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Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the August edition of the Western Park Gazette.

We're still operating a little one legged. The current economic climate in Leicester is still extremely difficult and many of our advertisers are not yet strong enough to return. So, once again, we have a slightly thinner edition than normal.

This month we feature the inspiring story of a 7 year old girl, from West Gate School on Glenfield Road, who could be taking her first steps into space, there's the ongoing menace of fly tipping blighting a quiet area of Westcotes, Roger Blackmore discovers more about the preacher who gave his name to Robert Hall Baptist Church and Helen Knott has a few choice words for those who refuse to wear masks when out shopping. We have the latest updates from the local police and Project Hive as well as more seasonal gardening advice from Tony Huxley.

And if you want to stretch your thinking muscles the crossword and Sudoku are loitering on the inside back cover.

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Published by Rapsallion Media

**62 Ainsdale Rd
Leicester LE3 0UA**

Printed by **Flexpress Ltd**

6 Coal Cart Road, Interchange,
Birstall, Leicester, LE4 3YB



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2: You can still meet up to six people from other households outdoors in a public place but not your garden.

3: You can only visit pubs and restaurants with your own household.

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Go to [leicester.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/coronavirus) for city wide updates.

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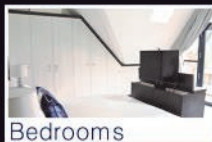
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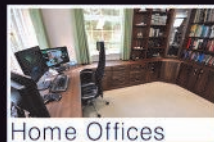
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ONE GIANT LEAP

An aspiring astronaut from Leicester, seven year old Elizabeth "Astro Liz" Norman, has had one of her dreams realised as she was featured during NASA's coverage of their Perseverance Mars Rover launch.

Elizabeth, a student at West Gate School, was inspired by the historic NASA/Space X launch on 27th May which saw two astronauts successfully launch on a commercial rocket to the International Space Station for the first time in history. Elizabeth was excited to capture video footage of the Drago capsule flying over Leicester during its second orbit of the earth on its way to the ISS.

The moment was so captivating for the young explorer that it inspired her to create her own S.T.E.A.M. related YouTube channel, Astro Liz's Lab, which she hopes will inspire a new generation of mini-scientists. Her dream of becoming an astronaut and future Mars colonist was born and events that followed would set the wheels in motion.

Elizabeth took 'one giant leap' toward her dream of becoming an astronaut at the end of July when she was featured during NASA's Perseverance Mars Rover launch event. She successfully applied to and became one of the first 800 people across the globe to participate in NASA Social, a private virtual launch party hosted by the organisation. She received a

commemorative badge and enjoyed having her photo superimposed into a photograph of the Perseverance Mars Rover shown in the clean room at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California. Elizabeth participated in several private Q&A sessions with NASA scientists and engineers and was excited when NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory sent her a message that they hope to see her application to their organisation in the future.

Elizabeth's aspiration became tangible on 30th July when, during their post-launch briefing, NASA featured Elizabeth in their 'Countdown to Mars' Perseverance Rover send-off video. Elizabeth can be seen proudly waving her "Future Mars Colonist" flag whilst standing next to her homemade mission control centre. Elizabeth's name was one of the 10.9 million that were micro-engraved onto three microchips carried to Mars by the Perseverance Rover.



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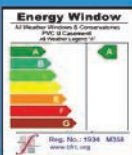
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KNOTT'S LANDING

Mask rage is the latest phenomena 2020 has thrown our way. Little bits of cloth that seem to be causing all sorts of shouting. On the one hand you've got people who are just – "WEAR THE DAMN MASK" – and then on the other hand you have the crew who yell – "I WILL NOT BE MUZZLED!"

A government afraid of admitting mistakes for fear of showing weakness has left us divided, confused and angry. It's pretty clear that along with locking down earlier, quarantining visitors from abroad properly and not sending old people with COVID back to care homes, the Government should have had us wearing masks from the start of lockdown for everyone's protection. Still, better late than never you might think, but not for an angry group who seem to think that they have the right to infect other people with a grim disease because they don't like wearing a bit of cloth over their face.

"I can't get enough oxygen with a mask on!", "I will get carbon dioxide poisoning breathing through a mask!", "My glasses steam up!", "I will



not wear a muzzle!"

This last one is the most perplexing. A muzzle stops a dog or horse biting or feeding, are people worried they won't be able to eat? The rules are pretty clear that you can take it off in a restaurant. Maybe they actually want the right to bite people? There are a handful of people who can't wear a mask but as far as I can see there is no excuse for most of us not to hitch the knicker elastic behind our ears when we go shopping. What makes me really cross is seeing people who are just taking the mick! I know not all disabilities are visible... I get that completely, but standing in a supermarket looking around the other day there is either an epidemic of severe asthma and COPD and there are way more autistic people than we can ever have known or people are taking the mick. It's clearly happening because Sainsburys even have an announcement about it begging us not to have a go at non-mask wearers in case we pick on a disabled person.

