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a community magazine and business directory
for residents of solihull



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A close-up photograph of a dark glass bottle of Prosecco being poured into two glasses. The liquid is a golden color and is captured mid-pour, creating a dynamic sense of movement. The background is softly blurred, showing hints of greenery and warm lights.

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happy halloween

Welcome to the October issue of The Solihull Index.

It's time to get the heating on, make sure the fire's working and get all comfy and cosy ready for the colder days, darker evenings and Halloween and Bonfire Night. Get in the mood for Halloween with our recipe for chocolate spider cupcakes on page 29 – they'll be a treat for some people and a trick for others!

Arden School is holding its ever popular family fireworks event on 4th November, with food, drink and two firework displays. And the Ramada Hotel in Solihull is holding a Halloween Special – 'Elvis Resurrection for one night only' on Friday 27th October. For more details on these events please see page 8.

Wishing you all a happy Halloween and hoping you get treated and not tricked!

Zoe Reece

Tel: 07557 220585

Email: zoe@dorridgedirectory.com

www.solihullindex.com

Zoe



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Locally designed by: hotlobster design ltd Printed by: Warwick Printing Company

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Chartered Architects Gary Winn RIBA and Dean Poulton RIBA are Progression Architects and have been based in Solihull since 1992. They are about to celebrate 25 years in practice.

The practice specialises in the design of domestic house extensions, one off houses and conversions, although they also have some corporate blue chip clients.

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At Progression we are also Chartered Town Planners and members of the Royal Town Planning Institute. We specialise in dealing with planning applications and negotiating with the Local Authorities. We also prepare, submit and attend Planning Appeals, where applications are refused, putting our case forward from an applicant's point of view.

As we are also Architects, we tend to think through our solutions creatively, at times from a perspective that is not immediately apparent. As Arboriculturists, we work together where tree issues meet planning issues, such as Tree Preservation Orders.



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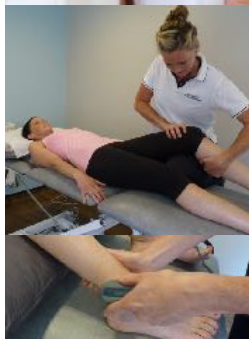
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community events

Bollywood Night

Ramada Hotel Solihull

20th October

Bollywood Night with the funky Bollywood Showgirls. Audience participation included. £25 per person. Price includes 2 course Indian buffet, Bollywood Showgirls and DJ Entertainment. To book call 0121 711 2121.

Den Building

Wednesday 26th October,

10.30 - 11.30am

**The Parkridge Centre,
Bructon Park, B91 3HW**

Would you be able to survive outside this winter? Come and find out as you discover how to make a survival den in the woods, to keep warm and sheltered away from the cold. Suitable for children aged 6+. Entrance costs £3.50 per child. For more information visit www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/whats-on

Bentley Heath Country Market's Pumpkin Mania!

Bentley Heath Community Centre, B93 9BQ

**Friday 27th October,
9.30-11.30am**

Half Term fun at Bentley Heath Country Market! For Halloween we are inviting producers and customers to bring along pumpkins to our competition. Bentley Heath Country Market, which takes place every Friday (9:30-11:30) is a community hub for homecooked, homegrown and homemade produce. To celebrate Halloween and the school half term holidays we are holding a 'pumpkin' competition which is open to all - producers, customers, adults and children. Grow, carve, make or bake a pumpkin and bring along. There will also be Halloween themed craft for children.

Elvis Resurrection for One Night Only – Halloween Special

**Friday 27th October,
7.30pm – midnight**

Ramada Hotel, Solihull

£27 per person, includes 2 course dinner, Elvis tribute act and DJ entertainment. Call 0121 711 2121 to book.

The National Glass Fair

Sunday 12th November,

10.30am - 4pm

**National Motorcycle Museum,
Coventry Road, Solihull B92 0EJ**

Leading specialist fair with around 90 exhibitors selling antique and collectable glass including contemporary artists showing their own work. Exhibition, refreshments, free parking. Admission £5. Call 07887 762872 for more information.

Christmas Craft Fair

Saturday 18th November,

10.30am – 4.00pm

Bentley Heath Community Centre, B93 9BQ

There will be a selection of stalls selling Christmas gifts and decorations, as well as a Cake and Home Produce Stall, Tombola and Bottle Stall. Refreshments will be available all day. Father Christmas will be visiting too! In aid of St. Philip's Building For the Future Project.

