


PIGEON POST


Keeping you informed & involved


October & November 2021




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ISSUE



Welcome to the first anniversary issue of Pigeon Post.

Can't believe it's a year since we published our first Pigeon Post to reach out to people who were feeling cut off due to Covid restrictions and who had no access to a computer.

We wanted our readers to decide what we write about and thanks to all your letters, phone calls, stories, poems and top tips, I think we've done a pretty good job!

What a pleasure it's been getting to know you! You've told us so many fascinating things about your lives – from surviving a V2 blast to appearing on Britain's Got Talent and what it was like playing in a 1940s Swing Band or working on women's magazines in the 1970s.

It all goes to show that the stories of people living in Barnet are just as interesting, if not more so, than the celebrities we read about in the weeklies!

Have a good month!

Helen Newman
Chief Executive
Age UK Barnet



Age UK Barnet, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT.

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WINTER SQUASHES TO BEAT WINTER BUGS....

Now that autumn is upon us, vibrant orange and yellow pumpkins and butternut squashes are filling up the fresh produce isles. Although we think of them as vegetables, they are technically fruit, says cookery volunteer Kato. 'Due to their vibrant colour, winter squashes are rich in nutrients that keep our immune system in shape and fight inflammation,' says Kato. 'They are also excellent sources of fibre and keep our gut microbes healthy and happy.' And best of all, they are delicious in almost any form – as our recipe ideas show.

Pumpkin fritters

First make the pumpkin puree: cut a 1.2-1.5kg pumpkin in half and scoop out the seeds. Rub the flesh with rapeseed or sunflower oil, and prick the skin. Roast flesh side down on a baking sheet covered with wax paper for about 50 minutes at 180°C. When the pumpkin flesh is soft, scoop out and puree in a blender or with an electrical or hand whisk.



Combine one cup of pumpkin puree with one cup of flour of your choice (try spelt, buckwheat or other wholewheat flours for a change from white flour), 2tsp baking powder, 3-6 tsp caster sugar (to taste), ¼ cup milk, and a combination of ½ tsp each of ground nutmeg, cinnamon and salt. Add one beaten egg. In a frying pan, heat 2-4 tbsp of rapeseed or sunflower oil to smoking point. Add a ladleful of the pumpkin mixture to the hot oil – make sure not to overcrowd the pan. Fry the fritters for two minutes on each side. Enjoy as a tasty dessert – for a decadent treat add caramel sauce.



Butternut curry soup

Very gently cook 2 cups of chopped onion and 4 tsp of medium curry powder in a mix of 2tbsp each of rapeseed and olive oil, for 25 minutes until soft, but not browned. Meanwhile, chop up the flesh of 2 medium butternuts (peeled and deseeded) – it should make about 4½ cups – and two cored red apples. Add to the onions with 3 cups of chicken stock (fresh or cubes), and cook for 25 minutes until the squash is soft. Mix with a stick blender, and add one cup of apple juice. Heat up and enjoy.

Butternut squash and sage risotto

Roast 4 cups of cubed butternut squash flesh with 2tbsp of olive, sunflower or rapeseed oil, and half a bunch of chopped sage for 30 minutes at 200°C. Meanwhile, gently fry one chopped onion in olive oil for 10 minutes. Then stir any type of risotto short grain rice into the onion for about two minutes. Add 150ml white wine and cook until it has all evaporated. Add 1.5 litre of vegetable stock, one ladle at a time, while stirring the rice, over a low heat. The rice should take about 25 minutes to cook – it should be of a creamy consistency. Puree half of the roasted butternut and stir into the rice with 50g of parmesan or any strong Italian cheese. Add a handful of kale leaves and stir into the rice. Fry a few sage leaves in a teaspoon of olive oil for a few minutes, crush, and scatter over the rice with the remaining butternut.



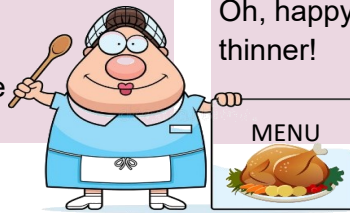
POETRY CORNER

A poem from our reader Maureen Walsh of Mill Hill, remembering her days as a dinner lady!

DINNER LADIES!



