth noting that some apps are just fronts for companies who capture your personal data and then sell it on to third parties.

Obviously apps developers need to pay the rent like anyone else, which is why a lot of the apps are free but they can make a ton of money out of selling your data. You'd expect to pay for it somewhere down the line, but surely the option of paying a couple of quid up front for the privacy would be better for the user in the long run.



DECARBONISING

A number of West End residents and I are currently enjoying a course designed to help us reduce our carbon footprints.

The course, designed by Transition Leicester, consists of seven meetings covering the topics of home energy, waste and water, consumerism, food and transport. Each week we have fun taking part in games, exercises and discussions and everyone has the opportunity to talk to other people who care about climate change. In fact, most of us would agree that one of the most positive things about the course is the exchange of ideas.

In the first session everyone completed a questionnaire in order to have their individual carbon footprint calculated and based on that we then chose for ourselves, what changes we want to make. I have found that making changes with other people who are doing the same is more fun and easier than going it alone.

Here are some interesting facts that we have learned so far on the course:



The total CO₂ produced by UK individuals is about 12 tonnes per year. An average per person which might be sustainable for the world would be about 1.5 tonnes per year.

Around £8 billion of energy is wasted every year in the UK because of homes that are poorly insulated. If you don't have loft insulation 26% of your home's heat will be lost.

Nearly a third of all household water is used to flush the loo; you can save 1 – 2 litres of water every time you flush by installing a free Save a Flush bag in the cistern, available from Severn Trent Water.

Every year UK households throw away an average 473 kg of waste per person. Use the 5 Rs as an easy way to think about reducing your waste – Refuse, Reduce, Repair, Re-use, Recycle.

Got you thinking and want to know more? If you would like to reduce your carbon footprint in a supportive group environment contact Transition Leicester on 0116 289 9074 or find the Leicester page at www.transitiontowns.org

Leigh Picciano Moss

Want to tell us something?

SHOUT IT OUT!

e: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk



Tony Huxley's Garden Tidings



Now's the time to put the finished product from your compost bin to good use in the garden. If the results are good enough you can even use it as potting compost, especially for tomatoes and other pot grown fruit and veg.

If your composting has failed it's usually because the heap is too wet or dry. Too wet and air can't get in. Aerobic composting stops, making the heap a sludgy,



smelly mess. Too dry, and the bugs that do the work die. Then the compost bin becomes an attractive residence for vermin and pests.

The trick is to create the right mix of high carbon "brown waste" such as woody prunings, with wetter nitrogen rich "green waste" like grass cuttings. If you've too much "green waste" add a few layers of cardboard or newspaper. Composters are a

great way of getting rid of "brown waste" like shredded bills and bank statements.

If things become too dry water the contents. Cover with something like a plastic sheet or old carpet to retain more moisture. It will also retain more heat which accelerates composting. Active compost bins can get very hot and virtual self pasteurise, killing the weed seeds. Chop woody material into small pieces so they break down quicker. Some gardeners mince prunings with a rotary mower, but do take care if trying this.

Compost needs turning periodically. This mixes up the layers, allows air in and reinvigorates the composting process. Two bins make this a lot easier. In the spring I use compost from the oldest heap in the garden then turn the previous seasons waste into the now empty box and let it mature another season. If you turn the compost more often it'll be ready even sooner.

Well that's your rot, see you next month!

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BRAIN *TAZERS*

1. A builder renovating a hotel has to number each of the rooms with plastic numbers, but, he has run out of the number 9. How many 9's must he buy in order to number all 1,000 rooms?
2. A month includes 5 Saturdays and 5 Mondays. What day of the week is the 15th?
3. Ivy rats oil is an anagram of which recent event in Leicester?
4. Find the opposite words beginning with "C" of each of these. 1. Destroy 2. Natural 3. Agree.
5. Use the clue to find the word pairs, eg, S&P (seasoning) = salt and pepper. 1. S&L (losses and gains). 2. S & S (physical weapons). 3. S&S (Little girls are made out of them).
6. What is once in a minute, twice a moment but never in a thousand years?
7. A girl who wants a talking parrot, buys one that the pet shop owner, truthfully, says will learn and repeat every word it hears. A week later she takes it back complaining that it hasn't said a word and demands a refund. The refund is refused because the pet shop owner did not lie. How so?

Answers on line: www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

SUDOKU

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		7	4	8				
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					5	7	4	
	8			7				

Make a Splash!

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