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november 2023

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for residents of wythall & hollywood

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Feeling Festive?

Welcome to the November edition

By the time this arrives Christmas will only be about 6 weeks away! Check out page 6 to see what local events are coming up to get you in the festive mood.

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!

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community events

Elvis And The Dixie Rock 'N' Roll Band Live Show!

25 November, Land Rover Sports & Social Club

Voted the best Elvis Tribute Act in the Midlands by local radio station BRMB, Mark's vocal range is such that it allows him to spectacularly mimic many of the performances of Elvis, through some of his most prominent years. To book: www.landroversc.co.uk/shows-and-events/

Menopause Café

26 November 10am, Paramo Lounge, Solihull High Street

Join us at Menopause

Café, a supportive space to share experiences, learn, and connect with others navigating the menopause journey. All welcome to come along.

The Super Weekender 2023

1-3 December, NEC, Birmingham

This 3-day event will bring together over 15,000 dance lovers from across the country. Dancers can compete, perform, train and exhibit under one roof with unmissable competitions and world-class training from sought-after choreographers and dance professionals. For more info: www.thenec.co.uk/whats-on/the-super-weekender/

Christmas Fair

2 December 10am - 1pm, Knowle Village Hall.

This annual Fair is a Knowle Village Hall Fundraising event. Christmas door wreaths will be on sale as well as plenty of gifts, cards, chocolates etc - lots to choose from! Refreshments will be available and there is a Grand Raffle. Come and join in!

Comedy Night

25 November, Knowle British Legion

Don't miss this sensational line-up of talented comedians who will have you rolling in the aisles from start to finish. So mark your calendars and prepare for an unforgettable night of non-stop laughter. Tickets from www.tributenightpromotions.co.uk/

Donny Osmond

9 December, Resorts World Arena

Legendary music star Donny Osmond has announced his first UK tour in six years. The pop superstar will be bringing his electrifying Vegas show to UK arenas from December. To book: www.resortsworldarena.co.uk/whats-on/donny-osmond/



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a good read

By Natasha Donovan

Infinite Detail

by **Tim Maughan**

Maughan's debut novel is a mesmerizing and thought-provoking exploration of a future world shattered by the sudden collapse of the internet. Set in a near-future dystopia, Maughan skilfully navigates the intricacies of a society that has lost its digital connectivity and the profound impact it has on both individuals and the collective consciousness. The novel weaves together two narrative threads: one set in the days leading up to the 'Zero Day' event, when the internet vanishes, and the other in the aftermath, where society grapples with the consequences. Maughan's prose is both evocative and insightful, capturing the tension and unease of a world suddenly thrust into chaos. Through a cast of compelling characters, he explores how our reliance on technology shapes our identities, relationships, and perceptions.

Maughan's vision of a post-internet world is hauntingly vivid, painting a picture of a society in disarray, where once-thriving cities become desolate and communities fragment. As characters navigate this new reality, the author delves into themes of power, surveillance, and the blurred lines between the virtual and the real. The novel's exploration of the human condition amidst technological collapse is deeply resonant, inviting readers to contemplate their own relationship with the digital realm. It's a cautionary tale; a portrait of the fragility of our current status quo, and it is as thought-provoking as it is terrifying; you won't ever take your Wi-Fi for granted again.



Time Travelling with a Hamster

by **Ross Welford**

This is a delightful and heartwarming novel aimed at young readers aged 8-12. It masterfully combines the complexities of time travel with a touching exploration of family bonds and personal growth. The story follows Al Chaudhury, a twelve-year-old boy who stumbles upon a time machine built by his late father. Filled with a mix of curiosity and determination, Al embarks on a mission to change the past and save his father's life.

Welford's writing is imbued with a genuine sense of wonder and a keen understanding of a young person's perspective. Al goes on a rollercoaster adventure through time, navigating paradoxes and unforeseen consequences with pluck and humour. Al's interactions with his pet hamster, a hilarious and unlikely companion in his journey, add a nice touch of whimsy to the story.