I used to be a dinner lady,
I worked alongside Meg and Sadie
Our overalls were wrap-arounds
One size did not fit all, so we found
I had to be careful mine didn't sweep the ground
On our heads we wore colourful turbans
With the radio we used to sing along with Diana Durban
The kitchen was always filled with lots of steam
From saucepans filled with fresh-grown greens
Some pots were as big as a giant's cauldron
With very large handles for us to have to hold on
Pots overflowing, brimming, oozing
And hissing sissing and sizzling
Lots of food piled pyramid high
And a desperate Dan-sized meat pie



The sun smiled into the kitchen that was brightly lit
Where Meg was turning the handle of the spit
The ovens were so deep and cavernous
Filled with baking trays, size ginormous
The outside of the ovens, always shining and gleaming
While on the tops, delicious puds were steaming
The tantalizing aroma of the roasts
And melted dripping on doorstep sized toasts
And Sadie the third dinner lady
Made a not-to-be-forgotten lump-free gravy
Then in streamed the diners
With a chorus of "what's for dinner"
Oh, happy days! No one obsessed with getting thinner!

BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN BARNET



CELEBRATING DIVERSITY IN THE RAF

The RAF Museum is holding a special workshop on 20 November 2021, exploring the lives of African, Caribbean, South Asian and Irish volunteers who served in the RAF despite being opposed to British rule in their home countries.

A series of talks will explore and celebrate the stories of key individuals from diverse backgrounds who served in the RAF and connect their experiences to the story of wider participation in the British armed forces during the war. The workshop is called Freedom Fighters: diverse identities in the RAF and looks at the evolving debate about Britain's imperial past, shining a light on the issues of slavery, the growth of nationalism and the cultural legacy of empire. For more information call the RAF Museum on 020 8205 2266.



Age UK Barnet is also holding interactive sessions at the RAF Museum exploring different aspects of the RAF and its history. We have two more sessions left this year – on 17 November and 1 December. Get in touch with Helen on 07384 466840 to find out more.

OVER TO YOU!



YOUR LIVES, YOUR STORIES!



Maybe you've got a cleaning tip, recipe idea, a useful piece of advice or a funny story? Whatever you want to get off your chest, put it to paper and send it to us at **Age UK Barnet Letters Page, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT**. Or call Teresa on **07502 989 403**.



READERS LETTERS

'I Will Never Drive Again!'

Reader Katharine tells us why she gave up her car

Six weeks ago, I sold my car (with a price sticker on the windscreen, in my front garden)

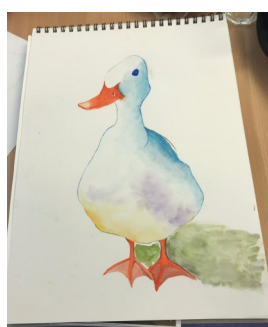
This made financial sense. For the last 2-3 years, I only drove within a radius of about 5 miles, and that only once or twice a week! The mounting insurance, road tax, petrol, MOT and repairs came to nearly £2,000 a year. For what??

Amazingly, I feel a sense of relief. I have a bus pass, I love walking, and the knowledge that I no longer add bad stuff to the atmosphere is so heartening. Yes - there are times when my little Honda would be so useful, but that £150 a month saved does sweeten the pill.

If any of you are toying with the idea of going car-less, it can be done!



ART GALLERY



So great to see the beautiful art being created in some of our art classes at the **Ann Owens Centre** in East Finchley. We love the autumn colours in a few of our participants' latest paintings. Do get in touch if you'd like to join one of our art classes. If you'd prefer to get creative with flowers, we have flower arranging sessions at **Hope Lane Community Centre** in EN5. For more information, just phone **Helen** on **07384 466840**

International Harpist Sioned Williams was inspired to write about the influence of music on her life after reading Professor Catherine Loveday's Pigeon Post article about the benefits of music.. here she talks movingly about how music has got her through her health struggles and the darkest of times.



Without music in my life, I may not even be here today. In childhood an unknown illness meant I could not always find the energy for the kind of physical play my friends enjoyed. However, I had a piano, I sang, I improvised and I composed. Whilst I was often sick, music was my 'go-to'. Aged 11, I started harp lessons, and though playing was literally painful for me, inexplicably, I practised more when I felt my body was in distress and I found a way through. Music ignited my imagination, it heightened my senses; subdued, gentle, soothing at difficult times and in contrast, invigorating and thrilling, enabling me to be cheerful, contented. I grew more confident in my musical aspirations and music was my solace and the ignition when life pointed me out as 'different'. After an international solo career, in 1990 I became Principal Harp of the BBC Symphony Orchestra; a