THE CORE LIBRARY

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- **Councillor's Surgery** - these are face-to-face meetings held by councillors for local people to raise issues in their area. First and last Saturday of the month, 10.00am-12.00pm
- **Rhyme Time** - Wednesdays 10.15am to 10.30am, term-time only. A short interactive session for 0-2s that includes finger and action rhymes and songs. Come along and meet up with other parents/carers and discover what the library can offer your child
- **Meet and Play** - Fridays 10.15am to 11.15am, age 0 - 2 years (term time only). Our new

Meet and Play session offers the chance for young families to meet up, relax, chat, play, sing or make music together! The session is for families, led by families. Toys and musical instruments are provided. For more information contact 0121 704 6965.

- **Homework Club** - Tuesdays 3.45pm to 5.15pm, term time only
- **Silent Reading Cafe** - Held once a month on Thursday evenings, this is a chance to unwind and read in a cosy, informal environment without distractions. It begins with an hour of silent reading from 6pm with a chance to chat (if you want) between 7pm and 7.45pm.



THE ST JOHNS HOTEL

SOLIHULL

FESTIVE SUNDAY LUNCH

Sunday 17th December 2017

Join us for our sumptuous 3 course Festive Sunday Lunch at St Johns Hotel.

Enjoy a glass of mulled wine or soft drink on arrival before savouring our festive lunch, accompanied by our pianist and Christmas carols with a local choir. As a special treat for the children, Santa will make a visit!

£22 per adult

£13 per child (5-12 year olds)

Children under 5 years are free

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goosebumps!

Goosebumps are part of Halloween spookiness but what are they and what causes them?

Goosebumps are actually left over from our evolutionary past. They occur when tiny muscles around the base of each hair tense, pulling the hair more erect. If we had a good covering of fur, like a cat, this would fluff up our coat and allow it to trap more air, providing better insulation. But with our thin body hair, it just makes our skin look strange and pimply!

We feel our hair bristle when we are frightened. Many mammals fluff up their fur when threatened because it makes them look bigger and more dangerous. Humans used to have a similar defence mechanism but now that we have so little body hair it doesn't work in the same way. But evolution has left us with the sensation of the hairs we do have standing on end.

Interestingly we sometimes

get the same effect when we hear beautiful music or look at an evocative work of art. Scientists have discovered that when we experience an intense emotional feeling in response to music a chemical called dopamine is released. Dopamine is a factor in both intense fear and intense pleasure (though in different parts of the brain) but one of its universal effects is to produce goosebumps! So now you know.

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a taster of what's on in october & november ...

CINEMA



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Stranded after a tragic plane crash, two strangers must forge a connection to survive the extreme elements of a remote snow covered mountain. When they realise help is not coming, they embark on a perilous journey across hundreds of miles of wilderness, pushing one another to endure and discovering strength they never knew possible.

The Glass Castle from 6th October

Based on Jeannette Walls' bestselling memoir, this film tells the story of how Jeannette grew up with an eccentric father and a family of nomads, moving every few months. Her father convinced Jeannette and her sisters that their life was a glorious adventure to distract them from their poverty.



Paddington 2 from 10th November

'Paddington 2' continues the adventures of the little bear from darkest Peru, now that he's a permanent member of the Brown family. His Aunt Lucy's 100th birthday is coming up, and he's trying to find her the perfect present. An antique book could be exactly what he needs – but



when a dastardly thief snatches it, it's up to Paddington and the Browns to get it back.

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THEATRE

The Core Theatre, Solihull
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The Nutcracker by Ballet Theatre UK

Tuesday 24th October

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most loved and unforgettable musical score combines with magical choreography, exquisite costumes and breath-taking scenery that together creates an atmosphere of fantasy and illusion.

Monstersaurus

Friday 27th October

This brand new show from the creators of Aliens Love Underpants is monster-ously good! Follow the young inventor Monty as he creates a whole world of whacky inventions and incredible monsters. This energetic show - full of thrills, spills, magic and mayhem - will delight the whole family, with original music and plenty of audience participation! Suitable for ages: 3+



Peter Pan - A Musical Adventure

Tuesday 7th – Saturday 11th November

JM Barrie's timeless tale of the boy who refused to grow up is re-born as a spectacular musical with a score by Stile & Drewe and a book by the late Willis Hall, as Peter Pan and Tinkerbell whisk the Darling family's children beyond the stars to his island where there are "no tedious distances between one adventure and the next".