Mask wearing means you are doing something selfless, protecting other people, protecting the elderly, protecting black and Asian communities from catching a virus you might not know you have. In a country where fairness is everything, people are behaving with selfish abandon and that makes some, me included, fume. **WEAR THE DAMN MASK.**

Helen Knott

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ROBERT HALL - ICONIC PREACHER

An article in the March Gazette described a community project in the grounds of Robert Hall Baptist Church on Narborough Road. It may have prompted you to ask just who was Robert Hall?

Robert Hall was born in the little village of Arnesby in the south of Leicestershire in 1764 where his father was the Baptist minister. He was the youngest of 14 children living in the manse (A house provided by some churches for ministers and families) next door to the chapel.

He does not appear to have enjoyed very good health as a youth, indeed he nearly died at birth but resolved to follow in his father's footsteps and enter the Baptist ministry.

Described as "too clever for his tutors", he was actually taught to read by following the letters on grave stones, he wrote hymns at eight and was preaching by the age of eleven. He went on to the Rylands School in Northampton and Aberdeen University before joining the Broadmead Chapel in Bristol which had a reputation for working with



young men keen to become pastors.

From here on his reputation as a powerful preacher and orator grew and grew.

He became established at Harvey Lane Chapel in Leicester where Baptists were the largest non-conformist group in the town, outnumbering the Methodists.

My grandmother's little book on Leicestershire, published in 1907, relates that Robert Hall had become so well thought of that it had even been known for some to travel up from London on a Saturday to hear the famous divine preach at Harvey Lane Chapel on the Sunday. Needless to say Harvey Lane Chapel was always packed.

He became particularly renowned for his defence of framework knitters in Leicester's knitwear trade following a recession in 1819, even setting up a friendly society to help them. An accomplished writer, Hall published various books including a collected volume of sermons produced in 1819.

His statue can be found at the intersection of De Montfort Street and New Walk close to the Belmont Hotel.

In spite of living his whole later life in agony with severe hypocalcaemia, next to John Wesley, Robert Hall was the most renowned preacher in the whole of Great Britain. Not bad going for the little lad from Arnesby.

Roger Blackmore

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CLEAN UP EFFORT TRASHED

Residents of Linkway Gardens and Cherryleas Drive have been left devastated after spending a day and a half clearing up rubbish only to have fly tippers return within 48 hours.

The lives of residents of the quiet cul-de-sacs just off Fosse Road South, are being made unbearable due to large amounts of rubbish constantly being dumped on their doorstep and high incidences of anti-social behaviour. They fear that no-one is able to help them and that their plight is being ignored.

The Merry Monarch car park on Fosse Road South and the adjoining streets are laid out on private land. The absentee landlords, Admiral Taverns, Hall Properties and Leicester City Council have batted back and forth responsibility for the maintenance of the estate for many years, leaving residents with no realistic hope of finding a solution to the problem.

Sick and tired of hearing "It isn't our responsibility", residents recently decided to take on the work of cleaning up themselves. A small group joined forces with award winning local litter removal expert 'Can Man' who visits the car park three times a week but struggles to keep up with the volume of litter, let alone the frequent fly tipping. The equivalent of 30 man-hours were spent removing 25 black bags of rubbish (including a large flat-screen TV), trimming overgrown vegetation, sweeping up shattered glass and weeding boundaries. All rubbish was then dis-

posed of at residents' own expense.

All the hard work came to nothing and residents have now been left devastated because two days after their mammoth clean up a sofa was left over night, next to the newly cleaned area and more rubbish is being dumped every week.

The car park is also a magnet for anti-social behaviour, whether it be the buying and selling of cars, drug dealing, alcohol consumption or as an open-air toilet. Residents have grown so tired of reporting issues to the police, with nothing followed up, that they no longer feel it's worth a phone call – a very dangerous situation indeed.

Leigh Picciano Moss (Resident)



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PROJECT

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Update

Project Hive is run by the WWCE, who are a group of local residents

raising funds for the redevelopment the old Eco House into a community space.

The team is busy working on this year's Western Park Scarecrow Trail which returns over the weekend of 5th & 6th September. There will be around the same number of scarecrows as last year, once again spread across the streets of our little part of the world with the theme of "Heroes". We hope to see even more of our community out in the fresh air pounding the pavements than before. Due to the ongoing restrictions we will not be based on Dovetails playground this time, instead you will be able to get a hold of your guides at properties on Westfield Road or Dorchester Road. We also hope to offer a digital download through our website so stay tuned to our social media channels and our website for more detail closer to the time.

Have you heard about our (Western) Parklife photography competition? We are asking for your submissions of pictures taken by you of life in and around the area. It's open to all ages and a panel of judges will be choosing the best entries to create a 2021 calendar.

Again, you can find out more online.

Find out more about WWCE and Project Hive at our website wwce.org.uk or on Facebook @wwceleicester



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CAMERA & COVID

On many of my Photographic walks around the West End and slightly beyond, it never fails to amaze me how Mother Nature has taken over the edges of pavements, walls, and brickwork. Wherever I've seen a crack in a slab of concrete, or a gap in some retaining wall, there's usually a weed making its presence felt, defying the odds by producing a beautiful flower head. As nobody is reducing them to compost, it has brought a bit of visual delight to Lockdown Leicester. Some of these plants I've never seen before, so I downloaded a flora identification app to my phone, and it's opened up a whole new world for me. It's good to know that, in my COVID-19 picture files, I have shots of unexpected beauty, as well those stark images of closed shops, some of which have sadly gone forever.