This is a beautiful novel about the emotional complexity of loss, and the lengths one is willing to go to mend a fractured family. Al's relationship with his late father, the mystery surrounding his last words, and the bond he shares with his unconventional grandfather all contribute to the novel's emotional depth. Through the intricacies of time travel, the author explores the idea that every action has a ripple effect, highlighting the importance of accepting the past while embracing the present.

Time Travelling with a Hamster captures the essence of childhood curiosity, resilience, and the power of love. It effortlessly weaves together science fiction elements with relatable coming-of-age experiences, making it a captivating read for young readers and adults alike. It is a heartwarming tale that reminds us of the preciousness of time and the significance of the relationships that shape our lives.





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Pear and Chocolate Pudding Cake

A light and luscious cake using in-season pears.



Preparation time: 20 min

Cooking time: 40 min

Serves: 8

Ingredients

85g butter, plus 1
tbsp extra for tin
85g golden caster sugar,
plus extra for tin
85g gluten-free dark
chocolate, broken
into pieces.
1 tbsp brandy
3 eggs, separated.
85g hazelnuts or almonds,
toasted and ground in
a food processor.
4 very ripe pears, peeled,
halved, and cored.
Icing sugar, for dusting

Method

Grease the sides of a
25cm loose-bottomed
cake tin and line the base

with baking parchment.
Sprinkle in 2 tbsp caster
sugar and swirl it around to
coat the base and sides,
then tip out any excess.
Preheat the oven to 180C/
fan 160C/gas 4. Melt the
chocolate and butter in
a bowl over a pan of hot
water, remove from the
heat, stir in the brandy
and leave to cool.

Whisk the egg yolks with the
caster sugar in a large bowl
until pale and thick; then fold
into the cooled chocolate
along with the ground
hazelnuts or almonds.

In a separate bowl, with a

clean whisk, beat the whites
until they reach a soft peak
(don't over beat). Stir a
spoonful of the whites into
the chocolate mix, then
carefully fold in the rest of
them in. Spoon the mixture
into the prepared tin. Level it
off, then arrange the pears
over the mixture, cut side
down. Bake for about 40
mins until the pears are soft
and the cake is cooked
all the way through. Leave
to cool in the tin for five
minutes before releasing
it, then place on a rack
to cool completely.

Dust with icing sugar and
serve with crème fraîche.

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GaryMM-1318, 24 Aug 2023



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St. Andrew's Day - November 30th

How did St Andrew (who never set foot in Scotland) become its patron Saint?

Born in Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee, Andrew was the brother of Peter. Before following Jesus, both brothers were fishermen. In Christian tradition, St. Andrew was known for his strong faith and fervent devotion, and he is credited with being the first apostle and introducing his brother to Jesus. His missionary journeys are believed to have included areas like Greece, Turkey, and possibly parts of modern-day Russia and Poland.

However, what ties St. Andrew to Scotland is not his life but

the manner of his martyrdom and subsequent legends. After Jesus died, Andrew continued to preach about Jesus and his teachings. The Roman rulers took exception to this and martyred Andrew for his beliefs. Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross, called "Cruz Decussata", more commonly known as the Saltire, or St. Andrew's Cross. The connection with Scotland deepened with legends suggesting that some of St. Andrew's relics were brought to Scotland by St. Regulus. St Andrew has been



celebrated in Scotland for over one thousand years, with feasts being held in his honour as far back as the year 1000 AD. However, it wasn't until 1320, when Scotland's independence was declared with the signing of The Declaration of Arbroath, that he officially became Scotland's patron saint.



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How Secure is your Wi-Fi?

How much thought do you give to your home Wi-Fi security? Probably not enough. An insecure home Wi-Fi network means that outsiders can easily access it, and as well as using your internet for free, they can exploit it for malicious activities. They could access data on devices connected to that network, including passwords, financial data, personal photos, and confidential documents. Someone could even use your network to engage in illegal activities online which could be traced back to you. Even if unauthorized users aren't engaging in malicious activity, the added traffic can lead to network congestion, resulting in reduced performance for legitimate users.

