














PIGEON POST

Keeping you informed & involved

December 2020



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Welcome to the third issue of Pigeon Post. It's festive season and here at Age UK Barnet we're all determined to get into the spirit of things despite the coronavirus restrictions.

Our Christmas crafts and festive treat ideas from our Kato will

hopefully help – do try her energy boosting bites for Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas.

Our new section 'Over to you' is devoted to you – a place to share your stories. This month our roving reporter Linda speaks to 94 -year-old former journalist Josie about her life. Another reader has written a cheeky topical short story and we review a humorous book about a radical cat by Whetstone resident Geoff.

We've also got tips on how to boost your memory, some easy falls prevention exercises from our Deborah plus the usual puzzles and useful info.

Thanks to everyone who's got in touch to say how much you're enjoying the issues – we really value your feedback.

We wish you all a happy festive break!

Helen Newman
Chief Executive
Age UK Barnet



**"I will honour Christmas
in my heart, and try to
keep it all the year"**

*Charles Dickens
A Christmas Carol*



HEALTHY FESTIVE TREATS



All the extra indulgence at this time of year can make us feel sluggish – here our cookery volunteer Kato offers tips on how to keep up energy levels.

It is that time of year again, when the lights go up to bring some festive cheer to dark winter days and all around us festive treats and foods abound to celebrate Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas. Indulging in delicious treats is part and parcel of all the food traditions of these religious festivals. Unfortunately, this leaves many of us feeling a bit worn out and bloated by the end of the festive season. By substituting excessive white flour, butter, and sugar for nuts, fruit, plant oils, and a variety of spices, the recipes below will help you feel more energised and well-nourished, while still enjoying the satisfying smells and tastes we associate with festive treats.

Chocolate-nut clusters



Melt 250 grams of dark (70-85% cocoa) chocolate (try chilli or sea salt flavours) with 1 tsp of coconut oil. Stir in 2 cups of roasted lightly salted nuts of your choice. Scoop teaspoon-size clusters of the mixture on to a baking sheet, covered with baking paper and refrigerate until chocolate is set.

Top tip: Home roasting raw nuts is cheaper and delicious. Dissolve $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt in $\frac{3}{4}$ tbsp hot water, mix in 2 cups of nuts. Place in a single layer on two baking sheets. Place the sheets in the bottom and top third of the oven. Roast at 180°C for 8 minutes, rotate the sheets and roast for another 8 minutes. When done, mix in one tbsp of olive oil and a pinch of sea salt and leave to cool.

Spicy roast chickpeas

Stir together 1 tbsp olive oil, 3tsp spice mix*, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt. Coat two cans of chickpeas in this mixture, divide between two baking sheets, put one in the bottom and one in the top third of the oven. Roast at 200°C for 20 minutes, rotate the sheets, and roast for another 20 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature. * Try these spice mixes or experiment with your own: 1.5 tsp each of paprika and cumin; 1.5 tsp each of sumac and zaatar; 1.5 tsp each of medium chilli powder or cayenne pepper and garlic salt



Cinnamon apple chips

Thinly slice 2 large sweet apples in rounds. Soak for 30 minutes in a mixture of 4 cups water and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup lemon juice. Drain and sprinkle with cinnamon. Spread in single layers on a large baking sheet covered in baking paper. Bake for 1 hour then flip over and bake for another hour at 200°C. Cool and store.

Raw gingerbread biscuits

Mix the following in a food processor: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ground almonds, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup porridge oats, 1 tbsp cinnamon, 1 tsp ginger, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp nutmeg, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp vanilla, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground cloves. Soak 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of pitted dates in hot water for an hour. Drain liquid and blend in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dates at a time. Shape the mixture into balls or roll out and cut shapes with a cookie cutter. Sprinkle with desiccated coconut flakes.



Banana-coconut ice cream (1-2 servings)

Bake a medium banana with a mix of 1 tbsp coconut oil and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp of date or maple syrup for 15 minutes at 180°C. Blend with $\frac{1}{4}$ can of coconut milk and refrigerate overnight. Toast a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chopped or sliced almonds in a pan and sprinkle over ice cream.