Tony Shelley

£180k INVESTMENT IN THE RALLY

We are being asked for our views on plans to revamp a popular local park close to Leicester's Waterside regeneration area.

The Rally park, which sits between Tudor Road and The River Soar, could see around £180,000 invested in a range of proposed improvements. These include a raised seating area, new landscaping with flowering lawns, improvements to the Tudor Road entrance and a new multi-use ball court.

If given the go-ahead, work on the proposed improvements could begin in the autumn.

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August Police Update

We are tantalisingly close to having the last of the local restrictions lifted and moving closer to the new 'normal'. The reopening of some social venues has been welcomed and I am pleased to report that the vast majority of the community have approached this sensibly; the reports of disorder being low. Face masks are the new norm and, again, the response by the community has been impressive from a policing perspective. They say that you don't really appreciate something until it is gone and most of the people I have spoken to seem to express a new vigour in ensuring we don't return to a lockdown.

We have been looking at the survey results from our Neighbourhood Link:

(www.neighbourhoodlink.co.uk) and placing our resources accordingly. There is a fine balance between what causes you the most concern and what we know represents the most risk and harm (often hidden from public view). You have raised concerns about the cannabis grows and other drug dealing and we have responded through the enforcement of several warrants. More are planned. I often find copies of the Western Park Gazette at these properties; let's hope the assailants read it and take the hint! Nuisance Parking and associated ASB is also a concern to you and your teams have been out and about with the parking enforcement officers. The hot weather has seemingly attracted nuisance motorcycles on the parks. Ridden illegally, and frequently stolen, the perpetrators will often be spoiling for a chase. There are inherent dangers in doing so and our preferred tactic is one of building up our intelligence picture and acting at a time when the dangers can be controlled. This is where information provided by the public proves invaluable. We have utilised specialist teams in pursuit management to run several days of action with significant success, through arrests and the permanent removal of a number of motorcycles from their riders.

Catalytic converters and number plate thefts continue to be a problem along the Hinckley Road area. Hybrid vehicles are often the target as the converter contains precious metals which are less prone to corrosion and as such are more valuable to thieves, therefore patrols have been increased.

We continue respond to what is important to you but only if we know about it. If you have not done so, I encourage you to sign up to Neighbourhood link and complete the very short survey. In the meantime, keep safe, keep healthy and be a good neighbour.

Sgt Ed Jones

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



As the lockdown noose is slowly, possibly, maybe, loosening - for now; it's time to raid the garden for some delicious fruit!

After a spell of some blistering temperatures and humidity, the fruit in the garden is now beginning to look edible. Apples and pears are fattening nicely, although this time last year they were already filling the fruit bowl! They've also put on masses of leaf growth, but I've kept them in check with a summer prune. This keeps the crop manageable and improves quality. It also allows more light to the plants below. Plum trees can also produce too much fruit which can cause limbs to tear, so don't be afraid or too greedy to thin the crop.

My peach tree has made a full recovery after its annual attack of Peach Leaf Curl. This fungal infection can defoliate infected plants. The fungus likes damp Spring conditions. Using a waterproof sheet to cover small specimens for the first five months of the year can reduce infection. You can also spray with a copper based fungicide in winter and early spring.

Currants and gooseberries should now be ready for harvesting, this is also a good time to prune

back the new growth. On the other hand blackcurrants should be pruned when dormant, trying only to remove old wood as the fruit is produced on the new growth.

The humble blackberry is everywhere. Battling unwanted brambles, if they take hold, can be an ongoing task but if well managed, a regular summer crop of fruit full of vitamins and anti-toxicants is a good thing to keep for a pie.

Blueberries are attractive plants that don't look out of place in ornamental borders or planters. They are ericaceous so for best results grow in lime free soil and apply an acidic mulch such as composted pine needles or conifer clippings. Their berries are claimed to be a "super



Blueberries

food" and should be plump and ready for picking.

Fruit trees and shrubs can give a great return for a small investment of time and care. Most fruit can be easily frozen, bottled or turned into jams and puddings, and nothing beats the taste of a home grown dessert.

Tony Huxley



Martin Page

YOUR LOCAL TREE SURGEON

- ✧ Are your trees too tall, blocking light or untidy?
- ✧ Do your hedges, conifers or shrubs need trimming?
- ✧ Would you like to remove that stubborn stump?

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BRAIN TAZERS

1		2		3		4
5						
6						
7						

1 Across: Vacation **1 Down:** Coughing **2D:** Song like **3D:** Pronounce without a sound **4D:** Northern Americans **5A:** Wheeled home **6A:** Slope **7A:** Course gamers.
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Answers at w:westernparkgazette.co.uk

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

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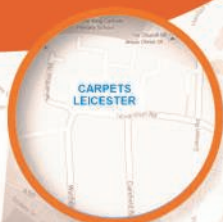
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