To book please visit www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk

carve the best pumpkin

Carving Jack O' Lanterns dates back to an old Celtic holiday, Samhain.

People carved scary looking turnip lanterns and lit them with candles to ward off spirits. When the Irish migrated to America, they found that pumpkins grown there were much easier to carve so adapted their custom.

My children love to carve pumpkins. Oh who am I kidding, my husband and I love it too and over the years our designs have become more ambitious. Here are a few tips.

Start with the right pumpkin. It should be fresh with a sturdy stem, no bruises and a flat bottom so it won't roll. A smooth one is easier to carve and if you can find one with a flatter 'face' so much the better.

Use proper safety pumpkin carving sets. No-one wants to spend Halloween sat in the accident and emergency department dressed as Dracula's Bride. Ok that was the one year I did NOT use proper pumpkin saw and I was more at risk at dying from embarrassment than the blood loss but don't risk it folks.

Cut the lid using

the saw angled in towards the stem. That way the lid won't drop inside the pumpkin when you replace it.

Scoop out all the pulp and some of the flesh - an ice cream scoop works brilliantly.

You can now download patterns from the internet. These are terrific if you have limited artistic skills like me. Tape the pattern to the pumpkin (make little cuts around the edge of the pattern if the pumpkin is a bit too round, and that way it will fit better). Then use a pin or small nail to puncture the paper and the outer skin of the pumpkin at intervals of around 1/4 inch / 0.5 cm, or even closer for intricate designs.

If it's difficult to see your poked-out pattern, rub a little corn flour or baby powder into the dots. The dots will turn bright white and your design will magically appear.

Carve the tiniest sections first. Then carve the areas in the centre of the pattern, and then work outwards. That way you can rest your hand on the uncut bits of pumpkin, not your carved-out design.

Rather than always cutting all the way through the pumpkin try just removing some of the skin. The yellow flesh underneath will glow when lit up from inside.

Spread Vaseline on the cut edges to seal in moisture. If you have to carve it a few days in advance and it shrivels you can revive it with a face-down soak in cold water.

Pumpkin carving is a great activity for all the family. You can make it competitive, or have a theme for your pumpkins, or invite friends over for a pumpkin carving party. Just don't end up in casualty wearing a wild wig and face paint. A safe Halloween is a

Happy Halloween!



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Solihull brings you into the festive season with a traditional and warm welcome. This year the town centre will showcase a brand new 14-day Christmas market **(23rd November – 6th December)** with a variety of Christmas gifts, food and drinks on offer. It doesn't just end there, the town centre will be alive with 3 wise men and their camels, balloon modelling elves, Dickensian characters, stilt walkers, choirs, a grotto in Touchwood, a charity gift wrapping service in Mell Square and much more.

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contact

Chris Mundell
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Chocolate Spider Cupcakes



For the cakes:

100g Plain flour
20g Cocoa powder
140g caster sugar
1 1/2 tsp baking powder
Pinch salt
40g Unsalted butter (room temp)
120ml whole milk
1 egg
1/4 tsp vanilla extract

For the icing:

300g Icing sugar (sifted)
100g Unsalted butter (room temp)
40g Cocoa powder
40ml Whole milk

For decoration:

Pot of chocolate sprinkles
Sweets for eyeballs
Black string liquorice - cut into 5cm strips

Method

Preheat the oven to Gas 3 / 175C

Place the flour, cocoa powder, caster sugar, baking powder, salt and butter into an electric mixer (or use a handheld whisk) and beat on a slow speed until the mixture looks grainy, like sand. In a separate jug whisk the milk, egg and vanilla extract together. Pour half into the flour mixture. Beat well to combine and make sure you get rid of any lumps. Add the second half of the egg and milk mixture and beat until the mixture is smooth (about two minutes). Spoon the mixture into 12 paper cupcake cases and bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes until cooked. Set aside to cool. To make the icing: Beat the icing sugar, butter and cocoa powder together by hand or in an electric mixer. Add the milk a little at a time then beat well until the mixture is light and fluffy. Use this to cover the cooled cakes. To finish the spiders: Pour the chocolate sprinkles on to a saucer. Take each iced cake and dip the icing into the sprinkles to make the hairy spider's body. Place two 'eyeballs' on each cupcake. Use a skewer to poke 4 holes on opposite sides of each cupcake; insert liquorice strips into each hole.