BOOK REVIEW



Towards a parliament for cats by Geoff Hooper

A lovely whimsical book by Whetstone resident Geoff, written with the help of his cat Louis, who is on a mission to raise cat consciousness in Barnet. Treats, tummy tickles and snuggles aren't enough for Louis - he is campaigning for cat recognition, cat rights, cat votes and ultimately a cat parliament! There's also a little love story in there too. 'The book is based in Barnet and Barneteers might be puzzled that Louis talks about Barnet (West) which they may struggle to find on the map,' says Geoff. 'But it does exist as sure as my cat helped me write the book!'



Geoff, 82, a former journalist, has lived in Barnet with his wife Wendy for 50 years and they are great fans of cats, having had 6 cats over the years.

All cat lovers will enjoy this book which is beautifully illustrated by cartoonist Harley

Bishop, who has recently celebrated his 85th birthday. 'Towards a parliament for cats' costs £8.99 and is available on Amazon.



An exclusive cartoon by Harley for Pigeon Post— Geoff in the throes of writing his book!

CONTACTS FOR CHRISTMAS



A few useful numbers in case of emergency



Still call your GP surgery if you need an appointment. Some surgeries offer phone consultations with a GP – speak to your surgery for more information about this. If your GP surgery is closed and you need an urgent appointment, a recorded message will tell you who to contact.



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 get a coronavirus test you must have symptoms of one or more of the following - 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 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 80806587** 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**.

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.**

We will try to address any issues raised in future editions and will print a selection of the letters we receive.



Reader short story

Lucky Escape for hit and run victim – short short story by Della from Barnet.

On Tuesday 24th December at about 11.50pm Mr R from East Barnet was driving home from his office party, which had taken place in the village of Northaw when the incident occurred. Driving conditions were particularly bad that night, made worse by the heavy snow falls during the day. At the scene of the accident, Mr R said. 'This bl**dy great big van comes hurtling outa nowhere, smashes up me front bumper and left wing, then 'ee just droves 'orf like Father Christmas late for a date!' Fortunately nobody was injured and later at the local police station, Mr R was able to give a full statement. When asked to give a description of the offending driver, Mr R went on to say 'Yea, 'ee was very fat, 'ad a white bushy beard, little round glasses on 'is 'ed and some sorta red jacket. Oh yeah and he was wearing an 'at' However, this description did not match any of the witness statements. The family that were walking by that night all stated that there was no car or any other vehicle involved and that Mr R had driven his own car into a large tree.

Mr R spent the night in custody and next morning was given a cup of tea and two mince pies and a caution – after which he was driven home by PC Nicholas.



Mum is loving
the Age UK
Barnet Pigeon
Post.
Thank you

Lisa xx

Our pick of this Month's TV

Mortimer & Whitehouse **Gone Fishing**
Christmas Special, BBC2;

Billy Connolly: **It's Been A Pleasure** on ITV

The Savoy At Christmas on ITV



OVER TO YOU!



YOUR LIVES, YOUR STORIES!



Each month our reporter Linda Jackson has a lovely chat with one of you readers and shares your stories with the rest of us. This month Linda speaks to 94 year old Josie from Barnet.

Josie is an articulate and forthcoming lady who lives alone with an elderly rescue dog in a house with a small garden. She does not have any children, but her deceased twin brother had four children, so she has nieces and nephews who do not live nearby.

Josie was born in Cairo to British parents. She had a happy time at school there, but when her brother went to university in the UK, she stayed behind. She got a job on the local English newspaper, learnt journalism from the bottom up, and eventually joined the news desk. The hours were long, but the work was interesting. Egypt was going through a difficult time with riots, and a volatile atmosphere. She said with hindsight she should have returned to the UK then, but circumstances at the time prevented it. She left Egypt in 1956 and got jobs on various women's magazines including **Home** and **Women's Realm** which she edited for seven years, and retired before the coming of IT when many magazines closed down. Josie is obviously interested in people and enjoys chatting to them. Now she misses her day to day contacts. When asked what she thought of lockdown, she said she hated it "as it further reduces ones options". Pre-Covid she used to play bridge but fears at her age she will not be able to get back into it. She listens to the news with interest, and I am sure she has an opinion on current events. She cannot go shopping, but a "lovely" lady from Age UK Barnet brings her supplies.



Josie likes to take her dog out for a walk every day.