huge privilege and a massive responsibility. I was also diagnosed with the very rare 'McArdle Disease' and was told to 'rest, not use muscles'. The thought, however, that music would not feature in my career was impossible. My brain negotiated how life may have to be handled if I was to survive and play the harp, but even in physically very difficult situations, listening to music soothed me. I persevered, even while finding some times overwhelming. Could I get through a demanding passage? Could I get to the platform from the dressing-room (since this disease affects all skeletal muscle). Miraculously, I discovered the pain was not taking over, emotions were. Playing within an orchestra, being part of a huge entity of sound is unimaginable. The tiniest delicate fragment, or the hugest full symphonic breadth of sound, the most insane contemporary noise or the most lush romantic chord; each strike a different inner feeling. This does not only manifest in the emotional sense but also physically; it sends bursts of adrenaline enabling musicians to go well beyond 'expected' norms.

During one Prom concert in 2017, I became aware that my sight had suddenly deteriorated but I carried on until the baton finally came down on the last beat. An emergency operation at Moorfields ensued and music once again played a role, enabling me to become calm for a long operation. I imagined beautiful sounds (Mahler Adagietto)...it heightened my emotions to drop my heart rate, then, and in several more ops over 14 months. Each time music changed my brain's behaviour thus my body and all my emotions.

When finally I made the harrowing decision to leave the orchestra (the sight loss in one eye being the major factor), I did not want to listen to music, and certainly I did not want to play. I've always been very creative so what to do next was not my issue. Slow thoughtful music was too painful on one side, jolly music was far too happy on the other; it was a stressful and unbearably sad time.

Then it dawned on me that music had always been my best friend. After my harp had been silent for months, I went to my instrument. The physicality of playing, even with only one eye, meant adapting to new challenges, but all worries disappeared when emotion took over. The sheer pleasure of hearing music coming from my own two hands...inexplicable really.

Whether I play in The Royal Albert Hall in front of thousands, or in a small informal gathering, there is nothing more satisfying than to share my passion with others.

Music is simply incredible.

Sioned Williams is looking forward to entertaining friends at Barnet Age UK on December 16th in a varied recital of harp music.

**Has something extraordinary happened to you? Maybe you had an unusual career?
Whatever your story, please get in touch if you'd like Linda to share it with us.
Please phone Teresa on 07502 989 403.**

RECIPE TIME....



MICROWAVE MUG: SESAME SALMON & BROCCOLI

Both of these recipes are diabetes friendly and make a tasty meal and treat.

Ingredients

1 skinless and boneless salmon steak - cubed (150g)
1 tsp toasted sesame oil
half tsp Chinese five-spice powder
70g broccoli, broken into small florets
2 spring onions, finely chopped

Prep: 5min › Cook: 2min + 1min resting › Serves: 2



Method

Place the salmon in a bowl and add the sesame oil and five-spice, mixing well to coat the salmon.

Put some of the broccoli and spring onions into a mug, add some salmon and then more broccoli, distributing evenly. You can cram it in as it will shrink a little when cooked.

Add 2 tbs water then cover with cling film and pierce a hole in the top.

Heat for 2 minutes, leave to stand for 1 minute before removing the film and serving.

Tip: Try adding other vegetables such as mangetout or thin slices of pepper. For a tandoori twist, try using curry powder in place of the Chinese five-spice powder. You can also add noodles or rice for a more filling meal.



CURRENT TEABREAD

Prep: 20 min › Cook: 1hr 15 mins

Ingredients

- 340 g (12 oz) self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 50 g (1¾ oz) unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 100 g (3½ oz) light muscovado sugar
- 150 g (5½ oz) fresh currants
- 3 tbsp chopped fresh mint
- 150 ml (5 fl oz) orange juice, or as needed



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F, gas mark 4). Grease and line a 900 g (2 lb) loaf tin. Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl, then rub in the butter with your fingertips until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar, and make a well in the centre.
2. Put the currants and mint into the well in the dry ingredients and pour in the orange juice. Gradually stir the dry ingredients into the liquid until everything is thoroughly combined. The mixture should be soft, so add 1–2 tbsp more orange juice if necessary.
3. Turn the mixture into the prepared tin and smooth the top. Bake for about 1 ¼ hours or until risen, brown and firm to the touch. If the loaf looks as though it is browning too much after about 50 minutes, place a piece of foil loosely over the top.

Leave the teabread to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then turn it out onto a wire rack to cool completely. This teabread is best left overnight before serving, and can be kept in an airtight tin for up to 3 days.