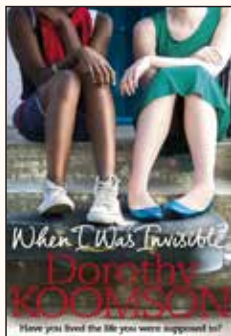
a good read

reviews By Willow Coby

When I Was Invisible

by Dorothy Koomson

We have all felt invisible at times. Whether it is in the staff room at work where everyone else is chatting and you feel left out. Or waiting to be served somewhere and it seems as if everyone else is being served first. But what if the one person you feel you should be able to turn to when things go wrong ignores your plight?



This novel tells the story of two girls with the same name. Veronica (Roni) Harper and Veronika (Nika) Harper met when they were eight years old and knew they were immediately destined to become ballerinas. However, life doesn't always go as planned and both girls, now in their thirties are living invisible lives: one is a nun and one is living homeless on the streets of Birmingham. Neither planned to be there and the story of how they got there gradually unfolds, told in the first person by both Roni and Nika.

What ultimately lies at the heart of this is a betrayal that ran so deep it destroyed both friendships and lives. As Roni leaves the convent overwhelmed by guilt and seeks out Nika to make amends the novel builds to a tense climax as the true nature of the betrayal is revealed and the many layers of their lives are peeled back. Some choose to be invisible in our busy society, others feel invisible and lost because of the way they are treated. This moving novel reminds us to listen to others and pay attention to their lives.

Operation Eiffel Tower

by Elen Caldecott

This children's book, aimed at 9-11-year-old readers is a sweet and touching tale of four siblings who live in a seaside resort with their parents. Lauren, Jack, Ruby, and Billy enjoy living by the sea. Jack



helps out at the local adventure golf course and plays the odd round when things are quiet. But life isn't all great and the children are fed up of hearing their parents arguing. Lauren reads in one of her magazines that a weekend break in Paris is the perfect way to reignite a relationship and so the children plot to raise money to send Mum and Dad to Paris to help them remember why they fell in love. It becomes known as 'Operation Eiffel Tower'. However, before long, Dad moves out and the children fear that they are too late.

This novel deals with the break-up of a family in a realistic way, with humour thrown in. It shows that relationships don't always work out as planned, and neither do our hopes and dreams. Will it have the happy ending that the four siblings want? And if it doesn't have they failed, or can things still work out okay?

COMPETITION

WIN 2 tickets

to see Jongleurs on the Road

Thursday 16th November

The Core Theatre, Solihull (formerly Solihull Arts Complex)



For your chance to win these tickets, worth £24, visit the Core Theatre website page for this event - www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk - to find the answer to this question:

Who does Peter Kay liken Jo Enright, one of the comedians in the show, to?

Email your answer to: thecoretheatre@solihull.gov.uk – and please put 'Jongleurs' as the subject line

Closing date for entries is 31st October and the winner will be drawn at random and notified by email after this date.

About the Show:

Jongleurs is the byword for live stand up comedy.

Hosted by Maureen Younger.

Stand up comic, compere, actor, ad hoc radio talking head and writer for magazines such as the new online magazine for switched on women Standard Issue, Her Edit, as well as Psychologies Magazine's new blogging platform, Life Labs. As a comic Maureen is a rare creature, a Brit who speaks languages, so she also gigs in Germany, Austria, Germany, France and Spain, having lived abroad for many years. She is joined by:

George Egg

Following two sell out years in a row at the Edinburgh Fringe with his first show ANARCHIST COOK, award winning comedian George Egg returned to Edinburgh in 2017 with a new show demonstrating more ingenious live cooking, this time using DIY tools. As comfortable cooking now as doing his quirky stand up show George

likes to mix up his act so a couple of surprises maybe likely!