I very much enjoyed talking to Josie. She is interested in the outside world and misses the stimulation of contact with other people "human beings need face to face contact with each other". *I couldn't agree more.*

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.



STUMPY THE CHRISTMAS TREE!

Meet Stumpy – an odd looking Christmas tree without a top, that a year ago sat in its pot outside Waitrose Whetstone, remaining unwanted and unsold until after Christmas was over. 'All the trees were sold except this one small topless tree – I noticed it every day as it stood all sad and lonely,' says local resident Fay.

Then when Fay and her partner Bill arrived home early on New Year's Eve, there, in their front garden, was Stumpy! 'Our relations were down from Newcastle and after hearing the sorry tale of the unwanted tree, they took pity on it and bought it for us,' says Fay.

Fay and Bill, both in their 70s, repotted and nurtured it over the year so it's flourished. A handy neighbour has even built a new top so it could carry a star. 'Stumpy has now become a bit of a local celebrity - children and adults are coming from all around to decorate it and add a bauble or two,' says Bill. 'Including 97 year old Marjorie (pictured left) who's made a huge effort to help make this tree special.'

We love this tale of an ugly tree turning into a beauty and bringing the local community together.



RECIPE TIME....



EASY PEASY CHRISTMAS CAKE

Ingredients

250g softened butter
250g light soft brown sugar
250g sultanas
250g seedless raisins
250g currants
60g ground almonds
125g diced mixed peel
125g glacé cherries
3 large eggs
50 ml sherry
(or apple juice if preferred)

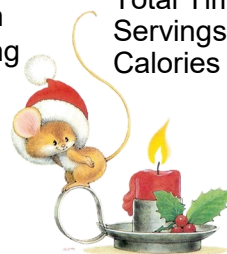
1 very heaped tablespoon
golden syrup
250g self-raising flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon mixed spice
1 teaspoon nutmeg
Icing (optional)
Shredless marmalade or
sieved apricot jam
Ready-rolled marzipan
Ready-rolled white icing

Equipment

A large mixing bowl, Two smaller
mixing bowls and a little bowl for
the cherries
Jug, 20cm / 8 inch cake tin,
Greaseproof paper, Brown
paper, Baking sheet, Skewer,
Cooling rack
Prep Time 1 hour
Cook Time 3 hours
Total Time 4 hours
Servings 30 slices
Calories 241kcal



Method



Cream the butter and sugar in a large bowl until pale.
In a separate bowl mix together the flour, ground almonds and spices.
Wash the sultanas, raisins and currants and place in a third bowl together with the chopped mixed peel.
Rinse and dry the cherries. Place in a small bowl and dust with a little flour (to stop them sinking in the cake).
In a jug, mix the eggs, golden syrup and sherry (or apple juice).
Line the base and sides of a 20cm / 8inch cake tin with a double layer of greased greaseproof paper, having greased the tin first. Make sure the paper which lines the sides stands 7cm above the rim of the tin. To ensure the cake does not have a hard base, line a baking sheet with 4 layers of thick brown paper. Preheat your oven to 165C / 145C fan /gas mark 3 / 325F.

Assembly Add a handful (or large spoonful) of flour to the creamed butter and sugar. Then add a small amount of the egg mixture and a handful of the fruit mixture and work together well, ideally with your hands (or use a wooden spoon if preferred).
Repeat this process until all the ingredients are well mixed, then finally add the cherries and mix again. Put the mixture in the prepared tin and flatten down evenly.

Baking Place the cake tin on the prepared baking sheet and put into your preheated oven for 1 hour. Reduce the heat to 150C / 130 fan /gas mark 2 / 300F and cook for a second hour.
Cover with a little hat of greaseproof paper and bake for a third hour.
Remove from the oven and check it is cooked properly by inserting a skewer – the skewer should be clean when removed.

After Baking Trim the greaseproof paper back to the level of the tin's rim and place on a cooling wire upside down still in its tin.
Leave until completely cold (ideally the next day).
Slide the cake out, wrap securely with foil and store in a cake tin until Christmas.