Some more ideas - Make blueberry teabread by substituting fresh blueberries for the currants. * For cranberry pecan teabread, substitute roughly chopped fresh cranberries for the currants. Replace the mint with ½ tsp ground cinnamon, sifting it with the flour, and stir in 100 g (3½ oz) pecan nuts with the sugar.



BLUEBERRIES FOR THE BRAIN

Hot off the press... our trustee Catherine Loveday reports on two exciting new studies about the benefits of flavonoids revealed at the Psychobiology Section Annual Scientific Meeting she recently attended.

Scientists have known for a long time that a healthy diet can boost our brain health and reduce the risk of dementia. And a study by Claire Williams at Reading University looked at one aspect of the diet – flavonoids, which are found in brightly coloured berries, red cabbage, tea and dark chocolate, for instance - and are consistently shown to have important health benefits.

'Healthy older adults completed a food diary, and researchers looked at the amount of flavonoids in their diet, and once other things were taken into consideration, they found that the levels of flavonoids in people's diet predicted performance in memory and problem-solving tasks,' says Catherine. 'Over a four year period, people eating higher level of flavonoids were maintaining their brain function significantly better than those eating lower levels of flavonoids.'

The message is clear about the benefits of flavonoids, but what about taking a supplement? Freeze dried blueberry powder and supplements, for instance, have higher levels of flavonoids than we can easily get in our diets.

'In a small randomised control trial, researchers found that people who took dried blueberry powder as a supplement showed improvements in memory and other brain functions,' says Catherine. 'And the effects were the greatest among those who already had good levels of flavonoids in their diets.'

Researchers weren't sure why this was exactly but - alongside changes in brain function – researchers found improvements in people's cardio vascular system, a reduction in blood pressure and an increase in particular gut microbes that lead to a healthier gut.

'A healthy gut is a really good predictor of a healthy brain,' says Catherine. 'A varied diet gives bigger diversity of gut bacteria which supports brain function but also has been linked to better immunity.'

So it's a big thumbs up for flavonoids, but try to keep up your dietary levels, even if you decide to take a supplement. 'We should aim for a rainbow diet, full of different colours, to get the widest range of nutrients and higher levels of flavonoids,' says Catherine. 'The science behind it relates to the components that make up the colours which are good for us.'

Our favourite flavonoids!

★Berries, particularly Blueberries and Red Cabbage★Onions ★Kale ★
★Parsley★Tea★Red Wine★Dark Chocolate★



GETTING YOU CONNECTED!

'This laptop will change everything. Life's going to be so much easier doing my tasks online!' says Stavrakis (pictured right) who is our first Laptop Loan client, where we lend laptops to older Barnet residents without a computer and support them to get online. The idea is that getting connected online will help improve physical and mental wellbeing as well as social lives, hopefully reducing feelings of loneliness. 'Once someone's been set up on their computer, they can come along to one of Age UK Barnet's digital inclusion sessions where they'll be shown how to manage everyday tasks such as paying bills, and we will also link them up to online exercise and social activities,' says Mandy who will be organizing the laptop loans for Age UK Barnet.