Jo Enright

Jo Enright has worked with many of the UK's leading comedy writers and directors. Appearing alongside Peter Kay in Phoenix Nights, with Steve Coogan in I'm Alan Partridge and playing the female lead Sue, in Life's Too Short, directed by Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant. Jo has recently received rave reviews for the part of Angela in three series of ITV's The Job Lot.

Jeff Innocent

Comedian, actor and writer Jeff has a diverse career taking him from writer (notably with The Economist) to films, to TV via Edinburgh and Radio. Hugely respected this East End 'Guv'Nor' shows the young folk how to do it. The list of professionals he has worked with is endless and his unique charm and humour is memorable.

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We'll provide you with design tips to help you create your own beautiful lighting design.

By James Parnham

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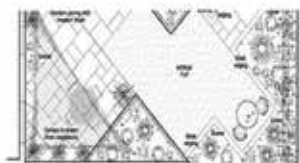
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NOVEMBER 2017

Sat 11th	MOTOWN DIVAS SHOW with THE DREAMETTES	£32.50
Sat 25th	THE SNOWBALL 'BLACK TIE' PARTY NIGHT with THE SOUNDATIONS	£49.50

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Sat 2nd	BACK TO THE 60's PARTY with THE REVOLVERS	£37.50
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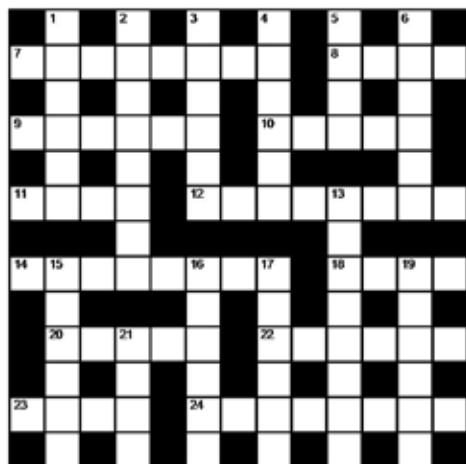
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crossword

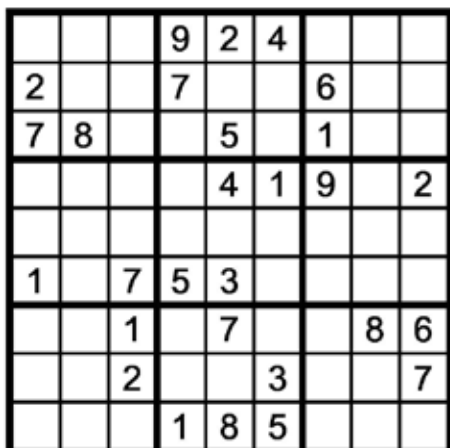


clues

- 7 Remy Martin, Hennessy, Korbel (8)
- 8 Hand held tablet (4)
- 9 Totalling-up (6)
- 10 Item written in a diary or ledger (5)
- 11 We stand on them (4)
- 12 Experiencing again (8)
- 14 Undergraduates (8)
- 18 Bedside light source (4)
- 20 Sound 15 down might make (5)
- 22 Removed the lid (6)
- 23 Body powder (4)
- 24 In a secretive manner (2, 3, 3)

Down

- 1 Walk laboriously (6)
- 2 Joined the armed services (8)
- 3 Vocalist (6)
- 4 Also (2, 4)
- 5 Present (4)
- 6 Deep ravine (6)
- 13 Hit back before the ball bounced (8)
- 15 Male feline (6)
- 16 Unit of force (6)
- 17 Knee-length trousers (6)
- 19 Cereal with oats, fruit and nuts (6)
- 21 Curved structure (4)



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.

answers on page 41

useful numbers

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Northbrook Group Practice	0121 746 5000
Hobs Moat Medical Centre	0121 742 5211
Solihull Hospital	0121 424 2000
Spire Parkway Hospital	0845 850 1451

Council

Solihull Council	0121 704 6000
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6	1	5	9	2	4	7	3	8
2	3	9	7	1	8	6	4	5
7	8	4	3	5	6	1	2	9
5	6	3	8	4	1	9	7	2
9	4	8	2	6	7	3	5	1
1	2	7	5	3	9	8	6	4
3	9	1	4	7	2	5	8	6
8	5	2	6	9	3	4	1	7
4	7	6	1	8	5	2	9	3

Sudoku Solution

from page 39

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

Crossword Solution

from page 39

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