Icing (optional) Cover the entire cake in warmed shredless marmalade (or sieved apricot jam).
Place the ready-rolled marzipan onto the cake and gently smooth down the sides. Trim off any excess. Lightly cover and leave for 1-2 days, ideally.
Lightly brush the marzipan with water and place the ready-rolled icing on top of the cake. Gently smooth down the sides and trim off any excess. Decorate if desired.





It's never too late to improve your cognitive skills, according to our trustee Catherine Loveday, neuroscientist and professor at University of Westminster

HOW TO BOOST YOUR BRAIN POWER

Although we lose 2 per cent of our brain cells every year after the age of 20, it's still possible to make what we have work better. 'Often, we are just losing the cells we don't need,' says Catherine, 'and with the right lifestyle choices it's possible to make new connections, whatever your age.' Some things even get better: 'Knowledge is robust and generally people get wiser as they get older.'

It's perfectly natural to struggle to recall a name or think of a word. 'We slow down and our brains slow down. But research shows if we take more time, our recall can be as good as a young person's.'

Don't worry about looking things up on Google. There's no evidence that this will worsen memory. 'Much worse is using a satnav,' says Catherine. 'Losing your brain's ability to map and navigate your surroundings can lead to loss of brain cells and memory problems.' Finding your own way, and even getting lost, stimulates the brain and keeps the connections going.

Here's a few of Catherine's top tips for keeping our brains young

Exercise every day – even if it's a daily half hour brisk walk. People who exercise have stronger, bigger hearts – and bigger brains. Just sitting less and moving more will help. Have regular eye and hearing tests - If your senses aren't working, you can't take in the world around you, and brain connections are lost.

Control your sugar intake. Eating too much sugar can affect the way we regulate our blood sugars, as well as our gut health – and diets high in sugar have been linked to memory problems and Alzheimer's.

Brush your teeth & visit the dentist – studies have linked gum disease with cognitive decline and dementia

Embrace novelty and challenge - try something new on the menu, take a different route to the shops, see a show you'd never normally see – it all helps!

Treasure your memories – look through diaries, create memory boxes, put together photo albums and make playlists of your favourite music.

Someone told me it takes 5 sheep
to make 1 sweater.
I didn't even know they could knit!

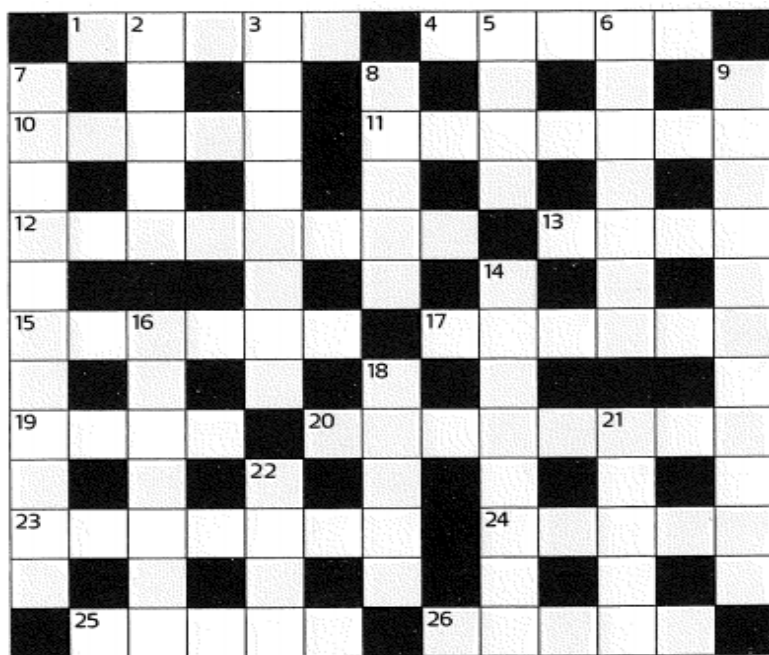


Stay safe at Christmas!

According to the Royal Society for the prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), more than 6000 people end up in A&E on Christmas day due to an accident and Christmas trees alone account for more than 1,000 injuries each year – from tripping over fairy lights to falling while putting up decorations. Never put candles near Christmas trees, and give yourself enough time to prepare and cook Christmas dinner to avoid accidents that come from rushing – and wipe away any spills quickly.



PUZZLE TIME....