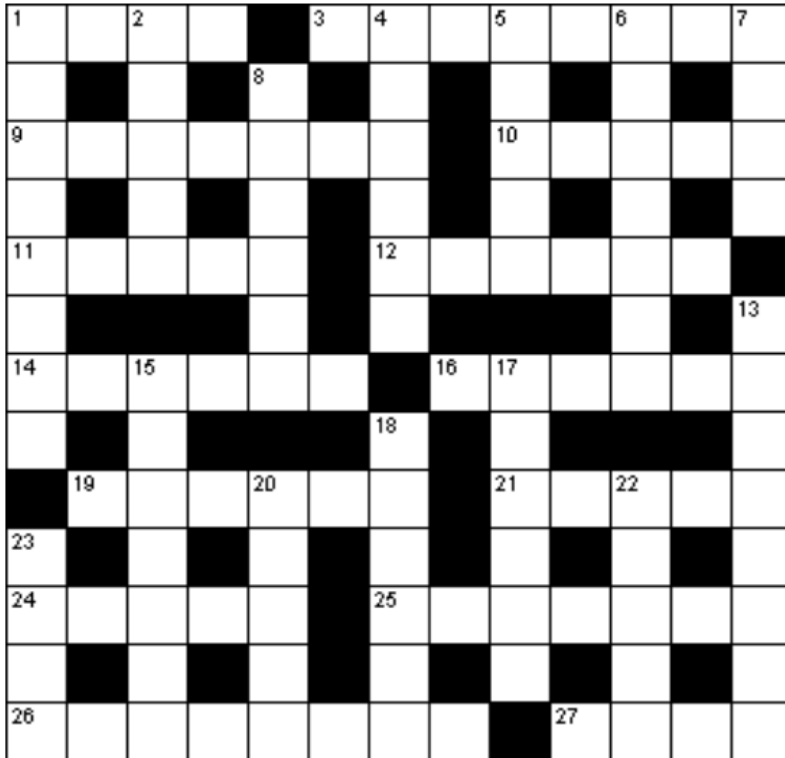
What we can do

- ◆Lend you a laptop
- ◆Set you up on email
- ◆Show you how to connect and stay in touch with loved ones
- ◆Help you store all your photos
- ◆Make all your practical tasks easier by doing them online – such as shopping, paying bills and banking
- ◆Link you to our online activities and exercise classes
- ◆Help you find out more about all the things you enjoy

If you would really gain from one of our laptops, please get in touch.

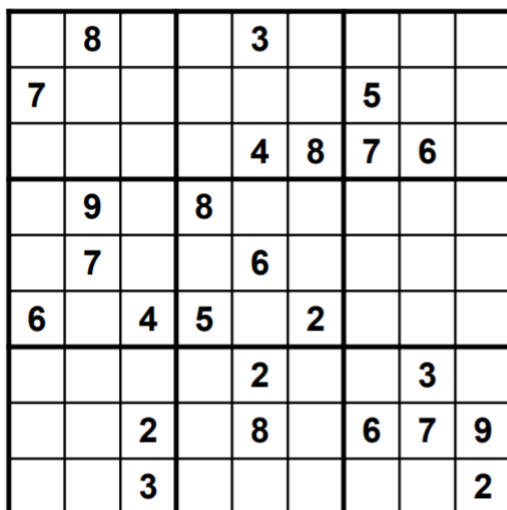
Just contact **Mandy** on **020 8432 1415**

PUZZLE TIME....



ACROSS	
1	Spinning toys (4)
3	Small freshwater turtle (8)
9	Japanese art of paper folding (7)
10	Implicitly understood (5)
11	Pungent (5)
12	Spanish capital (6)
14	Make possible (6)
16	Third sign of the zodiac (6)
19	Preliminary drawing (6)
21	Happen again (5)
24	Go on all fours (5)
25	Witty saying (7)
26	Imperil (8)
27	Sacred (4)

DOWN	
1	Deceitful (3, 5)
2	Previous (5)
4	Mystery (6)
5	Assessed (5)
6	Composer of the opera "Tosca" (7)
7	Brief written record made for late reference (4)
8	Light open-toed shoe (6)
13	Card game (3,5)
15	Ungainly (7)
17	Insect with large rear pincers (6)
18	Stilton, for example (6)
20	Sharp hooked claw (5)
22	Freight (5)
23	Measure of land (4)



**SUDUKO
MEDIUM**

WHAT TO WEAR WORD SEARCH

BELT	SHAWL
BLOUSE	SHIFT
COAT	SHIRT
DRESS	SHORTS
FROCK	SKIRT
GOWN	SLACKS
JACKET	SLIP
JEANS	SUIT
JERSEY	SWEATER
PANTS	VEST
ROBE	WRAP
SCARF	

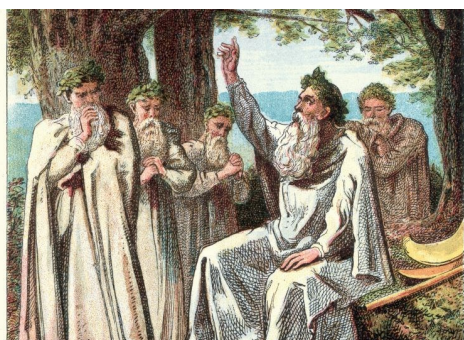
S T B A T B O S T R O H S
 J T E R L R S L A C K S H
 G C N O C O A T B W S B S
 R O U A K B S O F R N O S
 L S W C P E O R W R A W S
 E S O N T T A T A S E J H
 B R H L F C J S E A J S A
 F A E I S E U P T K I U W
 P B H S R I E E I R C D L
 A S F S T T R V S L R A E
 R E E A B L O T E E S J J
 W Y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

How Halloween came about.....