Wi-Fi security might seem daunting, but it's more about taking the right steps than it is about technical complexity. Here are areas where people often slip up:

Setup: Adjusting router settings feels like a chore, but investing a little time now can prevent problems later. Make it a point to familiarize yourself with your router's control panel.

Weak Passwords: Opt for a robust Wi-Fi password. Avoid easily guessable



passwords like "password" or "12345678", or your surname!

Default Admin Passwords:

Replace the generic passwords e.g., 'admin', that your router came with to prevent unauthorized access.

Using Outmoded Security

Protocols: Move beyond outdated encryption like WEP or even WPA. WPA3 is the newest standard, so look for routers that support it.

Enabled Vulnerable Services:

Disable insecure features like Wi-Fi Protected Setup (WPS) and Universal Plug and Play (UPnP), which can be easily exploited.

Unnecessary Remote Access:

Unless essential, turn off remote access to your router to prevent external threats.

Ignoring Guest Networks:

Use the guest network feature for visitors to keep them separate from your primary network.

This limits their access to sensitive files and devices.

Smart Devices on Main

Network: Assign smart home gadgets to a guest network. This prevents potential security lapses from affecting your main devices.

NOTE Hiding your Wi-Fi network means disabling the "SSID broadcast" feature on your router, making the network name (SSID) invisible to most users. While it might seem like a smart security measure, there are several problems associated with it:

It can give you a false sense of security, because hiding your SSID doesn't make your network invisible to everyone. People with the right tools or software can still detect hidden networks and their SSIDs.

Also, every time you want to add a new device to your network, you'll need to manually input the SSID and password since the network won't appear in the list of available Wi-Fi connections. This can be inconvenient and troublesome, especially for less tech-savvy individuals.

Most importantly hiding your SSID is not a substitute for implementing robust security measures, such as strong encryption (like WPA3) and a solid password.

Hopefully I've helped you understand a little better how to protect your home Wi-Fi so that you can stream and surf safely.

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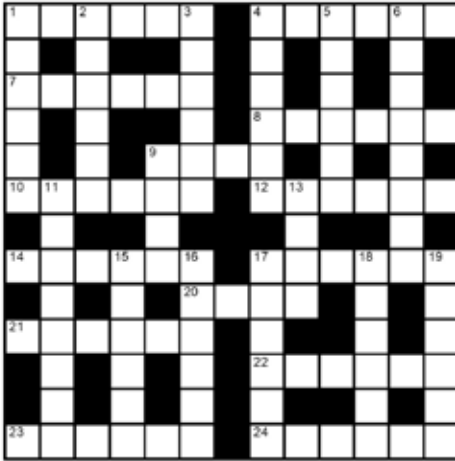
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crossword



clues

Across

- 1 chaos, uproar (6)
- 4 congratulations, adoration (6)
- 7 clippers (6)
- 8 fashionable, stylish (6)
- 9 administer, distribute (4)
- 10 small flat metal ring (6)
- 12 stippled (6)
- 14 acclaimed, recognised (6)
- 17 alcove (6)
- 20 at that time (4)
- 21 type of straw hat (6)
- 22 request, summon (6)
- 23 seat for riding (6)
- 24 as night falls (6)

Down

- 1 allot, grant (6)
- 2 anticipates with horror (6)
- 3 assemble, collect (6)
- 4 heaved, puffed (6)
- 5 hopeless and downtrodden (6)
- 6 without pips or kernels (8)
- 9 bill of fare (4)
- 11 semi-aquatic snake (8)
- 13 harbinger, portent (4)
- 15 offer a higher price (6)
- 16 band (6)
- 17 careless (6)
- 18 begrudges, years (6)
- 19 mute (6)

answer on page 22



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.

answer on page 22



Mark O'Sullivan

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

Sudoku Solution

from page 20

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

Crossword Solution

from page 20

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