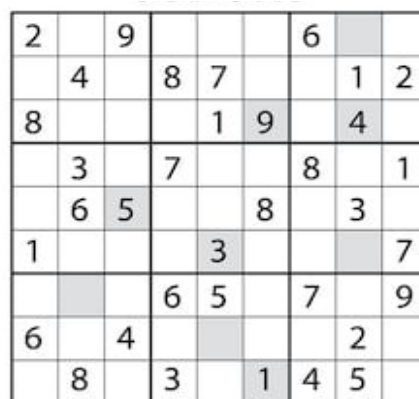


ACROSS

1	New wife (5)
4	Sampled (5)
10	Replica (5)
11	Hermit (7)
12	Physical workout (8)
13	Italian goodbye (4)
15	Tranquillise (6)
17	Bill Hayley's backing group (6)
19	Builder of the Ark (4)
20	Circle's width (8)
23	Milk pudding (7)
24	Contaminate (5)
25	Add (5)
26	Loose rock debris (5)

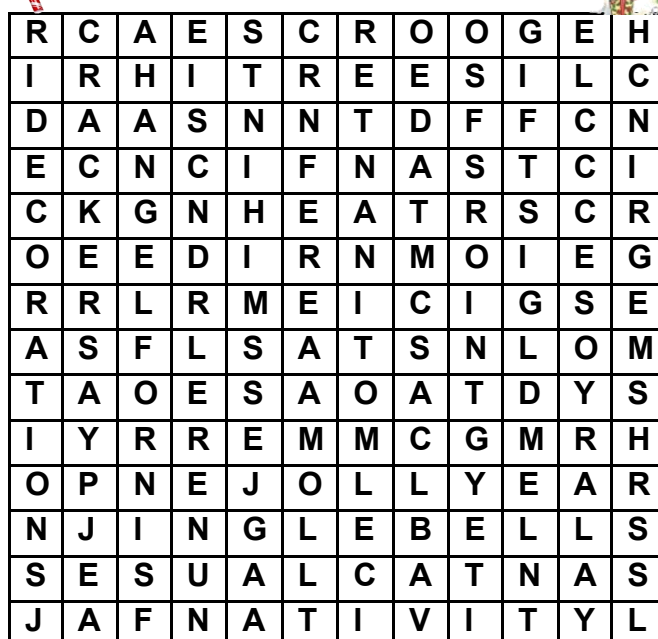
DOWN

2	Long Hill (5)
3	Dainty (8)
5	Display stand (4)
6	Escaping often and cleverly (7)
7	Mimic (11)
8	Sweeper (5)
9	Make objections (11)
14	Beauty product (8)
16	Expressionless (7)
18	At the end, ultimate (5)
21	Cord (5)
22	Wisecrack (4)



SUDOKU

CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH



Your shoes can tell your age!

Try this and see:

- Take your shoe size (no half sizes, round up)
 - Multiply it by 5
 - Add 50
 - Multiply by 20
 - Add 1020
 - Subtract the year you were born
- The first digit(s) are your shoe size & the last 2 digits are your age!



CHRISTMAS, CRACKERS, TREE, DECORATIONS, FAMILY, FRIENDS, GIFTS, MANGER, NATIVITY, MERRY, SANTA CLAUS, JOLLY, JINGLE BELLS, SCROOGE, PRESENTS, GRINCH, ANGEL

NOSTALGIA PAGE

Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus

By Francis P. Church, first published in *The New York Sun* on September 21, 1897



A question raised by a little girl named Virginia, asking if there really was a Santa.....
"Is there a Santa Claus?" the childish scrawl in the letter asked. At once, Church knew that there was no avoiding the question. He must answer, and he must answer truthfully. And so he turned to his desk, and he began his reply which was to become one of the most memorable editorials in newspaper history.....

*Dear Editor,
I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus.
Papa says, "If you see it in New York Sun, it's so."
Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?*

Virginia O'Hanlon



Dear Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the scepticism of a sceptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if you did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.



You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.





Pom-Pom Wreath

Materials

Wool, glue, pom-pom maker (optional) cereal box, small cake decorations.

Make some pompoms in a range of sizes (*you can buy a pompom maker in the £ shop!*) then glue together onto a circle wreath (you can cut one out of a cereal box!). Add a matching tassel to the bottom, a few bottle brush trees to the inside (or any small cake decorations) tie a piece of white ribbon to the top to hang.