Halloween or Hallowe'en is now celebrated across the world on the night of 31st October. Modern day celebrations generally involve groups of children dressed in scary costumes roaming from house to house, demanding "trick-or-treat". This idea is that householders hand over treats in the form of chocolates, sweets and candy to avoid a trick being played on them.

The origins of these celebrations however date back thousands of years, to pagan times. Halloween can be traced back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. Until 2,000 years ago, the Celts lived across the lands we now know as Britain, Ireland and northern France and they were essentially a farming and agricultural people. The Pre-Christian Celtic year was determined by the growing seasons and Samhain marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark cold winter. The festival symbolised the boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead.



It was believed by the Celts that on the night of 31st October, ghosts of their dead would revisit the mortal world and large bonfires were lit in each village in order to ward off any evil spirits. Celtic priests, known as Druids, would have led the Samhain celebrations. To help protect the people and keep them warm through the forthcoming long, dark winter months, the Druids also ensured that the hearth fire of each house was re-lit from the glowing embers of the sacred bonfire. The Romans conquered much of the Celtic tribal lands when they invaded from mainland Europe in 43AD, and over the next 400 years of occupation and rule, they appear to have assimilated many of their own

celebrations into the existing Celtic festivals. This may explain the current Halloween tradition of 'bobbing' for apples. The Roman goddess of fruit and trees was known as Pomona (pictured to the right), and her symbol just happened to have been that of the apple.

As the Romans moved out of Britain in the early 5th century, so a new set of conquerors began to move in. First Saxon warriors raided England's south and east coasts. Following these early Saxon raids, from around 430AD, a host of Germanic migrants arrived in east and southeast England, including Jutes from the Jutland peninsula (modern Denmark), Angles from Angeln in southwest Jutland and the Saxons from northwest Germany. The native Celtic tribes were pushed to the northern and western extremes of Britain, to present day Wales, Scotland, Cornwall, Cumbria and the Isle of Man.

In the decades that followed, Christian teaching and faith arrived, spreading inwards from those northern and western extremities from the early Celtic Church, and up from Kent with the arrival of Saint Augustine from Rome in 597. Along with the Christians arrived the Christian Festivals and amongst them "All

Hallows' Day", also known as "All Saints Day", a day to remember those who had died for their beliefs. The night or evening of Samhain therefore became known as *All-hallows-even* then *Hallow Eve*, still later *Hallowe'en* and then of course *Halloween*.

Throughout Britain, Halloween has traditionally been celebrated by children's games such as bobbing for apples in containers full of water, telling ghost stories and the carving of faces into hollowed-out vegetables such as swedes and turnips. These faces would usually be illuminated from within by a candle, the lanterns displayed on window sills to ward off any evil spirits.

The current use of pumpkins is a relatively modern innovation imported from the United States, and we can also extend the same debt of gratitude to our friends in America for that 'quaint' "trick-or-treat" tradition!



EASY CRAFTS

NO SEW FLEECE OCTOPUS

This cute little octopus is really simple to make!



What you will need

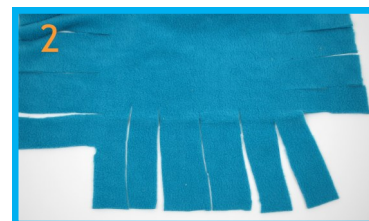
16" x 16" piece of fleece, styrofoam ball 3" in diameter, 3/4" wide ribbon, felt scraps in white, grey, and black, embroidery thread, 8" x 8" piece of quilting cotton for the bandana, string, stick on eyes

Instructions



1. Place the foam ball in the center of the fleece square and wrap it. Get a sense of how long the fringe in the legs will be. Unwrap the ball and set it aside.

2. Cut away a roughly 5" x 5" square from each corner of the fleece (this doesn't have to be perfect). Cut 6 snips along the remaining edges. The snips are about 5" in length, but don't have to be very neat or very exact, don't worry!



3. Place the ball back in the center of the fleece and wrap it up. Tie it tightly in a double knot at the neck with some string. Pull the fleece taut to smooth out the wrinkles.

4. To make a leg, braid three fringes together and tie off the end with a ribbon tied in a bow. (We held the head between our feet while we braided!) Continue until you have 8 legs.



5. Trim the ends of each leg so that they are neat and even.

6. Cut circles from the white felt for eyes. Cut slightly smaller circles from grey felt, and even smaller circles from black felt. Layer the eyes and glue them to one another, and then to the head.