SNOWMEN T-LIGHTS



Materials

Battery operated tea lights
Black Sharpie/black felt pen
Orange Sharpie/orange felt pen
Red ribbon
Red pipe cleaners
Small red pom poms
Black felt or black card
Glue Gun or tube of glue

(Most of these items can be bought in the £ shop!)

Please note: Ordinary felt pens can rub off after time unlike Sharpies which are permanent!



Position the face, so that the flame is pointing up. It just makes for a better looking carrot nose! Use the black Sharpie to draw a simple face onto the tea light.

Cut a piece of red pipe cleaner to approximately 2.5" long.

Curve it around the tea light and then add a small line of hot glue on both ends to

hold it in place. Don't glue it the entire way around because you'll need to be able to slide the ribbon under the pipe cleaner later. Add a generous dab of hot glue where the ears would be and add the pom-poms. Now your snowman has ear muffs!



Cut out a piece of ribbon to approximately 4.5" long. Then cross it over itself (see picture) and add a small dab of hot glue to hold it together.

Add a small line of glue to the back of the "scarf". And then glue it to the back of the tea light. Cut a piece of the thinner red ribbon approximately 11"

long and then slide it under the pipe cleaner. Tie a tiny knot in the ribbon to keep it together.



The tea light flame is white when it's turned off so you'll probably want to colour it orange with a marker to make it look like a carrot, even when the tea light is turned off.

To make the snowman with a top hat, cut a strip of black felt or black card, to approximately 1-1/4" wide. Scrap of red ribbon for the band.

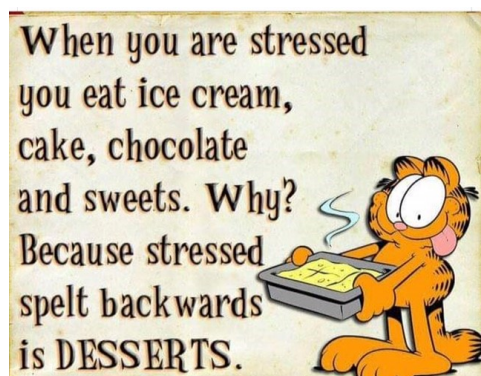


Since there's no pipe cleaner to hold it in place on this one, you'll need to glue the ribbon right to the tea light. Add a generous dab of glue/hot glue to the tea light, add the ribbon, and then add another generous dab of glue/hot glue to keep it all in place.

Falls prevention moves

Strength and balance exercises from our Falls Prevention lead Deborah, to reduce your risk of falls

Make sure you have a sturdy chair to hold onto before doing these exercises!



Posture check -

Please make sure your posture is correct - shoulder down, tummies in, knees soft, plenty of breathing.

Heel raises - ensure your weight is over the ball of your foot then move onto your big toe up to count of 3, lower to count of 5. Repeat 5 times



Heel balances

- hold on to back of chair, with soft knees, tuck bottom underneath, hold to count of 5.

Relax, then repeat 5 times

Leg raise - hold on to back of chair lift left leg behind you hold to count of 5 lower leg slowly down, then change legs.

Relax, then repeat whole exercise 5 times



Skiing - stand with feet shoulder width apart, bend knees slightly and push out bottom as though to sit chin level with the floor -

Hold for 5 seconds, relax, repeat to count of 10.

How can we help?

Since the start of the second lockdown, we have had to suspend some of our face to face activities and we hope to resume these as soon as we can. In the meantime, we are offering a range of services.

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

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

Need a handyperson to change a lightbulb or fix something in the home? To find out what we can do, phone our Handyperson Service on 020 8150 0963

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

Please note, small charges apply for the above services.

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**.



SOCIAL WALKS IN BARNET

Need an excuse to get out? We now have five social walking groups for over 55s – a chance for a socially distanced stroll and a chat.

Friary Park, North Finchley – 9.30am-10.30am Mondays, followed by optional tea in the café afterwards. Meet at 9.30am at the Torrington Park entrance nearest to Ashurst Road.