7. Embroider a mouth with split stitch.

8. Optional: Hem an 8" x 8" square of matching fabric to make a bandanna.





MORNING STRETCHES!

These energising wake-up moves from our Lesley will get you ready and primed to meet the day

Seated calf stretch

Sitting tall near the front of the chair, hold the chair for support with knees hip width apart. Extend one leg forward in line with the hip. Flex the toes up till you feel a calf stretch and hold for 15 seconds. Repeat on the other leg.



Standing hamstring stretch

With one hand holding something firm, knees hip width apart, take one leg forward resting on the heel, weight over the back of the front leg. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat on the other leg.



Spine rotation

Sitting tall on a chair, feet or knees hip width apart, keep the spine upright and with the arms crossed on the chest, turn the shoulders towards the side, hold for 15 secs, then turn the other way and hold for 15 seconds.



Chest stretch

Still tall on front of the chair, feet and knees hip width apart. Hold onto the back of the chair, low down and push chest forward gently and hold for 15 seconds. Relax and then repeat twice more.

Finger stretch

Sit tall, match up finger tips and thumbs on both hands. Press gently for 15 seconds. Relax and repeat.





HOW CAN WE HELP?



For advice about benefits, grants, housing and money concerns, phone our **Later Life Planning Service** on 020 8432 1417.

Would you enjoy a regular chat over the phone with a friendly volunteer? Try our **Befriending Service** on **020 8432 1416**

For essential jobs in the home please phone our **Handyperson Service*** on 020 8150 0963. Our handyperson team are kitted in PPE and some jobs such as

changing a lightbulb are free of charge.

Unable to get out to the shops and cannot shop online? We have a **Shopping Service*** for people who need a light weekly shop. For more info, Tel **020 8150 0963**

Living Well Dementia Hub—dementia adviser service and **day opportunities** for people living with mild to moderate dementia and their carers. Phone 020 8203 5040

Foot care* We offer basic nail-cutting (£15) at the Ann Owens Centre in East Finchley and, for people with diabetes, taking steroids or warfarin, we have nail-cutting with a podiatrist (£20). For an appointment, phone **020 8203 5040**.

Finding your feet service - We match walking buddies with people worried about getting out and about again. Phone **0208 150 0963**. **There may be a charge for these services.*

Get your winter vaccines!! If you catch Covid-19 and flu at the same time, you're twice as likely to be seriously ill. Ask your GP or pharmacist for your free winter vaccine!

CONTACT NUMBERS



A few useful numbers in case of emergency

Call **111** for **NHS** urgent medical advice – if you need **emergency help and services** call **999**.

If you suspect you have coronavirus, call **119** to get help or to find your nearest test centre. To Symptoms include a high temperature, new contagious cough and/or loss of smell or taste. The test must be completed within 8 days of having symptoms to be effective.

For help on **discharge from hospital**, call **British Red Cross** on **07709 398809** or **07808 202125**.

If something needs fixing at home, call our Handyperson Service on 020 8150 0963 or call the **Age UK London Boroughs Business Directory** to get a list of vetted local trades people such as plumbers and electricians – **0800 3345056**. If you are a **Barnet Homes resident** you can call **020 8080 6587** for repairs or emergency calls. **Need to speak to someone?** For a friendly chat, day or night,

call **Silver Line** on **0800 470 8090**. If you are in a serious mental health crisis, please call the **24-hour Crisis Telephone Service** (for people living in Barnet, Enfield & Haringey) on **0800 151 0023** or phone the **Samaritans** on **116 123**.

Boosting
Barnet
Brains

Get your Zzzzzzzzzzzs

Good sleep holds back the decline in our thinking skills and keeps our brain healthy



Have regular bedtime and morning routines

Manage stress

Be active in the day

Call Age UK
Barnet on
**020 8203
5040** for a list
of activities



LATERLIFE PLANNING Q&A

Our team answer all your questions about rising energy prices and our reader Katharine offers her eco tips.

Can I get help paying my energy bills?

If you're finding it hard to keep up with energy payments or you're worried you won't be able to afford the energy you need this winter, you might be entitled to financial support.

Warm Home Discount. If you receive Pension Credit you could be entitled to an extra £140 this winter. If you're eligible, you should automatically receive a letter between October and December.

Winter Fuel Payment. You might be entitled to this if you receive the state pension and you are on certain social security benefits. For more details contact the helpline on 0800 731 0160.

Can I get support from my energy supplier?

If you're finding it difficult to keep up with energy bills or you owe money to your energy supplier, your supplier has a duty to help.

You can ask your energy supplier for:

- a review of your payments or debt repayments
- payment breaks or reductions
- more time to pay your bills
- access to hardship funds
- Priority Service registration.

If you're over State Pension age or live with a disability or health condition you can be asked to be placed on the Priority Service Register. This gives you access to a range of support, including priority assistance in an emergency, advance notice of planned power cuts and helps with prepayment meter access.

TURN YOURSELF INTO AN ENERGY- MISER



MINIMISE THE ENERGY PRICE RISES

Some great money saving tips from reader Katharine.

- Borrow or buy (for around £15), a power meter to check which of your household devices use the most electricity – it might make you change your habits!
- Electric cookers: Cut potatoes into small pieces, bring to a brisk boil, switch off and leave with lid on to cook while cooling. Boil eggs the same way.
- Electric ovens: Calculate when you can switch off and leave dish to cook by residual heat. (Be sure though that everything is thoroughly heated!)
- Soak grains or pulses in a bowl of water overnight; this will halve cooking time.
- Electric kettles: Heat no more water than you need. Kettles eat electricity.
- Irons: The last shirt and more can be done while the iron cools
- Televisions: switch off when nobody is in the room! Switch laptops to 'Off' rather than 'Sleep'.
- Central heating: if your thermostat is in the hall, keep all house doors closed. Use draught excluders

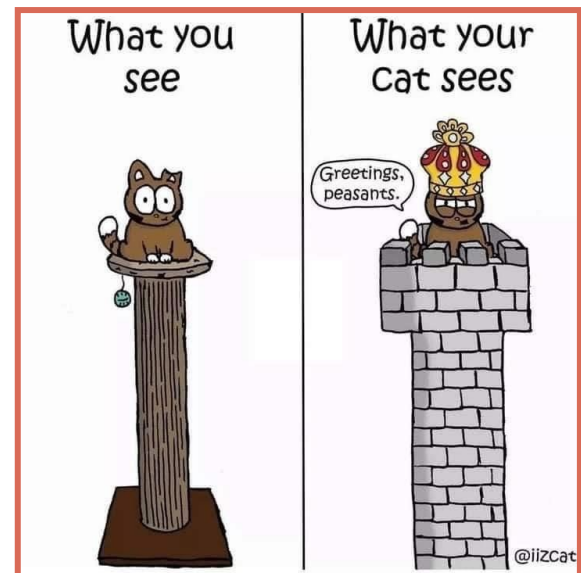
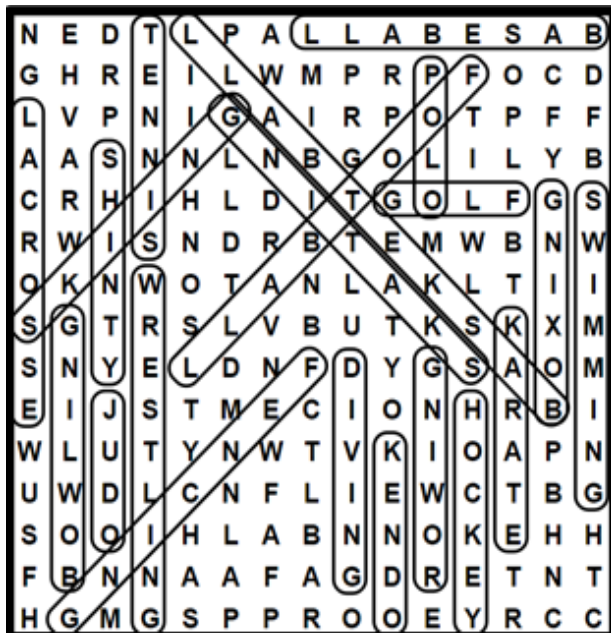


Date for your diary! Our Winter Craft Fair -Sunday 21 November 11am-3pm. At the Ann Owens Centre. Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT. Buy your Christmas cards, gifts and beautiful crafts. We'll also be launching our Indian cookery book. Plus tea, home-made cakes, a raffle!



If you have enjoyed this newsletter, please let us know. Just drop us a line at Pigeon Post, Age UK Barnet, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT.

WHAT TO WEAR WORD SEARCH P8



CROSSWORD ANSWERS P8

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