Dollis Valley Greenwalk, Totteridge - 10.30am-11.30am Tuesdays. Meet at 10.30am by the map board at the entrance to Brook Farm Open Space, Totteridge Lane, (located downhill from the entrance to Totteridge and Whetstone underground station)

Stephens House - 10.30-11.30 am Fridays. Meet at Finchley Central tube station by the ticket entrance. Regents Park Road, London N3 2RY.

Oakhill Park, EN4 – 2pm-3pm Fridays, followed by optional refreshments in local café afterwards. Meet at Oak Hill Park car park (Parkside Gardens, East Barnet, EN4 8JP) 2 groups take place at the same time.

Golders Hill Park, NW3 – 10.30am-11.30am Saturdays, followed by optional refreshments in local café afterwards. Meet at Golders Hill Park Cafe, Golders Hill, North End Way NW3 7HD

INTERESTED IN COMING ALONG? Give Wendy a ring on 020 8432 1421 to book your place

PATIENT TRANSPORT - Are you eligible?

Worried about getting to and from hospital? Hospital Transport services the Royal Free, Whittington, North Middlesex and Moorfields. To check whether you are entitled to hospital transport please phone **0333240 4909**. You will need to go through an assessment process. Being visual impaired does not automatically make you eligible.



Handyperson Q&A

Our Handyperson team Adam and Martin answer your DIY questions

Do you have any suggestions for cheap and easy draft proofing? Hazel from Finchley



Draughts from outside can come in through gaps under doors, letterboxes and even keyholes. If you can feel cold air coming in from under an external door, you can fit a weather bar or a door brush strip. These act as a seal at the bottom of your door when it's closed. They are easy to fit and are available in most large DIY stores – prices start from around £6. Alternatively, you could use a draught excluder. All sorts of shops sell draught excluders, or you could even make one yourself by filling a large piece of fabric with old clothes or rice. However, because

a draught excluder isn't fixed to the door, depending on where it lands when you close the door behind you, it may let in draughts when you're out. Letterbox draught excluders are popular, as are letterbox plates, which stop cold air getting in without blocking your mail – they cost under £10. A keyhole cover is a metallic disc that stops draughts and slides to the side when you put your key in – they cost about £3.

If you think that dogs can't count, try putting three dog biscuits in your pocket and then giving him only two of them!



Our Handyperson Service can help you check your home to try and keep you warm and safe over the winter months – from checking and bleeding radiators to assisting with draught proofing. Our handyperson team are all vetted and wear full PPE. We charge an hourly rate of £25 per hour and £15 per hour for those on the following means tested and disability benefits. For an appointment call 020 8150 0963.

A MONTH OF FESTIVITIES

It's not just about Christmas, December is full of celebrations for many religions and cultures around the world

8 December - Buddhist: Bodhi Day (Buddha's Enlightenment) – Mahāyāna Buddhists celebrate Buddha's attainment of understanding

10 – 18 December - Jewish: Hanukkah (12/11-12/18) begins at sundown – commemorates the Jewish victory over the Syrian Greeks, ending a three-year period of religious persecution

20 December – Pagan and Wiccan: Yule begins at sundown – sabbat celebrated on the winter solstice, often observed as the rebirth of the great horned hunter god and the newborn solstice sun

25 December - Christians - Christmas (or Feast of the Nativity) is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ

HEALTHWATCH



Healthwatch Barnet

Healthwatch Barnet is keen to hear from you about your experience of health and social care services in Barnet to help improve services. To take part in the survey, simply give them a ring on **020 3475 1308** to arrange a time and day that is convenient for you. The phonenumber is open **Tuesday - Friday 9am to 5pm**

And finally.....

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

We look forward to hearing from you.



"We hope you have enjoyed our little newsletter – please join us again next month!"

Answer to Christmas word search on P8

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

Answer to crossword on P8

Across: 1 Bride, 4 Tried, 10 Model, 11 Recluse, 12 Exercise, 13 Ciao, 15 Sedate, 17 Noah, 20 Diameter, 23 Tapioca, 24 Taint, 25 Annex, 26 Scree.

Down: 2 Ridge, delicate, 5 Rack, 6 Elusive, 7 Impersonate, 8 Brush, 9 Remonstrate, 14 Cosmetic, 16 Deadpan, 18 Final, 21 Twine, 22 Joke

Answer to Sudoku on P8

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

